

AN ANTHOLOGY OF PHILOSOPHY IN PERSIA, VOL 3:

PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGY IN THE MIDDLE AGES AND BEYOND



EDITED BY S. H. NASR & M. AMINRAZAVI

An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia

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An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia, Volume 1: From Zoroaster to 'Umar Khayyām

An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia, Volume 2: Ismaili Thought in the Classical Age

An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia

VOLUME 3

*Philosophical Theology in the Middle Ages and Beyond
from Mu'tazilī and Ash'arī to Shī'ī Texts*

SEYYED HOSSEIN NASR *and* MEHDI AMINRAZAVI

with the assistance of

M. R. JOZI

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5. Works on Ismaili history and thought, and the relationship of the Ismailis to other traditions, communities and schools of thought in Islam.
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7. Bibliographical works and catalogues which document manuscripts, printed texts and other source materials.

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جز حق حکمی که حکم را شاید نیست حکمی که ز حکم حق افزون آید نیست
هر چیز که هست آنچنان می باید و آن چیز که آنچنان نمی باید نیست

There is no judge worthy to give judgment save the Truth,
There is no judgment beyond the judgment of the Truth.

Whatever exists is as it should be,
And that which should not be exists not.

Naşîr al-Dîn ʿTūsî

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- Ghazzālī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad. *al-Iqtisād fi'l-i'tiqād*, tr. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Abū Zayd as *al-Ghazali on Divine Predicates and their Properties*. Lahore, 1970.
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Note on Transliteration

Arabic characters

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| ء | ’ |
| ب | b |
| ت | t |
| ث | th |
| ج | j |
| ح | ḥ |
| خ | kh |
| د | d |
| ذ | dh |
| ر | r |
| ز | z |
| س | s |
| ش | sh |
| ص | ṣ |
| ض | ḍ |
| ط | ṭ |
| ظ | ẓ |
| ع | ‘ |
| غ | gh |
| ف | f |
| ق | q |
| ك | k |
| ل | l |
| م | m |
| ن | n |
| ه | h |
| و | w |
| ي | y |
| ة | ah; at (construct state) |

long vowels

| | |
|---|---|
| ا | ā |
| و | ū |
| ي | ī |

short vowels

| | |
|----|---|
| ـَ | a |
| ـُ | u |
| ـِ | i |

diphthongs

| | |
|-----|--------------------|
| ـَو | aw |
| ـَي | ai (ay) |
| ـِي | ayy (final form ī) |
| ـُو | uww (final form ū) |

Persian letters added to the Arabic alphabet

| | |
|---|----|
| پ | p |
| چ | ch |
| ژ | zh |
| گ | g |

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*Contributors mentioned here are those who have translated new material for this volume and M. R. Jozi who variously assisted in its production. The list of others whose translations have already appeared elsewhere and of which we have made use appears in the List of Reprinted Works.

General Introduction

The Islamic community of the first/seventh century was already in contact with a world in which Graeco-Alexandrian thought had become known and where Christian theology had developed in its encounter with Greek thought. Muslims began to discuss certain problems of a theological nature in part in response to the theological issues discussed within the Jewish and Christian, and also to some extent Mazdean and Manichean, communities, but mostly resulting from the character of the Islamic revelation itself. Such questions as the nature of the Qur'ān as the Word of God and whether it was created or uncreated, free will and determinism, who is saved, the relationship between faith and works, the question of the legitimacy of politico-religious authority, and the relation between the oneness of God's Essence and His many Names and Attributes mentioned in the Qur'ān, were discussed widely by the early Islamic community, often in relation to political contention between different groups. It was from this background that the first important school of Sunni theology (*kalām*), which is said by traditional sources to have originated with 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, came into being. Already in the *Nahj al-balāghah* (The Path of Eloquence) – a collection of the sermons, letters and aphorisms of 'Alī assembled by Sayyid Sharīf al-Raḍī in the fourth/tenth century – many theological questions of the greatest importance are discussed, such as the meaning of Divine Unity, how Divine Unity differs from mathematical unity, the meaning of justice as it is related to the Divine Nature and Will and the meaning of the vision of God. There is the famous tradition of Dhi'lāb according to which Dhi'lāb asked the Imam if he could see God and the Imam answered, 'I have never worshipped a God whom I have not seen.' These and many other issues with which 'Alī dealt contain the roots of later *kalām* discussions, not to mention the question of the Imamate concerning himself, which divided the Sunni and Shi'i understanding of the legitimacy of politico-religious authority.

The founder of the first formal Sunni theological school possessing a philosophical dimension is said to be, however, Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā', a student of the Baṣran

patriarch of early Islamic learning and Sufism, Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), who was a student of ‘Alī. But Wāṣil broke away from the teachings of his master over the question of the status of grave sins. With Ḥasan’s exclamation ‘*i’tazala ‘annā*, ‘he has separated himself from us’, Wāṣil withdrew, as commanded, from the master’s circle and began to teach his views to a number of disciples, the group thus becoming known as *al-Mu’tazilah* or Mu’tazilites. Wāṣil died in 131/748 but his school survived to become a major current of thought in Baṣra, Kūfa and later Baghdad, and even achieved dominance in the early Abbasid period before it was eclipsed and replaced in Baghdad at the end of the third/ninth century by the Ash‘arites. In Persia, however, it survived for another century or more.

The Mu’tazilites were not exclusively Persians or Arabs; rather, this school of *kalām* was cultivated in centres where both groups lived and intermingled with each other. If they are included in a volume dedicated to philosophical thought in Persia, it is not to disclaim in any way the importance of the Arab component in this school, but to assert the presence of a Persian element as well. Moreover, most of our knowledge of the Mu’tazilite school comes from the vast Mu’tazilite encyclopedia of Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār, who hailed from Hamadān. One needs also to mention that a school which sought to formulate an intermediary position between the Mu’tazilites and Ash‘arites, namely the Māturīdite school of *kalām*, was founded by Abū Manṣūr Māturīdī (d. 337/944) from Khurāsān and flourished mostly in Persia and Transoxiana.

The Mu’tazilites have often been called the rationalists of Islam, especially by Western scholars, but they were not simply rationalists in the current philosophical understanding of the term. Nevertheless, they did use reason widely in theological discussions and questions of religion and many of them tipped the scale in favour of reason in seeking to understand of the Unity of God in purely rational terms. They also defended free will against determinism and believed in the created nature of the Qur’ān. Furthermore, they developed an ‘atomism’, usually known as *kalām* atomism, which was also accepted by their opponents, the Ash‘arites.

Kalām atomism is of considerable philosophical interest and is to be distinguished from the atomism of both Muḥammad ibn Zakariyyā’ Rāzī and the Greek atomists. According to *kalām* atomism, objects are not composed of form and matter as asserted by Aristotle and later by the Muslim Peripatetics, or of small units with dimension as held by the Greek atomists, but of dimensionless ‘atoms’ which they called *juz’ lā yatajazzā* (literally the part that cannot be divided). Moreover, for them space and time are also discontinuous, space consisting of discontinuous points and time of discontinuous moments. They claimed, furthermore, that there is no causality in the ordinary sense of the term. For the followers of this ‘atomistic’ perspective, what we conceive as causality, for example observing that A ‘causes’ B, is no more than the result of the habit of observing B following A, which we then generalize into a causal relation. For them what holds the world

together is not horizontal causes but the Will of God. Ultimately every cause is the Divine Cause. This view, amplified further by the Ash'arites, brought about a strong response from the Islamic philosophers especially Ibn Sīnā who was in turn attacked on the issue by Ghazzālī in his *Tahāfut al-falāsifah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers), while the criticisms of Ghazzālī found their response in Ibn Rushd's *Tahāfut al-tahāfut* (The Incoherence of Incoherence). This issue was also central in the centuries long debates between Ibn Sīnā, Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī. One cannot understand fully the course of philosophy in Persia without taking into account the views of *kalām* and the interaction between *kalām* and *falsafah*.

The Mu'tazilites also exercised some influence upon the course of early Islamic philosophy by creating a theological ambience in which the use of reason was highly extolled. They became known in the Islamic community as the followers of the five principles (*al-uṣūl al-khamsah*): unity (*tawḥīd*), justice ('*adl*), the 'promise and the threat' (*al-wa'd wa'l-wa'id*), an in-between position for a Muslim who has committed sin (*al-manzilat bayn al-manzilatayn*), and exhortation of the performance of the good and forbidding the committing of evil (*al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf wa'l-nahy 'an al-munkar*). These five principles possess important philosophical aspects. What is the meaning of unity? How is justice related to the Divine Nature and Will? If there is promise and threat, we must have free will. Then what about the question of Divine Omniscience and Omnipotence? These were all questions which, raised by the Mu'tazilites became a major challenge to philosophers such as Ibn Sīnā who also sought to address them.

Most of the works of early Mu'tazilites have been lost or survive only in fragments recorded in later writings. But what remains points to the significance of a number of the early figures of this school chief among them Abu'l-Hudhayl al-'Allāf and his student Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn al-Sayyār known as al-Nazzām. Abu'l-Hudhayl (d.c. 226/840) was a student of Wāṣil's student, 'Uthmān ibn Khālid al-Ṭawīl. A brilliant dialectician and speaker, he carried out many theological debates including some with Mazdaeans and Christians. The formulation of the five principles of the Mu'tazilites goes back to him.

Nazzām, who was a famous figure during the reign of al-Ma'mūn and who died in 231/845, was not only a theologian but also a poet and man of letters who was moreover familiar with Greek philosophy. Like Abu'l-Hudhayl, he held many controversial views especially concerning the meaning of God's Attributes and the power of His Will over evil. But Nazzām was most of all known as the figure who developed the Mu'tazilite theory of atomism as well as that of latency and manifestation (*kumūn* and *burūz*) concerning creation. Most of the famous Mu'tazilites of the third/ninth century in Baghdad such as Muḥammad ibn Shabīb and Bishr ibn al-Mu'tamir (d. 210/825) were his students. The last of the famous Mu'tazilites of the third/ninth century Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī (d. 303/915–916) from Khūzistān,

who was the teacher of Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, also traced his lineage in *kalām* to Nazzām.

As for Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, the last major figure of Mu'tazilism known to us (with the exception of those from Yemen), he came from Asadābād near Hamadān. After completing his early studies in Hamadān, he became a well-known scholar of *ḥadīth*. His attraction to Mu'tazilite teachings took him to Baṣra where he studied with some of the students of Jubbā'ī and also to Baghdad. It was upon returning to Persia, however, that 'Abd al-Jabbār composed his monumental encyclopedia of Mu'tazilite teachings entitled *Kitāb al-mughnī fi'l-abwāb al-tawḥīd wa'l-'adl* (The Book of Plenitude concerning Headings of Unity and Justice). This work of twenty volumes was written in 360/970 in Rāmhurmuz near the Persian Gulf and is the most famous work of Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār but not his only work. At the end of *al-Mughnī* he mentions seven of his other writings including one entitled *Naqd al-luma'* (Critique of The Book of Flashes of Light) which is a criticism of al-Ash'arī's well-known *Kitāb al-luma'* (The Book of Flashes of Light).

'Abd al-Jabbār became a famous figure in Persia which was governed during his lifetime by the Būyids. He was even chosen to be chief judge (*qāḍī al-quḍāt*) by the Būyid rulers and spent some time in Rayy, one of their major capitals. But he fell from grace after the fall of the prime minister and little is known of the last part of his life. Despite having had a number of students, his death in 415/1025 marked the end of the prominent intellectual activity of the Mu'tazilites in Persia, although Mu'tazilism continued to survive through the generation of his students.

The *Kitāb al-mughnī* is a veritable summation of Mu'tazilite teachings of the earlier centuries while as a theologian Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār himself sought to go back to the earliest position of Wāṣil in which 'aql and naql, or reason (in this context) and revealed knowledge were kept in balance against the later tendency of some Mu'tazilites who raised the status of 'aql over that of naql. 'Abd al-Jabbār and his followers sought to reassert the early belief of Wāṣil according to whom the Qur'ān, authenticated *ḥadīth*, rational argument ('aql) and consensus (*ijmā'*) were all to be considered as sources for theological truth. But by then the main arena of Sunni theological thought was dominated by the Ash'arites and Mu'tazilism retired from main centres of learning in the central lands of Islam to the Yemen where it continued to enjoy a new phase of life for many centuries.

Sunni rational theology and philosophical theology are also treated in this volume for a period that is nearly the same as the era of classical Ismaili philosophy. The theological thought of a philosophical nature which this volume treats extends from the second/eighth to the ninth/fifteenth century when Sunni *kalām* gradually lost its great propagators among the Persians whose theological concerns turned to an even greater degree to Twelve-Imam Shi'i thought. In the second part of this volume our concern is, however, only with Sunni *kalām* whose greatest Persian expositors lived

in the period from the fifth/eleventh to ninth/fourteenth centuries. Shi'ī *kalām*, as far as it concerns philosophy, is treated in the last section of this volume.

It might be asked why a volume should be devoted to *kalām*, usually translated as Islamic 'scholastic theology', in a work devoted to philosophy in Persia. The answer is that while early Ash'arite *kalām* was totally opposed to *falsafah* and has therefore not been included in this work, the earlier Mu'tazilite school of *kalām* provided an extensive reign for the exercise of reason and therefore both interacted widely with philosophy and helped to provide an ambience in which philosophy could be more easily cultivated. As for later Ash'arite *kalām*, usually referred to as *kalām al-muta'akhhirīn*, that is, the *kalām* of the later generations (or the *via nova*), although it remained opposed to *falsafah*, it adopted to an ever greater degree philosophical arguments and dealt with philosophical issues while also interacting with philosophy and influencing its arguments in many domains. Such major theologians as Ghazzālī and Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, while being adamant opponents of those technically called philosophers, that is, the *falāsifah* such as Ibn Sīnā, were themselves philosophers in the wider sense of the term. Many of them were in reality philosophical opponents of philosophy and their thought as well as that of certain other figures of later *kalām* who were Persians must certainly be represented in a work devoted to philosophy in its widest sense in Persia. As for systematic Twelve-Imam Shi'ī *kalām*, its life is hardly separable from that of philosophy.

There is no doubt that Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī (d. 324/935–936), the founder of the Ash'arite school of *kalām*, which opposed Mu'tazilism, was an Arab as were some of the major figures of the school established by him, such as Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013) along with many other later Ash'arites. Curiously enough, however, the later school of Ash'arite *kalām* (or the *via nova*) associated with Imām al-Ḥaramayn Juwaynī and his student Ghazzālī, the most famous of all Muslim theologians, had its home in Khurāsān. It was from the Persian province of Khurāsān that the intellectual defence of Sunni Islam was to be provided in the fifth/eleventh and sixth/twelfth centuries when much of the heartland of the Islamic world was under Shi'ī control. For some three centuries, from the fifth/eleventh to the eighth/fourteenth, the greatest figures of later Ash'arite or philosophical *kalām* hailed from Persia and were associated with the centres of Khurāsān and later Shīrāz. To this day the advanced texts of *kalām* taught in major Sunni centres of learning such as al-Azhar in Cairo consist mostly of the works of Persian theologians such as Ghazzālī, Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī and Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī.

It must be emphasized that both Mu'tazilite *kalām* and later Ash'arite philosophical *kalām* discuss many issues of philosophical interest while also reacting constantly with the mainstream schools of philosophy. Can one study Ibn Sīnā or even Mullā Ṣadrā seriously without consideration of their reaction to the views of the *mutakallimūn*? Can one study later Islamic ethics without full awareness of the teachings of Ghazzālī? Can one possibly understand how Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī

resuscitated Ibn Sīnā's philosophy without consideration of Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī's analysis and criticism of al-Shaykh al-Ra'īs? Anyone who has studied traditional texts of philosophy in contemporary Persia or elsewhere will immediately confess that the answer to all of these questions is negative. Ghazzālī and Rāzī did criticize Peripatetic philosophy and cause a turning point in the Persian philosophical tradition which was to be dominated by other schools such as the School of Illumination or *ishrāq* without the earlier philosophical foundations having become forgotten.

These later theologians provided criticisms that caused those being criticized, including both Peripatetics and the Ismailis, to provide fresh philosophical responses. In this way these theologians challenged the various schools of Islamic philosophy and played a role in the manner in which they developed. But this was not their only philosophical contribution. Within their theological works, including their study of ethics and politics, they developed numerous ideas which are in themselves of a philosophical nature even if technically these *mutakallimūn* were not called philosophers, since in the context of traditional Islamic learning a clean distinction is made between *falsafah* and *kalām*. In any event the later school of philosophical *kalām* marks an important philosophical as well as theological development in Persia and must be fully considered as part of the tapestry of Persian philosophical thought even if its proponents considered themselves to be opponents of *falsafah*.

Of the later Persian authorities in philosophical *kalām*, both those of Khurāsān and Shirāz have been included. The Khurāsānī school begins with Imām al-Ḥaramayn Juwaynī (d. 478/1085) whose *Kitāb al-irshād* (The Book of Guidance) is the first major opus of the later school of Ash'arite theology. In this work one sees that Juwaynī is already concerned with issues such as the nature of knowledge in a more philosophical manner than one finds in early Ash'arite works. But it is especially his student Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Ghazzālī (d. 505/1111) who marks a major new development in philosophical *kalām*, despite his explicit criticism of 'the philosophers'. This most celebrated and influential of Islamic theologians is usually considered to be an Ash'arite but he expresses many views which have caused some scholars to doubt his full attachment to the Ash'arite school. He is also viewed as the great opponent of Ibn Sīnā and his school, although again some scholars question whether he is directly attacking Ibn Sīnā or some other philosophers. Ghazzālī was also of course a major figure of Sufism and the author of the most celebrated and influential work on ethics in Islam. The influence of this colossal figure is to be seen in so many ways in later Islamic thinkers from Suhrawardī to Mullā Ṣadrā and his student Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī who provided a Shi'i version of Ghazzālī's magnum opus, the *Ihyā' ulūm al-dīn* (The Revivification of the Sciences of Religion) abbreviated under the name of *Ihyā' al-ihyā'* (The Revivification of the Revivification). As one of the most significant figures in the whole intellectual history of Islam in general and of Persia in particular, Ghazzālī possesses a place of great prominence in any work dealing seriously with philosophy in Persia.

The philosophical theology issuing from the teachings of Juwaynī and Ghazzālī was followed by several figures of note, chief among them Abu'l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153) and Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 606/1209). Some have considered Shahrastānī to have been Shī'ī, pointing as proof to his use of the distinctly Shī'ī method of *ta'wīl* in his Qur'ānic commentary *Mafātiḥ al-asrār* (Keys to the Mysteries). Yet, he certainly wrote as an Ash'arite and had studied *fiqh* in Nayshāpūr with the well-known Shāfi'ī/Ash'arite authorities Abu'l-Muẓaffar Aḥmad Khawāfi and Abū Naṣr Qushayrī, and *kalām* with the Ash'arite teacher Abu'l-Qāsim Anṣārī. Not only did he write, following the example of al-Ash'arī himself, a major work on 'nations and schools of thought', that is *milal* and *niḥal*, which is in fact the most famous of its *genre* in Islamic thought, but he also criticized Peripatetic philosophy in his *Muṣāri'at al-falāsifah* (Wrestling with the Philosophers) to which Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī was to reply in his *Maṣāri' al-muṣāri'* (Wrestling with the Wrestler). It seems that while Ghazzālī attacked the philosophers because he considered their views to be dangerous for faith, Shahrastānī's aim was simply to show his intellectual superiority by 'wrestling with' and throwing to the ground the greatest of the *falāsifah*. In attacking the philosophers, he did not in fact confine himself to this work alone but wrote another treatise entitled *al-Manāḥij wa'l-āyāt* (Methods and Signs) in which he also criticized Ibn Sīnā directly.

Ghazzālī's criticism of the *falāsifah* as stated in his *al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl* (Our Deliverance from Error) was centred primarily on questions of a religious character, especially the created nature of the world, God's knowledge of particulars and bodily resurrection. Shahrastānī's criticism dealt in contrast with purely philosophical issues. In his *Muṣāri'at al-falāsifah* he opposes Ibn Sīnā on seven points such as the enumeration of different kinds of being, the existence of the Necessary Being (*wājib al-wujūd*), the unity and knowledge of the Necessary Being, etc. His aim in criticizing the *falāsifah* seems to have been more philosophical than theological. Of course in addition to such criticisms, Shahrastānī wrote a number of treatises on philosophical theology, one of the most important of which is included in part of this volume.

While Shahrastānī was born in Khurāsān, Rāzī was born in Rayy but belongs to the theological school of Khurāsān by his education and also through most of his activities in later life, much of which was spent in Herat. Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī is of double significance for an understanding of the total tradition of Islamic philosophy. He was at once a major representative of the later Ash'arite school and the most learned among all the *mutakallimūn* in the intellectual sciences. He was also a critic of Ibn Sīnā's philosophy who left a major impact upon the *falsafah* tradition itself, more so than Ghazzālī. Rāzī also wrote one of the most monumental Qur'ānic commentaries in Islamic history, one coloured by *kalām* interpretations of the Sacred Text. This commentary has influenced later commentaries of the Qur'ān from Mullā Ṣadrā to 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī who were themselves philosophers.

Besides major theological works written in both Arabic and Persian, Rāzī wrote a number of disputations with philosophers and assembled views of earlier thinkers on various philosophical and theological issues. To this latter end he wrote one of his major works, *al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyyah* (Oriental Discourses), whose influence is clearly evident in Mullā Ṣadrā. Rāzī was also a master of digesting difficult philosophical issues and expressing them in clear and simple terms. It is to this quality of Rāzī that Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī refers in a famous poem:

Fakhr-i Rāzī cuts science into little pieces,
And casts them before children telling them, come, come.

Rāzī made use of this gift to analyse the difficult text of Ibn Sīnā's last great masterpiece *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbihāt* (The Book of Directives and Remarks) bringing out the meaning of the text. But having done so, he cast doubt on the views of Ibn Sīnā and criticized him at every turn. That is why he earned the title of *Imām al-Mushakkikīn* (The Leader of Sceptics) among later Persian philosophers who also refer to him often as simply Imām Fakhr. Nevertheless, Rāzī played a major role in the later history of Islamic philosophy in Persia because it was to his criticism that Ṭūsī was to provide a sentence by sentence reply in his *Sharḥ al-ishārāt* (Commentary upon the *Ishārāt*), the most important work of later Peripatetic philosophy taught as a text in *madrāsahs* in Persia to this day. For the past eight centuries Rāzī has been studied and discussed as a link between the two towering philosophical figures, Ibn Sīnā and Ṭūsī. In fact the *Sharḥ al-ishārāt*, incorporating the criticisms of Rāzī and the responses of Ṭūsī, has exercised a much greater influence on the later history of Islamic philosophy in Persia and beyond than the *Tahāfut al-falāsifah* of Ghazzālī and Ibn Rushd's response in *Tahāfut al-tahāfut* which are much better known in the West. Rāzī also wrote other works against the Peripatetics but none had the influence of his summary and criticism of the *Ishārāt*.

Rāzī was interested in Sufism in addition to the formal sciences but never embraced it. He is said to have been a classmate of Suhrawardī and traditional accounts mention that at the end of his life he was presented with a copy of one of Suhrawardī's works which he read and then kissed with tears in his eyes. But these two famous figures followed very different paths. Suhrawardī inaugurated a new school of philosophy, while Rāzī, in continuing the tradition of philosophical theology, also made a major contribution in spite of himself to the revival of Ibn Sīnā's Peripatetic philosophy.

As a result of the Mongol invasion the school of philosophical theology in Khurāsān was brought more or less to an end. Meanwhile, in the eighth/fourteenth and ninth/fifteenth centuries, Shīrāz became the major centre of intellectual activity in both philosophy and theology as a result of the relative political calm that reigned at that time in the province of Fārs. It was here that the School of Shīrāz in

philosophy to which we shall turn in a future volume of this anthology came into being and also where the Ash'arite philosophical theology of *via nova* reached its peak. In the eighth/fourteenth century 'Aḍud al-Dīn Ījī (d. 756/1355), the chief *qāḍī* of Shīrāz whom Ḥāfīz had met, wrote his *Kitāb al-mawāqif* (The Book of Stations) to which Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī (d. 816/1413), who was at once a theologian and Sufi, wrote his *Sharḥ al-mawāqif* (Commentary upon the Book of Stations). This work marks the peak of Ash'arite philosophical theology and is taught to this day in such places as al-Azhar as the most advanced text of Ash'arite *kalām*.

There was also in Shīrāz another school of *kalām* more opposed to philosophy than the school represented by Ījī and Jurjānī. The most important representative of this school is without doubt the Khurāsānī theologian, Sa'd al-Dīn Taftāzānī (d. 793/1390), who became a student of Ījī and authored a number of influential original works and commentaries on *kalām* some of which are also still taught in centres of Sunni learning. Interestingly enough, while Taftāzānī was more strongly opposed to philosophy than a figure such as Ījī, he sought himself to deal with issues which were philosophical in nature and not only theological.

There were also other figures of note in the area of Shīrāz during the period separating the Mongols from the Safavids who dealt with one form or another of *kalām*, both Sunni and Shi'i. These figures such as Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī and Ṣadr al-Dīn Dashtakī were, however, also philosophers of note and will therefore be treated in a future volume when we deal with the philosophical School of Shīrāz.

In evaluating the significance of *via nova* of Ash'arite *kalām* we can conclude that it played two significant roles in the intellectual tradition of Islamic Persia: the first was the formulation of a philosophical theology which is in itself of much importance philosophically. The question of the nature of corporeality, time, space, action, causality and many other issues discussed extensively by these later Ash'arites are of philosophical importance in themselves and following H. A. Wolfson, one can refer in English in reference to this school to a 'philosophy of *kalām*', although in classical Persian and Arabic such an expression is incongruous. The second was the constant debate, criticism and exchange between *kalām* and *falsafah* which affected the course of development of Islamic philosophy itself and forced many philosophers from Ibn Sīnā onward to deal with certain intellectual challenges placed before them by the Mu'tazilites and later the Ash'arites. That is why, especially from the time of Ghazzālī, the histories of *kalām* and *falsafah* become to some extent intertwined.

In the *mutakallimūn* criticism of *falsafah* and the response of the *falāsīfah* to them there are several lines of development, mostly involving Persia, but affecting much of the rest of the Islamic world. There is first of all the Ibn Sīnā—Ghazzālī—Ibn Rushd debate and the *Tahāfut* literature already mentioned. This line of development was followed by later figures in the Ottoman Empire but did not have much echo in later Persian schools of thought. Then there is the Ibn Sīnā—Fakhr al-Dīn

Rāzī—Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī—Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī line based on the *Ishārāt*, its criticism by Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, responses to these criticisms by Ṭūsī and ‘trial’ between these various texts by Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī in his *al-Muḥākīmāt* (Trials). Then there is the *Kitāb al-muḥaṣṣal* (The Book of Summation) of Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī criticizing Ibn Sīnā and the *falāsifah* in general again answered by Ṭūsī in his *Talkhīṣ al-muḥaṣṣal* (Summarizing the Summation). To this list must be added the *Muṣārī‘at al-falāsifah* and Ṭūsī’s response mentioned above.

Although as Persia turned toward Shi‘ism in later centuries, significant scholars of Ash‘arite *kalām* ceased to exist in that land, these lines of development of debates and criticisms between *kalām* and *falsafah* remained very much on the philosophical scene, especially the *Ishārāt* debate already mentioned. Moreover, these exchanges in Persia were to influence Islamic thought in many other lands and remain a very significant part of the Islamic intellectual tradition in general.

There were of course other *kalāmī* positions and schools of *kalām* in Persia which are of philosophical significance such as the school founded by the Ḥanafī theologian, Abū Maṣnūr al-Māturīdī who sought to uphold an intermediate position between the Mu‘tazilites and the Ash‘arites, especially on the question of the use of ‘*aql*’ in matters pertaining to religion. Of late, much scholarly attention is being paid to this school. Also *kalāmī* thought penetrated into several *genres* of Persian literature including religious and mystical poetry. Perhaps the most significant example of this category is the *Mathnawī* of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, the supreme work of Persian Sufi poetry. While it is a bible of Sufism, the *Mathnawī* also contains many *kalām* discussions and has in fact been studied from the point of view of *kalām*. All of these developments point to the significance of Mu‘tazilite and especially Ash‘arite *kalām* on the Persian philosophical scene. But of course with the advent of the Safavids, Shi‘ism became predominant in Persia and naturally Shi‘i *kalām*, which had had several centuries of development before the advent of the Safavids, became more dominant, although for reasons which will be discussed later, Twelve-Imam Shi‘i *kalām* never became as dominant in Shi‘i intellectual circles as Ash‘arite *kalām* became in Sunni ones.

In the deepest sense Shi‘i *kalām*, like all *kalām*, goes back to the Qur‘ān and *Ḥadīth* and then, specific to Shi‘ism, the *Nahj al-balāghah* (The Path of Eloquence) of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib as well as the teachings of the fifth and sixth Shi‘i Imams, Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Ja‘far al-Šādiq. Technical *kalām* developed, however, earlier among Sunnis and Ismailis than the Twelve-Imam Shi‘is whose earliest expositors of *kalām* go back to the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries. Among the earliest of the Twelve-Imam Shi‘i theologians one can name several members of the Persian Nawbakhtī family including Ḥasan ibn Mūsā (d. between 300/912 and 310/922). But the first major figure of Shi‘i (by which we mean here the Twelve-Imam) *kalām* was another Persian from Khurāsān, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan Ṭūsī (d. 459/1066).

His *Tamhīd al-uṣūl* (The Disposition of the Principles), a large and momentous work, was a kind of Shi'i response to Mu'tazilite theology. Ṭūsī dealt with the five principles of Mu'tazilite *kalām* in four sections as follows: 1. Unity and Attributes of God; 2. The essence of the Word of God; 3. Promise and threat; and 4. Religious government and Islamic justice. In each case he provided the Shi'i perspective concerning the question at hand.

Systematic Shi'i *kalām* with direct philosophical import did not, however, come into being until the seventh/thirteenth century with Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (d. 672/1247). This remarkable figure, at once scientist, philosopher, ethicist and theologian, is not only known for his composition of works on Ismaili thought, which were treated in Volume Two of this *Anthology*, or major philosophical writings to which we shall turn in Volume Four. He also wrote works which are foundational to Twelve-Imam Shi'i *kalām*. They include *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* (The Catharsis of the Articles of Faith), the most important treatise of Shi'i *kalām*, selections from which appear in this volume, *Qawā'id al-'aqā'id* (The Foundation of the Articles of Faith), and *Fuṣūl* (Chapters).

The new tenor set for Shi'i *kalām* is evident in the content of the *Tajrīd* which begins with the discussion of being (*wujūd*) and proceeds to the subjects of quiddity, causality, substance and accidents, intelligible beings, the independence of the soul from the body, etc. Only in the second part of the book does Ṭūsī turn to the discussion of God, His Names, Attributes and Actions and then to the question of prophecy, the Imamate (in the Shi'i sense) and eschatology. This work is therefore both theological and philosophical and in some of the numerous later commentaries written upon it the distinction becomes blurred and it is difficult to decide whether a particular commentator was a *faḥḥāṣṣ* or *mutakallim*, Ṭūsī having been both at the same time. In the later Shi'i climate there is definitely not the same irreducible tension between *kalām* and *falsafah* found in the earlier period. In fact Ṭūsī and his followers provided an accommodation within theological circles for the cultivation of philosophy which was very instrumental in the survival and in fact later re-flowering of philosophy in Persia and zones of Persianate Islamic culture such as India in contrast to the Arab world with the exception of Iraq.

This accommodating attitude is to be found in Ṭūsī's most famous student in the field of *kalām*, Jamāl al-Dīn Abū Manṣūr Ḥasan al-Ḥillī (d. 726/1325) from Iraq who is considered as one of the foremost religious scholars of Shi'ism. Besides writing numerous works on Shi'i doctrine, law, *kalām* (including a commentary upon the *Tajrīd*) and other religious sciences, Ḥillī also wrote commentaries upon Ibn Sīnā's *Shifā'* (The Healing) and *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt* as well as upon Suhrawardī's *Talwīḥāt* (Intimations) to explain and elucidate rather than to criticize these works. Such an attitude would hardly be conceivable for an Ash'arite *mutakallim* and provides further evidence of Twelve-Imam theologians providing a home for philosophy within Shi'ism. The same attitude is also evident in another

of the major students of Ṭūsī, Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham al-Baḥrānī (d. 678/1280), the author of a monumental and also a shorter commentary upon the *Nahj al-balāghah* of ‘Alī which is widely read to this day in Persia and other Shi‘i lands. This major religious scholar and theologian also wrote on philosophy and Sufism in addition to *kalām* and was highly praised later by Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī (d. after 787/1385) who integrated the teachings of Ibn ‘Arabī into Shi‘i gnosis.

These major seventh/thirteenth century theological figures such as Ṭūsī, Ḥilli and Baḥrānī are not only important for providing an ambience within Shi‘i religious circles for the cultivation of philosophy. Their own works on *kalām*, and especially the *Tajrīd* and its commentaries have an important philosophical aspect and constitute an integral part of the philosophical scene in the later history of Persia.

The later history of Shi‘i *kalām* revolves mostly around commentaries and expansions of the works of the seventh/thirteenth century, especially the *Tajrīd*. Many figures of the School of Shīrāz, which we will deal with in a future volume, wrote commentaries upon this work, one of the most important of these being Shams al-Dīn Khafrī, who, like Ṭūsī himself, was also a philosopher and an outstanding astronomer. This close link not only between *kalām* and philosophy but also between *kalām* and the mathematical sciences is of much interest and requires a re-examination of the thesis expressed by many orientalist and some modern Muslim scholars that *kalām* was opposed to the cultivation of the sciences. While this thesis is partly true, it does not by any means hold universally, especially in the Shi‘i ambience. Besides the above examples, one needs only to recall the name of Bahā’ al-Dīn ‘Āmilī (d. 1030/1622), at once a great mathematician and theologian/jurist of the Safavid period.

In any case during the Safavid, Zand and Qajar periods, Shi‘i *kalām* continued to be cultivated by a number of Persian thinkers. The most famous in the Safavid period was perhaps ‘Abd al-Razzāq Lāhījī (d. 1072/1661), a student of Mullā Ṣadrā, and ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s own son Ḥasan (d. 1121/1709), and in the Qajar period Mullā Mahdī Narāqī (d. 1209/1795). The last two were also eminent philosophers in whose writings the line of distinction between Shi‘i *kalām* and *falsafah* is practically removed; some would in fact argue that Ḥasan and Mullā Mahdī were essentially philosophers.

The later history of Shi‘i *kalām* is not well known, but there is no doubt that the school was to a large extent eclipsed and supplanted by the philosophy of thinkers such as Mullā Ṣadrā. This towering figure of later Islamic philosophy in Persia in fact considered the cultivation of *kalām* to be illegitimate and believed that only ‘the divine philosophers’ or ‘theosophers’ (*ḥukamā-yi ilāhī*) had the right to deal with issues that *kalām* sought to treat because they possessed both the intellectual power of demonstration and the inner light of intellectual certitude resulting from intellectual intuition while according to him the *mutakallimūn* were devoid of both. In a sense after the Safavid period the ‘theosophy’ or *ḥikmat-i ilāhī* of Mullā Ṣadrā

and others played the role of theology as well as philosophy. One could say that whereas in the Arab world (except for Iraq and Yemen) after Ibn Rushd Islamic philosophy flowed as a stream into the two oceans of Sufism and *kalām*, in the Shi'i ambience of Persia *kalām* flowed into the ocean of that 'divine philosophy or wisdom' associated with the School of Iṣfahān and manifested itself even more rarely as *kalām* in the distinct sense known in earlier Islamic history. But in doing so, *kalām* itself became integrated into and a part of later schools of philosophy and therefore its study still remains of significance for the full understanding of the development of the various later schools of philosophy in Persia.

S. H. Nasr

Introductory Analysis

The present volume brings together a comprehensive array of materials pertaining to philosophical theology by major thinkers of the Islamic intellectual tradition in Persia. It begins with al-‘Allāf and al-Nazzām, two figures whose works have survived only in fragments and partially as quoted by others. These men belonged to a milieu in which Arabic and Persian elements were mixed but were nevertheless well within the influence of the Persianate intellectual world and should be viewed as a link between the very early proponents of *kalām* and later Persian *kalām* scholars. Further explanations for their inclusion in this book have been elaborated in Seyyed Hossein Nasr’s General Introduction.

In Part I of this volume is devoted to Mu‘tazilism. The first chapter begins with a series of propositions by al-‘Allāf concerning God’s knowledge and its relationship to free will and determinism, and then deals with with the question of Divine Speech and the created or uncreated nature of the Qur’ān. Chapter 2 contains a brief discussion by al-Nazzām concerning motion and latency that touches upon the notion of substance in this context. The discussion of Mu‘tazilite *kalām* concludes with an extract from Qādī ‘Abd al-Jabbār’s *al-Mughnī*. Here the question of the beatific vision of God is presented as the main theme of the chapter. The claim that we can see God in the ordinary sense is first refuted and the possibility of a sixth sense through which God can be seen is then examined.

Part II deals with post-Mu‘tazilite Sunni theological thought. It begins with selections from al-Juwaynī’s *Kitāb al-irshād* in which three areas of Juwaynī’s thought are presented: rules of inquiry and their relationship with religious doctrines (*Sharī‘ah*); the reality of knowledge, and the Divine Speech. This part of the book continues with the towering figure of Ghazzālī, the most important theologian among the Ash‘arites. In the section from his *Tahāfut al-falāsifah* which is included here, Ghazzālī deals with questions concerning the inability of the philosophers to explain the attributes of God, a major area of contention among theologians and philosophers. In the second section, selections from *al-Iqtisād fī l-‘itiqād* are

presented in which Ghazzālī discusses the problem of Divine Attributes in a dialectical manner. In the third section, a discussion of the intellect and its subdivisions as presented in Ghazzālī's *Ihyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* has been included.

It is not always a simple task to differentiate between theological and philosophical writings in later Islamic philosophical thought and the line between the two types of discourse is often murky. The writings of Ghazzālī and the excerpts from Shahrastānī's *Nihāyat al-iqdām fī 'ilm al-kalām* in the subsequent chapter are indicative of this problem. Shahrastānī argues that it is impossible for anything not to have a beginning and further, in the same section, he continues the argument against the Mu'tazilite dualist and naturalist philosophers by once again arguing that God is the ultimate cause and the origin of all things. Shahrastānī is a remarkable figure in that he represents an interesting case of an Ash'arite who uses rational arguments and logic and writes in a philosophical language very similar to the Peripatetics but with the intention of opposing the rational philosophers.

Shahrastānī's intricate arguments are followed by a chapter on one of the most influential theologians, namely Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī. Rāzī's commentary upon Ibn Sīnā's *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbihāt* considers such topics as existence and its causes. In this text Rāzī treats one of the most difficult philosophical topics with contemporary applications, namely a refutation of the claim that the only valid knowledge is empirical knowledge. Rāzī concludes this section by affirming the existence of a Necessary Being. *Al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyyah* is the second treatise by Rāzī included here, in which he discusses the notion of 'body'. The topic, which is reminiscent of the views of early atomists, undertakes a discussion concerning dimension, extantness, definition of a body and some of its related issues such as form, matter and essence. Rāzī reflects on the views of his predecessors such as al-Nazzām, Shahrastānī and some of the Greek masters and then embarks on refuting the indivisibility of particles by offering twenty proofs. This extract comes to an end with a discussion concerning eternity and temporal generation and the nature of light, colours and the immateriality of light. The chapter on Rāzī continues with a discussion drawn from his *De Anima*, a work entitled *al-Nafs wa'l-rūḥ wa sharḥ quwāhumā*. The first section of this chapter begins with a discussion concerning the universal principles of ethics and in the second part the classification of existents in terms of their causal impact on other existent beings is discussed. Emanation, a favourite theme of philosophers, is clearly present here as well as numerous Qur'anic references that give it a *kalām* context. In the last section, the ranks and hierarchy among 'human spirits' are presented and Rāzī discusses the innate desire for perfection. This treatise could have also been called a 'discourse on knowledge and power' since the relationship between these two concepts and that of human spirit is a recurring theme.

ʿAḍud al-Dīn Ījī is the next thinker to whom a chapter is dedicated. This Ash'arite theologian and Shāfi'ī jurist from Shīrāz was a prolific author of whose

works we have included here part of *al-Mawāqif fī ‘ilm al-kalām*. The selection is divided into two parts, *Observations* and *Intentions*, in which Ījī discusses such issues as the definition of science and its divisions, speculation and the manner in which it is carried out, as well as the question of methodological inquiry in theology. Of particular interest for historians of philosophy and theology here are his summaries of the opinions of major Mu‘tazilite figures.

We then proceed to the next great theologian of the eighth century, Mīr Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī who hailed from Gurgān, in northern Iran, and about whose life little is known. We have included here part of his *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*, a commentary on Ījī’s *al-Mawāqif* in which Jurjānī deals with the question of theodicy and its relationship with religious laws. In the second section of this chapter Jurjānī’s short but most interesting treatise *Risālat al-wujūd* is presented. Here he engages in a discussion of doctrine of the ‘Unity of being’ and in so doing makes an attempt to bring about a rapprochement between Ibn ‘Arabī and Suhrawardī’s illuminationist (*ishrāqī*) views. He also discusses the differences between theologians and Sufis and their understanding of the concept of Divine unity (*tawḥīd*).

Sa‘d al-Dīn Taftāzānī, a theologian born in Khurāsān in 722/1322 whose work is presented in the seventh chapter, represents the pinnacle of later Ash‘arite theology. At that time there was in Shīrāz a school of *kalām* which was more opposed to philosophy than Ījī and Jurjānī, of which Taftāzānī is the perfect representative. It is nevertheless often the case that even theologians opposed to philosophy treated theological issues philosophically and Taftāzānī was one of them. The first of two treatises included here is *Sharḥ al-maqāṣid fī ‘ilm al-kalām* in which Taftāzānī treats such topics as the foundations of epistemology, sensual perception, intellectual judgment and the problem of universals. The second is a translation of his *Fī uṣūl al-Islām* in which the essence of beings, the cause of knowledge and some of the traditional problems of ontology such as substances and accidents are examined.

Following an extensive discussion on theological issues by the Sunni theologians, Part III of this book deals with the writings of the Persian Shi‘i theologians starting with Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and his influential work, *Tajrīd al-i‘tiqād*. Existence and non-existence constitutes the central theme of this section and such topics as mental existence, possibility and necessity as they pertain to existence and the question of causality are among the issues treated here.

The second Shi‘i theologian treated in this part of the book is Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥasan b. al-Yūsuf al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī better known as “Allāmah Ḥillī”. Ḥillī, who was also an authority in *fiqh*, Arabic literature and logic, was one of the best students of Ṭūsī but nevertheless maintained his independence and even wrote on his differences with his teacher. Ḥillī’s commentary upon the *al-Tajrīd* of Ṭūsī known as *Sharḥ al-tajrīd* is included here. Written in a dialectical fashion, this section begins with a discussion concerning causality and proceeds to discuss determinism and its relationship to the First Cause, First Principle and First Effect. The discussion

shifts to the implications of causal connections and Hilli discusses the impossibility of the infinite regress of a contingent series of beings (*regressio ad infinitum*) and other themes pertaining to causality. It is, however, towards the end of this section that such issues as the proof for the existence of immaterial substances, and the independence of the soul from the body and its immaterial and created nature, are discussed and treated.

In the final chapter of this volume, we have included a work by the eminent theologian, Muḥammad Mahdī Narāqī. In this section of his major work, *Qurrat al-ʿuyūn*, the question of Divine Essence, the reality of existence, quiddities and their relationship to Absolute Existence are discussed. Narāqī then offers a critique of what certain theologians call the 'sixth school', namely those theologians who regard beings to have two existences, general and particular. The rest of this section is devoted to a discussion of the differences between *mutikallimūn* (theologians) and *muti'allihīn* (philosophers), particularly on the thorny notion of necessity.

This present volume therefore provides the reader with a compendium of excerpts from works of Islamic philosophical theology in Persia covering a period of some twelve centuries. Translations have been made by leading scholars in the field with the intention of producing a readable work in English for scholars as well as advanced students of Islamic and Iranian studies.

M. Aminrazavi

PART I
Mu'tazilism

Introduction

Mu'tazilism is the earliest form of dialectical theology to have developed in the Islamic world. At the beginning it signified group solidarity but did not have clearly defined doctrines, whereas in the third/ninth century in Baghdad at the Abbasid court it formulated a recognizable set of teachings which was an attempt to provide a rational and dialectical defence of the tenets of Sunni Islam. Many of the Mu'tazilites held distinct views of their own but the school also displayed certain features which run throughout its period of development, the most important being insistence upon free will and extensive use of reasoning in religious matters.

The detailed history of Mu'tazilism is still unknown, although studies of the past few decades have clarified to some extent the stages of its development. Yet many points still remain debatable, including the name of the movement. The traditional explanation of Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā', separating himself from Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Ḥasan's exclamation 'Wāṣil has separated himself from us' (*i'tazala 'annā*), has been doubted by some scholars, especially since members of this school themselves accepted the name *mu'tazilah* readily and did not see anything pejorative in it. Certain scholars have sought to derive the name from Mu'tazilites keeping themselves separate (*i'tizāl*) from the various parties of the day during the early history of the movement, while others have sought to connect their name to the story of the Seven Sleepers of the Cave mentioned in the Qur'ān who separated or disassociated themselves from the world. In any case the members of the school referred to themselves as *mu'tazilah* and this was not a title given to them by their opponents.

The earliest history of Mu'tazilism might be called its period of incubation, lasting to the end of the second/eighth century. Founded in Baṣra during the late Umayyad period, this earliest phase, for which there is very scant record, is marked by a certain missionary zeal and it is said that Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā' sent some of his disciples to Iran, India, Maghreb and even Armenia to propagate his teaching. The second period, lasting from about 815/1412 to 850/1446, was witness to the

transformation of Mu'tazilism into a major intellectual movement in Baghdad. Many notable figures of the school appeared at this time, some holding views opposed to those of the other members. The rise to a position of eminence came first through the support of the Barmakids, the Persian *wazīrs* of the Abbasids, and then al-Ma'mūn himself. Functioning in a cosmopolitan environment with the presence of several other religions, theologies and philosophies, Mu'tazilites developed a rational defence of Islam which appealed not only to the Sunni intellectual milieu but also to the Shi'a, Murji'ites and others. Such Mu'tazilites as Ḍirār ibn 'Amr, Abu'l-Hudhayl al-'Allāf and al-Nazzām became highly influential. One of the most famous, Bishr ibn al-Mu'tamar, was so close to caliph al-Ma'mūn that he was able to sign a decree according to which 'Alī al-Riḏā, the eighth Shi'i Imam, was chosen as al-Ma'mūn's successor. But resistance to rational theology remained strong in Baghdad. Consequently al-Ma'mūn's successor al-Mutawakkil, decided to oppose and in fact prohibit dialectical theology. But this prohibition did not have much effect on other centres where Mu'tazilism was flourishing, including, in Persia, Kirmān, Fārs and Khūzistān.

The caliph al-Mutawakkil turned not only against the Mu'tazilites but also against the Shi'a, causing the famous Mu'tazilī man of letters, al-Jāḥiẓ, to defend the Mu'tazilites while attacking the Shi'a. This in turn caused Ibn al-Rāwandī, who was accused by his opponents of being an anti-religious 'free thinker', to side with the Shi'a and attack al-Jāḥiẓ and the Mu'tazilites. He tried to show the contradiction existing in dialectical explanations of the teachings of the Qur'ān. In any case by the end of the third/ninth century, the political power of Mu'tazilism had waned and the third period of the history of the school began, a period marked by systematic elaboration of Mu'tazilite teaching into two branches known as the Baṣran and the Baghdadi. The main representative of the Baghdadi school was Abu'l-Qāsim al-Ka'bi from Khurāsān and those of the Baṣran school Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'i and his son Abū Hāshim. While they differed from each other on many issues, both schools sought to answer the criticism posed by Ibn al-Rāwandī. Soon they both shifted the centre of their activity to Persia.

The influence of the Baṣran school is best seen in the works of Qāḏī 'Abd al-Jabbār and his students. As for the Baghdadi school, many of its tenets were accepted by certain Shi'a theologians, mostly of the Zaydī school but also some belonging to the Twelver-Imam Shi'i branch such as the two Nawbakhtis, although Twelver-Imam Shi'i *kalām* even in its early phase cannot simply be identified with Mu'tazilism. In any case while the Zaydīs of Māzandarān were espousing the cause of Mu'tazilism, among Persian Twelver-Imam Shi'a, there was also an espousal of some Mu'tazilite theses despite the opposition of traditionalists such as Ibn Bābūyah. Outside of Shi'i circles in Persia, however, Mu'tazilism began to wane, although a few Ḥanafīs still showed interest in it both inside and outside of Persia. It was only in eastern Persia that Mu'tazilism survived under the Khwārazmshāhs.

Mu'tazilite influence on Sunni circles in Persia came to a definite end with the Mongol invasion in the seventh/thirteenth century, although one or two figures are mentioned up to the time of Tamerlane while Mu'tazilite theses continued to be debated in Persian Shi'i circles during later centuries without any major Twelver-Imam Shi'i theologian being identified purely and simply as a Mu'tazilite. The future of Mu'tazilism was to lie among the Zaydīs of Yemen. In Persia itself the influence of both the Baṣran and Baghdadi schools of Mu'tazilism was to be felt for many centuries to come through such major Twelver-Imam Shi'i theologians as Shaykh al-Mufid and Sharif al-Murtaḍā both of whom died in the fifth/eleventh century.

Because of its nature as well as its long history, Mu'tazilism is of much significance in the development in Persia of both philosophical theology and philosophy itself. In the early period of the rise of Islamic philosophy in Baghdad, Mu'tazilism provided a congenial atmosphere for the rise of the rational sciences including philosophy. Later its theses became a challenge to philosophers. Many of the tenets first discussed by the Mu'tazilites such as atomism, the relation between free will and determinism and the rapport between transcendence (*tanzih*) and immanence (*tashbih*) provided philosophical challenges which were answered by philosophers from Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā to Mullā Ṣadrā and Sabziwārī. Even the Ash'arite rebuttals of certain Mu'tazilite theses by such figures as Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī possessed philosophical as well as theological dimensions, and therefore attracted the attention of later Persian philosophers. Although Mu'tazilism became part and parcel of the Islamic intellectual discourse and was eclipsed in later centuries, its ideas and theses remained part of the fabric of philosophical and theological thought and an element to which it is necessary to turn in any treatment of the development of philosophical thought in Persia which seeks, to any degree, to be comprehensive and complete.

S. H. Nasr

Abu'l-Hudhayl al-'Allāf

Abu'l Hudhayl Muḥammad ibn al-Hudhayl ibn 'Ubayd Allāh, who was a *mawlā* of 'Abd al-Qays and therefore most likely of Persian origin, was born in Baṣra (c.134/751–752) in the foragers' quarter, hence his title, al-'Allāf (meaning forager). After studying in Baṣra and becoming a well-known scholar, he went to Baghdad in 203/818–819 and settled in the Abbasid capital where he was well received. He died at a very advanced age in Baghdad in 226/840–841 and according to some in 235/849–850.

Abu'l Hudhayl had studied *kalām* and other religious sciences with 'Uthmān ibn al-Ṭawīl who himself had been a student of Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā', the traditionally accepted founder of the Mu'tazilite school. In addition to being a scholar of *kalām*, Abu'l-Hudhayl was also a poet and scholar of *ḥadīth*, but his fame resides more than anything else in his theological speculations. He is in fact considered to be the first speculative Mu'tazilite theologian whose influence in the later development of this school is immense.

Faced with the presence of other religions and philosophies, Abu'l-Hudhayl set out to defend the tenets of Islam against Zoroastrian and Manichean dualism as well as the naturalism associated with later Greek thought. Later in life he began to study philosophy, to which he was attracted while attacking the philosophers. In his own theological position he emphasized above all Divine Oneness and transcendence (*tanzīh*) and opposed all references to immanence and similitude (*tashbīh*). He also sought to harmonize the idea of creation *ex nihilo* as stated in revealed scriptures and Aristotelian cosmology in which the cosmos does not have a created origin. To this end, while accepting that motion is the source of transformation in the cosmos, he insisted that motion itself was created by God and that the cosmos will have an end. He was also the founder of the atomism so characteristic of Mu'tazilite and also Ash'arite *kalām*, an atomism which concerned both the world of nature and the world of man.

The five principles for which Mu'tazilite theology is known and which were discussed in the General Introduction to this volume were first elaborated by

Abu'l-Hudhayl. He was widely accepted as the leading authority in Mu'tazilite *kalām* with great dialectical power. As such he gained the attention of the Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mūn who respected him greatly and would often invite him to the court for theological disputations with other scholars. Despite his fame, however, his works were lost and only fragments survive today in later collections. Moreover, his views were often distorted by later writers, especially Ibn al-Rāwandī although some authorities such as al-Khayyāṭ in his *Kitāb al-intiṣār* and al-Ash'arī in his *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* give a much more objective account.

Abu'l-Hudhayl trained many students, foremost among them his own nephew al-Nazzām, who was deeply influenced by the master, although he disagreed with him on the interpretation of atomism. The influence of Abu'l-Hudhayl continued beyond his own students to embrace all later phases of the development of Mu'tazilism. His views were also debated by both Shi'i and Ash'arite theologians. By any account he remains the most influential speculative theologian of early Mu'tazilism and a seminal figure in the development of early Islamic theology in its interaction with philosophy, other schools of Islamic religious thought, and the philosophical and theological currents of religions present in early Islamic history in Iraq and Persia. These were the main arenas for Mu'tazilite theology up to the Seljuq and even Ilkhanid period when Mu'tazilism more or less died in these lands, while surviving in Yemen for many centuries to come.

S. H. Nasr

SELECTIONS

from *Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyīn*

Translated for this volume by Majid Fakhry from 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī, *Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyīn* (Views of the Islamic Schools), (Beirut, 1983), pp. 133–135, 162–165, 168 and 169 (selected passages)

In *al-Milal wa'l-niḥal* al-Shahrastānī has summarized Abu'l-Hudhayl's views, as distinct from those of the rest of the Mu'tazilites, in ten propositions.

First Proposition: God Almighty is a knower through a knowledge, which is identical with His Essence; is powerful through a power, which is identical with His Essence; and is living through a life, which is identical with His Essence. Actually, he borrowed this view from the philosophers, who held that [God's] essence is one in which there is no multiplicity whatsoever and that attributes are not distinct notions subsisting in His Essence as something other than it, but are rather identical with it, and are reducible to negations or corollaries,¹ as will be explained later. The difference between saying that He is a knower in Himself not through knowledge and saying He is a Knower through knowledge which is identical with Himself is that the first statement entails negating the attribute [of knowledge]; whereas the second asserts an essence which is in itself an attribute, or asserts an attribute which in itself is an essence; and since Abu'l-Hudhayl has asserted these attributes as aspects of the Essence, they are identical with the hypostases of the Christians or the 'states' of Abū Hāshim [al-Jubbā'ī].

Second Proposition: He posited a series of wills in no substratum, through which God Almighty wills. He was the first to introduce this notion and was followed therein by others.

Third Proposition: He believed that part of God's speech is in no substratum, corresponding to His order: 'Be',² and part in a substratum, such as commanding, prohibiting, informing or seeking information. It is as though the order of generation³ is different from the order of religious obligation.

Fourth Proposition: With respect to free will (*qadar*), he held the same view as his fellow [Mu'tazilites]. However, he was a libertarian regarding this world but a determinist regarding the next world. For his view regarding the movements of the people of the two eternal abodes⁴ in the other world was that they are all necessary, over which the human servants have no control since they are all created by

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1. This is a reference to the Mu'tazilite view of divine 'negative' attributes, known as *ta'īl*.
 2. Qur'ān 3:46; 16:40, etc.
 3. Or ordering the world to be.
 4. Heaven and hell.

God Almighty. For, were they acquired by human servants, they would be liable to religious obligation with respect thereto.

Fifth Proposition: The movements of the people of the two eternal abodes will cease, and then they will be reduced to a state of permanent rest. Thereupon all the pleasures of the people of heaven will coalesce in that rest, and the sufferings of the people of hell will coalesce in that rest.

This is close to the view of Jahm [ibn Ṣaffwān], who held that heaven and hell would come to an end. Abu'l-Hudhayl adhered to this view, because when he was compelled to admit, regarding the question of the temporal generation of the world, that occurrences which have no beginning are similar to events which have no end, since each is infinite he said: 'I do not assert the existence of motions which are infinite at the end; nor do I assert infinite motions which are infinite at the beginning but only that they will all terminate in a permanent rest.' He appears to have assumed that what follows in the case of motion does not follow in the case of rest.

Sixth Proposition: He held that [human] capacity is one of the other accidents, and is different from soundness and health. He also distinguished between the actions of the heart and those of bodily organs. For, he said, it is not possible for the actions of the heart to exist, without the existence, simultaneously with them, of power or capacity during the actions; although he allowed this in the case of the actions of the organs, which he believed to be prior. For one can act through them in the first instance, even if the action does not come to be, save in the second instance. For, he said, the instance of 'to act' is different from the instance 'one has acted.' Moreover, whatever is generated by the action of the human servant is part of his action, except for colour, taste, and smell, as well as anything else whose modality is unknown. With respect to understanding and knowledge arising in someone else, upon hearing him or being taught by him, he held that God Almighty creates them in him. For they are not part of the actions of human servants.

Seventh Proposition: With respect to speculation, prior to revelation, he held that [man] should know God by proof without intuition. If he fails in attaining knowledge, he is always liable to punishment. He should also know the goodness of the good and the badness of the bad, and thus undertake the good, such as truth and justice, and shun the bad, such as lying and injustice. He also believed in certain acts of obedience in which neither God Almighty is intended, nor seeking to approach Him, such as the intention of initial speculation—that is intending to speculate so as to apprehend God's existence. For initial speculation does not entail the knowledge of God yet, whereas action is a form of worship.

He held with respect to the one compelled to act, if he did know the allusions or insinuations relative to the compelled act, that he could lie, and then his sin would be remitted.

Eighth Proposition: With respect to the life-span and divine provision (*rizq*), he said that if a man is not killed, he will die at the appointed time, and it is not

possible to increase or decrease a man's life-span. Provisions are of two types: the first consists of matters God has created and are profitable, and these may be said to have been created by God as provisions for His servants. On this view, whoever argues that one who profited from what God has not created as provision is wrong, since there are in bodies certain things which God did not create. The second consists of those provisions which God has decreed as the lots of the servants; so that what He allowed is a provision, and what He has prohibited is not; therefore, man is not commanded to take advantage of it.

Ninth Proposition: al-Ka'bī reported that [Abu'l-Hudhayl] held that God's will is not the same as the object willed. Thus, His willing of what He has created is identical with His creating it. For him, creating a thing is not the same as the thing itself; creation, instead, is a command¹ which is not in a substratum. He also said that God Almighty is eternally hearing and seeing, in the sense that He will hear and will see forever. Similarly, He is eternally forgiving, merciful, beneficent, creator, provider, rewarding, punishing, friendly, hostile, commanding and prohibiting in the sense that all this shall come to pass.

Tenth Proposition: Some people have related that [Abu'l-Hudhayl] held that testimony, regarding what is gone, will not hold unless supported by the testimony of twenty witnesses; one of them is destined for paradise, or more than one. The earth will never be without some people who are friends of God and are infallible, do not lie and do not commit mortal sins. They are the warrant of testimony and not that of concurrent witnesses. For it is possible that a group of undetermined number might lie, if they are not friends of God and they do not include at least one witness who is infallible.²

Divine Speech³

Abu'l-Hudhayl divided God's speech into what requires a substratum and what does not require a substratum. Thus His order 'Be'⁴ is an accident inhering in no substratum; whereas the rest of His speech is a series of accidents inhering in some body or other, such as commanding, prohibiting and informing.⁵ Thus, he believed that the imperative of creation (or 'Be') is different from the imperative of religious obligation.

With this is connected his view of the contingent occurrence of God's will in no substratum. For, he posited a series of wills in no substratum, of which God is the Willer. Abu'l-Hudhayl was the first Mu'tazilite to maintain that view which the rest

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1. That is, the order 'be' (*kun*).
 2. Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal* (Cairo, 1321/1903), Part I, pp. 62–67.
 3. *Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyīn*, pp. 162–165.
 4. Qur'ān 3:47; 16:40, etc.
 5. I read: *ikhbār*, instead of *istikhbār*.

of the Mu'tazilah concurred in, holding that God wills through a contingent will existing in one substratum.¹

He also believed that if God wills to generate anything, He generates it by merely ordering it to be; and this is His procedure in bringing back [to life] or destroying anything. However, this view does not entail what the determinists claim: namely, that it would not have been possible for Him to penetrate the imperative 'be' without another imperative 'be' and so on *ad infinitum*. For [Abu'l-Hudhayl's] point is that, when God wishes an action He simply brings it about by uttering His command (that is: 'be'); not that He cannot generate it in any other way.²

Thus the act of creation is accomplished by His ordering [the thing] to be; and the same is true of the act of destroying or bringing back; that is, resurrecting. Now, the imperative 'be' does not require a prior 'be', so that this could go on *ad infinitum*; but rather a renewed imperative, contingent on the renewal of the will. Thus, whenever God wills a certain action, He simply says: 'be'. This, being an act of creation, it must be independent of place; and there is no substratum in which it inheres. God's will, according to Abu'l-Hudhayl is different from the object of His will and from His command. His will of the effects of His action is not really created but is, together with His command, 'be', a creation thereof. Similarly His willing of religious faith is not a creation of His, nor is it the same as the command [to believe]. For God's will subsists in Him and not in a place.³

This will lead us to the discussion of the major issue, for which the Mu'tazilah were famous, and on account of which many violent events and persecutions took place. The Mu'tazilah disagreed as to whether God's speech 'is body or not a body and whether it is created in six ways.'

1. The first sect held that God's speech is a body and is created, and there is nothing which is not a body.

2. The second sect held that God's speech is an accident or a motion; for there are no accidents, according to them, other than motions. They also held that the speech of the Creator is a body, and that body is a sound consisting of segments, is audible and is identical with God's action and His creation. Man simply prefers reading, which is a motion, and this is different from the Qur'an itself. This was the view of al-Nazzām and his followers. Al-Nazzām denied that God's speech could exist in many places or even in two places, at the same time. He held that it only exists in the place in which God created it.

3. The third Mu'tazilite sect held that the Qur'an is created by God and that it is an accident, but refused to admit that it was a body. They also held that it could exist in many places at the same time; so that if a reader recites it, it would exist as

1. Cf. al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Commentary on Five Principles*, p. 440.

2. *Ibid*, p. 562.

3. al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* (Cairo, 1954), Part I, p. 244.

part of his recitation; and if a writer writes it, it would exist as part of his writing; and if a person memorizes it, it would exist as part of his memorization. Thus [the Qur'ān] exists in different places by reason of recitation, memorization and writing; but it is impossible for it to move or vanish. This is the view of Abu'l-Hudhayl and his followers. The same is true of his view that the order of creation¹ can exist in many places at the same time.

4. The fourth sect believed that God's speech is an accident and is created; but they denied that it could exist in two places at the same time. They also held that with respect to the place, in which God created it, it is impossible that it should move away from it or exist in another place. This is the view of Ja'far ibn Ḥarb and most of the Baghdad members of the school.

5. The fifth sect, which included the followers of Mu'ammār, held that the Qur'ān is an accident, accidents for them being of two kinds, a kind produced by the living and a kind produced by the dead. Now, it is impossible that what the dead produce should be the action of the living. The Qur'ān, being a product and an accident, it is impossible that God should have produced it in reality; for they denied that effects are part of God's action. They also held that the Qur'ān is the action of the place from which it is heard. Thus, if it is heard from a tree, then it is part of its action; and wherever it is heard, it is the action of the place in which it inheres.²

Abu'l-Hudhayl's view regarding the creation of the Qur'ān is summed up by al-Ash'arī in *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* (Discourses of Islamic Sects) as follows: 'Abu'l-Hudhayl used to say: "God Almighty created the Qur'ān in the Preserved Tablet, and it is an accident. The Qur'ān exists in three places: in a place in which it is preserved,³ in a place in which it is written and in a place in which it is recited or heard. Thus, God's speech can exist in many places in the way we have explained, without the Qur'ān being liable to transition, motion or vanishing in reality. It only exists in place as written, recited or memorized, so that if its written status in place ceases, it would not be in it any longer, without ceasing to exist.

If, on the other hand, its written status exists in place, it would exist in it as written, without being transferred to it. The same is true of memorizing and reciting it in that order; and if God Almighty were to destroy all the places in which it is memorized, recited or heard, it would cease to exist or vanish.⁴ He⁴ sometimes says that man's speech may exist in many places, as memorized or recited. This view was also entertained by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Jubbā'ī.

1. That is, the creative imperative: 'Be.'

2. al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, Part I. pp. 245–246.

3. Or memorized. The Arabic term has this double connotation.

4. Abu'l-Hudhayl.

Ibrāhīm al-Nazzām

Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Sayyār known as al-Nazzām, who probably came from a Persian background, was born and brought up in Baṣra where he studied with his uncle Abu'l-Hudhayl al-'Allāf. After 204/819 al-Nazzām gained access to the Abbasid court in Baghdad and was respected by al-Ma'mūn. It was in that city that he died between 220/835 and 230/845, still at the height of his intellectual powers.

Al-Nazzām was not only a theologian but also an accomplished poet whose work was highly appreciated, especially by those at court. It combines sensuous imagery with intellectual elements and reveals al-Nazzām to have been more at home in the worldly circles of Baghdad society than many other Mu'tazilites who kept away from centres of power. His writings were well known, but like those of al-'Allāf are nearly completely lost. What survive today are a few fragments mostly from his *Kitāb al-nakth* (Book of Breach of Compact). These pieces have been preserved in the writings of later *mutakallimūn* and historians. Al-Nazzām also trained many students, the most famous of whom was al-Jāhīz who wrote extensively in many fields including the defence of Mu'tazilī theses.

Al-Nazzām is known particularly as the 'natural philosopher' among the Mu'tazilites. Although he accepted al-'Allāf's atomism in principle, he modified it in a major way. He believed that bodies permeate each other. Change takes place gradually and through it hidden components of a body come to the surface and are externalized. He also developed a peculiar theory of locomotion which was rejected by both Ibn Sīnā and the later *mutakallimūn*. For al-Nazzām natural philosophy is a part of theology. For example, he emphasized that bodies do not mix by themselves but are in need of an independent force to bring about their mixture and this independent force is God. What guarantees the identity of each body in action is its creation (*khilqah*), rather than its nature (*tabī'ah*) as claimed by the philosophers.

Al-Nazzām considered even knowledge to be a kind of movement. This kind of movement could, however, reach a state of rest (*sukūn*). He in fact identified truth with the rest or tranquility of the heart (*sukūn al-qalb*). Man moves like the rest of

creation. But whereas in nature everything moves according to an impetus placed in it by its creation, man is given free will to move, to act and also to know. God is omnipotent, but nevertheless man has free will.

Al-Nazzām developed a doctrine of God's Nature based almost completely on the negation of Attributes from Him and emphasis upon His Transcendence. He did not in fact develop a doctrine of Divine Attributes except for the attention he paid to God's Will and Power in relation to the question of theodicy. He also emphasized the goodness of God and that, although omnipotent, God does not and cannot commit evil.

The name of al-Nazzām and his ideas remained alive for many centuries not only among Mu'tazilites but also among theologians of other schools as well as among the philosophers. He was one of the seminal figures of early Mu'tazilism and his ideas, being of philosophical importance, were debated by many later philosophers and philosophical theologians.

S. H. Nasr

SELECTIONS

from *Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyīn*

Translated for this volume by Majid Fakhry from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī’s *Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyīn* (Schools of Thought of the Muslims) (Beirut, 1983), pp. 233–242 (selected passages).

1. On Body and Motion

Al-Nazzām defines body as ‘that which has length, width and depth and whose parts have no determined number. It has no half but has a half, no part but has a part.’¹

‘All bodies are in motion, motion being of two types: natural upward and downward motion (*i’timād*), and transition. Thus they are all movable in reality, but at rest in linguistic usage. Motions are mode of being (*kawn*), no more and no less. I² have read in a book attributed to him (that is, al-Nazzām) that he said: “I do not know what rest is, unless it means that the thing was in the same place twice; that is, has moved in it twice”. He also held that bodies, upon being created by God Almighty, were involved in the upward and downward motion.’³

Contrary to al-Nazzām, Mu‘ammar ibn ‘Abbād used to say that all bodies are really at rest but are movable in linguistic usage, rest being a mode of being only. Body upon being created by God is at rest.

Al-Nazzām’s view of motion resembles that of Democritus, regarding perpetual flux and that everything is in motion, rest being simply a form of equilibrium of movables; and this is what he meant by saying natural motion or tendency (*i’timād*).

Al-Ash‘arī reports al-Nazzām’s view elsewhere as follows:⁴ ‘The actions of humans are all motions, which are accidents. It is said a body is at rest, linguistically speaking, when it has “moved” in the same place twice, and thus it is said that it was at rest in that place, not that rest is anything other than natural motion. He also held that natural motions and modes of being are equivalent to motions and that motions are of two types: a natural motion *in* place and a motion of transition *from* place. In addition, he held that all motions are of the same genus and that it is impossible that the same entity should perform two different actions. Al-Nazzām, it is said, used to say that length is the same as the long and breadth is the same as the broad; and that colours, tastes, smells, sounds, pains, heat, coldness, dampness

1. al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* (Cairo, 1954), Part 2, p. 6.

2. al-Ash‘arī.

3. al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, Part 2, pp. 20ff.

4. Ibid. p. 36.

and dryness are all subtle bodies. He also held that the locus of colour is the same as the locus of taste and smell, and that the subtle bodies could occupy the same locus. He did not assert the existence of any other accident than motion.'

'He also believed that there is no accident other than motions;¹ and it is impossible to perceive accidents, since man can only perceive colours, which are bodies, and no body is perceived by a perceiver except colour.² Moreover, accidents are not susceptible of opposition; since opposition arises between different bodies, such as hot and cold, black and white, sweet and sour, all of which are bodies corrupting each other. Similarly, every two bodies which mutually corrupt each other are opposites.³

2. Latency (*kumūn*) and Interpenetration⁴

'Ibrāhīm al-Nazzām held that everything may penetrate its opposite or counterpart. Accordingly, an opposite is what resists and corrupts another; such as sweet and bitter, hot and cold, while a counterpart is like hot and cold, sour and cold. He also held that the light could penetrate the heavy, and sometimes something light may be of smaller measure than something heavy, but stronger than it so that if it penetrates it, it occupies it; that is, something of smaller measure but greater strength could occupy something of greater measure but smaller strength.'

'He also held that colour penetrates taste and smell, which are bodies. By interpenetration is meant that one body's locus is the same as the other body's locus and the one is the same as the other ... However, all people deny that two bodies can occupy the same place at the same time; and this was also denied by all the Muslim⁵ sects, and those who agree with them.'

'The dualists have maintained that the combination of light and darkness takes the form of interpenetration which Ibrāhīm (al-Nazzām) had asserted.'

'Ḍirār (ibn 'Amr) held that a body consists of different things which combine by way of contiguity, so as to be fully adjacent. He denied interpenetration, or the fact that two things could occupy the same place, whether they are accidents or bodies.'

'Most theoreticians have maintained that two accidents could occupy the same place, but two bodies cannot occupy the same place. These include Abu'l-Hudhayl. Zurqān reported that some things are latent, others not. As for the latent, they include oil [latent] in the olive, grease in the sesame seed and juice in the grapes. All this is different from interpenetration which Ibrāhīm (al-Nazzām) has asserted. As for the non-latent, they include fire in the flint and the like. It is impossible that

1. Ibid. Part. 2, p. 44.

2. Ibid. Part. 2, p. 47.

3. Ibid. Part. 2, p. 58.

4. This section is from *Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyīn*, pp. 235–238.

5. Literally, the 'people of prayer.'

fire should [penetrate] the flint without burning it. Since we notice that it has not burnt it, we conclude that there is no fire in it.’

‘Many theoreticians have argued that fire is latent in the flint; they even held that it is latent in the wood. These include al-Iskāfī and others. Zurqān also reported that Abū Bakr al-‘Aṣamm held that there is nothing which is latent in something else, as they claim. Abu’l-Hudhayl, Ibrāhīm (al-Nazzām), Mu‘ammar (ibn ‘Abbād), Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam and Bishr ibn al-Mu‘tamir held that oil is latent in the olive, grease in the sesame seed and fire in the flint.’

‘Many atheists held that colours, tastes and smells are latent in earth, water and fire, and then they appear in the ripe date and other fruits by transmission and the contact of shapes with one another. They compared this to the grain of saffron thrown into a water jar, and exposed to its different shapes whereupon it appears.’¹

This is an adequate exposition of the theory of latency, as it circulated in Islam up to the fourth century AH. If we search in the rest of the sources for al-Nazzām’s theory of latency and interpenetration, we will find first what Ibn al-Rāwandī states. He writes: ‘(al-Nazzām) used to say that God created all men, beasts and animals, brutes and plants at the same time; and that the creation of Adam did not antedate the creation of his children; or the creation of mothers that of their offspring. Instead, God caused certain things to be latent in other things.

Precedence or antecedence consists in their becoming manifested in their places, rather than their creation or invention. It is impossible, according to him, for God’s power to increase the creation or decrease it in any way.’

Al-Khayyāt rebuts Ibn al-Rāwandī’s claim saying: ‘This is a false accusation of Ibrāhīm [al-Nazzām]. For it is well known that Ibrāhīm used to say that God Almighty was capable of creating the like of this world or the like of its like without end or limit; and, along with his argument that God created the whole world [at once], he used to argue that the signs² of the prophets (may they be blessed) were not created except at the time God revealed them at the hands of His messengers. This is his well-known and famous position, as far as the theologians are concerned.’ Then (Ibn al-Rāwandī) added: ‘He (i.e. al-Nazzām) used to claim that God creates the world and what is in it at every point, without destroying it or bringing it back.’ Al-Khayyāt rebuts this statement saying: ‘That also is something which was not attributed to him except by ‘Amr ibn Baḥr al-Jāḥiḥ; but his followers have denied it.’

Now, the discussion of latency turns on two points: the latency of accidents and that of existing entities. From what al-Ash‘arī and Ibn al-Rāwandī have said, it appears that al-Nazzām adhered to both theses: the latency of accidents and that of existing entities. Latency of accidents means ‘that accidents inhere externally in bodies, but are now latent and manifest. If motion becomes manifest in bodies, then

1. Ibid. p. 237.

2. That is, miracles.

rest becomes latent in them; and if rest becomes manifest, then motion becomes latent in them. Similarly, whenever an accident becomes manifest, its contrary becomes latent in its place ... ¹

Abū Ishāq (al-Nazzām) used to say: 'We have found that: a) wood [changes] upon disintegrating and dissolving into elements from which it was composed and the sums from which it was made up; namely, fire, smoke, water and ashes; b) that fire emits heat and light, water produces a sound, smoke has a taste, a colour and a smell and c) that ashes have a taste, a colour and a certain dryness, and the flowing water has a portion of its fellow-elements. Then we found it consisting of different genera made up of singular elements, and that wood is composed as we described, and thus we were led to the view that it is made up of dual, rather than singular components.'

Abū Ishāq (al-Nazzām) added: 'If the theologian does not understand the syllogism or accord its validity, thus holding that if a twig is rubbed against another twig (it will produce fire) he is compelled to admit the same thing with respect to smoke and with respect to flowing water. Then, if he reasons logically, he will have to assert with respect to ashes what he asserted with respect to smoke and water. Otherwise, he will be either an ignoramus or a dogmatist.'²

Al-Nazzām said further, the only tenable position is that of the advocates of latency.³ Then he added: 'One of the advocates of accidents may object and argue that fire was not latent [in the twig], since it cannot be latent in it, when it is larger than it. Rather, if a twig is rubbed against another twig, they both become hot, as well as that part of the air lying between them, and then the part which is next to that. Then, if it is ignited, it will grow thinner, then dry and glow. For fire is nothing but air transformed; air, in essence being hot and thin, or a white body, very receptive and highly mutable. Now, the fire that appears to you larger than the wood is really that transmuted air, and its extinction is the result of the cessation of those fiery accidents in it. Air, in fact, is quickly transformed into fire and as quickly is liable to return to its original nature. It is not the case: 1) that [fire] ceases to exist; it has actually been transformed to a higher, celestial form and become continuous, and thus returned to its original place; or its parts become dispersed in the air; 2) nor that it was latent in the wood, penetrating it and compressed in it, so that when it became manifest it expanded and spread. In fact, the flame is simply air transformed into fire, because air is very akin to fire, water being the barrier between them. For fire is dry and hot, whereas water is moist and cold and air is hot and moist. Thus, it resembles water, in point of moisture and purity, and resembles fire in point of heat and lightness; therefore, it differs from them and resembles them at

1. al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn* (Istanbul, 1928), p. 55.

2. al-Jāhīz, *Kitāb al-ḥayawān* (Cairo, 1905–1907), Part 5, p. 10.

3. This and next para from *Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyīn*, pp. 241–243.

the same time. That is why it is possible for it to change into both of them quickly; just as air is compressed when it becomes moist and acquires a certain density, until its parts change into rain. Water, then is the opposite of fire; air is its counterpart, but not its opposite. It is not possible for a substance to change into its opposite, unless it changes first into its counterpart. It is, thus, possible for water to change into air and air into fire; then air could change into water and water into earth. It is essential for change to follow a certain order or gradation. Each substance has certain preliminaries; thus water may turn clay into rock, and contrariwise, rock could change into air and air into rock, in this order and sequence.'

Abū Ishāq [al-Nazzām] answered the skilled advocates of accidents as follows: 'You claim that the fire we observe did not emanate from wood, but the air surrounding it was ignited and changed into fire. Perhaps, in the case of the wood dripping with a lot of water, that water was not inherent in the wood, but the substratum of air changed into water; but the substratum of air is not more likely to change into water than the course followed by smoke in transformation should follow the course of fire and water. If those people generalize this and claim that the fire which we observed, and that water and smoke we observed as thick smoke and black as that which clings to the bottoms of pots and the roofs of kitchens, is only air which has been transformed; it may be supposed, then, that ashes also consist of air which has been transformed into ashes.'

Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār

In the absence of reliable biographical data concerning this important Mu‘tazilite figure, what is said about his life should be viewed with caution. His full name appears to have been Abu’l-Ḥasan ‘Abd al-Jabbār ibn Aḥmad Hamadānī also known by the honorific title ‘al-Qāḍī’ (the Judge) or ‘Qāḍī al-Quḍāt’ (The Judge of Judges) and sometimes simply called ‘al-Hamadānī’. There is no information regarding the exact date of his birth but given the possible date of his death as 414–416/1023–1025 and the fact that he lived to be ninety, it is safe to assume that he must have been born around 310/932 in Asadābād near the modern city of Hamadān in Iran.

Having received his early education in Hamadān and Iṣfahān, he first became an Ash‘arite but later in life at Baṣra, while studying with Abū Ishāq, he came under the influence of the Mu‘tazilites. His further studies in Baghdad with Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Baṣrī made his Mu‘tazilite convictions even deeper. Sometime after 360/982, at the invitation of the wazīr Ṣāḥib ibn ‘Abbād, al-Jabbār went to Rayy where he assumed the position of chief judge.

In addition to Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Baṣrī, ‘Abd al-Jabbār studied with two other teachers, Abū ‘Alī Muḥammad ibn al-Jubbā‘ī and Abū Hāshim ‘Abd al-Salām ibn al-Jubbā‘ī whom ‘Abd al-Jabbār tells us were his real teachers. As to the students of ‘Abd al-Jabbār, detailed biographies of thirty-six of them are known. Among the more notable of them one can mention Abū Rashīd Sa‘īd al-Nayshābūrī, a central figure in the school of Baghdad, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Mattawayh and finally Yūsuf al-Baṣīr, a Jewish theologian belonging to the school of Karaism which had borrowed much from Islamic sources.

‘Abd al-Jabbār also had his opponents who were primarily among the Ash‘arites. Ibn Kullāb who was the central figure of the School of Kullābiyyah and Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam, from an extensive list about whom ‘Abd al-Jabbār writes, were also his opponents.

From a doctrinal point of view, ‘Abd al-Jabbār was first and foremost a Mu‘tazilite who undertook a major and comprehensive attempt to reconcile reason

and revelation. He himself considered his major contribution to be the methodical and systematic treatment of theological issues. His work is in fact a synthesis of Mu'tazilite theology. It is the absence of such a methodology that 'Abd al-Jabbār considers to be the cause of errors in theological discussions.

On the question of God, 'Abd al-Jabbār argues that human intuition bears witness to His existence without any need for assistance, be it intellectual or revelatory in nature, although he of course accepts the truth of revelation. 'Abd al-Jabbār comments critically on a wide range of Aristotelian themes such as logic, epistemology, ontology, cosmology, metaphysics and theodicy. On a number of issues, such as the body-soul distinction, 'Abd al-Jabbār rejects the Aristotelian view and instead argues for a more unified perspective.

'Abd al-Jabbār has a special place in the history of Islamic theology for it is through his magnum opus, *al-Mughnī* (The Book That Makes Others Superfluous), that our knowledge of the Mu'tazilites has increased substantially. *Al-Mughnī*, which etymologically means 'that which contains what is essential and makes other things superfluous', was found in Yemen in the early 1950s. The discovery of this encyclopedic work transformed the knowledge that contemporary scholars have of the whole school of Mu'tazilite theology.

We have included in this chapter several sections of this book that are mainly concerned with the question of the possibility of having a beatific vision of God. In the first the claim that we can see God now is refuted, and in the second the claim that there is a sixth sense by which we see the eternal is refuted. Continuing with the same theme, 'Abd al-Jabbār goes on to argue that the reason we do not see God is not because of the weakness of our vision or the scarcity of the eye's rays. The final section is titled 'A refutation of the claim that there is a sixth sense by which we see the Eternal, May He Be Exalted, or other things, although it is among those things that it is impossible to see by this sense'.

M. Aminrazavi

THE BOOK THAT MAKES OTHERS SUPERFLUOUS

al-Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawhīd wa'l-'adl

Translated for this volume by Daniel C. Peterson based on Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār's *al-Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawhīd wa'l-'adl* (Cairo, 1950), section 4, pp. 99–112 and 113–114.

A Refutation of the Claim That We See God Now

What indicates that we do not see Him now is the fact that, if we saw Him, we would necessarily know Him, for it is by the logic of that which we see, when the obscurity that veils it is removed, that we know it as it is. For that reason we know all of the visible things in their variety when we see them as colours and as substances. It is the same with all of the perceptibles. Still, none of us [fully] knows what he sees, owing to the ambiguities or similarities that occur. But we know that rational obscurities or ambiguities, on account of which we fail to know what we see, do not occur in Him, may He be exalted, because they occur only in what is obscured by something else; by reason of its connection with it by way of incarnation, or by way of proximity, or by its being similar or equivalent to something else, or by imagining that some of these things apply to Him.

But the impossibility of all of that with regard to God, may He be praised, is well known, for, if He were visible to us, we would inevitably know Him. Therefore, if that claim is invalid on account of what we find in ourselves, namely, that we lack necessary knowledge of Him and in view of the fact that our deductive reasoning about Him is valid, and the negation of knowledge about Him comes with the entry of obscurities, and in view of the fact that it is known that, among those who are legally accountable, there are those who deny His existence, as well as those who believe Him to be what He is not, it is known that He is not visible to us now.

No one should say, 'Have you considered that there might be, among all those who are legally accountable, someone who sees Him—as certain of them claim—even if you people do not see Him?' Let it be said to him, if one of those who are legally accountable saw Him, all would see Him. And if that is true of all of them, it is wrong to suppose that one of them might be privileged to see Him while another is not, and it is not valid to suppose that someone not legally responsible would be favoured with that privilege in preference to those who are legally accountable for that is simply not true of visible things as we have made clear previously.

In addition, nobody claims that he sees God, may He be praised, except those who believe Him to be a body of a particular shape, or who believe that He incarnates Himself in bodies. And we have shown the corruption of such views. And discussion on the vision of God logically follows after discussion of corporeality.

And if it is said, 'Why do you not say that He, may He be exalted, does not create in us knowledge of Him even if we see Him in reality? For, if He created that in us, we would be free of the obligation that is not valid except with the acquisition of knowledge about Him.' Let it be said to that person, it is by the logic of that which we see, when our seeing is coupled with perfection of intellect, that we inevitably know it. Indeed, the loss of knowledge necessarily implies the cessation of intellect. For it is not true, when the intellect is sound, that one can see blackness and not know it, while at the same time both see and know whiteness.

And this should imply, even if we say that knowledge of perceptible things is an act of God, that it is never true when sound mind is present that He fails to produce such knowledge in us. If we allowed that, it would lead to gross ignorance and to our mistrusting objects of perception. We could not be certain of their actual condition. Thus, we have critiqued that assertion, and the invalidity of the question is established.

Moreover, it should have been possible for those who are not legally accountable to know their Lord by seeing Him. For there is no obstacle blocking that—if that which prevents one from knowing Him is, as they have asserted, our being legally accountable—as it follows, according to this saying (i.e., that holding someone accountable is not true, unless people do not know what they see), that God does not commission anyone, because it leads to the conclusion that the ascription of responsibility is conditioned upon something that, if it happened, would necessarily imply the cessation of intellect. And this would rightly establish as repulsive the notion of moral accountability.

Furthermore, we should have known Him, for that would not rule out the validity of requiring accountability if He were visible, because it would necessitate that He be among the perceptibles. But, rather, this statement is true for us in view of the fact that it is established that attainment to knowledge of Him by acquisition is benevolence to us in all that we are intent upon. And if He were visible and perceptible, that would not be true.

On the other hand, there is no difference between the assertion of someone who says, 'Truly, we see Him, may He be exalted, even if we do not know Him,' and the assertion of someone else who says, 'Truly, we hear Him, and we perceive Him by the organs of taste and smell, even if we do not know Him.' And the corruption of that demands the invalidity of this proposition.

In addition, it would oblige us to grant that we see nonexistent things, even if we do not know them, and that we see everything that, in fact, we do not see (e.g. tastes and smells and belief and consciences), even if we do not know them. And we would not guarantee that we can see everything that we perceive by all the senses. Rather, we perceive all the perceptibles by the cause of life, just as we perceive it by the senses, even if we do not know it. And one who says this has forged upon

himself a chain of ignorance that he cannot handle with talk of accountability and the principles of argumentation.

Thus, it has been confirmed by this statement that we do not now see the Eternal One, may He be exalted.

A Refutation of the Claim That there is a Sixth Sense by Which We See the Eternal, May He Be Exalted, or Other Things, Although it is among Those Things that it is Impossible to See by This Sense

Know that someone who disagrees with that inevitably falls into one or the other of two categories. Either he says that these visible things are seen by it in the same way that things are seen with the eye (although it is distinguished by the fact that the Eternal, may He be exalted, is seen by it), or he says that it is distinguished by the fact that the perceptibles are perceived by it in a way different from the vision of the eye and the perception that occurs by means of all the other senses. And that the Eternal, may He be praised, is perceived by it, or belief and the will.

Perhaps he opts for the first category. What points to its falsity is the fact that we know that this sense, by which God is allegedly seen, differs in its constitution and its range and its restriction and its colour and so on, through all of the qualities by which it is distinguished. Yet we know, even if it varies, that it shares in the fact that it is not true that we see by one of them anything but what we see by all of them. And it is known that the contradiction of that sense to this rational sense is no greater than the contradiction of some of them to others, for it cannot be said that it is contradictory to this sense by nature, since their essences are similar. We have made clear that a difference of attributes has no impact in this matter. And if, despite their variation, they share in the fact that we see nothing by one of them that we do not see by all of them, it is necessarily untrue that we see the Eternal, may He be exalted, by that sense, just as it is impossible that we see Him by these rational senses. If we allowed the contrary of that, we could not believe in His being able, may He be exalted, to create a faculty in certain bodies by which he makes bodies and colours, although that is impossible by this faculty. Since that is refuted on the basis of the knowledge that the faculties do not differ even if their objects differ, the contradiction of those faculties to it is like the contrary of some of them to others. And since that is true of the faculties, a similar judgment is entailed with regard to the senses, for the division of the attributes of the senses is like the difference of the natures of the faculties. If it is necessary, on the basis of knowledge that a difference of the natures of the faculties does not affect the objects of those faculties, there follows the refutation of the claim of a faculty connected with none of these categories. And if division in the attributes of the sense of the eye does not affect what we see by it, then it is not true that we see by the sixth sense something that is impossible to see by it.

Our Shaykh, Abū Hāshim, may God have mercy upon him, said: If God sees His own nature—and it is not true, despite the difference between His nature and our natures and the natures of the senses that He see what is impossible for us to see—since difference in nature is more decisive than a division of attributes, if they do not have an impact in this issue surely a difference of attributes will not. One who advances this proposition is obliged to allow the perception of the Eternal, may He be exalted, from every aspect by which the perceptibles are perceived. And he declares Him to be perceptible in all these aspects by the sense that he mentions, and by many senses. And he necessarily affirms the possibility of seeing the nonexistent by means of that sense, as well as the possibility that a thing can be seen by this sense as what it is not. And the allowance that He may be seen by that sense necessitates what cannot truly be seen according to sight. And he necessarily affirms ignorance almost beyond reckoning, in the manner of the Kullābiyyah in their affirmation of an ancient word contrary to this word. Thus, the affirmation of it is necessarily false.

As for a discussion of those who affirm a sixth sense in a different way, and claim that the Eternal, may He be exalted, is perceived by it in a different way than that by which these senses perceive the perceptible, our Shaykh, Abū Hāshim, may God have mercy upon him, points to the falsity of this proposition, saying that it would be necessary that one of us finds damage by the loss of this sense, just as he finds harm and loss in the loss of the sense of the eye. And in our knowledge that we do not find a loss in that is an indication of the falsity of what they connect with it.

And he made clear, may God have mercy upon him, that the deficiency that the blind man recognizes does not depend upon his knowledge that there is a sense by which one sees, because the blind man who cannot see at all and does not know the manner of the operation of this sense, when it is granted to him and it is permitted that he see by it and know, by it, some of the objects of knowledge, recognizes the deficiency in himself. So, likewise, it is necessary that we find the deficiency in ourselves implied by our lack of the sixth sense, if we allow its being among the faculties as they think.

And he made clear that a human being recognizes a defect in himself by the lack of organs, because he needs them if they existed, for if he had organs for speech or for strength, his condition would be such that he would attain benefits by their means and would repel harm quite differently from what the situation is at present. Thus it is inevitable that he should recognize a deficiency in himself, as we have said. Likewise, if there were among the faculties another sense by which some of the perceptibles were perceived, along with the knowledge of their manner of being, that would necessitate his recognition of a defect when it was lost. And it is not necessary that one of us recognize a defect if he did not attain to an object of desire on account of more than what he desired, for he recognizes the defect, rather, in what necessitates its loss, the deficiency of his state with regard to that

by which he profits or with which he repels injuries. As for what he does not covet at all, that is not necessary with regard to it. And for this reason the believer in paradise is not in a state of deficiency owing to the insufficiency of his desire when contrasted with the desire of the prophets. If he were, if the object of his desire fell short of the extent of need, he would unavoidably recognize a deficiency. And for this reason one does not recognize a defect on account of the smallness of his body as compared with the body of an elephant, since he has no need of a large body to procure benefits and to repel harm. And we know that, if there were a faculty of a sixth sense, by which we would perceive what it is impossible that we perceive by these senses, there would be in us a stronger need by which we would attain to knowledge of the perceptibles, and if it were like that, it would necessitate that the rational man would recognize a deficiency in himself, just as we have said. In the absence of that is an indication of the corruption of this proposition.

Our assertion that it is necessary that he perceive a lack in his soul does not mean merely knowing of the loss of the sense. Rather, it refers to the defective condition that comes upon him, owing to the loss of that which, if it is present, permits him to attain to benefits and harms according to what the loss of one of these rational senses does to his condition. And it is not for anyone to say, 'You lament the deficiency which, when it occurs, does not affect anything except the loss of the sense.' What points to the nullity of this saying is that one of the things that accompany perfection of intellect is knowledge of the perceptibles. We have indicated that in what has gone before, and we have made clear that the soundness of reasoning requires prior knowledge of visible things and many of their conditions, and that whoever is not a knower of that is incapable of reasoning upon the unity of God, may He be exalted, and upon His justice.

When that has been established, if there were among the faculties a sixth sense by which can truly be perceived that which cannot be perceived by these senses, it would be necessary that God create it (may He be praised) in order that He might know those perceptibles by it, just as the like would be necessary for these senses. And it would be necessary even if He did not create in some of the intellects that which He created in others, in order to know by it the perceptibles, and to know from its loss these perceptibles by report—just as, in short, the blind man knows colours by report.

It has been established that everything, knowledge of which is attained by perception, of which perception is the way to knowledge, is unknowable by rational proofs—just as the knowledge of that which is attained by argument is unknowable by perception. Likewise, it has been established that the knowledge of that which is attained by rational proof does not admit of being known except by that means. What can be known by report are some things that can be known by perception or rational argument. A knowledge of them and of their manner is preceded, thus, by perception and rational argument.

If that is true, if there were a sixth sense by which some of the rational accidents were perceived, or even the Eternal, may He be exalted, it would necessitate that there not be in the intellect an indication of the corruption of knowledge of that. And establishing the rational proofs for that and for its conditions is a proof of the corruption of this proposition. And for that reason we said that whatever there is that is established by perception, is not established on a condition of its own, not grasped or necessitated by perception. Perception does not grasp it nor necessitate it. And for that reason we accuse whoever approves the being of the perceptibles as possessing other attributes of their own, of ignorance, just as we accuse of ignorance whoever confirms what he knows by rational demonstration on the basis of that to which arguments cannot penetrate. So the judgment is necessary that the proposition of a sixth sense is invalid, owing to what it implies of ignorance.

On the other hand, the intellect does not point to the establishment of the senses. Rather, it is known by practical experience, just as the intellect does not establish the existence of tools for action, but, rather, they are known by practical experience. And if that is true, how can anybody say of the sixth sense that it is among the faculties, until he has judged that of it, and until he can prove that the Eternal, may He be exalted, is perceived by it in the life to come, according to what He really is?

If he says, 'I affirm that because I know that He, may He be exalted, has a quiddity which rational argument does not indicate, there is no escape from the truth of knowledge of His having a quiddity. Thus, it is necessary that the way to knowledge of this quiddity is perception by a sixth sense, because I know that He cannot be perceived by these ordinary senses.' Let it be said to him, first, 'We have made clear the falsity of the proposition of quiddity, and we indicated its corruption. So how can it seem true to you to make it a principle for this corrupt school? Furthermore, you have not come to the assertion of a sixth sense for this cause without asserting that He, great and glorious, is able to set up an indication that He does not know now. He knows it, rather, by what He has in terms of quiddity. For the assertion of a proof that differs from what is known is not far from the assertion of a sense differing from the rational senses.'

And if he says, 'Even if the argument does not necessitate the judgment that there is among the faculties a sixth sense, it is necessary that we allow that and that we stop at that point. And when we allow it, the judgment is not valid that He, may He be exalted, is not perceived.' Let it be said to him, 'If you were in doubt about that, because of the lack of proof, why you did assert a sixth sense without going on to assert a seventh and an eighth and a ninth and a tenth and so on *ad infinitum*? And how can it be true that you decide that He is seen by a sixth sense, while your position in asserting it is the position of one who doubts it? And, furthermore, you did not come to affirm a sixth sense by which He is seen or perceived by way of smell or taste or hearing without first confirming His perception by it in a different way from these ordinary ways, for the specialization of some of that without

the other is rather true by proof. So, as for being in doubt, it is necessary that the permission of all be on the same level. And this is as we said to whoever establishes an Eternal with God.

Secondly, you do not assert a second Eternal, which the intellect does not require, by a first without the establishment of a third and a fourth, and so on *ad infinitum*. Therefore, your position in what you assert on this subject is the position of a doubter. Thus, it is clear that the judgment that there is a sixth sense among the faculties according to this proposition is not true.

On the other hand, one who confirms this sense cannot escape saying that either (a) perception of the perceptibles by all of the senses is of one type or (b) perception by them varies. If he says that all of them are of one type, although the senses that represent the path to them differ short of perception, it is necessary that his assertion of the sixth sense is vain, for what is perceived by it is perceived in the same way that it is perceived by these ordinary senses, and it is necessary that these senses in all their variety function as one sense. And that necessarily implies satisfaction with one of them from among the totality. And the corruption of that is evident.

And if he makes them different, why does he proceed to confirm the sixth sense, by which things are perceived in a different way than by these senses, as more worthy than that he be perceived by it in the fashion in which some of them are perceived? There is no difference between his designating them by a perception different from these perceptions, or designating them by a perceptible of which it is not true that it is perceptible by these senses. And this necessitates, with regard to him, the allowance of the Eternal Being, may He be exalted, perceptible by this sense in the way that He is perceived by the sense of smell or taste or hearing, and that is something that those who assert the sixth sense do not commit.

On the other hand, it is necessary that the perceptible is perceived by that sense in a special fashion. And if the Eternal is perceived by way of vision, it is necessary that the condition for the validity of His perception by its means be like that which we have mentioned with regard to the perception of visible things. And that necessitates His being among those things, which are subject to comparison or something analogous to comparison. And we will explain the corruption of this proposition in what follows. If He were perceived by its means but in a different fashion, this is a confirmation of what cannot be understood. This school is not a school of those who permit the vision of God, may He be praised, because the person who asserts it says that the Eternal, may He be exalted, is perceived by a sixth sense but is not seen by it [is nonetheless a school that affirms something analogous to sight]. So we mentioned it and treated the proof for it exhaustively because of its connection with vision and perception.

A Refutation of the Claim That the Reason We Do Not See God is the Weakness of Our Vision or the Paucity of its Rays

Know that the perfection of the organ of sight implies the separation of a quantity of rays from it in a special way, so that we can see visible things by it. We have already alluded to this. And if that is true, the proposition advanced that sight is too weak to see something must take one of the two following forms: either the paucity of visual rays is intended by it and by the incapacity of the observer from whom the rays issue, or a weakness is intended that goes back to him and not to the paucity of his visual rays. And this weakness must necessarily be rational. Either it is intended that this state obtains because of an attribute which, when present, causes the diminution of its rays, or it is intended that it is by an attribute which makes it impossible for the eye to turn to all visible things, for there is, in them, that which requires, because of its distance, that a separate operation work upon them so that it can see that visible thing by it, just as it requires a separate operation when jumping is desired, or victory. And when, by weakness of sight, some of what we have mentioned is not intended, he who asserted it is wrong with regard to an unintelligible aspect.

We have learned that what we have mentioned earlier does not have an effect upon the vision of visible things, except if they have a specific attribute on account of which, if they lack it, their seeing is not impossible. Do you not realize that the seeing of distant things is impossible because it would require a quantity of rays exceeding the quantity by which a near thing is seen, as well as that they not scatter, and that it does not occur in such a manner that would perfect the organ? And for that reason the situation of those who observe a distant object differs. Some of them see it more quickly than their vision of other objects. Some of them need to use an instrument to observe it, and they have difficulties in it that others do not experience. And for that reason, those who have weak sight do not see distant objects, but when they draw near to them, they see them. And they do not see delicate or fine things—but when those things become denser, they see them. And for that reason, by the strength of their visual rays, they change the situation of the visible thing, as it were, in this regard.

Anybody who asserts the weakness of visual rays or the weakness of sight as an obstacle to the vision of the Eternal, may He be exalted, but not in this rational way, is in the same condition as the person who asserts an unknown obstacle, for the affirmation of the obstacle as an obstacle of a non-rational type is equivalent to the affirmation of an unknown obstacle. And when that has been established, if it were weakness of vision or paucity of rays that had an effect upon our vision of God, may He be exalted, it would be necessary that it be there in the judgment of distant objects and delicate ones and fine ones for the effect of that thing upon it to be true. And it is true that this obstacle vanishes by strength of vision or abundance of visual rays, as we say with regard to delicate bodies, so that we see

them. And the proposition on this subject necessitates the assertion that He, may He be exalted, is a body or a contingent thing. But we have already demonstrated the corruption of that opinion. And in this way we have allowed a differentiation in the condition of those who see delicate things. Thus, it is allowed that an angel can see other angels, and also that the prophets can see them, even if we ourselves cannot see them now. And the situation of those who look at distant things differs likewise, and it is not true that their situation differs with regard to the vision of massive and near bodies when weakness of visual rays and weakness of vision do not affect them. Thus, it is established that weakness of visual rays and of vision is not an obstacle to the vision of God, may He be exalted.

If it is said, 'How can it be true that weakness of visual rays has an effect upon the seeing of one thing, but not upon the seeing of another? And why don't you say that it is impossible for it to have an effect? Or that if it affects the seeing of one thing, it will influence the seeing of another? Just as the corruption of the sense, if it influences the soundness of the vision of some visible things, affects also the soundness of the seeing of other things, this necessitates the assertion that what the person weak in sight, or the person afflicted by a paucity of visual rays does not see, he fails to see owing to some factor other than what you have mentioned. And this necessitates the soundness of the proposition that the observer sees a thing because of something else, in the absence of which he does not see it, and that the situation rather differs in the observer because of this.'

Let it be said to him: Indeed, the sense of sight is an instrument in the perception of visible things. And the instrument is not prohibited from being an instrument in a thing if it has a certain attribute, and it is not an instrument in another thing unless it has another attribute. For a difference in the attributes of that in which it is an instrument is like a difference in that for which it is an instrument. And if it does not rule out a difference of instruments according to a difference of perceptibles, so likewise it does not forbid that the situation of the sense of sight differs commensurate with the difference of what is seen by its means. So the attribute that is appropriate for the seeing of something near at hand is not the attribute that it is necessary to have for the seeing of something far away; similarly, the instrument with which some writings are written is necessarily different from that by which other writings are done, and the instrument by which distant things are moved is different from that by which things near at hand are moved. And if that is true, it necessarily follows that we observe the difference of their state, just as the observation of the difference of the situation of that for which it is an instrument is also necessary. And for that reason, it is true that there is an instrument, with the paucity of visual rays, in the vision of near things, and with the abundance of visual rays in the vision of things distant, just as it is true that a strong rope is an instrument in pulling a heavy object, and a weak rope is an instrument for pulling an object that is lighter.

When someone says that sight, since it is distinguished by a measure of rays, is an instrument in seeing the Eternal, this is not true, for we have made it clear that it is rather an instrument, with strength of visual rays in a thing of which it truly can be an instrument for seeing, with the weakness of rays when its situation is altered from nearness to farness, and from lightness to massiveness. As we say about power, a specified power can move a small body, but if that small object becomes great or increases in mass, it cannot be carried by that power. But when the power increases, its carrying becomes plausible. So an increase in power affects the carrying of something whose carrying is possible, as does a decrease in power, if its situation changes from heaviness to lightness. And just as the assertion of a forbidding of the heavy is not true except in this fashion, so, likewise, is your assertion that the paucity of visual rays is an obstacle to the seeing of visible things not true, except according to this definition. And if there is no truth in what we have mentioned, it necessarily follows that it is allowed in all of the contingent things that they be visible, even if we do not see them owing to the weakness of the visual rays or of the sight.

And as for him who allows that it be said that all of what is perceived by the senses is perceived by the faculty of sight, in the same way that we perceive the visible things by it, but that we do not perceive by it at the present time because of the weakness of sight and the weakness of our visual rays; it would be true to say that the visible thing is true when it is seen according to every attribute that it has. But we do not see all of them now because of the weakness of the visual rays and of our sight, and it is true that it is said that the screen and the veil prevent, now, the seeing of some of the visible things owing to the weakness of the rays and sight. If they were strong, we would see the veiled to the same degree that we now see that from which no veil separates us. And every ignorance that is entailed upon us by those who assert the seeing of God and permit the presence of higher bodies with us even if we do not see them, accompanies this proposition. There is no way to restore it, and it obligates the vision of that which does not exist, and it necessitates the nullification of the contrariety of contraries, and the assertion worthy of actions which they are not worthy of, or the nullification of the caused from causes and the assertion of everything that leads to confusion of the necessary with the usual. And if that is false, the judgment necessarily follows that weakness of sight and of visual rays does not affect anything, except in the seeing of what we have already mentioned. And that forbids the attachment to Him of the notion that He, may He be exalted, is invisible because of it.

**That It is Not True That the Obstacle That Prevents Us from Seeing God is
That the Visual Rays Do Not Connect with Him or with His Location**

Someone may raise an objection as follows: Why don't you allow that an observer may not see the Eternal, may He be praised, not because He is by nature invisible, but because He is seen by means of an organ, and it is of the perfection of that organ that rays go out from it and find connection with the object of vision or with its place? But it is impossible that visual rays connect with the Eternal, great and glorious, or with His place. He is exalted above that because of the impossibility of His being either a body or a contingent thing. Thus, it is necessary, for this cause, that we do not see Him. But that does not deny His being visible to Himself, or by a sixth sense which functions without visual rays.

That objection may be replied to as follows: We have already made clear in what has gone before that the reason for our seeing visible things by the sense of sight is not what you have mentioned with regards to a connection of the visual rays with them or their place. Rather, we see by means of the sense of sight when the visual rays, which are the perfection of the organ, reach a situation where there is no veil between the observer and the object of vision, or a place where it is not admissible that there be a veil. And when the visual rays go beyond this situation with the object of vision, it is necessarily seen. But when its situation with the object of vision is as we have mentioned, it is not true that it is seen.

We know that, were the Most High an object of vision as they claim, it could not be truthfully said that between Him and us is a veil or a place in which a veil would be appropriate. And if that were not true, it would be necessary, were He visible, that we see Him now. So, since we do not see Him, the judgment is necessary that He is not an object of vision.

We have already indicated with regard to the perfection of the organ of sight that the situation of the visual rays is just as we have said, and that its connection is not observed—neither with the object of vision nor with its place, and even when the object of vision is such that connection is possible in regard to it, the situation that we have mentioned does not arise except by connection. And when a situation is in the place, the judgment nevertheless does not arise which we have mentioned, except by connection with its location, not that that is a condition, just as the capable person acts by reason of his capacity. And if he is not capable except by a capacity that he requires for his action, not because the action lies in it, but because his being capable is not true except with it, so likewise, the arrival of the rays by the attribute that we have mentioned is not true when the object of vision is a body or an accident except when it arrives by that attribute, not because it is the condition for its vision.

We have made clear that the judgment of the remainder of the senses does not differ, in that the condition of what is perceived by them works in the same way.

And we have made clear what our Shaykh, Abū Hāshim, may God have mercy upon him, said about blackness, if it is not found in a place, it is true that we see it in this way, such that it is said that it does not obtain except in such a manner that, if it reaches a condition in a place, it is in one aspect rather than another, so that it is true that it attains to the rays with it. It is found not in the place of judgment, which it reaches to when it is in a place. And we have made clear that this aspect rather is true in it, owing to its newness from the perspective of its creator. Thus there is no difference between His creating it in a place, first in a place in which its createdness does not differ. And we have made clear that it is among those things that are not true that He created it in opposition like the essences, such that its condition changes in the manner of its coming to be by the act of its creator. So it is necessary that He creates in the place and not in the place simultaneously, inasmuch as if the place were obtained by which it is distinguished, it would be in its domain. And we have made clear that its being in multiple domains is impossible, but rather its place becomes independent in opposition, so that it is seen as if it were transported by the transportation of its place. And if not, its condition does not change.

If that is true, it is not possible that it be said that we do not see the Eternal, exalted be He, because it is not true that the visual rays which are the perfection of the organ attain the judgment by which He would be perceived. And if that has been refuted, what we have said about our not seeing Him because He is by nature invisible is established, and that it is necessarily impossible that He see Himself, just as it is impossible that we see Him.

PART II
Later Sunni Theological Thought

Introduction

Ash'arite *kalām* continued to be opposed to *falsafah* throughout Islamic history from the time of the founder of this school, Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, who lived in the fourth/tenth century. But, as already mentioned, the constant intellectual strife between *kalām* and *falsafah* not only influenced the discussions of the philosophers themselves, as can be seen in the works of Ibn Sinā, but also modified the structure of the texts of *kalām* and expanded the field of its discussions, leading to what has come to be known as philosophical *kalām* identified by Ibn Khaldūn as the *kalām* of the *via nova* or 'later period' (literally 'of those who come later', *kalām al-muta'akhhirīn*). This development, which began in the fifth/eleventh century, also coincided with important political events in the Islamic world that made Khurāsān the great bastion for the defence of Sunni orthodoxy associated with Sunni schools of *kalām* of which the most important was the Ash'arite and the next most important the Māturīdite, which also flourished in northern Persia in the region of greater Khurāsān.

In the fourth/tenth century much of North Africa, Egypt and Syria was ruled by various Shi'i dynasties while Persia itself was governed for the most part also by Shi'i rulers — the Būyids. When the Sunni Seljuqs appeared upon the scene, it was from Khurāsān that the intellectual defence of Sunnism began with the support and protection of the new rulers. Paradoxically, while Persia is now associated with Shi'ism and even historically was the primary home of various Shi'i schools of thought, it also became the main base for those late schools of Sunni *kalām* associated first with Khurāsān and in the seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries with Shirāz. Later *kalām*, or philosophical *kalām*, which is of great philosophical as well as theological significance, is therefore an important element in the intellectual and philosophical traditions of Persia.

This later school of philosophical *kalām* began with Imām al-Ḥaramayn Juwaynī and his student Ghazzālī. It reached its philosophical peak with Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī and Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī and continued to produce important figures such

as Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī and Saʿd al-Dīn Taftāzānī into the ninth/fifteenth century. Some of the representatives of this school were more philosophically minded than others; some knew more about philosophy as *falsafah* and some less. The most famous among them, Ghazzālī, had studied *falsafah* by himself, while others had had teachers in the field. The figure among them who was best versed in *falsafah* and the natural sciences was Rāzī, and through his commentary upon Ibn Sinā's *Kitāb al-ishārāt wa'l-tanbihāt* he left the greatest mark upon the later tradition of philosophy in Persia, Ghazzālī, however, had the widest impact on Islamic thought in general, as a result of his critique of *mashshā'ī* philosophy as a whole.

It is also in the writings of Rāzī that one observes a new phase in the development of *kalām* as a totally independent discipline vis-à-vis *falsafah* while at the same time coming fully into its own as philosophical *kalām*. Some of the figures of later *kalām* were also philosophers themselves and contributed to the development of the Islamic philosophical tradition in general, the most notable being Dawānī who is one of the best known commentators upon Suhrawardī's *ishrāqī* or illuminative thought. These later *mutakallimūn* also interacted widely with Twelver-Imam Shi'i thought which became dominant in Persia after the ninth/fifteenth century, and they are often mentioned by later Persian Shi'i theologians as well as philosophers such as Mullā Ṣadrā and 'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhijī. One sees the quotations of Rāzī and also Ghazzālī in the works of many later Shi'i thinkers of the Safavid, Zand and Qajar periods.

Later *kalām* continued to be interested in classical *kalām* issues such as the nature of the Divine Names and Qualities, free will and determination, and the nature of the Qur'ān. But it also had to provide answers to the challenges of *falsafah* and therefore turned to the study of the nature of time, corporeality and causality and to the question of the origin of the world more fully than early *kalām*. It in fact developed its earlier doctrine of atomism more extensively in seeking to answer the theses of *falsafah* concerning such subjects. Moreover, in classical *kalāmī* questions such as the nature of the Divine Names, the later *mutakallimūn* often gave more fully developed responses which must also be called more philosophical in the general sense of the term. An outstanding example is Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī's treatise on the Divine Names, *Kitāb lawāmi' al-bayyināt fi'l-asmā' wa'l-ṣifāt* (The Book of Evident Lights concerning the Names and Attributes), one of the major texts on the subject in the annals of Islamic thought. Even Rāzī's monumental Qur'ānic commentary, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* (Keys to the Invisible), is not only a theological commentary but also a philosophical one, as can be seen by the fact that later Persian philosophical commentators upon the sacred texts, from Mullā Ṣadrā to 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, made use of it.

The history of later philosophical *kalām* is not as yet well documented, but the major peaks of this intellectual mountain chain are already known. The notable works of this school, mostly in Arabic but also some in Persian, represent the fruit

of rich philosophical and theological activity extended over several centuries. Although they were rejected by later philosophers from the Safavid period onward, these theologians nevertheless influenced later schools of thought in Persia and throughout the rest of the Islamic world and therefore deserve to receive full consideration in an anthology devoted to philosophical thought in Persia.

S. H. Nasr

Imam al-Ḥaramayn Juwaynī

Abu'l-Ma'ālī 'Abd al-Malik Juwaynī known as 'Imam al-Ḥaramayn' (Imam of the Two Holy Precincts) was born in 419/1028 near the city of Nayshābūr and died in 478/1085 in his birth place. Juwaynī first studied *fiqh* and Ash'arite *kalām* with his father 'Abd Allāh ibn Yūsuf who was a famous Shāfi'ī jurist, and then with Abu'l-Qāsim al-Isfarāyīnī, another well known Shāfi'ī scholar. Intellectually, Juwaynī was a theologian who had embraced the newly founded school of Ash'arism. This theological school, which had emerged as a reaction to the more rationalistic school of Mu'tazilism, came under severe criticism by the wazir of Ṭughrul Beg, who called his teachings heretical. Fearing for his life, Juwaynī left for Baghdad, a great centre of learning at the time, and went to Mecca and Medina where he taught for four years. It is for this reason that he was given the title of Imam al-Ḥaramayn. However, the political climate changed in his favour when Nizām al-Mulk, who favoured Ash'arism, came to power as the wazir and built the famous Nizāmiyyah School for Juwaynī in Nayshābūr, where he taught until the end of his life. It was here that he encountered his famous student Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Ghazzālī who was influenced by Juwaynī's views on *kalām*. In addition to teaching the more discursive subjects, Juwaynī also held mystical sessions in which *dhikr* (invocation of Divine Names) was practised.

Juwaynī left his intellectual legacy in two different domains: jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and theology (*kalām*). In jurisprudence he authored a major work entitled *Waraqāt fī uṣūl al-fiqh* (Letters Concerning the Principles of Jurisprudence) and went so far as to devise a method of analysing judicial matters on an Ash'arite basis and presented it in his work *al-Burhān fī uṣūl al-fiqh*. Despite the importance of his writings in jurisprudence, Juwaynī is best known as a theologian belonging to a period between old Ash'arism and the more philosophical school called 'later' (*muta'akhhir*) by Ibn Khaldūn.

Juwaynī's writings are marked by several characteristics; his intellectual inquiries were systematic and methodical which was a departure from earlier

discussions on *kalām*. Among the issues which Juwaynī emphasized are epistemological ones, particularly regarding the knowledge of Divine Attributes, Divine States (*aḥwāl*), the rational method of inquiry and the use of proof by syllogism. Juwaynī left his mark on the field of *kalām* not only in terms of the depth of his analysis, but also in his approach to theological problems. He placed great emphasis on the means (*asbāb*) by which inferences were made and the way that such means of analysis played a role in the presentation and discussion of the problems involved.

Juwaynī's well-known work in *kalām* is his *Kitāb al-irshād* (The Book of Guidance). This is a comprehensive treatise on Ash'arite *kalām* written for the followers of the tradition and deals with first-order problems, meaning problems directly encountered in matters of religious creed. It is divided into thirty chapters which deal with topics such as *tawḥīd* (Divine Unity), Divine Attributes, good and evil, free will and predestination, the relation between reason and revelation, definition of knowledge, prophecy, the hereafter, reward and punishment, and the question of leadership of the Muslim community. This is one of the first *kalām* works in which one finds *nazar* (inquiry) and *tafkīr* (reflection) made obligatory in the discussion of *kalām* issues.

Juwaynī's involvement in this work is not concerned with speculative and rational issues in themselves but concerns religious and spiritual themes in a philosophical and rational manner. He tries to clarify the Ash'arite theological position vis-à-vis the position of its adversaries, especially the Mu'tazilites and Karrāmites. Juwaynī uses rational methods and presents the problems through the channels of inquiry and demonstration, unlike his master al-Ash'arī who counsels the believer to accept religious doctrines on the basis of faith 'without asking how'. His solutions to the principal theological problems are for the most part faithful to the Ash'arite tradition but with a philosophical dimension.

The chapters of *Kitāb al-irshād* translated here deal with three areas of Juwaynī's thought: (1) The rules of inquiry (*nazar*); in this chapter he discusses rules of inquiry and argues that inquiry is incumbent according to the *Sharī'ah* to guarantee the soundness of matters concerning the Law (*Shar'*) and is a supplement to it. (2) The reality of knowledge; in this chapter, using the injunctions of Islam, he offers several definitions of knowledge, analyses them, refutes them, and then gives his own definition of knowledge, its nature and categories and argues that intellect is an ensemble of immediate knowledge which precedes inquiry. (3) The Divine Speech (or Word); in this chapter he discusses the Divine Attribute of Speech and takes the middle course between the two extreme positions regarding the createdness and eternity of the Qur'ān arguing that the Divine Speech or Word (i.e., the Qur'ān,) is both uncreated when viewed as an eternal Attribute subsisting in God without linguistic expressions, and created by God when viewed as the linguistic expression

of the Divine uncreated Word in the form of the Qur'ān. The issue of whether the Qur'ān is created or uncreated was debated extensively by the *mutakallimūn* in the early centuries of Islam.

In the chapters selected here for translation and also in the rest of his book, Juwaynī presents his arguments with rigorous, highly refined theorems and techniques of logic, showing flaws in the belief systems and doctrines of the Mu'tazilites and defending his own position by subjecting them to the scrutiny of utmost logical rigour. Most of the issues on theological matters dealt with by him are still relevant to contemporary Muslims. There are two editions of the Arabic text of *Kitāb al-irshād*, one by J. D. Luciani (Paris, 1938) who also translated it into French, and the other, which is a better edition, by Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā and 'Alī 'Abd al-Mun'im 'Abd al-Ḥāmid (Cairo, 1950). The content in the square brackets is from the translator.

M. Aminrazavi

THE BOOK OF GUIDANCE

Kitāb al-irshād

Translated for this volume by Latimah Peerwani from Juwaynī's *Kitāb al-irshād*, ed. M. Y. Mūsā and A. M. 'Abd al-Ḥāmid (Cairo, 1950), pp. 1–16 and 99–133–135.

On the Rules of Inquiry

The first thing necessary for a mature intelligent person when he reaches the age of puberty, or legal age according to the *Shar'*, is to aim for sound inquiry (*al-naẓar al-saḥīḥ*)¹ which could lead to the knowledge of the creation of the universe. Inquiry (*naẓar*), according to the technical usage of the People who declare Him One (*muwaḥḥidīn*), [i.e., the Ash'arites] is the reflection (*fikr*) by which knowledge, or the supremacy over surmise, is sought by him who exercises it. Inquiry is of two kinds: sound and unsound. That which is sound leads to the discovery [of knowledge] in a manner by which a proof of it can be denoted, whereas unsound is contrary to the former. Inquiry may become unsound due to its total digression from the customary procedures of the denotation, or it may become unsound due to its reliance on something obstructive or lacking fresh sharpness.²

If it is said: Some ancients denied that inquiry could lead to knowledge, and they claimed that the sources of perception of knowledge (*'ulūm*) were the senses. How can one combat their theory? We say the method is that we divide the argument³ [by twofold questions] and ask: Do you claim that you can have knowledge by unsound inquiry, or you are in doubt about it? If they reject unsound inquiry, then they have already contradicted the content of their doctrine regarding limiting the

1. The Arabic term *naẓar*, which is being translated here as 'inquiry', means to gaze, to investigate, to observe, to inspect. For the proponents of *kalām*, it denotes the process of reasoning and speculative activity by which conclusions are drawn.

2. In this and the following chapter, al-Juwaynī lays down the rules of inquiry and his definition of knowledge. The basic contention of al-Juwaynī is that inquiry is the prime source of knowledge. The allusion is to the Mu'tazilites who held that general ethical axioms were known by the intellect, thus they maintained that good and evil were objective concepts which could be known through *a priori* knowledge, so the function of *Shar'* (in the broadest sense) was supplementary to reason. Cf. G. F. Hourani, *Islamic Rationalism: The Ethics of 'Abd al-Jabbār* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 20ff. On the other hand, al-Juwaynī following the basic doctrines of Asha'rites held that good and evil were subjective concepts whose validity depended on the *Shar'* and *sam'*, and that inquiry was essential to supplement the *Shar'*. Cf. his *al-Irshād*, pp. 258–272, where he discusses this issue at length.

3. Division, i.e., *taqṣīm* or *qismah*, is a method of argumentation by which the author tries to solve a problem and to find the right answer by enumerating all possible answers, which are then subsequently dealt with, and, consequently, it consists in the division of the problem concerned into various sub-problems. Cf. J. R. T. M. Peters, *God's Created Speech* (Leiden, 1976), p. 72.

sources of perception of knowledge to the senses, for knowledge, including that of sense impressions (*maḥsūsāt*), by unsound inquiry is impossible.

Then we say: Do you know the unsound inquiry by *a priori* knowledge (*ḍarūratan*), or do you know it through inquiry? If they claim that they know it by *a priori* knowledge they are perplexed, but they do not admit to the opposition of their claim by it contradicting it. If they claim that they perceive the unsound inquiry by inquiry, then they have contradicted their assumption in that they denied the entire inquiry and decreed that it does not lead to knowledge, and they adhere to a species of inquiry and admit that it leads to knowledge.

If they say: If you affirm inquiry and claim that it leads to knowledge, do you support your claim by *a priori* (knowledge) or by inquiry? For if you [support your] claim by immediate (knowledge) then it is incumbent on you what we have made incumbent. Therefore your claim is rejected. If you judge the soundness of inquiry by inquiry then you have already affirmed a thing by itself, and that is impossible.

We say: Does this opinion of yours benefit you [to attain] anything or does it not benefit you at all for anything? If they claim that it does not benefit for [attaining] knowledge, nor does it procure any ruling, then they have already acknowledged it to be a blunder. This is enough for us for furnishing the reply.

If they claim that it is beneficial for [attaining] knowledge by refuting our argument, then they have already adhered to one kind of inquiry while denying the totality of it. If they say: Our aim is to face the unsound by the unsound, then we throw at them another argument (*al-taqṣīm*) and say: Opposing the unsound by the unsound is an aspect of inquiry. Then we say: It is not unlikely to affirm all species of inquiry from one species that affirms itself and the other than itself. This is like knowledge which is related to the objects of knowledge (*ma'lūmāt*) and also to itself, for knowledge is learned by knowledge, as the rest of the objects of knowledge are also learned by it.

If the interrogator says: I am not asserting the futility of inquiry that the argument of yours be thrown at me, I am in doubt and seeking right guidance, then the point conveyed to the one who wishes to be rightly guided is: Your way is to reflect persistently on the proofs and pursue this course vigorously. If your inquiry is sound, and the consideration orderly, then this will lead you to knowledge. So the [method of] inquiry is as described to him; if he refuses to apply the sound inquiry to knowledge, then his resistance and non-continuance of being guided may be clarified.

Section: On the contraries of inquiry: knowledge, ignorance, and doubt

Inquiry has its contraries [such as] the knowledge of the object of inquiry, ignorance, and doubt. The reason why its contrary is knowledge is it searches for

that [which is already realized] and aims to attain it, and that is contrary to the realization of knowledge because what has already been attained is not desired. The reason why it is contrary to ignorance is ignorance is belief connected to the object of belief which is contrary to what it is, and the one who is described by it is firm about it, and that is contrary to the search and investigation [for knowledge]. As for doubt, it is wavering between two beliefs; inquiry aims for the truth, so [doubt] is also contrary to knowledge, and so are all its contraries.

Section: Knowledge is obtained by inquiry

If the sound inquiry overcomes its obstacles and is not followed by any hurdle that negates knowledge, it obtains the knowledge of its object of inquiry (*manzūr*) and joins [it] through vigorous inquiry. However, [if] the inquirer (*nāzīr*) is ignorant about the object of denotation (*madlūl*) then nothing results from following the inquiry in spite of its remembrance by him, and the inquiry does not generate knowledge, nor the necessity of cause for its effect requisite for it, whereas the Mu'tazilites claim that it generates [knowledge]. What they agree with us on is that the remembrance (*tadhākur*) through inquiry does not generate knowledge, though it guarantees or implies (*ḍamina*) it. We will explain later at its appropriate place the basis of the [theory of] 'generation' (*tawallud*),¹ God willing.

If they say: Since inquiry does not generate knowledge [according to you], and the necessity of cause for its effect is not requisite for it, then what is the meaning of 'it guarantees it'? then we say: It means that if sound inquiry antecedes and banishes hurdles after it, then the surety of the knowledge of the object of inquiry becomes intellectually certain, and the surety of the two [i.e. inquiry and knowledge] also becomes inevitable without either one of the two necessitating the other, or existentiating or generating it. The two are like the will along with knowledge, for the will for a thing is not realized without the knowledge of it. However, their concomitance does not require that one of the two existentiates the other, or is necessary for the other, or generates the other.

Section: Sound inquiry and unsound inquiry

Sound inquiry guarantees knowledge as preceded. Unsound inquiry does not guarantee knowledge, nor does it [i.e., knowledge] guarantee it. Also it does not guarantee ignorance, or anything contrary to knowledge. Sound inquiry informs the inquirer about the direction of the denotation requisite for attaining the knowledge of the object of the denotation (*madlūl*). If the inquiry is unsound due to the concurrence of doubt (and yet doubt has no connection with belief in actuality for

1. This is one of the major issues in *kalām*; cf. H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Kalām* (London, 1976), pp. 644ff.

if actually doubt had a certain connection with belief, then it would be a rational proof and the belief would be knowledge).

What is clear from this is that when the [rational] proof denotes [a thing's] essential attribute (*ṣifāt naḥsiyyah*), it denotes its object of proof in totality by encompassing it with knowledge. If doubt too had any significance, then an *ʿālim* for the fact of having doubt would lead to ignorance, but that is not so.

Section: On proofs

The proofs of what is customarily not known by *a priori* (knowledge) are attained by employing sound inquiry. They are of two kinds: rational (*ʿaqlī*) and that which pertains to the *sam*¹. Rational proof denotes the concomitant attribute that is essential [to a thing]. The reason (*ʿaql*) does not establish the measure of existence of something without giving the proof of its object of denotation. For instance, a temporally originated thing by the very possibility of its existence denotes a requisite principle which individualized it as a possible existence; likewise certainty and individuality (*takhṣiṣ*) denote the knowledge of the agent of certainty and the will of the individualizer. Whereas [the proof] concerning the *sam*¹ is that which depends on the true report [of the Messenger] or the [Divine] Command which it is incumbent to follow.

Section: The incumbency of inquiry according to the Sharʿ

The inquiry that leads to the attainment of various kinds of knowledge (*maʿārif*) is incumbent, and the cognition of its incumbency is through the *Sharʿ*. All the laws concerning *taklīf* (religious prescription) are received from the evidences that pertain to the *sam*¹ and *Sharīʿah* propositions. The Muʿtazilites maintain that reason leads to the perception of incumbent things, and an aspect of [reason] is inquiry (*nazar*), so its necessity, according to them, is known through the reason. This issue will be dealt with later, God willing, but here we will mention something about it that is particular to inquiry.

If they say: If you deny the cognition of the incumbency of inquiry rationally, your way will lead to the rejection of the challenge of the prophets, peace be upon them, and sever the way to argumentation, whereas they invited the people [to investigate] what manifested from their order, and urged them for inquiry on what was expressed by the miracles, and they singled out some verses [of the Qurʾān which alluded to inquiry].

It is said to them: Inquiry is incumbent only if [approved] by the established *Sharʿ* and the continually affirmed *taklīf*. Besides the *Sharʿ*, according to us, nothing

1. Al-Juwaynī defines *sam*¹ as sources which are based on the Speech of God (i.e., the Qurʾān). Cf. *Irshād*, p. 358.

is affirmed from which to derive the incumbent [religious] matters (*wājibāt*), for this belief [of theirs] will take them to confusion, leading them away from the right guidance, and keeping [them] persistent in resistance and obstinacy.

We [also] say [to them]: This opinion which we have obligated concerning the transmitted *Sharʿ* reverses back on you regarding the rational propositions, for the arrival at knowledge is by the process of interpretation (*min majārī al-ʿibar*) through inquiry which is incumbent. According to you a man of reason conceives it possible that there is a Creator Who seeks from him His knowledge, and his gratitude [to Him] for His bestowal of blessings [on him]; if he knows Him, he is liberated and can hope for abundant reward. If he does not believe [in Him] and is arrogant and creates obstacles [in acknowledging His existence], he deserves evil consequences. If he is faced with two possibilities and is given two probabilities, and by adhering to one of the two he expects subsisting blessing, and by following the other he becomes entitled to painful chastisement, reason will require choosing the way to salvation and preferring [the course] which avoids destruction. Now, if the way which leads to knowledge according to the incumbency of inquiry [depends upon choosing from among] the inclinations (*khawāṭir*)¹ in the soul and the conflict of possibilities in the intuition (*ḥads*), then he who neglects these inclinations and is heedless of these innermost thoughts (*ḍamāʿir*) cannot become a knower according to the incumbency of inquiry.

So, what the adversaries make incumbent as the sources of reason (*ʿuqūl*) in the case of heedlessness and neglect is what we make incumbent as requisite of the transmitted *Sharʿ*. Whereas, what we obligate upon them as one of the postulates of *kalām* in the absence of inclinations, disputes with [their] assumption of the prophetic mission without the [need of] miracles. The contrary is incumbent upon them, but it is not incumbent upon us [to accept] what they say. For, if a miracle is manifest, and a man of reason established firmly by perceiving it, it is tantamount to the occurrence of two [contrary] inclinations assumed by the adversary. If they occur then choosing one of the two is possible for the inquiry, which is like the possibility of the inquiry [to choose] what concerns the miracle when it occurs.

Then we say: The incumbency [of inquiry] as a condition [for obtaining knowledge] according to us is [derived from] the affirmation (*thubūt*) from the *samʿ* which denotes [this obligation], along with firmly establishing the *mukallaf* [i.e., the believer on whom the *taklīf* (obligation) is imposed] to obtain it. If the miracles manifest, and the proofs denote the veracity of the messengers, then the *Sharʿ* is already established. The *samʿ* becomes persistent in making incumbent what is to be incumbent and forbidding what is to be forbidden. The incumbency of a thing does not depend upon the knowledge of the *mukallaf* about it. Rather, the condition is firmly established (*tamakkun*) to the one who is addressed, that he will obtain the knowledge of it.

1. The discussion on *khawāṭir* was important in *kalām*. Cf. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Kalām*, pp. 624ff.

If it is said: What is the evidence of the incumbency of inquiry and reasoning (*istidlāl*) from the *Shar'*? We say: The Community is unanimous on the incumbency of the knowledge of the Creator the Exalted, and it is clear through reason that he will only come to arrive at the acquisition of various kinds of knowledge (*ma'ārif*) through inquiry. So if it is not possible to arrive at the incumbent but through it, then that is incumbent.

On the Reality of Knowledge

Knowledge (*'ilm*) is the cognition (*ma'rifah*) of the object of knowledge (*ma'lūm*) as it is. This [definition] is preferable [among others] for wishing to define knowledge from the opinions of some of our companions recorded on the definition of knowledge. Among them is the opinion of some that knowledge is the explication of the object of knowledge as it is. According to our Shaykh [al-Ash'arī],¹ may God's mercy be upon him, knowledge is that which necessitates that he in whom it inheres be a knower. According to one group, knowledge is that by which the one who is attributed by it corrects the judgments (*aḥkām*) of the act and his conviction.

As for the one who defines [knowledge] as 'the explication of the object of knowledge as it is', this is objectionable, for an explication is far from encompassing the object of knowledge due to the ignorance or heedlessness [of the object of knowledge]. So, the one who learns that he has not been the knower of [the object of knowledge] should say: I have explicated it. Our objective in the definition is to mention what is included in the eternal (*qadīm*) and temporally originated (*ḥādīth*) knowledge.

We do not approve of the definition of knowledge that it necessitates that he in whom it inheres be a knower, for the objective behind definitions is the explication of the object of intention, and this [definition] is too general because one can apply it or its similitude to anything about which a person asks for definition. Also, it is not correct to define knowledge as something by which he who is attributed by it corrects the judgments [of an act] because knowledge about the things impossible (*mustaḥīlāt*) to occur and the eternal (*qadīm*) and the subsisting existents cannot be corrected by the judgments of the one who is attributed by them. Besides, he who defines it so includes only one species of knowledge and that is the knowledge by certainty and judgments.

The earlier Mu'tazilites said regarding the definition of knowledge, that knowledge is believing in a thing as it is together with firm mind in the [the object of belief]. However, this definition was refuted because the belief of *muqallid* [i.e., the follower of religious authority] is [based on] the affirmation (*thubūt*) of the Creator, and believing in the object of belief with one's satisfaction in the object of belief. But this is not by knowledge. The latter [Mu'tazilites] complemented [the

1. He is Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ismā'il al-Ash'arī (d.324/935), the initiator of the Sunni school of *kalām* which became known as Ash'arite after his name.

earlier definition] and said: [knowledge] is believing in a thing as it is together with firm mind in the object of belief; it is either *a priori*, or it results through inquiry. However, this [definition] is false regarding the knowledge of God the Exalted Who has no partner, and the knowledge of things which are impossible, such as contradictories which do not agree. These kinds of knowledge are not knowledge of things, for a thing according to us is existent, whereas, according to them, it is existent, and [empirically] nonexistent, the latter's existence is valid.¹ But [the latter] kinds of knowledge are outside the definition.

Section: Eternal and temporally originated knowledge

Knowledge is divided into eternal (*qadīm*) and temporally originated (*ḥādīth*). Eternal knowledge is the attribute of the Exalted Creator Who is self-subsistent. It is connected to the infinite objects of knowledge which are necessary for the Exalted and Glorified Lord; its rule to encompass [them] is sanctified from *a priori* or acquired [modes of knowledge]. Temporally originated knowledge is subdivided into *a priori* (*ḍarūrī*), self-evident (*badīhī*), and acquired (*kasbī*). *A priori* knowledge is temporally originated knowledge, does not depend on the ability of man [to attain it], and is accompanied by disadvantage or need; self-evident [knowledge] is like *a priori* [knowledge] but is neither accompanied by disadvantage nor need. Each one of the two may be designated by the name of the other.

One of the rules (*ḥukm*) of the *a priori* [knowledge] concerning [its] established pattern is to follow in succession without any interruption in it or doubt about it, such as the knowledge of the objects of perception, a person's knowledge of himself, and the knowledge that contradictories do not agree, etc. Acquired knowledge is temporally originated knowledge, which is decreed by the temporally originated ability [of man]. All acquired knowledge is obtained by inquiry. It is that in which the sound inquiry is included in the evidence. But what is customary with it [i.e., *a priori* knowledge] is that it is possible [for it] to create knowledge and have power over it without turning to inquiry, but customarily all acquired knowledge is obtained by inquiry.

Section: Knowledge and its contraries

Knowledge (*‘ulūm*) has its contraries, which are specific to it, and the contraries have what contradicts them and is other than them. Among the specific

1. Al-Juwaynī does not explain what he means by 'a thing is existent—definition'. However, from his predecessor in Ash'arite theology, al-Bāqillānī, who also deals with 'knowledge', we understand that the definition of the object of knowledge in the Ash'arite *kalām* is given of a thing which is temporally existent, and not temporally nonexistent, but eternally existent. Cf. Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Ṭayyib ibn al-Bāqillānī, *al-Tamhīd* (Cairo, 1947), pp. 34–35.

contraries, one of them is ignorance. It is the belief of a believer in something that is contrary to what it is. Another one is doubt, which is uncertainty about [choosing one belief] from two beliefs. It advances without preferring either of the two. Another one is surmise (*ẓann*), which is like doubt in being uncertain except that it prefers one of the two beliefs according to its judgment. The common contraries are death, sleep, heedlessness, and swoon. These ‘meanings’ (*ma‘ānī*, or matters) are contrary to knowledge, contrary to will, and contrary to their contraries.

Section: Intellect is [an ensemble of] a priori knowledge

Intellect (*‘aql*) is [an ensemble of] *a priori* knowledge. The evidence that it is [an ensemble of] *a priori* knowledge is that one is not qualified by it with the measure of being bereft of all knowledge. If it is said: There is an impediment [in accepting] that the intellect is bereft of knowledge, its substance is conditioned, and its affirmation is by the affirmation of some kind of [knowledge], such as will conditioned by the knowledge of the willer.

We say: Our objective is to present the intellect, which is a condition in the *taklīf*, for the one without it cannot comprehend the knowledge imposed upon him. If the *taklīf* depends upon the comprehension of the *mukallaf* concerning what is imposed upon him, and it is not possible to comprehend that except after attaining the knowledge of the objects known, which are the roots of inquiry, then attaining the knowledge of *taklīf* cannot precede without them. Our intention is to give a theorem that knowledge (*‘ulūm*) which we condition to be preceding the beginning of inquiry is what we call intellect (*‘aql*), and to explain what is intended by intellect so that the query [about it] is averted. We do not deny that *‘aql* is one of the equivocal terms that has many meanings, but our objective is what we have already mentioned.

‘Aql is not a certain knowledge concerning inquiry (*al-‘ulūm al-naẓariyyah*) because the condition for the beginning of inquiry is the precedence of *‘aql* [to it]; nor is *‘aql* the entire *a priori* [sensible] knowledge, for a blind person, or the one who cannot perceive, can be described as having *‘aql* although he may be deprived of *a priori* [empirical] knowledge (*‘ulūm*). It is clear from this that *‘aql* is of some *a priori* [empirical] knowledge but not all of it.

The way to determine and specify it [i.e., the *‘aql*] is to say: any knowledge which an intelligent man is not bereft of, and in which an unintelligent man cannot associate, is *‘aql*. It is deduced from the requisite probing that *‘aql* is *a priori* knowledge that permits what is permissible and does not permit what is impossible, such as the knowledge that ‘contradictories do not agree’, and the knowledge that ‘the object of knowledge is either not-affirmed or affirmed’, or that ‘an existent is either eternal or temporally originated’.

On the Divine Word: Created or Uncreated

Section: God is Speaker, Commander, Prohibiter

Know that (may you be preserved from innovation!) one of the doctrines of the People of Truth (*ahl al-ḥaqq*, [i.e., the Ash‘arites]) is that the Creator the Sublime and Exalted is the Speaker (*mutakallim*) of the pre-eternal Speech (*kalām azalī*), which has no beginning in its existence. Those who follow Islam conform with affirming the Speech, and none arrives at negating it, nor does anyone assume a doctrine that He in His being is not a Speaker, nor do they deny the attributes of Him being Knowing, Powerful, Living.¹

According to Mu‘tazilites, Khārijites, Zaydites, Imāmites, and others besides them, such as ‘the people of whims’ (*ahl al-ahwā’*), the Speech of the Creator, Who is exalted above the utterance of the deviated ones, is temporally originated (*ḥadīth*) and has a beginning in existence. Some from those [groups] refrain from naming it ‘created’ (*makhlūq*) while asserting its temporal origin (*ḥadīth*) because the word ‘created’ (*makhlūq*) has some implication of being confused with the creation. The created speech [according to them] is that which is originated by the speaker composed of something not original. Most of the Mu‘tazilites apply the word ‘created’ to the Speech of God the Exalted.

The Karrāmites² maintain that the Speech of God is eternal (*qadīm*), whereas [His] utterance (*qawl*) is temporally originated, but it is other than anything that is temporally originated (*muḥdath*), and the Qur‘ān is the Utterance of God and not the Speech of God. The Speech of God, according to them, is the power (*qudrah*) over the speech, and His temporally originated utterance subsists in His Essence (*dhāt*). God is exalted above the utterance of the deviated ones! He is not the Utterer of the utterance subsisting in Him. Rather, He is the Utterer by virtue of the uttering; everything that has a beginning in existence subsists in His essence and is temporally originated by [His] power which is not originated; every originated

1. This chapter is concerned with the nature of the Divine Speech. The Mu‘tazilites maintained that the Qur‘ān was temporally originated Divine Speech. The literalists held that the Qur‘ān was eternal not only concerning its content and words but in its total material structure as well. Al-Juwaynī takes a middle position between these two extremes. He affirms that the Qur‘ān is eternal, by which he means that the Divine Attribute ‘Speech’ subsists eternally in God, and as such, it is independent of verbal and linguistic expression. Nevertheless, the Speech is also composed of words, it is expressed in language. In this form it is temporally originated by God. He affirms the simultaneity of the eternal nature of the Qur‘ān and its temporal origination according to the Ash‘arite doctrine. However, unlike his master al-Ash‘ari who counsels the believer to accept this doctrine on the basis of faith ‘without asking how’, al-Juwaynī through demonstration and inquiry argues on the rational ground the simultaneity of the eternal nature and the temporal origination of the Divine Speech and the union of the uncreated and created Word of God.

2. The followers of Muḥammad b. al-Karrām (d. 255/868). Cf. Abu‘l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa‘l-niḥal* (Cairo, 1968), vol. 1, p. 108. Al-Shahrastānī lists them in the category of Sunni anthropomorphists.

thing is distinct from the [Divine] essence, so it is temporally originated by His utterance ‘be’, and not by [His] power. There is much senseless jabber [in their doctrine] which this Creed has no possibility to investigate.

Our aim is to elucidate the truth and refute the one who deviates from it. This can only be clarified after compiling some sections as evidence concerning the quiddity (*māhiyyah*) of speech and its reality, so that, when our objectives are explicated through those, we return to our intention. We have already obligated the adherence to the decisive rules (*qawā’i*) in this Creed, though small in volume. In its composition we have followed differently from what we have come across in some creeds of the [Ash‘arite] imams. We have made this condition [i.e., following differently] requisite as a method in the presentation of the *kalām* issue. Now we will examine this [matter].

Section: On the reality of speech, its definition and meaning

Know (may God the Exalted guide you to the right path), that the Mu‘tazilites and the adversaries of the People of Truth have cast around about the reality of speech. So we will indicate their views overall; then we will pursue those [views] with criticism.

What the ancient [Mu‘tazilites] say about it [‘s definition] is that ‘speech is arrangement of letters and articulated sounds denoting correct intentions (*aghrād*)’. But this is absurd because the definition should encompass [all] the units of the object defined where even one letter may become a communicative (*mufīd*) word. If [for example] you [wish] to command ‘*waqī*’ (beware) or ‘*washī*’ (denounce), you could say ‘*qī*’ and ‘*shī*’, and this is a word without [many] letters and sounds [but is communicative].

If it is said: One letter cannot communicate [the intention], but if [the letters for] the command [such as ‘*qī*’ or ‘*shī*’] are separated from these letters and joined to the ending letter ‘*h*’, and made ‘*qih*’ and ‘*shih*’, [they would communicate the intention], because one letter alone by itself [is not communicative]. However, this does not rescue them from what is desired by them because the letter ‘*qī*’ included in the word joined to it is one letter. Verily our objective is to elucidate that [matter].

[Further, it is said by some Mu‘tazilites that] there is no sense in limiting [a letter] to being communicative (*ifādah*) for there are some letters [composed] in words that are not communicative, as in: You spoke but it was not communicative. So, there is no sense in limiting [a letter] to being communicative.¹ Furthermore we say: If the letters themselves are sounds, then there is no sense in repeating them as well as the definitions in which the repetition occurs, which are not communicative.

1. The allusion may be to the Mu‘tazilite ‘Abd al-Jabbār (d.c. 416/1025) who contended that one letter of the alphabet is not communicative. Cf. Peters, *God’s Created Speech*, pp. 298ff.

If they say: speech is articulated sound and the arrangement of letters, and its measure is that speech is sounds and [only] sounds if the letters are suppressed, then it is said to them: the articulated sounds are not communicative in themselves as long as the signs are not adopted for their expression. If [what you maintain] satisfies you and is sufficient for you, then following this course [of thought] it becomes requisite for you to give the succession of beats on the instruments the commonly established name 'speech'. This much is enough in following their definition [of 'speech'].¹

If someone says: What is the definition of speech according to you? We say: There are some among our imams who refrain from defining speech. However, we will explain that in detail, and while elucidating that we will mention the quiddity of speech.

Not all the objects of knowledge are subject to definitions. Rather, some are defined and some are not, as there are some which provide cause and some which do not provide cause.

Our master [al-Ash'arī], may God be merciful on him, said 'speech is that which necessitates for its substratum the being of a speaker.' We have an observation on this [opinion]. But at first we say: speech is utterance (*qawl*) which subsists in the soul (*qā'im bi'l-nafs*). If we wish to have it in detail: it is the utterance subsisting in the soul, which is denoted by expressions and signs (*ishārāt*) commonly in use.

Section: The Mu'tazilites deny the speech of the soul

The Mu'tazilites have denied the speech subsisting in the soul. They maintain that speech is articulated sounds and arranged letters, and they stipulate that speech subsisting in the soul is equivalent to expressions which can be reduced to letters and sounds. Sometimes Ibn al-Jubbā'ī² affirms the speech of the soul (*kalām al-nafs*) and calls it 'inclinations' (*khawāṭir*). He maintains that those inclinations are perceived and heard by the sense of hearing. Al-Jubbā'ī held that the articulated sounds expressed by letters are not speech though speech is letters combined with sounds, but it is not sounds and is heard if the sounds are heard.

The People of Truth affirm that speech subsists in the soul. They maintain that it is the reflection (*fikr*) which circulates in the heart (*khalaja*), which at times is furnished by the expressions and the signs commonly in usage or by other analo-

1. This was the doctrine of the Mu'tazilites concerning speech in general applying both to man's and God's speech. Cf. al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa'l-niḥal*, vol. 1, pp. 80–81, and Peters, *God's Created Speech*, pp. 302ff.

2. He was Abū Hāshim (d. 321/933) the son of al-Jubbā'ī (d. 303/915). They were Mu'tazilites from Baṣra. Al-Jubbā'ī was the master of Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī when the latter followed the Mu'tazilite *kalām*. Cf. al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa'l-niḥal*, p. 78ff.

gous [expressions]. The argument for the affirmation of the speech subsisting in the soul is that when an intelligent person commands his servant to carry out an order, he finds immediately and deeply within his soul the requisition of obedience from him; then he indicates that through what he finds in some linguistic expressions and constructed signs, or through inscriptions called writing.

If they [i.e. the Mu'tazilites] claim that what we have mentioned concerning the command is verily the will (*irādah*) of the commander (*āmīr*) subjecting the one who is commanded to his command, then this is absurd. For the commander may command something which he does not will to the one to whom his command is addressed to comply even though he finds in the desires of his soul (*hawājis al-nafs*) the requisition from him which is denoted in expression. We will show later that the being of the commander and obligator may not necessarily be a willer (*murīd*) of the act commanded by him.

If they say: He who finds in his soul the will, that makes the word issuing from him a command in the form of obligation or recommendation, then this is absurd in many aspects. One of them is that the word [for the command] wanes through the persistence from the depth of the soul (*wijdān*), for its requisition continues in the soul, and what has passed is not willed. Rather, it is regretted. So we are compelled to learn that what we find after the cessation of the word is that there is no regret by the agent. What is clear from this is that the word is an interpretation (*tarjamah*) of what is deep within the soul (*damīr*), and this is something to which the intellect is compelled. The word is not an interpretation of the will representing an attribute. Rather, it is an interpretation of requisition and necessity, and this inference cannot be resisted.

If it is said that requisition is one kind of belief [in the soul], then this is absurd because belief is either surmise (*ẓann*) or knowledge or ignorance, or other than that from various kinds of beliefs. What is found in the requisition itself shows definitely that it is not knowledge, nor surmise, ignorance, intuition, or supposition. Whoever realizes what we have obligated regarding making requisition a kind of will and belief should accept the opinion on inquiry (*naẓar*). If someone says inquiry is the will to know the object of inquiry, or it is one kind of belief [we say:] they cannot dissociate themselves from what has been made clear—that the essence (*kawn*) of inquiry is something additional to wills and beliefs. So their way leaves us to affirm our objective.

One of the arguments for the affirmation of the speech of the soul is if someone says, 'do'. [The word 'do'] may imply [doing] something recommended, it may imply [doing] something incumbent, it may make requisite something permissible, or it may convey something forbidden. If it denotes something incumbent, then [this word] cannot be incumbent in itself because the form of the word in willing something incumbent is like the form of the word in willing something recommended because it is articulated in sounds divided into many parts, and

the sounds surely do not differ in the division of the aspects of probabilities. This argument forces one to accept necessarily that ‘meaning’ (or intention, *ma‘nī*) is in the soul, which later is covered by denotations in the form of expressions, etc., from the signs (*amārāt*).

If it is said: ‘Your opinion regarding the word being a denotation of what is in the soul, which you have compelled us [to accept], is thrown back upon you, for the denotation of something incumbent should be distinguished from the denotation of something recommended; then we say the distinction between the two denotations does not return to the sounds themselves but to the interrelation of words, which, when they are interrelated and [their] states (*aḥwāl*) witnessed, the person addressed is compelled to perceive the intention behind the agent of the words. What we have mentioned concerning the combinations of states is not speech according to our adversaries. This much is enough regarding the rational objects of perception.

Now we refer to the usage of the lexicographers. We know for sure that Arabs employ [such expressions as,] ‘the speech of the soul (*kalām al-nafs*)’ and ‘the utterance rotating in the heart’. [For instance] they say, ‘there is speech in my soul’, or ‘an utterance is circling in my soul’. The common usage of such [expressions] is found in prose and poetry. As al-Akhtal said:

The speech is in the heart and verily
the tongue denotes what is in the heart.

If the adversary says the intelligent people call the communicative utterances ‘speech’ in general as they say, ‘We have heard certain speech, and we perceive the objectives behind it through the expressions’, then we say the satisfactory method according to us is to call the expressions ‘speech in reality’, and the speech which subsists in the soul as ‘speech’. The unification of the two will avert the controversy of the adversaries.

Among our companions some maintain that the real speech (*al-kalām al-ḥaqīqī*) is that which subsists in the soul, but its expressions are called metaphorical speech, as some ‘knowledge’ (*‘ulūm*) is called metaphorical [knowledge]. For instance if someone says, ‘I heard some knowledge (*‘ilm*) and perceived some knowledge (*‘ulūm*)’, verily he means the perception of the expressions which denote the knowledge (*‘ulūm*). Often a metaphor makes the truths well known.

Section: The speaker is he in whom the speech subsists

The speaker, according to the People of Truth, is he in whom the speech subsists. According to those who affirm states (*aḥwāl*), speech is a state (*ḥāl*) which neces-

sitates a substratum and that [substratum] is the being of the speaker.¹ Accordingly speech is relegated to the level of knowledge (*‘ulūm*), power, and other analogous attributes which require provisions for their substrata.

The Mu‘tazilites and all those who maintain that the Speech of God the Exalted is temporally originated are of the opinion that the being of a speaker is a speaker of the attributes of acts, and the speaker according to them is he who makes (*fa‘ala*) speech. There is nothing from the act of the agent that returns to his essence because the meaning of ‘the agent being the doer of an act’, according to them, is someone from whom the act occurs. So according to that exigency they do not condition the speech to be subsisting in the speaker, as they do not necessitate the subsistence of the act in the agent. This is one of the important [issues] to which this section will be devoted.

We say: If the speaker is he who makes the speech, then the speaker will not be known as a speaker by him who knows him as the agent of speech. But that is not so because he who hears a speech issuing from a speaker knows for certain that his being is a speaker without a thought crossing his mind whether his being is the agent of his speech or is compelled by it. If he believes that his being is the speaker while turning away from such ignorance [that his being is the agent of his speech], it would become established that the being of the speaker as a speaker does not mean his being is the agent of speech. What should be clear from this is that we believe that there is no agent in reality but God the Exalted; we are determined in this belief and will not move away from the *a priori* knowledge (*al-‘ilm al-ḍarūrī*) that the being of the speaker is the speaker.

[An argument] strengthens adherence [to the above doctrine]. We say speech, according to you, is articulated sounds and arranged letters. If a person tells us, ‘I had gone to [see] Zayd today’, this issuance from him is his speech, and he is a speaker of it. If God the Exalted had created these sounds in an orderly manner in [His] servant necessarily (immediately) (*ḍarūrah*), and this is what we have assumed, then the adversary would have to admit that either it requires a speaker as a substratum for the speech, or it does not require him. If he claims that the substratum is the speaker then he has contradicted [his] argument stating the speaker is he who makes the speech, for the [Divine] Speech is an Act of God according to the assumed hypothesis. If he claims that the substratum of the speech or the totality that is the substratum of speech is not [connected] to the speaker, then he has stubbornly resisted and rejected what he stipulated at first. For verily we hear the one in whom the speech subsists saying [for instance], ‘I had gone [to see] Zayd today’, and we hear *him* saying that. So he is free to choose [either of those two alternatives].

1. Abū Hāshim ibn al-Jubbā‘ī is considered to be the originator of the theory of ‘*aḥwāl*’ (states or modes). He maintained God’s Attributes to be the states of His essence. For a detailed account of this issue, cf. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Kalām*, pp. 147–234.

If, in this section, we base our objective on our principle concerning the absoluteness of the Lord the Sublime in the creation and the impossibility of the being of other than Him to be the giver of existence, then it will become clear in this principle the absurdity of the argument that, since the Creator is the Speaker being the agent of Speech, so He is the agent of the temporally originated speech but not the speaker of it.

The compulsion imposed by the Najjāriyyah¹ is quite clear. They agreed with the People of Truth that the Lord the Exalted is the Creator of the actions (*a'māl*) of people [lit. servants], but [this belief] did not persist with them for long. Now their belief is that the speaker is he who makes the speech. So speech according to the doctrine of the adversaries is sounds, and if the speaker is he who makes the speech, then the agent of sounds (*muṣawwit*) is he who makes the sounds. From this [argument] it necessitates that the being of the Creator, Who is above what the deviated ones say, is the giver of sounds since He is the agent of sounds.

If by these decisive arguments the doctrine of those who maintain that the speaker is he who makes the speech is proved absurd, then what becomes inevitable is that speech is specific to the speaker in some respect. If the aspect of the act is refuted, nothing remains for the investigation and analysis after proving the absurdity of what we have mentioned except [to accept] what we approve, that the speaker is he in whom the speech subsists. The affirmation (*thubūt*) of this principle will invalidate [the thesis] that speech necessitates some provision for its substratum, which is the being of the speaker, and that every attribute which subsists in a substratum necessitates a certain provision. These preliminary remarks are enough to express our objective in refuting the [thesis of our] adversaries. Now we will direct our attention to some questions before investigating the purpose of the issue.

We say speech in the detailed *kalām* exposition is a branch [of study] for affirming the being of the Creator the Exalted as the Speaker. So on what ground do they reject the one who claims that He is not the Speaker at all? If they claim that the speaker is he who makes the speech, whereas the Creator, the Exalted and Glorified, is powerful (*muqtadir*) over creating the speech and originating it, then we say we have already refuted in the introductory ways your doctrine, [stating,] 'the speaker is he who makes the speech', so what you mention regarding the Speech being an object-of-power (*maqḍūr*) of God is enough from you. However, why do you claim that His object-of-power has already occurred? Besides, not everything that the intellect makes requisite for being subjected to the power of the Creator the Exalted

1. The text reads 'al-Bakhāriyyah'. I have not come across any sect by that name in the works of heresiographers. There seems to be an error made by the copyist in misplacing the 'diacritical point' on the third and fourth letters of this word. Al-Juwaynī seems to be alluding to al-Najjāriyyah the followers of Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Najjār, a Mu'tazilite from Rayy. Cf. al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa'l-nihal*, p. 89.

necessitates occurring because that will lead to infinite temporal occurrences since the objects-of-power [of God] are infinite.

If they say we know the occurrence of the [Divine] Speech and God describing Himself as Speaker through the miracles, and the extraordinary signs (*al-āyāt al-khāriq li'l-‘ādāt*) denoting the veracity of those who claimed prophethood, also that the prophets reported the Speech of God the Exalted and its occurrence, and they were truthful and were assisted by the indubitable [Divine] Signs and trustworthy demonstrations. They support this claim of theirs by saying: the knowledge concerning negating imperfections [from God] has been based on the *sam‘* for you, and the assertion of the Speech of God the Exalted is supported by the miracles for you. So on what ground do you reject the one who follows your way in that?

We say our opponents are from the Mu‘tazilites and some of their kind who were reluctant at first to affirm the miracles and adhere to knowledge in general which denotes the truth of those who were challenged about them. We will discuss it, God willing, in [the chapter on] the miracles.¹ Further we say what holds proper for you does not hold proper for us. So, in an attempt to affirm the truth [revealed] from the Sovereign, what we would say is, he [i.e., the Prophet] took the front seat at a promised known place; he was surrounded by those among his entourage who particularly served him. Then he laid a strong claim for himself amid all those who were present that he was the messenger of the Sovereign to those who were present and absent. That [claim] was based on the visions from the Sovereign and what he heard [from Him]. In this state he called to witness the affirmation of his mission (*risālah*) by the command issued from the Sovereign in a way that defied the customary norm. The Sovereign responded to [him in] his affliction; they approved of his claim. This denotes the confirmation by the Sovereign Himself of His utterance [subsisting] in Himself, whereas the manifest act was its interpretation coming down to the level of expressions conventionally established for understanding meanings.

So, this is our way. But that is not favourable to the Mu‘tazilites because according to them the meaning of ‘the Creator the Exalted is the Speaker’ is ‘He is the agent of Speech.’ But there is nothing in the manifestation of the signs [in the Qur‘ān] which denotes that the Creator the Exalted created the articulated sounds, which are speech, in some bodies (*ajsām*), and that the miracles are connected for the assent (*taṣḍīq*) of its manifestation. If the assent is its attribute, then the object of assent should be qualified by it according to the critical investigation (*tahqīq*), but from the act a real attribute does not return to the agent, so the miracles cannot denote the affirmation of the Speech.

What should be clear from our objective in the above [exposition] is that we have clarified with demonstrations that an agent of assent cannot become the assent for

1. Cf. *Kitāb al-irshād*, pp. 307ff.

his act. Therefore assent is a genre of speech. We have already mentioned in general the absurdity of the opinion of the one who maintains that the speaker is he who makes the speech, for that comprises assent which is one kind of speech.

According to the doctrines of Mu'tazilites it is absurd that God assents to the [mission] of the messengers by the Utterance (*qawl*) and denotation of the miracles confirming the veracity of the prophets, and that this [denotation] comes down to the level of assent by the Utterance. It is quite clear that the denotation of miracles [confirming the mission of the messengers] is absurd according to their corrupted beliefs and contradictory principles. But in refuting the [value of] miracles the way leading the wayfarers to affirm the [divine] Utterance [Speech] is severed. This is how God deals with every resistant skeptic! So this is one objection against them before penetrating into the purpose of the issue.

To one of the issues they raise we say: Why do you reject the doctrine of the one who claims that He the Exalted is Speaker by virtue of Himself, just as He is Alive, Knowing, and Powerful by virtue of Himself according to you? Why don't they enjoin that God in His being is Willer by virtue of Himself? If they say: it is impossible that God is Willer and Speaker by virtue of Himself because an attribute that is constant in the [Divine] essence (*nafs*) necessitates that it should be universal in its relation if related to the rest of the objects of relation, and for that reason it would necessitate His being to be the Knower of all the [particular] objects of knowledge if He is the Knower by virtue of Himself. This that they mention is a barren assumption.

For some of the issues it is said: If the Lord the Exalted is the Willer by virtue of Himself of some objects of will and not the others, then this will correspond to the particularity of the temporally originated will related to its objects of relation. If someone says 'Why do you particularize will to the object of its relation, and why not go beyond that?' The response of the People of Truth is that every object of relation is related to that which is particular to it, and its particularity has no cause; it is particular to itself as it is related to itself. It is not conceded to them [the Mu'tazilites] that the [rational] proof indicates the Divine essence as the Knower of every object of knowledge, so essentially He is the Knower by virtue of Himself because the [rational] proof about Him is another aspect.

There is no escape from the issue that they have contradicted what they have established when they say, 'the Creator is powerful by virtue of Himself'. Then they claim that His being is powerful but is not related to all the objects of power, that the objects of power of people, according to them, are not the objects of power of God. God is more exalted than they say! So this is the attribute of the soul according to the claim they particularize. If they say speech is articulated sounds and arranged letters, and there is no proof that speaking issues from the soul, then what they maintain is based upon their reliance on what is established which is devoid of absurdity, [then we say] we have already affirmed that speech which subsists in

the soul is not letters, sounds, melodies and chants. This much is our intention in presenting these objections.

Then know that speech according to the Mu'tazilites, and the rest of the adversaries who are concerned with this issue, is related to negation and affirmation. What they affirm and estimate is the speech, which in it, is affirmed [by us]. And their saying, 'it is the Speech of God the Exalted' is traced back [by them] to the product of the derivative of speech in languages and the objects which have names. The meaning of their saying, 'these expressions are the Speech of God' is that they are His creation. We do not deny that they are not the creation of God, but we refrain from naming the Creator of Speech 'the Speaker of it'. So we have already concurred on the meaning (or intention, *ma'nī*), but our dispute after the mutual agreement is on its naming.

The Speech which the People of Truth decree as eternal is the Speech that subsists in the [divine] essence [or reality]. The adversaries deny its origin and do not affirm it. They dispute after affirming it whether it is eternal or temporally originated. If we raise the objection by argument, it will amount to affirming the existent [of Speech in the divine essence,] whose origin they deny. So we say: It has been established that the divine existence (*kawn*) of God the Exalted is the Speaker of Speech, and the intellects characterize His Speech by it in some respect so there is no need for formally affirming that by proof.

Furthermore, the characterization agreed on the basis of the doctrine and made requisite rationally is related to the Act of the Creator, or it is particular to another attribute from His essential or spiritual attributes (*ṣifātuḥu al-naḥsiyyah aw al-ma'nawiyah*). Besides, the thesis leading to the characterization of speech as an act of God the Exalted has already been refuted, for we have already explained in what we presented [earlier] the reason for refuting those who maintain that the 'speaker is he who makes the speech'. It is also invalid to change the characterization related to the Divine Knowledge, His Will, His Hearing, or His Vision to the substance of [Divine] Speech, for these aspects are realized in the speech of people with their characterization by being qualified by it.

It is not proper to say that Speech, in a way, is particular to the essential attribute of the Creator the Exalted, for that would be [affirming something] in a general manner without any claim for particularity. We have, in an attempt to explain it, given a detailed [account of it]. So he who says in general that Speech is particular to Him, or it is one of His essential attributes, without any demonstration which could explain the reason for particularity, does not arrive at any [rational] conclusion.

When the application of particularity [or characterization] to various aspects already mentioned is invalidated, what becomes certain is that the Speech of the Creator the Glorified and Exalted is particular to Him, who has the characteristic of being subsisting [in Him]. If that is established, it leads to the impossibility of

it being temporally originated because it has been argued that it is impossible for Him to receive temporal creations. After refuting these diverse [doctrines], what holds [true] is the doctrine of the People of Truth concerning the description of the Exalted Creator ‘that essentially He is the Speaker of eternal beginningless Speech.’ The rational arguments for it are abundant, but what we have mentioned is sufficient.

Section: The Speech of God is eternal according to the Ḥashwiyyah

The Ḥashwiyyah,¹ who incline toward the literal meaning [of the Qur’ān], hold that the Speech of God the Exalted is eternal and beginningless. Further, they maintain that it is letters and sounds, and firmly assert that what is heard from the sounds of the recital [i.e. the Qur’ān] and their melodies are identical with the Speech of God the Exalted. Those among them who are downright literalists are of the opinion that what is heard [from the recitation of the Qur’ān] is the voice of God the Exalted. These are the analogies of their ignorance.

Also, they maintain that if the Speech of God the Exalted is written on a body (*jism*), and those bodies are arranged as inscription, imprint, lines and words, they are identical with the eternal Speech of God the Exalted though that body is temporally originated [at first], but then it is transformed to something eternal. They also decree that what is seen in the [written] lines [of the Qur’ān] is the eternal Divine Speech, which is letters and sounds. Their basis is that the sounds [of the Divine Speech, i.e. the Qur’ān], which are articulated and follow in succession, are fixed in eternity (*azal*), and subsist in the essence of the Creator. God is more exalted than their opinion!

The principles of their doctrine are based on resisting the immediate knowledge (*darūrāt*).² Verily, according to their claim, they affirm for the eternal Divine Speech the beginning and the end, and set for it the preceding and the preceded. For indeed [they say] the second letter of every word [in the Qur’ān] is preceded by a letter before it, and every preceded [letter] has a beginning in existence, so we are compelled to know that [the Divine Speech], having a beginning in existence, is temporally originated. It is obvious that due to their reluctance [to accept] the self-evident [knowledge] of the intellects in judgment, they have transformed that which is temporally originated to something eternal.

What establishes their ignominy in denying the [rational] truths is that according to them the letters of the alphabet [of the Qur’ān], though depicted from some

1. Al-Shahrastānī lists them under the category of Sunni literalists. Cf. *al-Milal*, vol. 1, pp. 105–106. A. S. Halkin identifies them with literalists and Ḥanbalites; cf. ‘Ḥashwiyya’, in *JAOS*, 54 (1934), pp. 1–28.

2. Regarding ‘*a priori* knowledge’, cf. al-Juwaynī’s discourse on ‘the reality of knowledge’, pp. 12–16 translated above.

substances, are nevertheless identical with the Speech of God the Exalted. But the iron from which the letters [of the Qur'ān] are formed is no more iron [*qua* iron] in its being [when formatted], for we perceive the piece of iron as a formatted body. How can we tolerate the argument of people who have reached such an extreme limit [of literalness]? Furthermore, the most ignorant among them are determined [in their belief] that when the name of God is written down in the form of writing, the imprint seen [in the writing] is identical with God and is the object of worship (*ma'būd*), which one should glorify.

Furthermore, their principle is that the eternal Divine Speech inheres in the letters of the alphabet [of the Qur'ān] and is not separate from the [Divine] essence. This is playing with the religion, and escaping from the boundary (set by Islam and) the Muslims. It resembles the stipulation of the doctrine of the Christians who in time maintained that the divine Word subsisted in Christ and the human body was its armour. If the majority of the common people were not deluded by the slogan of those [literalists], the state of resistance to turning away from these initial weaknesses and continuous ignominy would not have persisted.

Section: The discourse on the recitation [of the Qur'ān]

The recitation [of the Qur'ān], according to the People of Truth, is the sounds of the reciters and their melodies. These are their acquisitions (*aksāb*) by which they are commanded to fulfil something that is incumbent for some worship and recommended for most of the time. They will be chastised if they turn away from them, rewarded if they fulfil them, and punished if they neglect them. This is the consensus of the Muslims. The traditions also speak about it, and some exhaustive reports also indicate so. However, reward and punishment are not connected to anything but what the worshippers acquire. So, connecting the *taklīf* and the desirable (*targhīb*) act, or censured (*ta'nīf*) act to the eternal attribute [i.e., the divine Speech] which is outside the contingents and beyond the decreed things, is inappropriate.

Besides, the recitation [of the Qur'ān], which is delightful [to listen to] from one reciter, distorted from another, incorrect in intonation [by some], or straight and regular [in others], is far from all that we have mentioned about the eternal attribute. He who obligates reason would not think that the sounds which his throat emits by which his jugular vein is swelled due to the habitual recitation [of the Qur'ān], and his [recitation] according to his predilection or choice, incorrect or distorted form, [recited] manifestly or secretly, is the Speech itself of God the Exalted. So, this was the discourse on the recitation [of the Qur'ān].

Section: The discourse on the object of recitation

The object of recitation (*maqrīʿ*) in the recital [of the Qurʾān] is the object of understanding (*mafḥūm*) from which the object of knowledge (*maʿlūm*) [is attained], and that is the eternal divine Speech which is denoted by the expressions but is not *from* them. So the object of recitation does not inhere in the reciter, and nor does it subsist in him. The way of recitation and the object of recitation are like that of the remembrance (*dhikr*) [of God] and the object of remembrance (*madhkūr*). The remembrance reverts to the utterances of those who remember, but the Lord Who is the Object of remembrance, praise, and glorification is other than the remembrance, praise, and glorification. The Arabs have invented many kinds of denotations (*dalālāt*) for the objects of denotation in expressions. The poetic communication is called ‘chant’ (*inshād*); the information about the things absent which are not speeches is called ‘remembrance’, and the Speech of God the Exalted denoted in sounds is called ‘recitation’.

Section: The Speech of God the Exalted does not inhere in the Scripture

The Speech of God the Exalted is written in the Scripture, guarded in the ‘chests’ (or hearts, *ṣudūr*), and does not inhere (*ḥāll*) in the Scripture, nor does it subsist in the heart. Writing may be interpreted as motions of the writer; it may be interpreted as inscribed letters and imprinted lines, all of which are temporally originated. What is indicated in the lines and understood from them is the eternal Divine Speech. This generally corresponds to the saying that the Speech of God the Exalted is written in the Scriptures, but by that it does not mean that it is connected to the bodies [i.e., the letters of the Scripture] and subsists in the material things.

None from those inclined toward critical investigation maintain that the Divine Speech subsists in the substratum of the lines [of the Scripture] but al-Jubbāʿī, and we have narrated some of his senseless jabber. He is influenced by al-Najjār [who maintained] that the imprints [in the Scripture] are the bodies of the Speech of God the Exalted, and the Speech is sounds during its recitation and bodies while writing. All such [assumptions] are deviation from, and confusion in striving for the Truth and extremism in the apprehension of the Truth.

Section: The Speech of God is heard

The Speech of God the Exalted is heard (*masmūʿ*) according to Muslims in general. The testimony of that is from the Book of God the Exalted. His saying is, ‘If one among the polytheists asks thee for asylum, grant it to him so that he may hear the Speech of God’ [Qurʾān 9:6]. The word ‘hearing’ (*samāʿ*) is an equivocal

word; its meanings are neither defined, nor are what is requisite of them isolated. So, it may mean 'perception', it may mean 'understanding' or 'encompassing', it may mean 'obedience' or 'following', or it may mean 'response'. However, 'hearing' in the sense of 'comprehension' is quite well known and obvious, whereas 'hearing' in the sense of 'understanding' and 'knowledge' is widely prevalent and mentioned and cannot be denied. God the Exalted has described the obstinate in unbelief (*kufr*) as deaf.¹ Here the intention is not the defect in their sense [of hearing], but their turning away from perceiving the meanings, not encompassing what they have been warned about, and their turning away from reflection on the signs of God the Exalted.

If a narrator narrates a speech of someone in a certain way, the hearer of the great amount of [his] sounds may say, 'I had heard the speech of so-and-so.' By that he means the one who is absent [and whose speech was narrated] communicated to him the meaning [or intention] of his speech. What is definite is that what is heard and perceived at the moment [of hearing] are the sounds. So if the Speech of God the Exalted is called 'something heard', it means its essence (*kawn*) is understood and known from the sounds which are heard and perceived. The testimony of that is from some of the propositions of the *Sharī'ah* on which there is consensus of the Community that the Exalted Lord specially selected [prophet] Moses and others from [His] chosen ones among mankind and angels in order to make them hear His mighty Speech without any intermediary. If the hearer perceived the Speech itself of God the Exalted from the recitation [of the Qur'ān] by the reciter, then Moses, peace be upon him, would not have been chosen specially to have been spoken to (*taklīm*)² [by God] and to apprehend the Speech of God without the preaching of a preacher, or transmission from a messenger.

Section: The meaning of 'coming down' (inzāl) of the Speech of God the Exalted

The Speech of God the Exalted has 'come down' to the prophets, which has been indicated by many signs (*āyah*) from the Book of God the Exalted. However, 'coming down' does not mean the descent of a thing from an elevated place to a lower place. For 'coming down' in the sense of transference is particular to bodies and material things. He who believes the Speech of God the Exalted to be eternal, and its subsistence in the Creator Himself the Sublime and Exalted, and the impossibility of its disconnection from Him to Whom it is attributed, will have no doubt of the impossibility of its transference. Also he, who believes the [Divine] Speech to be temporally originated and arrives at [the conclusion] that it is one of the accidents (*'arad*), will also not permit in his creed the measure of transference, because an accident neither separates, nor transfers [from its substratum].

1. Cf. Qur'ān 2:18.

2. Ibid. 7:143.

So the meaning of ‘coming down’ (*inzāl*) is that Gabriel, peace of God be upon him, apprehended the Speech of God the Exalted when he was in his station above the seven heavens. Then he came down to the earth and made the messenger, may peace of God be upon him and salutation, comprehend what he comprehended when he was before the Lote-tree (*Sidrat al-muntahā*) without transferring the essence (or reality, *dhāt*) of the Speech. If someone says, ‘The message of the sovereign has come down from the castle’, by that [statement] does not imply the transference of his sounds, or the transference of his speech which subsists in his soul.

Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Ghazzālī

Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Ghazzālī Ṭūsī (sometimes known as Ghazzālī) is perhaps the most famous person to have been born on the Iranian plateau if we consider his fame on a worldwide scale. His influence in Islamic thought was so profound and enduring that some later scholars considered him to be the greatest figure of Islam after the period of the 'rightly guided' caliphs. Known as the 'Proof of Islam' (*ḥujjat al-islām*), the 'Renewer of Religion' (*mujaddid*) and the 'Ornament of Faith' (*zayn al-dīn*), he was at once jurist, Qur'ānic commentator, theologian, logician, philosophical critic of philosophy and Sufi. His life became proverbial and his works, written in both Arabic and Persian, have been read avidly for the past nine centuries throughout the Islamic world and continue to be studied widely by both Muslims themselves and Western scholars of Islam.

This remarkably original thinker in the traditional sense of the term was born in Ṭūs in Khurāsān in 450/1058. As a young boy he lost his father and he was brought up along with his brother Aḥmad Ghazzālī, who is one of the poles of Sufism and author of one of the most important Persian texts of Sufism *al-Sawānih fi'l-'ishq* (Inspirations from the World of Pure Spirits), in a Sufi family. His first encounter with Sufism, to which he was to return in later life, therefore came in his youth. Abū Ḥāmid, who was a precocious student, studied with various masters in Ṭūs, Jurjān, and especially Nayshābūr, which was then the main seat of Islamic learning in Khurāsān, his most famous teacher in theology having been Imām al-Ḥaramayn Abu'l Ma'ālī Juwaynī. In his mid-thirties Abū Ḥāmid was already a celebrated scholar, so famous that he was invited by the famous Seljuq wazir Khwājah Nizām al-Mulk to come to the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad to occupy the chair of Shāfi'ī law in the most illustrious centre of learning in the Islamic world at that time.

Ghazzālī accepted the invitation and in 484/1097 set out for Baghdad where he was to teach for four years. While bathing in worldly success and fame in the Abbasid capital, Ghazzālī fell into religious doubt as a result of reading works on

philosophy which he had never studied with a master. Being a person of extreme intellectual sincerity, he could not live in a state of hypocrisy. He therefore relinquished his position, bade farewell to his family and left everything behind in quest of certitude (*yaqīn*). For ten years from 488/1095 to 498/1105 he lived away from public view, wandering in areas stretching from Mecca to Jerusalem and Damascus. His life was spent in spiritual exercise, in meditation, invocation and prayer. Through Sufism, which he now began to practise earnestly, he regained certitude and the eye of his heart was opened to perceive directly the realities of the invisible world.

Finally, he returned to his homeland, teaching for a year at the Nizāmiyyah of Nayshābūr and then retreating for the last six years of his life to his city of birth, Ṭūs, where he trained a number of his choicest students and wrote his final works. Although invited to return to Baghdad, he declined, preferring the quieter ambience of his native city. He died in 505/1111 in Ṭūs where his tomb can be seen to this day.

The life of Ghazzālī is itself a key to the understanding of his works and the reason for his vast influence. He became the foremost authority in the exoteric religious sciences only to fall into religious doubt before the challenge of Avicennan philosophy. He regained his certitude through the path of Sufism and became himself a major authority in the esoteric sciences. He therefore played a major role in the development of jurisprudence and theology on the one hand and Sufism on the other. Moreover, he exercised the most far-reaching effect upon the trajectory that later Islamic philosophy was to follow in Persia.

It was Ghazzālī who opened a new chapter in Ash'arite *kalām*. It was he who brought the study of Sufism into the world of official Sunni learning and created peace and harmony between the exoteric and esoteric dimensions of Islam, one which has endured for the most part to this day. It was he who wrote the most important work of ethics in Islamic history, the *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* (The Revivification of the Sciences of Religion) which he himself summarized in exquisite Persian prose as *Kīmīyā-yi sa'ādat* (The Alchemy of Happiness) and it was he who exposed some of the esoteric teachings of Sufism pertaining to knowledge in treatises such as *al-Ḥikmat al-laduniyyah* (The Wisdom issuing from God). It was also he who brought out some of the pearls of wisdom hidden in the symbols of the Light Verse in his *Mishkāt al-anwār* (The Niche of Lights), a work whose echoes can be seen centuries later in many works including Mullā Ṣadrā's commentary upon the same verse.

In his exposition of religious, mystical and theologian doctrines, Ghazzālī always tried to preserve a balance between the exoteric and the esoteric, never satisfied with only the external form, nor ever willing to forgo the external form in the name of the inward essence. The title of one of his most famous works *al-Iqtīṣād fi'l-i'tiqād* (The Just Mean in Belief) bears witness to this aspect of his thought. The

very word *iqtisād* in the title means in this context none other than balance between the inward and the outward and the avoidance of extremes in either direction.

The philosophical significance of Ghazzālī is great despite his opposition to the Peripatetic philosophical tradition. First of all, Ghazzālī wrote a number of works in Sufi metaphysics and epistemology, such as the ‘Book of Knowledge’ of the *Iḥyā’*, which are of considerable philosophical importance and influenced later thinkers. This is also true of his writings on ethics and eschatology as well as certain of his Qur’ānic commentaries. Secondly, Ghazzālī wrote three works on logic: *Maḥakk al-naẓar* (Touchstone of Speculation), *Mi’yār al-‘ilm* (The Criterion of Knowledge) and *al-Qiṣṣ al-mustaqīm* (The Straight Balance) which deal with the science of logic but use a terminology based not on Aristotelian logic but on the Qur’ān. Ghazzālī asserted that he was the first person to have extracted the laws of logic and its vocabulary from the Qur’ān and believed that the origin of logic is divine revelation and that even the Greeks learned their logic from what God had revealed to the prophets of old such as Abraham and Moses.

Finally, the most important philosophical contribution of Ghazzālī is in his criticism of Peripatetic philosophy which he discusses already in his autobiography *al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl* (Our Deliverance from Error). To carry out a more systematic criticism, Ghazzālī first of all summarized Ibn Sīnā’s views in a work that Ghazzālī entitled *Maqāṣid al-falāsifah* (The Purposes of the Philosophers) and that is practically an Arabic translation of Ibn Sīnā’s Persian work *Dānishnāma-yi ‘Alā’ī* (The Book of Science dedicated to ‘Alā’ al-Dawlah). This work of Ghazzālī is so lucidly written that it became a favourite source for the learning of Islamic philosophy in the Islamic world and also in the West where its Latin translation became popular and where its author, the Latin Algazel, came to be considered a philosopher like Ibn Sīnā and not an opponent of Peripatetic philosophy.

This work was, however, merely a preparation for Ghazzālī’s major criticism of Peripatetic philosophy in general and Ibn Sīnā in particular which he carried out in his *Tahāfut al-falāsifah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers) to which Ibn Rushd was to respond in his *Tahāfut al-tahāfut* (The Incoherence of the Incoherence). While Ibn Rushd’s response did not elicit many sympathizers among Muslims, the work of Ghazzālī played a major role in curtailing the power of rationalism and indirectly prepared the ground for the spread of the teachings of the school of illumination (*ishrāq*) associated with Suhrawardī. Moreover, Ghazzālī began a fashion among the *mutakallimūn* to write against the philosophers in a type of literature that became a distinct *genre* and is usually called *tahāfut* literature. There were at least three other works of this name written by Quṭb al-Dīn Rāwandī (sixth/twelfth century), ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Ṭūsī (ninth/fifteenth century) and Khwājah-zādah Muṣliḥ al-Dīn ibn Yūsuf (ninth/fifteenth century). There were also works with other titles but inspired by Ghazzālī’s *Tahāfut* such as *Muṣāri‘at al-falāsifah* (Struggling/Wrestling with the Philosophers) of Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Karīm Shahrastānī and *Ta’jiz*

al-falāsifah (The Impotence of the Philosophers) of Imam Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī both written during the century following Ghazzālī.

Altogether Ghazzālī was one of the most creative and influential thinkers in the whole history of philosophical thought in Persia. His influence in the Islamic world ranged from the field of spiritual ethics to vast political monuments that changed the face of North Africa and Spain. His role in the development of Shāfi‘ī jurisprudence, Ash‘arite *kalām*, and Sufism is immense — and in the field of philosophy, while being a controversial figure opposed by the followers of Ibn Sīnā, he nevertheless continued to exercise considerable influence upon later Persian philosophers, as can be seen clearly in the writings of so many Safavid and Qajar philosophers such as Mullā Ṣadrā, Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī and Ḥājji Mullā Hādī Sabziwārī.

The first section of this chapter is from Ghazzālī’s *Tahāfut al-falāsifah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers) where he deals with questions concerning the inability of philosophers to explain properly certain Attributes of God as well as their inability to show that the world had a Maker and that His knowledge of the world is not limited only to universals. This section also deals with certain problems concerning causality. In the second section, we have included a discussion concerning the problem of Attributes as presented in Ghazzālī’s *al-Iqtisād fi’l-i’tiqād* (The Just Mean in Belief). In the third section, a discussion of the intellect and its divisions as presented in Ghazzālī’s *Ihyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn* (Revivification of the Sciences of Religion) has been included.

S. H. Nasr

THE INCOHERENCE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

Tahāfut al-falāsifah

Reprinted from Ghazzālī's *Tahāfut al-falāsifah*, tr. Michael E. Marmura as *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* (Provo, Utah, 1997), pp. 125–146, and 170–181.

[Tenth] Discussion

On their inability to show that the world has a maker and a cause

(1) We say:

(2) [When] those who maintain that every body is temporally originated because it is never devoid of temporal events state that [the world] needs a maker and a cause, their doctrine is intelligible. But as for you [philosophers], what is there to prevent you from [upholding] the doctrine of the materialists—namely, that the world is eternal, that no body in the world is originated and no body annihilated, but [that] what occurs temporally is forms and accidents? For [according to this doctrine] the bodies consist of the heavens, which are eternal, [and] the four elements constituting the stuff of the sub-lunar sphere. The bodies and materials [of the latter] are [likewise] eternal. It is only that the forms, through mixtures and transformations, undergo successive change over [these bodies]; the human and the vegetative souls come into temporal existence. The causes of [all] these [temporal] events terminate in the circular motion, the circular motion being eternal, its source an eternal soul of the heavens. Hence, [according to the materialists] there is no cause for the world and no maker of its bodies, but it continues eternally to be in the manner that it is, without a cause (I mean [without a cause of its] bodies). What, then is the sense of their saying that these bodies come into being through a cause, when [such bodies] are eternal?

(3) If it is said, 'Whatever has no cause is necessary of existence, and we have made a statement concerning those attributes of the Necessary Existent through which it was shown that body cannot be a Necessary Existent,' we say:

(4) We have shown the falsity of what you have claimed concerning the attributes of the Necessary Existent [and have shown] that demonstration only proves the termination of the [causal] series. And this, for the materialist, has already terminated at the outset. For he states that bodies have no cause and that, as regards forms and accidents, [these] cause each other, until [such causes and effects] reach the circular motion [of the heavens], parts of which [in turn] are causes of [other] parts (as it is with the doctrine of the philosophers), the regress [of the series of the causes of forms and accidents] terminating [with the circular motion]. Whoever reflects on what we have said will know the inability of the one who believes in the eternity of bodies to claim for them a cause; and the necessary consequence for him is materialism and atheism, as openly declared by a group. For these [latter]

are the ones who [in reality] have fulfilled the requirements of the speculation of [the philosophers].

(5) If it is said, ‘the proof of this is that these bodies are either necessary in existence, which is impossible, or [that they are] possible [in existence], and every possible is in need of a cause,’ we say:

(6) The expression ‘necessary existent’ and the expression ‘possible existent’ are incomprehensible. All their obfuscations are hidden in these two expressions. Let us then turn to what is comprehensible—namely, the negation or affirmation of the cause. It would then be as though they ask, ‘Do these bodies have a cause or do they not have a cause?’ To this the materialist replies, ‘They have no cause.’ What is [so] disavowable in this? If, then, this is what is meant by possibility, we [disagree and] say, ‘[Body] is necessary and not contingent.’ Their statement that it is not possible for body to be necessary is arbitrary and groundless.

(7) If it is said, ‘It is undeniable that body has parts and that the aggregate is substantiated by the parts and that the parts essentially precede the aggregate,’¹ we say:

(8) ‘Let this be the case. The aggregate, then, is substantiated by the parts and their combination—there being no cause, however, for the parts or their combination. Rather, these are likewise eternal, having no efficient cause.’ They are unable to refute this except with what they had mentioned of the necessity of denying multiplicity in the First Existent. But we have refuted this, and they have no other way [to argue for their position] except it.

(9) Hence, it has become clear that whoever does not believe in the creation of bodies has no basis whatsoever for his belief in the maker.

[Eleventh] Discussion

On showing the impotence of those among them who perceive that the First knows other[s] and knows the genera and species in a universal way

(1) We say:

(2) Inasmuch as existence for the Muslims² is confined to the temporally originated and the eternal, there being for them no eternal other than God and His attributes, [all things] other than Him being originated from His direction through His will, a necessary premise regarding His knowledge became realized for them. For that which is willed must necessarily be known to the willer. On this they built [the argument] that everything is known to Him because all [things] are willed by Him and originated by His will. Hence, there is no generated being that is not originated by His will, nothing remaining [uncreated] except Himself. And as long

1. Hence, presumably the parts must have a cause for both their existence and their combination in order to form a body.

2. More literally, ‘As for Muslims, inasmuch as existence, according to them ...’ One notices here that al-Ghazzālī identifies Muslims with those who affirm the world’s creation *ex nihilo*.

as it is established that He is a willer, knowing what He wills, He is necessarily a living being. And with any living being that knows another, knowing himself takes priority. Hence, for [Muslims] all existents are known to God, and they came to know this in this way after it became evident to them that He wills the temporal origination of the world. As for you [philosophers], if you claim the world to be pre-eternal, not originated through His will,¹ how, then do you know that He knows [what is] other than Himself? A proof for this is necessary.

(3) The sum of what Avicenna mentioned in ascertaining this in the course of his discussion reduces to two sorts [of argument].

(4) The first sort [of argument consists in saying] that the First does not exist in matter: whatever does not exist in matter is a pure intellect and whatever is pure intellect has all the intelligibles laid bare to it.² For the impediment to apprehending all things is attachment to matter and preoccupation with it. The soul of the human being is preoccupied with managing matter—that is, the body. Once [the human's] preoccupation [with the body] ceases with death, [the individual,] not having been tarnished by bodily appetites and base qualities that come to him from natural things, has the realities of all the intelligibles unveiled to him. For this reason, [Avicenna] adjudged that all the angels know all the intelligibles, nothing escaping them, since they too are pure intellects, not existing in matter.

(5) [To this] we say:

(6) If by your statement that the First does not exist in matter it is meant that He is neither body nor imprinted in a body, but rather that He is self-subsistent without being spatial or specified with spatial position, that is admitted. There remains your statement that that which has this description is a pure intellect. What, then, do you mean by 'intellect'? If you mean by it that which apprehends intellectually the rest of things, this would be the very thing sought after and the point at dispute. How, then, did you include it in the premises of the syllogism for [establishing] what is being sought after? If you mean by it something else—namely, that it apprehends itself intellectually—some of your philosopher brethren may concede this to you, but it amounts to saying that whatever conceives itself conceives another, in which case it would be asked, 'Why do you claim this, when it is not necessary?' This is [something] which Avicenna held, setting himself apart from the rest of the philosophers. How, then, do you claim it to be necessary? If it is [attained through] reflection, what demonstration is there for it?³

1. Al-Ghazzālī here reaffirms his position that a pre-eternal world means the denial of the eternal will. An alternative possible translation would be: 'As for you [philosophers], if you claim the world to be pre-eternal, then it is not originated through His will.' This would be followed by the interrogative, 'How, then, ...?' But if this is the intention, one would have expected the *lam yaḥduth* to read *lam yakun yaḥduth* as a relative clause.

2. See, for example, Avicenna's Commentary on the *De Anima* in *Aristū 'ind al-'arab*, ed. A. R. Badawī (Cairo, 1947), p. 108.

3. This, again, is the agreed-on division of knowledge into that which is a self-evident

(7) If it is then said, ‘This is because the impediment to the apprehension of things is matter, but [here] there is no matter,’ we say:

(8) We concede that it is an impediment, but we do not concede that it is the only impediment. Their syllogism is ordered according to the form of the conditional syllogism—namely, in saying: ‘If this is in matter, then it does not apprehend things intellectually. It is not in matter. Therefore, it apprehends things intellectually.’ This [way of arguing] consists in adding the contradictory of the antecedent.¹ But, as all agree,² adding the contradictory of the antecedent does not yield a valid conclusion. This is similar to one’s saying: ‘If this is a human, then it is an animal. It is not a human. Therefore, it is not an animal.’ For, it may not be a human, but a horse, whereby it would be an animal.

(9) Yes, [it is true that] repeating the antecedent negatively would yield the consequent as a valid conclusion, as mentioned in logic, [but] with a condition—namely, establishing the convertibility of the consequent and the antecedent through restriction. An example of this is their saying: ‘If the sun has risen, then it is daytime. But the sun has not risen. Therefore it is not daytime.’ This is [valid] because the existence of daytime has no other cause than the rising of the sun. Hence, each [i.e., antecedent and consequent] is convertible to the other. The showing of these modes and terms is explained in the book *Mi’yār al-‘ilm* (‘The Criterion of Knowledge’), which we have composed and appended to this book.

(10) If it is said, ‘We claim convertibility—namely, in that the impediment is restricted to matter, there being no impediment other than it,’ we say:

(11) This is arbitrary assertion. Where is the proof for it?

necessary truth and that which is known to be true through ‘reflection’ or ‘theory,’ requiring a demonstrative proof to establish it. See Discussion 1, note 5, above.

1. *Istithnā’ naqīḍ al-muqaddam*: In the evolution of the term *istithnā’* in the history of Arabic logic, ‘adding’ is one meaning, although in its final form ‘repeating’ would be the closest to its actual meaning. Translating the term as ‘repeating’ works ideally in the *modus ponens* argument where, in the syllogism, ‘If A then B, B, therefore A,’ is ‘repeated.’ To translate the above literally, however, as ‘repeating the contradictory of the antecedent,’ would be ambiguous, suggesting that the contradictory of the antecedent had already been given and is not repeated. To convey the correct meaning, one would have to give a paraphrase rather than a translation, such as ‘repeating the antecedent [but] in [its] contradictory [form].’ For a valuable discussion of the term *istithnā’* in conditional syllogism, see Kwame Gyekye, ‘The Term *Istithnā’* in Arabic Logic,’ *JAOS* 92, no. 1 (January-March, 1972), pp. 88–92.

2. *Bi’l-ittifāq*: Literally ‘by agreement’ in this context, ‘by coincidence’ or ‘by chance’ in other contexts. Avicenna uses it in the latter sense in his discussion of the conditional syllogism. The expression he uses is *ittafaqa ittifaqan*, which can be translated as ‘happening by coincidence.’ This is when the antecedent and the consequent both happen to be true with no immediate apparent necessary connection between them, as in the statement, ‘If man exists, then horse also exists.’ See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā’: al-Qiyās*, ed. S. Zayed (Cairo, 1964), 1.1, p. 234. For a translation and commentary, see N. Shehaby, *The Propositional Logic of Avicenna* (Dordrecht, Holland, and Boston, 1973), pp. 37–38. Since both al-Ghazzālī and Avicenna are using similar expression in their discussion of the conditional syllogism, it is tempting to read al-Ghazzālī as meaning by *bi al-ittifāq* what Avicenna means. This, however, does not seem to be the case.

(12) The second sort [of argument] is [Avicenna's] statement: 'Even though we did not say that the First wills origination nor that the whole [world] is temporally originated, we [nonetheless] say that [the world] is His act and has come to existence through Him, except that He continues to have the attribute of [those who are] agents and hence is ever enacting. We differ from others only to this extent. But as far as the basis of the act is concerned, [the answer is,] "No." And if the agent's having knowledge of His act is necessary, as all agree, then the whole, according to us, is due to His act.'

(13) The answer [to this] is in two respects.

(14) The first is that action divides into two [kinds]: voluntary, like the action of animal[s] and human[s], and natural, like the action of the sun in shedding light, fire in heating, and water in cooling. Knowledge of the act is only necessary in the voluntary act, as in the human arts. As regards natural action [the answer is,] 'No.' [Now,] according to you [philosophers], God enacted the world by way of necessity from His essence, by nature and compulsion, not by way of will and choice. Indeed, the whole [of the world] follows necessarily from His essence in the way that light follows necessarily from the sun. And just as the sun has no power to stop light and fire [has no power] to stop heating, the First has no power to stop His acts, may He be greatly exalted above what they say. This mode [of expression] [even] if metaphorically named an 'act,' basically does not entail knowledge for the agent.

(15) [To this it may be] said:

(16) There is a difference between the two—namely, that the whole proceeded from His essence because of His knowledge of the whole. Thus, the representation of the order of the whole is the cause of the emanation of the whole. There is no principle for [the existence of the whole] other than [His] knowledge of the whole. [His] knowledge of the whole is identical with His essence. Had He had no knowledge of the whole, the whole would not have come into existence. This is unlike [the case] of light and the sun.

(17) [To this] we say:

(18) In this your [philosopher] brethren disagreed with you. For they said, 'His essence is an essence from which the existence of the whole in its order follows necessarily, naturally and by compulsion, not inasmuch as He has knowledge of [this essence].? As long as you [Avicenna] agree with them in denying [God's] will, what is there that would render their doctrine impossible? And since knowledge of the sun of light was not made a condition for the necessity of light, light rather proceeding from it necessarily, let this be supposed with the First. There is nothing to prevent this [view].

(19) The second way [of answering the philosophers] is to concede that the proceeding of something from the agent also requires knowledge of what proceeds. [Now,] according to them, the act of God is one—namely, the first effect, which is

a simple intellect—[from this it follows] that He must know only it. The first effect would [also] know only what proceeds from it. For the whole did not come into existence from God all at once, but through mediation, generation, and necessity. [Regarding] that which proceeds from what proceeds from Him, why should it be known to Him, when only one thing proceeds from Him? Indeed, [if] this [knowledge extending beyond the first effect] is not necessary with the voluntary act, how much more so [is it unnecessary] with the natural? For the [downward] motion of the stone from the top of a mountain may be due to a voluntary [act] that sets [it] in motion that necessitates knowledge of the source of the motion, but does not necessitate knowledge of what is generated by [the initial voluntary act] through the mediation [of the movement] by way of [the stone's] colliding and its breaking another. For this also, [Avicenna] has no answer.

(20) [To this it may be] said:

(21) If we judge it that He knows only Himself, this would be the ultimate in repugnancy. For that which is other [than Him] knows itself, knows Him, and knows another. Hence, it would be above Him in nobility. How can the effect be nobler than the cause?

(22) [To this] we say:

(23) This repugnancy is a necessary consequence of [the doctrine] to which philosophy leads in terms of denying [the divine] will and denying the world's temporal origination; hence, [the repugnancy] must either be committed in the same way that the rest of the philosophers have committed [it], or else one must forsake philosophy and confess that the world is temporally originated by the [divine] will.

(24) Moreover, one would say: 'With what would you disavow those among the philosophers who say that [the effect's having more knowledge than the cause] does not constitute greater honour? For, knowledge is needed by [a being] other [than God] only in order to acquire perfection. For [such a being] in himself is deficient. Man is ennobled by the intelligibles, either in order to acquire knowledge of what benefits him in terms of consequences in this world or the next, or to perfect his dark, deficient self. The same is the case with all other creatures. As far God's essence, it has no need for an act of perfecting [itself]. On the contrary, if one were to suppose for Him knowledge through which He is perfected, then His essence *qua* His essence would be deficient.'

(25) This is similar to what you [Avicenna] have said regarding hearing, seeing and knowledge of the particulars that fall under time. For you have agreed with the rest of the philosophers that God is above [such knowledge] and that the First does not know the things that undergo change in the realm of the temporal that divide into 'what was' and 'what will be,' because that would necessitate change in His essence [and the reception of] influence. [Accordingly,] no deficiency [is involved] in denying Him [such knowledge]; rather, it is perfection, deficiency belonging to

the senses and the need thereof. If it were not for the deficiency of the human, he would have no need of the senses to protect him against whatever subjects him to change. The same applies to knowledge of temporal particular events. You [philosophers] claim that it constitutes deficiency. If, then, we know all temporal events and apprehend all sensible things, but the First knows nothing of the particulars and apprehends nothing of the sensible things, this not being a deficiency [in Him], then knowledge of the intellectual universals can also be affirmed as belonging to another, but not affirmed of Him, this also not constituting deficiency [in Him]. From this [conclusion] there is no escape.

[Twelfth] Discussion

On showing their inability to prove that He also knows Himself

(1) We say: 'Inasmuch as the Muslims recognized the world to be temporally originated through His will, they inferred knowledge from the will and then inferred life from both will and knowledge. From life they then [inferred] that every living being is aware of himself. [But God] is alive; hence, He also knows Himself. This becomes a pattern of reasoning that is comprehensible and exceedingly strong. But in your case, [philosophers,] once you deny will and temporal origination, claiming that whatever proceeds from Him follows by way of necessity and nature, why [would you hold] it improbable that His essence is such that there would proceed from Him only the first effect, and then from the first effect a second effect, [and so on] to the completion of the order of existents, but that, despite all this, He is unaware of Himself—just as, with fire from which heat necessarily proceeds, and with the sun from which light necessarily proceeds, neither one knows itself, just as it does not know another? On the contrary, that which knows itself knows what proceeds from it and hence knows another. We have shown that in terms of their doctrine [God] does not know another and [that they] have forced on those who oppose them on this the necessary consequence of [actually] agreeing with them by dint of the [very] position [these opponents] take. If, then, He does know another, it is not unlikely that He does not know Himself.

(2) If it is said, 'Whoever does not know himself is dead; how could the First be dead?' we say:

(3) 'This is a necessary consequence forced on you by the logic of your doctrine. For there is no difference between you and the one who says, "Whoever does not act through will, power, and choice, and who neither hears nor sees, is dead; and [moreover,] he who does not know another is dead." If, then, it is possible for the First to be devoid of all these attributes, what need is there for Him to know Himself?' If they return to [the argument] that everything free from matter is in itself intellect and hence apprehends itself, we have shown that this is an arbitrary assertion, having no demonstration to prove it.

(4) [To this it may be] said:

(5) The demonstration for this is that the existent divides into the living and the dead, the living being prior to the dead and nobler. But the First is prior and nobler and is thus living—everything alive being aware of itself—since it is impossible that the living should be included among His effects while He Himself is not alive.

(6) We say:

(7) These are arbitrary [assertions]. For we say: ‘Why is it impossible that there should proceed from that which does not know itself that which knows itself, either through many intermediaries or without an intermediary? If that which renders this impossible is [the consequence] that the effect becomes nobler than the cause, why should it be impossible for the effect to be nobler than the cause? This is not [self-evident] to the natural intelligence. Moreover, with what [argument] would you deny [the assertion] that His nobility lies in [the fact] that the existence of the whole [universe] is a consequence of His essence [and yet is] not in His knowledge?’ Proof for this is that some other [existent] may know things other than itself, [being one] who sees and hears, whereas He neither sees nor hears. For if one were to say, ‘The existent divides into the seeing and the blind, the knower and the ignorant,’ let, then, the seeing be prior and let, then, the First be a seer and a knower of things. But you [philosophers] deny this and say that nobility does not lie in the seeing and knowing of things, but rather in dispensing with seeing and knowing [particular things]; and [that it] lies in the essence, being such that from it the whole [universe], which includes knowers and those with sight, comes to exist. Similarly, there would be no nobility in [His] knowledge of [His] essence, but in His being the Principle of those possessing knowledge, this being a nobility peculiar to Him.

(8) Hence, it is by necessity that they are compelled to deny also His knowledge of Himself, since nothing gives evidence for this except will, and nothing proves will except the world’s temporal origination. With the rendering false [of their doctrine that He knows Himself], everything becomes false for those who approach these things in terms of rational reflection. They have no proof for all that they have mentioned or denied regarding the attributes of the First, [but] only suppositions and opinions, disdained by the lawyers [even] in [their treatment of] the conjectural. There is neither wonder nor astonishment if the mind is perplexed as regards the divine attributes. One is only astonished at their conceit in themselves and in their proofs and at their belief that they have come to know these things with certainty, despite the confusion and errors [their arguments] contain.

Thirteenth Discussion

On refuting their statement that God, may He be exalted above what they say, does not know the particulars divisible in terms of temporal division into what is, what was, and what will be

(1) They agreed on this. In the case of the one among them who maintained that He knows only Himself, this is evident from his doctrine. And those who maintain that He knows others, this being [the position] which Avicenna chose, claim that He knows things through a universal knowledge that does not enter time and which does not change in terms of the past, the future, and the present. Despite this, [Avicenna] claims that not even the weight of an atom, either in the heavens or on earth, escapes His knowledge, except that He knows the particulars by a universal kind [of knowing].

(2) One must begin by understanding their doctrine and then engage in objecting [to it].

(3) We will explain this with an example—namely, that the sun, for example, becomes eclipsed after not being eclipsed, then becomes bright again. Three things occur to it—I mean, to the eclipse:

(4) [1] A state in which it is nonexistent, but its existence is expected—that is, it will be; [2] a state in which it exists—that is, it is; [3] a third state in which it is nonexistent, having, however, been previously existent. Alongside these three states, we have three different cognitions. For we know, first of all, that the eclipse is nonexistent but will be; secondly, that it is; and, thirdly, that it was but is not presently existing. These three cognitions are numeric and different. Their succession over the [one] receptacle necessitates a change in the knowing essence. For if after the clearing [of the eclipse] one were to ‘know’ that the eclipse presently exists, this would be ignorance, not knowledge; and if, when [the eclipse actually] exists, one were to ‘know’ that it does not exist, this [also] would be ignorance, not knowledge. For none of [these states] can take the place of the other.

(5) [The philosophers] thus claim that God’s state does not differ in these three states; for this leads to change. It is inconceivable [they maintain] for that whose state does not differ to know these three matters, for knowledge follows the object known. Thus, if the object known changes, knowledge changes; and if knowledge changes, the knower inescapably changes. But change in God is impossible. Despite this, [Avicenna] claims that [God] knows the eclipse and all its attributes and accidents, but by a knowledge eternally attributed to Him which does not change—as, for example, knowing that the sun exists and the moon exists. For these came to exist through Him by the mediation of the angels, which according to their idiom they termed ‘pure intellects.’

[God] knows that [these two orbs] undergo a circular motion and that their spheres’ paths intersect at two points—namely, the head and the tail—and that at

certain times they meet at the two nodes, whereby the sun becomes eclipsed—that is, the body of the moon intercedes between it and the eyes of the observers so that the sun is concealed from [sight]. Moreover, [He knows] that if [the sun] moves beyond the node by a certain period of time—a year, for example—it would suffer an eclipse once again, and that that eclipse would cover all of it, a third of it, or half of it, and that it would last an hour or two hours, and so on to include all the states of the eclipse and its accidental occurrences, such that nothing escapes His knowledge. But His knowledge of [all] this—before the eclipse, at the time of the eclipse, and when it clears—is of one unchanging pattern and does not necessitate change in His essence. The same applies to His knowledge of all temporal events. For these occur as a result of causes, and these causes through other causes, until they terminate with the circular heavenly motion. The cause of [this] movement is the soul of the heavens, and the cause of the soul's causing motion is the desire to imitate God and the angels close to Him.¹ The whole is thus known to Him—that is, unveiled to Him—in one homogenous unveiling, unaffected by time. With all this, however, one does not say at the time of the eclipse that He knows that the eclipse presently exists; and thereafter He does not know at the time that it has cleared. It is inconceivable that [God] knows anything that necessarily requires in defining it a relation to time, because this necessitates a change in [Him]. This, then, [is what they hold] regarding what is divisible in terms of time.

(6) Their doctrine is similar regarding what is divisible in terms of matter and space—as, for example, individual humans and animals. For they say that [God] does not know the accidents of Zayd, 'Amr, and Khālid, but only man [in the] absolute [sense] by a universal knowledge. He thus knows [absolute man's] accidents and properties: that his body must be composed of organs, some for attacking, some for walking, some for apprehending; that some [of his organs] are pairs, some single; that his powers must be spread throughout his parts; and so on to the inclusion of every attribute external and internal to man, all that belongs to his appendages, attributes, and necessary concomitants, such that nothing escapes His knowledge, knowing [all that constitutes man] universally. As for the individual Zayd, he becomes distinguished from the individual 'Amr through the senses, not the intellect. For the basis of the distinction is the pointing to him at a specific direction and universal space. As regards our saying 'this' and 'this,' this is a reference to a relation obtaining between the sensible object and the perceiver by being close to him, far from him, or at a specific direction—[all of which] is impossible in the case of [God].

(7) This is a principle which they believed and through which they uprooted religious laws in their entirety, since it entails that if Zayd, for example, obeys or

1. This means the celestial intellects as distinct from the celestial souls, the former in Avicenna's system sometimes being referred to as the cherubim and the latter as the active angels.

disobeys God, God would not know which of his states has newly come about, because He does not know Zayd specifically. For [Zayd] is an individual, and his actions come temporally into existence after non-existence. And if He does not know the individual, He does not know his states and acts. Indeed, He does not know Zayd's unbelief or Islam, but only knows man's unbelief or Islam absolutely and universally, not specified in [particular] individuals. Indeed, it follows necessarily that one would have to say that when Muḥammad—God's prayers and peace be upon him—challenged [the heathen] with his prophethood, [God] did not know then that he made the challenge, the same being the case with every individual prophet, that [God] only knows that among people there would be those who would make the prophetic challenge and that their description would be such and such. However, as regards the specific prophet individually, He does not know him. For that is [only] known to the sense. [Likewise,] He does not know the [individual] states proceeding from [the prophet] because these are states divisible through the division of time pertaining to a specific individual. The apprehension of [these states] in their diversity necessitates change [in the knower].

(8) This, then, is what we wished to mention by way of, first, reporting their doctrine; second, by explaining it; and third, [by indicating] the repugnancies necessarily ensuing from it. Let us now mention their confusion [in supporting this doctrine] and [then] the manner in which it is false.

(9) Their confusion [lies in saying] that these [the temporal sequence of events relating to the eclipse] are three different states, and that different things, when succeeding each other over one place, must necessitate a change [in the knower]. Thus, if at the time of the eclipse [God] 'knows' that [the one place] would be [in the same state] as it had been prior [to the eclipse], He would be ignorant, not knowing. If [on the other hand, at the time of the eclipse] He has knowledge that [the eclipse] exists, but prior to this [time knowledge] that it will be, then His knowledge would change and His state would change. Change is thus the necessary consequence, since there is no other meaning for change except a difference in the knower. For whoever does not know a thing, and then gets to know it undergoes change; and whoever has had no knowledge that [the eclipse] will exist, and then [this knowledge] is realized at the time of [the existence of the eclipse], undergoes change. They ascertained this by maintaining that the states are three.

(10) [The first is] a state which is a pure relation—as [for example] your being to the right or the left [of something]; for this does not refer to an essential attribute but is a pure relation. Thus, if the thing which was to your right changes to your left, your relation changes but your essence does not change in any way. For this is a change of a relation to the essence but [does] not [come about] through a change in the essence.

(11) [The second] of this sort [is the case] when you are able to move bodies in front of you and these bodies, or some of them, cease to exist, where neither your

innate capacity nor [other] power changes. This is because power is the power over the moving of body; first of all in the absolute [general sense], and secondly over a specific [body] inasmuch as it is body. Thus, the relating of power to the specific body would not constitute an essential attribute, but [only] a pure relation. Therefore, the ceasing [of the bodies] to exist necessitates [only] the ceasing of the relation, not a change in the state of the one endowed with power.

(12) The third [state is one which involves] change in essence—namely, that He would not be knowing and then knows, or would not be one endowed with power and then [becomes endowed with] power. This constitutes change. The change in the object known necessitates change in the knowledge. For the reality of the essence of knowledge includes the relation to the specific object of knowledge, since the reality of the specific knowledge consists in its attachment to the specific object of knowledge as it [actually] is. Its attachment to it in a different manner necessarily constitutes another knowledge. Its succession necessitates a change in the state of the knower. It is impossible to say that the essence has one knowledge which becomes knowledge of ‘what is’ after having been knowledge of ‘what will be’ and then becomes knowledge of ‘what was’ after being knowledge of ‘what is.’ For knowledge is one, similar in its states, but [here] the relation [to the object] has changed; the relation in knowledge is the reality of the essence of knowledge, and hence its change necessitates a change in the essence of knowledge; as a consequence, change [in the knower] necessarily ensues; and this is impossible in the case of God.

(13) The objection [to this] is in two respects:

(14) The first is to say, ‘With what [argument] do you deny one who says that God, exalted be He, has one knowledge of the existence of the eclipse, for example, at a specific time, and that this [same] knowledge before [the existence of the eclipse] is knowledge that it will be, being identical with the knowledge at the time of the eclipse and identical with the knowledge after the clearing [of the eclipse], and that these differences reduce to relations that do not necessitate change in the essence of knowledge, and hence do not necessitate change in the essence of the knower, and that [these differences] have the status of a pure relation?’ For the one individual who would be on your right, moves on to be in front of you, and then moves to your left. The relations thus succeed each other for you; but the one undergoing change is that moving individual, not yourself.

This is how the state of affairs ought to be understood as regards God’s knowledge. For we admit that He knows things by one knowledge in the eternal past and future, [His] state never changing. Their purpose is to deny change [in God], and on this there is agreement. Their statement, however, that change [in the knower] follows necessarily from affirming knowledge of a present existence and of its termination thereafter, is not admitted. How do they know this? For if God creates for us knowledge of the arrival of Zayd tomorrow at sunrise [and] perpetuates this

knowledge, neither creating another knowledge nor inattention to this knowledge, we would then, at the time of the sunrise, know of his arriving now purely by the previous knowledge; and [moreover, we would know] afterwards that he had arrived earlier. This one permanent knowledge would be sufficient to encompass these three states.

(15) There remains for them to say that the relation to the specific object of knowledge is included in its reality, so that whenever the relation changes the thing for which the relation is essential changes; and as long as difference and succession [in the object of knowledge] occur, change [in the knower] takes place. [To this we] say:

(16) If this is true, then follow the path of [those of] your philosopher brethren who maintain that [God] knows only Himself and that His knowledge of Himself is identical with Himself, because if He knew absolute [universal] man and absolute [universal] animal and absolute [universal] inanimate [object], these being necessarily different, the relations to them would change inevitably. Thus, the one knowledge would not be suitable to be knowledge of different things because the thing related is different and the relation is different, the relation to the object known being essential for knowledge. This necessitates multiplicity and difference—and not multiplicity only with respect to similar things, since among similar things there are those that substitute for others. Knowledge of animal, however, is not a substitute for knowledge of the inanimate, and knowledge of whiteness is not a substitute for knowledge of blackness. For [each of] these [examples] constitute[s] two different [things].

(17) Moreover [we say]: ‘These species, genera, and universal accidents are infinite and are different. How can the different cognitions be subsumed under one knowledge—this knowledge, moreover being the essence of the Knower—without this constituting an addition to Him?’ By my word, how does the rational person allow himself to deem impossible the unifying of knowledge of one thing whose states divide into the past, present, and future, but not allow as impossible the unification of knowledge connected with all the different genera and species, when the differences and remoteness between the various remote genera and species are far greater than the differences that occur between the states of the one thing that divide in terms of time? And if [the former] did not necessitate multiplicity and difference, why should this necessitate multiplicity and difference? Once it is established by demonstration that the differences in times are less than the differences between genera and species, and that the [latter] did not necessitate multiplicity and difference, [the former], then, does not necessitate difference. And if it does not necessitate difference, then the encompassing of all [things]¹ by one knowledge, permanent in the eternal past and future, becomes possible without this necessitating change in the essence of the Knower.

1. Arabic: *al-kull*, ‘the whole.’ For al-Ghazzālī, this means knowledge that includes each existent in its particularity, not merely knowledge ‘of the whole’ in a universal way.

(18) The second objection is to say:

(19) What is the preventive in terms of your own principle for Him to know these particular matters, even though [this means] He would undergo change? And why would you not hold that this kind of change is not impossible for him, just as Juham, among the Muʿtazilites,¹ held, to the effect that His cognitions of temporal events are [themselves] temporal and just as some of the later Karrāmiyyah believed that He is the receptacle of temporal events? The multitudes of the people following true doctrine only denounced this against them inasmuch as that whatever undergoes change is not free of change, and what is not free of change and temporal happenings is temporally originated and is not eternal. But you hold the doctrine that the world is eternal and is not free from change. If, then, you rationally comprehend an eternal that changes, there is nothing to prevent you from upholding this belief [that God undergoes change].

(20) [To this, however,] it may be said:

(21) We have only deemed this impossible because the [supposed] knowledge, temporally originating in His essence, must either originate from His direction or from the direction of another. It is false that it originates from Him. For we have shown that from the Eternal a temporal event does not proceed, and that He does not become engaged in action² after not being engaged in action. For this necessitates change. We have established this in the question of the world's temporal origination. If, then, this [temporal knowledge] occurs in His essence from the direction of another, how could another be effective in Him and cause Him to change, such that His states would change by way of force and compulsion from the direction of another?

(22) We say:

(23) Each of these two alternatives is not impossible in terms of your own principle. Regarding your saying that it is impossible for a temporal event to proceed from the eternal, [this] is a [statement] we have refuted in the question [of the world's temporal creation]. And how [is this not the case] when, according to you, it is impossible for a temporal event which is a first temporal event to proceed from an eternal, where the condition for its impossibility is its being first? Otherwise, these events do not have temporal causes that are infinite, but terminate through the mediation of this circular movement to an eternal thing—namely, the soul and life of the sphere. Thus, the celestial soul is eternal and the circular motion is originated by it. Each part of the motion comes into being in time and passes away, and what comes after it is inevitably renewed. Temporal events then proceed from the eternal,

1. Juham, executed by the Umayyads in 749, shared with the Muʿtazilites their doctrine of the created Qurʾān but differed from them in his being a determinist; he was classified as a Murjiʿite by al-Ashʿarī. He was noted for his doctrine that ultimately heaven and hell cease to exist, God alone being eternal.

2. *Lā yaṣīr fāʿilan* can be translated as 'does not become an agent,' but such a translation loses the force of *fāʿilan* in this context.

according to you; but since the states of the eternal are similar, the emanation of the events from it is perpetually similar, just as the parts of the movement are similar because it proceeds from an eternal whose states are similar. It thus becomes clear that each party among them confesses that it is possible for a temporal event to proceed from an eternal, if it proceeds uniformly and perpetually. Let, then, these temporal cognitions [in the divine] be of this sort.

(24) As to the second alternative—namely, the proceeding of this knowledge in Him from another—we say, ‘Why is this impossible for you?’ For it entails only three things:

(25) The first is change [in God]. But we have shown its necessity in terms of your own principle.

(26) The second is the other’s being a cause for the change of another, which, however, is not impossible according to you. Let, then, the temporal occurrence of something be a cause for the temporal occurrence of the knowledge of it. [This is] just as when you say: ‘The coloured figure’s presenting itself in front of the perceiving pupil is the cause of the imprinting of the image of the figure in the moist layer of the eye with the mediation of the transparent air between the eye and the object seen.’ If, then, it is possible for an inanimate thing to be a cause for the imprinting of the form in the pupil, this being the meaning of seeing, why should it be impossible for the occurrence of temporal events to be a cause for the occurrence of the knowledge of them by the First? For just as the seeing faculty is prepared for apprehension and [as] the occurrence of the coloured figure, with the removal of [all] barriers, [is] a cause of the occurrence of the apprehension, let, then, the essence of the First Principle for you be prepared to receive knowledge, changing from potentiality to actuality with the existence of that temporal event. If this entails a change of the Eternal, the changing Eternal, according to you, is not impossible. And if you claim that this is impossible with the Necessary Existent, you have no proof for the necessary existent other than the termination of the chain of causes and effects, as previously [shown]. And we have shown that terminating the regress is possible with an eternal that undergoes change. [To] the third thing entailed in this—namely, [that] the Eternal [is] being changed by another and that this is akin to enforcement [imposed on Him] and the holding Him in power by another—it would be said:

(27) Why is this impossible according to you? Namely, that He would be the cause for the occurrence of temporal events through intermediaries and that then the occurrence of temporal events would become the cause for the occurrence of their knowledge for Him? It would be as though He is the cause for realizing knowledge for Himself, but through intermediaries. [Regarding] your statement that this would be akin to enforcement—[well,] let it be so. For this is appropriate to your principle, since you claim that what proceeds from God proceeds by way of necessity and [by] nature, and that He has no power not to act. This also is similar

to a kind of enforcement [imposed on Him] and indicates that He is akin to one compelled with respect to what proceeds from Him.

(28) If it is said, ‘This is not compulsion because His perfection consists in His being a source of all things,’ [we say:]

(29) This [namely, His being the cause of realizing knowledge for Himself] is [also] not an enforcement. For His perfection consists in His knowledge of all things. If there would occur to us knowledge corresponding to every temporal event, this would be a perfection for us, [and] neither a deficiency nor an enforcement [on us]. So let this be the case with respect to Him.

[Seventeenth] Discussion

On causality and miracles

(1) The connection between what is habitually believed to be a cause and what is habitually believed to be an effect is not necessary, according to us. But [with] any two things, where ‘this’ is not ‘that’ and ‘that’ is not ‘this,’¹ and where neither the affirmation of the one entails the affirmation of the other nor the negation of the one entails negation of the other,² it is not a necessity of the existence of the one that the other should exist, and it is not a necessity of the non-existence of the one that the other should not exist—for example, the quenching of thirst and drinking, satiety and eating, burning and contact with fire, light and the appearance of the sun, death and decapitation, healing and the drinking of medicine, the purging of the bowels and the using of a purgative, and so on to [include] all [that is] observable among connected things in medicine, astronomy, arts, and crafts. Their connection is due to the prior decree of God, who creates them side by side,³ not to its being necessary in itself, incapable of separation. On the contrary, it is within [divine] power to create satiety without eating, to create death without decapitation, to continue life after decapitation, and so on to all connected things. The philosophers denied the possibility of [this] and claimed it to be impossible.

(2) To examine these matters that are beyond enumeration will take a long time. Let us then take a specific example—namely, the burning of cotton, for instance,

1. The sentence starting from ‘where’ in the translation is a relative clause, and so is the one that follows it. The issue here is not that two things are not identical. Avicenna, for example, is very specific in maintaining that cause and effect are two separate things. What is at stake is whether the connection between them is necessary.

2. Now there are relations existing between two separate things that entail each other—if A is to the left of B, then B is necessarily to the right of A, and so on. But this, according to al-Ghazzālī in this passage (and elsewhere as well), is not the case with causal relations.

3. *‘Alā al-tasāwuq*: ‘side by side’ or ‘one alongside the other,’ but not ‘one following the other’ and not ‘in a successive order.’ What al-Ghazzālī is talking about is concomitance, where the priority is not temporal. His critique is of the Avicennan concept of essential cause, where cause and effect are simultaneous.

when in contact with fire. For we allow the possibility of the occurrence of the contact without the burning, and we allow as possible the occurrence of the cotton's transformation into burnt ashes without contact with the fire. [The philosophers], however, deny the possibility of this.

(3) The discussion of this question involves three positions.¹

(4) The first position is for the opponent to claim that the agent of the burning is the fire alone, it being an agent by nature [and] not by choice—hence incapable of refraining from [acting according to] what is in its nature after contacting a substratum receptive of it. And this is one of the things we deny. On the contrary, we say:

(5) The one who enacts the burning by creating blackness in the cotton, [causing] separation in its parts, and making it cinder or ashes, is God, either through the mediation of His angels or without mediation. As for fire, which is inanimate, it has no action. For what proof is there that it is the agent? They have no proof other than observing the occurrence of the burning at the [juncture of] contact with the fire. Observation, however, [only] shows the occurrence [of burning] at [the time of the contact with the fire], but does not show the occurrence [of burning] by [the fire] and that there is no other cause for it. For there is no disagreement [with the philosophers] that the infusion of spirit and the apprehending and motive powers in the animal sperm are not engendered by the natures confined in heat, cold, moistness, and dryness; that the father does not produce his son by placing the sperm in the womb; and that he does not produce his life, sight, hearing and seeing, and the rest of the [powers]² in him. It is known that these [come to] exist with [the placing of the sperm], but no one says that they [come to] exist by it. Rather, they exist from the direction of the First, either directly or through the mediation of the angels entrusted with temporal things. This is what the philosophers who uphold the existence of the Creator uphold in a conclusive manner, [our] discourse being [at this point in agreement] with them.³

(6) It has thus become clear that existence 'with' a thing does not prove that it exists 'by' it. Indeed, we will show this by an example. If a person, blind from birth, who has a film on his eyes and who has never heard from people the difference between night and day, were to have the film cleared from his eyes in daytime, [then] open his eyelids and see colours, [such a person] would believe that the agent [causing] the apprehension of the forms of the colours in his eyes is the opening of

1. Al-Ghazzālī discusses two positions.

2. *Ma'ānī*: Literally, 'meanings,' 'ideas.'

3. *Wa'l-kalām ma'ahum*: What al-Ghazzālī means by this sentence is not entirely clear. Our understanding of the sentence would be consistent with what was stated earlier: that 'there is no disagreement [with the philosophers] that the infusions of spirit ... ; that the father does not produce his son ...' One manuscript reads *falā kalām ma'ahum*: 'There is no dispute with them [on this issue]. This indicates that *kalām ma'ahum* means 'dispute with them' (though not on this issue.) Hence, an alternative translation would be, 'The dispute being with them.'

his sight and that, as long as his sight is sound, [his eyes] opened, the film removed, and the individual in front of him having colour, it follows necessarily that he would see, it being incomprehensible that he would not see. When, however, the sun sets and the atmosphere becomes dark, he would then know that it is sunlight that is the cause for the imprinting of the colours in his sight.

(7) Whence can the opponent safeguard himself against there being among the principles of existence grounds and causes from which these [observable] events emanate when a contact between them¹ takes place—[admitting] that [these principles], however, are permanent, never ceasing to exist; that they are not moving bodies that would set; that were they either to cease to exist or to set, we would apprehend the dissociation [between the temporal events] and would understand that there is a cause beyond what we observe? This [conclusion] is inescapable in accordance with the reasoning based on [the philosophers' own] principles.

(8) It is because of this that the exacting among them have agreed that these accidents and events that occur when the contact between bodies takes place—and, in general, when the relationships between them change—emanate from the bestower of forms, who is one of the angels, so that they have said: 'The imprinting of the form of colour in the eye comes from the bestower of forms,² the sun's appearance, the healthy pupil and the coloured body being only "readiers" and preparers for the receptacle's acceptance of these forms.' They have made this the case with all temporal events. With this, the claim of those who proclaim that it is fire that enacts the burning, that it is bread that enacts satiety, that it is medicine that produces health, and so on, becomes false.

(9) The second position belongs to those who admit that these temporal events emanate from the principles of temporal events, but that the preparation for the reception of the forms comes about through these present, observed causes—except that these principles are also [such that] things proceed from them necessarily and by nature, not by way of deliberation and choice, in the way [that] light proceeds from the sun, receptacles differing in their reception because of differences [of]

1. *Baynahā*: It is not clear whether this contact is between the principles and observable things or between observable terrestrial bodies. If one follows al-Ghazzālī's analogy of light being the cause of seeing that takes place when the eye is opened, it would seem that the contact here is between some terrestrial things and the principle, at which point an event would emanate. Alternatively, what is intended is the contact between two terrestrial bodies—for example, fire and cotton, with the enactment of burning the cotton emanating from the celestial principle. That this is what al-Ghazzālī probably intends is strongly suggested by what follows.

2. *Wāhib al-ṣuwar*: Usually identified with the active intellect. If al-Ghazzālī's statement is intended as referring to an Avicennan causal theory, this would not be quite accurate. With Avicenna there is a reception of forms from the active intellect, but these are intelligibles received by the human rational faculty from the active intellect—that is, that there is no causal interaction between terrestrial things. If al-Ghazzālī did not have Avicenna in mind, where did he get this idea? Were there Islamic philosophers who were advocating such a view, which would be quite close to occasionalism? Averroës does not shed much light on this.

disposition. For the shiny body receives the sun's ray and reflects it, whereby another place is illuminated by it, whereas mud does not; air does not prevent the penetration of light, whereas stone does; some things are softened by the sun, some hardened; some [are] whitened, as with the bleacher's garment, [and] some blackened, as with his face. [In all this, they maintain that] the principle is one but [that] the effects differ because of the differences of the dispositions in the receptacles. Similarly, the principles of existence are ever inundating what proceeds from them, having neither restraint from granting nor stinginess: the shortcoming is only due to the receptacles. This being the case [they argue], then as long as we suppose a fire having the quality [proper to it] and we suppose two similar pieces of cotton that come into contact with it in the same way, how would it be conceivable that one should burn and not the other, when there is no choice [on the part of the agent]? Based on this notion, they denied the falling of Abraham in the fire without the burning taking place, the fire remaining fire, and claimed that this is only possible by taking the heat out of the fire—which makes it no longer fire—or by changing the essence and body of Abraham into a stone or something over which fire has no effect. But neither is this [latter] possible, nor is that [former] possible.

(10) The answer [to this] has two approaches.

(11) The first is to say: 'We do not concede that the principles do not act by choice and that God does not act voluntarily.' We have finished with refuting their claim concerning this in the question of the world's creation. If, then, it is established that the Agent creates the burning through His will when the piece of cotton comes into contact with the fire, it becomes rationally possible [for God] not to create the burning with the existence of the contact.

(12) [To this] it may be said:

(13) This leads to the commission of repugnant contradictions. For if one denies that the effects follow necessarily from their causes and relates them to the will of their Creator, the will having no specific designated course but [a course that] can vary and change in kind, then let each of us allow the possibility of there being in front of him ferocious beasts, raging fires, high mountains, or enemies ready with their weapons [to kill him], but [also the possibility] that he does not see them because God does not create for him [vision of them]. And if someone leaves a book in the house, let him allow as possible its change on his returning home into a beardless slave boy—intelligent, busy with his tasks—or into an animal; or if he leaves a boy in his house, let him allow the possibility of his changing into a dog; or [again] if he leaves ashes, [let him allow] the possibility of its change into musk; and let him allow the possibility of stone changing into gold and gold into stone. If asked about any of this, he ought to say: 'I do not know what is at the house at present. All I know is that I have left a book in the house, which is perhaps now a horse that has defiled the library with its urine and its dung, and that I have left in the house a jar of water, which may well have turned into an apple tree. For God is capable of everything, and

it is not necessary for the horse to be created from the sperm nor the tree to be created from the seed—indeed, it is not necessary for either of the two to be created from anything. Perhaps [God] has created things that did not exist previously.’ Indeed, if [such a person] looks at a human being he has seen only now and is asked whether such a human is a creature that was born, let him hesitate and let him say that it is not impossible that some fruit in the marketplace has changed into a human, namely this human—for God has power over every possible thing, and this thing is possible—hence, one must hesitate in [this matter]. This is a mode wide open in scope for [numerous] illustrations, but this much is sufficient.

(14) [Our] answer [to this] is to say:

(15) If it is established that the possible is such that there cannot be created for man knowledge of its nonbeing, these impossibilities would necessarily follow. We are not, however, rendered skeptical by the illustrations you have given because God created for us the knowledge that He did not enact these possibilities. We did not claim that these things are necessary. On the contrary, they are possibilities that may or may not occur. But the continuous habit of their occurrence repeatedly, one time after another, fixes unshakably in our minds the belief in their occurrence according to past habit.

(16) Indeed, it is possible for one of the prophets to know through the ways [the philosophers] have mentioned that a certain individual will not arrive from his journey tomorrow when his arrival is possible, the prophet knowing, however, the non-occurrence of this possible thing. Nay, this is just as when one looks at a common man and knows that he neither knows the occult in any manner whatsoever nor apprehends the intelligibles without instruction; and yet, with all that, one does not deny that the soul and intuition [of this ordinary man] may become stronger so as to apprehend what the prophets apprehend, in accordance with what [the philosophers] acknowledge—although they know that such a possibility has not taken place.

(17) If, then, God disrupts the habitual [course of nature] by making [the miracle] occur at the time in which disruptions of habitual [events] take place, these cognitions [of the nonoccurrence of such unusual possibilities] slip away from [people’s] hearts, and [God] does not create them. There is, therefore, nothing to prevent a thing being possible, within the capabilities of God, [but] that by His prior knowledge He knew that He would not do it at certain times, despite its possibility, and that He creates for us the knowledge that He will not create it at that time. Hence, in [all] this talk [of theirs], there is nothing but sheer vilification.¹

(18) The second approach, with which there is deliverance from these vilifications,²

1. The word here, *tashnīʿ*, is a key term. It must be stressed that this is the *maṣḍar* of the verb in its second form. This is not *shanāʿah*, ‘repugnancy,’ but *tashnīʿ*, ‘vilification.’ A misreading of this term as *shanāʿah* gives an erroneous interpretation of what al-Ghazzālī is saying.

2. Again, the term here is *tashnīʿāt*, the feminine plural of *tashnīʿ*. It is not *shanāʿāt*, ‘repugnancies,’ but *tashnīʿāt*, ‘acts of vilification.’

is for us to admit¹ that fire is created in such a way that if two similar pieces of cotton come into contact with it, it would burn both, making no distinction between them if they are similar in all respects. With all this, however, we allow as possible that a prophet may be cast in the fire without being burned, either by changing the quality of the fire or by changing the quality of the prophet. Thus, either there would come about from God or from the angels a quality in the fire which restricts its heat to its own body so as not to transcend (its heat would thus remain with it, and it would [still] have the form and true nature of fire, its heat and influence, however, not going beyond it), or else there would occur in the body of the prophet a quality which will not change him from being flesh and bone [but] which will resist the influence of the fire. For we see [that] a person who covers himself with talc and sits in a fiery furnace is not affected by it. The one who has not witnessed this will deny it. Hence, the opponent's denial that [divine] power includes the ability to establish a certain quality either in the fire or in the human body that would prevent burning is like the denial of one who has never seen talc and its influence. Among the objects lying within God's power there are strange and wondrous things, not all of which we have seen. Why, then, should we deny their possibility and judge them to be impossible?

(19) Similarly, the raising of the dead and the changing of the staff into a snake are possible in this way—namely, that matter is receptive of all things. Thus, earth and the rest of the elements change into plants, plants—when eaten by animals—into blood, blood then changing into sperm. Sperm is then poured into the womb and develops in stages as an animal; this, in accordance with habit, takes place in a lengthy period of time. Why, then, should the opponent deem it impossible that it lies within God's power to rotate matter through these stages in a time shorter than has been known? And if this is possible within a shorter time, there is no restriction to its being [yet] shorter. These powers would thus accelerate in their actions, and through [this] there would come about what is a miracle for the prophet.

(20) If it is said, 'Does this proceed from the prophet's soul or from some other principle at the suggestion of the prophet?' we say:

(21) [In] what you have admitted regarding the possibility of the coming down of rain [and] of hurricanes and the occurrence of earthquakes through the power of the prophet's soul, do [such events] come about from him or from another principle? Our statement in [answering your question] is the same as your statement in [answering ours].² It is, however, more fitting for both you and us to relate this to God, either directly or through the mediation of the angels.³ The time meriting its

1. *An nusallim*: 'that we admit.' In Avicenna's *Logica*, the admitted premises, *al-musallamāt*, are those conceded, not necessarily because they are true, but for the sake of argument in dialectical discourse. See al-Ghazzālī's Fourth Introduction and note 3, Author's Introduction, above.

2. Literally, 'Our statement in this is as your statement in that.'

3. That the miracle is enacted by God on behalf of the prophet is an Ash'arite position. See, for example, al-Juwaynī, *al-Irshād*, ed. M. Y. Mūsā and A. A. 'Abd al-Hāmid (Cairo, 1950), pp.

appearance, however, is when the prophet's attention is wholly directed to it and the order of the good¹ becomes specifically [dependent] on its appearance so that the order of the revealed law may endure. [All] this gives preponderance to² the side of [the] existence [of the miracle], the thing in itself being possible [and] the principle [endowing it being] benevolent and generous. But it does not emanate from Him except when the need for its existence becomes preponderant, and the order of the good becomes specified therein only if a prophet needs it to prove his prophethood in order to spread the good.

(22) All this is consistent with the drift of what they say and a necessary consequence for them as long as they bring up the topic [of the doctrine to which they subscribe—namely,] of the prophet's special endowment with a characteristic contrary to what is customary with people. For the possible amounts of such special [prophetic qualities] are not encompassed by the mind. Why, then, with [all] this, must one disbelieve that whose transmission has been corroborated by innumerable reports, and belief in which is enjoined by the religious law?

(23) [To proceed] in general, since only the sperm is receptive of the animal form, the animal powers emanating to it from the angels who, according [to the philosophers], are principles of being, [it follows that]³ from the human sperm only a human is created and from the sperm of the horse only a horse, since [to take the latter case] its realization from the horse is the more necessitating of preponderance because of the greater appropriateness of the equine form over all other forms. In this way it thus accepts only the preponderant form. For this reason, wheat has never sprouted barley and apples never form the seed of pears.

(24) Moreover, we have seen genera of animals that are [spontaneously] generated from the earth and are never procreated—as, for example, worms, and others like the mouse, the snake, and the scorpion that are both [spontaneously] generated and procreated, their generation being from the earth. Their dispositions to receive forms differ due to things unknown to us, it being beyond human power to know them, since, according to [the philosophers], forms do not emanate from the angels by whim or haphazardly. On the contrary, there emanates to each receptacle only that

308–309; also al-Ghazzālī's *al-Iqtisād*, pp. 195–196. It is not entirely clear, however, why al-Ghazzālī thinks it is also more befitting of the philosophers, unless he means that all events in this terrestrial world are caused by 'the giver of forms', as he interprets the philosophers to say.

1. *Nizām al-khayr*: The terminology is Avicennan, and al-Ghazzālī follows Avicenna closely in maintaining that the prophet is needed for bringing about the good order. Avicenna, however, speaks of the 'necessity' of prophethood, a term which al-Ghazzālī avoids. See Avicenna's *Metaphysics*, 10.2, pp. 441–443. In this discussion al-Ghazzālī attempts as much as possible to speak in the language of the philosophers so as to show that, even in terms of some of their own principles, those miracles they reject can be upheld. In the *Iqtisād*, he makes his position clear—the existence of the prophet is possible, not necessary. *Iqtisād*, pp. 195ff.

2. In the *Iqtisād*, al-Ghazzālī makes it clear that it is God, not the prophet, who renders something preponderant. *Iqtisād*, p. 194.

3. This is dictated by the sense. The text here reads simply 'and.'

to which its reception is specified by being in itself disposed to receive [that thing]. [Now,] dispositions vary, their principles, according to them, being the configuration of the stars and the differing relations of the heavenly bodies in their movements.

(25) From this it has become clear that the principles of dispositions include strange and wondrous things—so much so that the masters of the talismanic art have arrived, through their knowledge of the special properties of mineral substances and knowledge of the stars, [at the ability] to combine the heavenly powers and the special properties of minerals. They have thus taken certain forms of the terrestrial [properties] and sought for them a specific horoscope, bringing about through them strange things in the world. Thus they have at times repelled from some town the snake and the scorpion, from some town the bedbug, and so on to matters known in the talismanic art. If, then, the principles of dispositions are beyond enumeration and the depth of their nature beyond our ken, there being no way for us to ascertain them, how can we know that it is impossible for a disposition to occur in some bodies that allows their transformation in phase of development in the shortest time so that they become prepared for receiving a form they were never prepared to receive previously, and that this should not come about as a miracle? The denial of this is only due to our lack of capacity to understand, [our lack of] familiarity with exalted beings, and our awareness of the secrets God—praised be He—in creation and nature. Whoever studies inductively the wonders of the sciences will not deem remote from the power of God, in any manner whatsoever, what has been related of the miracles of the prophets.

(26) [It may be] said:

(27) We help you by maintaining that every possible thing is within the power of God, while you help us by maintaining that whatever is impossible is not within [divine] power. There are things whose impossibility is known and there are things whose possibility is known, while there are things the mind confronts undecided, judging them neither to be impossible nor possible. Now, then, what, according to you, is the definition of the impossible? If it reduces to the combining of negation and affirmation in the one thing, then [go on and] say, ‘In the case of two things, where “this” is not “that” and “that” is not “this,” the existence of the one does not require the existence of the other.’ And say that God can create a will without knowledge of the object willed and can create knowledge without life; that He can move a dead man’s hand, seating him, and with the hand write volumes and engage in crafts, the man being all the while open-eyed, staring ahead of him, but not seeing and having no life and no power over [what is being done]—all these ordered acts being created by God together with the moving of [the man’s] hand, the moving coming from the direction of God. By allowing the possibility of this, there ends the distinction between the voluntary movement and the tremor. The well-designed act would no longer prove either the knowledge or the power of the agent. [God] ought then to be able to change genera. He would thus change substance into accident, knowledge

into power, blackness into whiteness, and sound into smell, just as He had been able to change the inanimate into the animate and stone into gold, and there would follow as necessary consequences impossibilities beyond enumeration.

(28) [We] answer:

(29) The impossible is not within the power [of being enacted]. The impossible consists in affirming a thing conjointly with denying it, affirming the more specific while denying the more general, or affirming two things while negating one [of them]. What does not reduce to this is not impossible, and what is not impossible is within [divine] power.

(30) As for combining blackness and whiteness, this is impossible. For by the affirmation of the form of blackness in the receptacle we understand [(a)] the negation of the appearance of whiteness and [(b)] [the affirmation of] the existence of blackness. Once the negation of whiteness becomes understood from the affirmation of blackness, then the affirmation of whiteness, together with its negation, becomes impossible.

(31) It is [further] impossible for the individual to be in two places, because we understand by his being in the house [for example] his not being in [a place] other than the house. Hence, it is impossible to suppose him in [a place] other than the house together with his being in the house, [his being in the house] signifying the denial of [his being] elsewhere.

(32) Similarly, we understand by the will the seeking after something known [to the willer]. If, then, a quest is supposed without knowledge, there would be no will. This entails the denial of what we have understood [by will].

(33) It is impossible, moreover, to create knowledge in inanimate matter. For we understand by the inanimate that which does not apprehend. If apprehension is created in it, then to call it inanimate in the sense we have understood becomes impossible. And if it does not apprehend, then to call what has been created 'knowledge' when its receptacle does not apprehend anything is [also] impossible. This, then, is the way in which this is impossible.

(34) As for the changing of genera, some of the Islamic dialectical theologians have said that it is within God's capacity [to enact]. We, however, say:

(35) A thing's becoming something else is unintelligible. For if blackness changes into a cooking pot,¹ does the blackness continue to exist or not? If it ceases to exist, it does not change [into something else]? Rather, the thing ceases to exist and something else comes into existence. If it [continues to] exist with the cooking pot, then it did not change but something was added to it. If [on the other hand] the

1. The unvowelled term given is *qdra*, which is easily read as *qudra*, 'power.' This, however, would not make good sense, as will be seen in what follows in the argument. The most likely reading is *qidra*, 'cooking pot.' The normal term for this is *qidr*, without the feminine ending, but *qidra* is a variant (see Dozy). The principal Cairo edition has *kudra*, 'smudge' (the reading adopted by Dunya), which would also make sense. All the other sources in Bouyges's edition, however, have it as *qidra*.

blackness remains while the cooking pot is nonexistent, then the former did not change but remained as it had been. [Again,] if we say that blood has changed into sperm, we mean by this that that matter itself took off one form and put on another. This, then, amounts to the fact that one form has ceased to exist and one has come into existence, there being a subsistent matter over which the two forms rotated. And when we say that water through heating has changed into air, we mean that the matter receptive of the form of water took off this form and received another form. Matter is thus common, while the quality changes. The same holds when we say that the staff has changed into a serpent and the earth into an animal.

(36) Between accident and substance, there is no common matter; nor between blackness and the cooking pot. And there is no common matter between the rest of the genera. It is this respect, then, that [the transformation of different genera one into another] is impossible.

(37) As for God's moving the hand of the dead man, setting him up in the form of a living person who is seated and writes so that through the movement of his hand ordered writing ensues, [this] in itself is not impossible as long as we turn over [the enactment of] temporal events to the will of a choosing being. It is only disavowed because of the continuous habit of its opposite occurring. Your statement that with this the well-designed act ceases to indicate the [existence of] the knowledge of the agent is not true. For the agent now is God, who is the performer of the well-designed act and [the] knower of it.

(38) As for your statement that there would be no difference between the tremor and the voluntary movement, we say:

(39) We apprehend [this difference] in ourselves. For we have perceived in ourselves a necessary distinction between the two states and have given expression to this difference by the term 'power.' We thus know that what takes place in the two possible alternatives [is two things], one of them [occurring] in one state, the other in [another] state—namely, the bringing into existence of a motion with the power over it¹ in the one state, and the bringing of motion into existence without the power over it in the other state. If, however, we look at another person and see many ordered motions, there occurs to us knowledge of their being within his power. For these are cognitions which God creates according to the habitual course [of events], by which we know the existence of one of the two possible alternatives [but] by which the impossibility of the other alternative is not shown, as has been previously said.

1. As al-Ghazzālī explains in the *Iqtīṣād* (pp. 90ff.), the power in us is created by God with His creation of the movement. Human power and the movement are concomitants. There is no causal efficacy between human power and the movement. Both are the simultaneous creations of the divine power. This, however, enables us to experience the distinction between the tremor and the 'voluntary' movement. We experience the latter as though enacted by us, when in fact it is not. This discussion goes back to al-Ash'arī. See *Kitāb al-luma'*, ed. R. J. McCarthy (Beirut, 1953), pp. 41–42. See also M. E. Marmura, 'Ghazzālī's Chapter on Divine Power in the *Iqtīṣād*', *Arabic Science and Philosophy* 4, no. 2 (September, 1994), pp. 279–315.

THE JUST MEAN IN BELIEF

al-Iqtisād fi'l-i'tiqād

Reprinted from Ghazzālī's *al-Iqtisād fi'l-i'tiqād* tr. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Abū Zayd *al-Ghazali on Divine Predicates and their Properties: A Critical and Annotated Translation of these chapters in al-Iqtisād fi'l-i'tiqād* (Lahore, 1970), pp. 1–28.

Chapter One

The Second Pivotal Point, Concerning the Attributes

It contains seven assertions. We assert that God is knowing, powerful, living, willing, hearing, seeing, and speaking. These are seven attributes from which the consideration of two matters arises. One of them is what is proper to each attribute separately, and the second is what is common to all the attributes. Let us begin with what is common to all the attributes. Let us begin with the first point, viz. the establishment of the basis of the particular attributes and the explanation of their special particular properties.

The first attribute is Power (*qudrah*).¹ We assert that the Creator of the world is

1. Ghazzālī in this chapter formulates a concept of Divine Power which is essentially atomistic. This view is based on the basic Ash'arite principle which is God's absolute power, a power which cannot be limited by any consideration. The principle which underscores this concept of God's power is that it is related to every possible thing. Only the impossible cannot be an object of power (translation, pp. 4–5 [Reference is made to the translation from al-Ghazzālī, *al-Iqtisād fi'l-i'tiqād*, Ankara, 1962]). This is so because the question whether God, Who composed the parts of a body is powerful enough to separate them until they are reduced to the atom or not, must be asked. If the answer is negative, this would be ascribing to God powerlessness (*ta'jiz*). But if the answer is affirmative, then the opponent would admit the concept of the indivisible atom (translation, p. 8). Ghazzālī denies that there can be infinite division in actu and hence infinite regress. It seems by this denial Ghazzālī is trying to refute Nazzām's claim that a body is divisible ad infinitum. Cf. Khayyāt, *Kitāb al-intiṣār wa'l-radd 'alā Ibn al-Rāwandī al-mulḥid* (Cairo, 1925), pp. 32–33. But Nazzām is not speaking there about a division *in actu*; rather he talks about an intellectual division (*ibid.*, p. 33).

Ghazzālī restates once more here his and the Ash'arites' doctrine of causality, a doctrine which denies all natural laws and man's freedom in acts. All natural phenomena are here dismissed as occurring through mere custom (*ṭard al-'ādah*), (translation, p. 19). Ghazzālī says that every contingent thing and every act or movement is divisible into separate parts and that power creates movement after movement, and substance after substance perpetually (translation, p. 4). This, Ghazzālī says, is true of bodies and not accidents, for accidents do not endure for two moments of time. He goes on to prove this through the example of the ring on the hand when man moves the hand. Here Ghazzālī says, there is no causal nexus between the movement of the hand and that of the ring. He concludes by saying that man does not influence these movements, but he certainly can relate to himself an act which God has created. This power of man is what he called *kasb* (translation, pp. 13, 16–17).

Al-Ash'arī in the *Maqālāt al-Islamiyyīn* (Ritter, ed. [Wiesbaden, 1963], pp. 377–378), sums up for us the various Mu'tazilites' positions concerning the concept of man's power as follows:

Powerful because the world is a masterly work, well ordered, perfectly arranged, including varieties of wonders and signs, and all that points to power. Properly to order the syllogism,¹ we say: Any masterly work proceeds from a powerful agent. The world is a masterly work. Therefore, it proceeds from a powerful agent. Concerning which of the two premises is the dispute?

If it be asked: Why did you say that the world is a masterly work?

We answer: We mean by being 'masterly,' its perfect order, systematic arrangement, and symmetry. He who examines closely the members of his own body, external and internal, will perceive wonders of perfection which surpass accounting. This is a premise the knowledge of which is based on the senses and observation; and thus, it cannot be denied.

If it is said: Then, how did you know the other premise, viz. that every masterly and well-ordered work proceeds from a powerful agent?

We say: This is attained through rational necessity. The intellect confirms this without an apodictic proof, and the intelligent person will be unable to deny it. Even though this is the case, we shall furnish a proof that will cut the ground from under denial and obstinacy.

We say: We mean by His being powerful that the act proceeding from Him either proceeds from Him through His essence or through a concept superadded to His essence, and it is absurd that it proceeds from Him through His essence, because if this were the case the act would be eternal *a parte ante* (*qadīm*) along with the essence (*dhāt*).² This proves that it proceeds from something superadded to His

Some say: The Maker of the world is able to make His creatures 'create' substances, colours, flavours, and all other kinds of acts. This is the claim of the extremists among the Rāfiḍīs.

Others say: God cannot be described as enabling His creatures to 'do' substances, but He is powerful to make them 'do' all accidents such as life, death, knowledge, and the power to do all other kinds of accidents. This is the position of al-Šāliḥi.

Some say: The Maker of the world is powerful to enable His creatures to [do] colours, flavours, coldness, moisture, and dryness. He is more powerful than they in so doing. As for power over life and death, it is not permissible that He enables them to do any of these. This is the claim of Bishr ibn al-Mu'tamar.

Others say: There is no accident which is not permissible for God to empower [His creatures] to do its like. The only accident, according to this group, is the movement. As for colours, flavours, coldness, and sound, they have denied that God could empower His creatures to do them because, to them, these are substances, and God can only empower His creatures to [do] movements. This is the statement of al-Nazzām.

Some say: It is possible that God may empower His creatures to do movements and rest, sound, and pain and all that which they know its 'howness' (*kayfiyyah*). As for accidents whose 'howness' they do not know such as colours, flavours, life, death, powerlessness, and power, it is not permissible to describe God as able to empower [His creatures] to do any of them. This is the position of Abu'l-Hudhayl.

1. See Chapter I, *'al-Iqtisād fi'l-i'tiqād*, Method and Importance,' pp. 1–2.

2. To the Mu'tazilites the problem was whether attributes, conceived as real, incorporeal beings distinct from God's essence, existed in God or not. Their interpretation of attributes affirmed of God as affirmative or negative attributes was used by them as a means of saying that none of the

Essence (*dhāt*). We call this superadded attribute, through which the act exists, power, since the proper meaning of the term ‘power’ (*qudrah*) in [the Arabic] language is nothing other than the attribute by which the act is made possible for the agent, and through which the act occurs. This description is proven by the decisive distinction which we have mentioned, and by power we mean nothing other than this attribute which we have established.

If it is said: But this [argument], regarding power, could be turned against you, for, since power is eternal (*qadīmah*), why do you say that its object is not eternal (*qadīm*) also?¹

We say: The answer to this will follow when we deal with the properties of will (*irādah*). Since we are dealing here with power, let us state its properties. One of these properties is that it is related to all the objects of power (*maqḍūrāt*) by which I mean all the possible things. Now it is evident that the possible things are infinite, and therefore, that there is no end to the objects of power. By saying that the possible things are infinite, we mean that the creation of contingent things never comes to a point beyond which it would be impossible, in reason, for contingent things to occur. Possibility endures for ever, and the power is wide enough to include all that. The proof of this assertion, that is, the generality of the relation of power [to its objects] is that it has already been proven that the creator of the world is one. Either He has a particular power *vis-à-vis* each object of power, the latter being infinite, thus establishing an infinite progression of such powers—and this is absurd because of what has been said earlier about the absurdity of infinite progression—or the power should be one so that, despite its oneness, it becomes related to all the substances and accidents in their multiplicity, because of something common to them all. But there is no common element other than possibility (*imkān*). Therefore, it necessarily follows that every possible thing is undoubtedly an object of power, and occurs through power.

Speaking generally, if the substance and accidents proceed from Him, it is impossible that their like do not issue from Him also, because the power to do something is power to do its like since there is nothing to prevent multiplicity in the objects of power. Therefore, its relation to all movements and all colours [i.e. change] is in one mode.

terms predicated of God in the Qur’ān or in the common speech of men are to be taken to signify the existence of real attributes in God. Ghazzālī takes issue with them, for, logically with the denial of real attributes, all the terms affirmed of God become predicates which are identical with the subject. Such a tautological approach is not acceptable to Ghazzālī because this would be tantamount to saying God is God. See H. A. Wolfson: (a) ‘Avicenna, Alghazali, and Averroes,’ *Homenaje a MillásVallicrosa* (Barcelona, 1956), Vol. 2, pp. 545–571; (b) ‘Philosophical Implications of the Problem of Divine Attributes in the *Kalām*,’ *JAOS*, 79 (1959), pp. 73–80 (c) ‘Maimonides on Negative Attributes,’ *Louis Ginzberg Jubilee Volume* (New York, 1945–1946), pp. 411–446.

1. Ghazzālī’s contention is that an act could never be eternal. If it were eternal, it would cease to be an act, for an act is something which started after it was not.

Thus, [power] lends itself to the creation of movement after movement, perpetually, and likewise of colour after colour and substance after substance (*jawhar*), etc. This is what we meant by saying that His power is related to every possible thing. Possibility is not confined to one particular number exclusive of others. So it is not possible to point to a movement of which it may be said that it is beyond the possibility of being related to a power that is also related to its like. By necessity we know that what is necessary for something is necessary for its like, and from this axiom three points arise.

The First Point

If someone asks: Do you say that the contrary to what is known could be an object of power?

We say: This matter is controversial, but it would not be so if the true nature of the problem were ascertained and the linguistic complexity removed. The explanation is that it has been established that every possible thing is an object of power and that an impossible thing is not. Let us, therefore, examine closely whether the contrary of what is known is possible (*mumkin*) or impossible (*muḥāl*)! We shall not know this until we know the meanings of impossible (*muḥāl*) and possible (*mumkin*) and verify both of them. Otherwise, careless investigation may judge the contrary of what is known at the same time to be impossible (*muḥāl*), and possible (*mumkin*), and to be not impossible. Since it is judged to be impossible (*muḥāl*), and not impossible—and two contradictory things cannot be judged to be true at the same time—know that there is equivocation in the terms. This will be shown to you by what I say, namely, that the world, for example, may truly be judged to be necessary (*wājib*), impossible (*muḥāl*), and possible (*mumkin*).

As for its being necessary (*wājib*),¹ it is called such from the following perspective: if the will of the Eternal *a parte ante* (*qadīm*) is supposed to exist as a necessary existence, the object of the will is also certainly necessary and not merely probable (*jā'iz*), since the non-existence of the object of will is absurd if at the same time the eternal will is verified to exist.

As for its being impossible (*muḥāl*),² it is called such if the will for its creation be supposed not to exist. Therefore, its occurrence will be impossible because it will lead to the occurrence of a contingent thing without a cause, and that is known to be impossible.

1. Ibn Sinā in *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt* (Cairo, 1958, pp. 447–449–551) defines the necessary (*wājib*) as that which by its essence is necessary if we do not take into consideration anything other than its very essence. If it is necessary by itself, then this would be the 'truth'. But also if the condition for the existence of the necessary is supposed to exist, then the necessary must exist.

2. The impossible (*muḥāl*) or, as Ibn Sinā calls it, the *mumtani'* is that which either by its essence is impossible or because of its cause is non-existent (*ibid.*, pp. 447–449–551).

As for its being possible (*mumkin*),¹ it is so called, when it is considered by itself, excluding the question of the existence of the eternal will or its non-existence. Then it will bear the description of possibility (*imkān*). There are, therefore, three considerations:

The first is the positing of the existence of the will and its relation to it [i.e. to the *mumkin*] as a condition. In this respect it is necessary (*wājib*).

The second is the supposition of the lack of will. From this perspective it is impossible (*muḥāl*).

The third is the omission of attention to the will and the cause, disregarding their existence or non-existence, and confining the inquiry to the world itself. From this perspective the third judgment remains to it, namely, possibility (*imkān*). We mean by this that it is possible in itself, that is, if we do not impose any condition other than itself, it would be possible (*mumkin*). It is evident from this that the one thing could be both possible and impossible; possible in itself and impossible in relation to other things, but it cannot be in itself both possible and impossible because these are contradictory. Attention should, therefore, be paid to what is contrary to the known.

For example, we may say that if it is present in God's knowledge that He will cause Zayd to die on Saturday morning, one may ask whether the creation of life for Zayd on the morning of Saturday is possible or impossible. The truth is that it is both: possible in itself, but impossible in consideration of the divine knowledge. The impossible in itself would be that which is unattainable in itself like the bringing together of the colours black and white, and not something which would be impossible because it involved impossibility in something else. In the case of Zayd's life, his living is not unattainable because of life itself, but because it is related to an impossibility in something other than [life] itself, namely, that very knowledge (*'ilm*), since otherwise the knowledge would be transformed into ignorance, and it is absurd that it be so transformed.

It is evident, therefore, that it is possible (*mumkin*) in itself and impossible (*muḥāl*) because it is related to an impossibility in something other than itself. If we say that Zayd's life is an object of power at this moment, we mean only that life as such is not impossible (*muḥāl*) like the bringing together of the colours black and white. And God's power *per se* does not lack relation to the creation of life nor does it fall short of creation because of languor, weakness, or any reason having to do with power *per se*. These are two points which cannot be denied. I mean the negation of powerlessness in power *per se* and the affirmation of the possibility of

1. The possible (*mumkin*) is that which cannot exist by itself, for its existence has no priority over its non-existence. Its existence or non-existence is only due to the existence of something or its non-existence. By 'something' Ibn Sīnā means the cause. Ṭūsī, commenting on this says that Ibn Sīnā means that the possible can only exist if it has a cause different from it. The stress here is that there should be a determining factor (*murajjih*) (ibid., pp. 448–510–511).

life *per se*, without regard to anything else. If the opponent says that it is not an object of power in the sense that its existence leads to an impossibility, he is right in this sense, and we do not deny that.

There remains to examine the term [power]. The question is whether it is right, in language, to use this term or not. It is evident that the right thing is to use the term. People say that so and so is capable of movement and rest; if he wills, he moves, and if he does not so will, he rests. They also say that he has the power at every moment to do both these contrary things, though they know that only one of them exists in God's knowledge. This use of the term bears witness to what we have said. Its meaning follows necessarily and cannot be disputed.

The Second Point

If someone says: You have claimed that power is generally related to all things possible, what do you have to say about the objects of the power of animals and all the creatures? Do these also fall within the power of God or not? If you say they do not, then you contradict your premise that the relation of power is all encompassing. And if you maintain that they fall within God's power, you shall have either to acknowledge a single object of power acted upon by two powerful agents, which is absurd, or deny that man and all the animals are powerful, which would be an obstinate rejection of necessity and a negation of the demands of the Divine Law, because it is impossible to demand what cannot be done. It is absurd that God would say to His creature: You must do what is within My power, over which I have the sole power and which you have no power over. God can never demand from man what God knows man is not capable of doing.

In solving this problem, we say that people have taken different positions on the issue. The Fatalists¹ denied the power of man and were thus forced to deny the necessary differences between the tremor and the voluntary movement, and consequently had to say that the Divine Law made unfulfillable demands.

The Mu'tazilites deny the relation of the divine power to the acts of man, of animals, of angels, of *jinn*, and of the devils.² The Mu'tazilites, however, claim that

1. The Fatalists (*Jabriyyūn*), headed by Jahm ibn Ṣaffwān, maintain that man's act is not his own, that God alone is the creator of all acts. In this respect, they claim there is no difference between an involuntary act such as the tremor of the hand or the act of falling from a high place, on the one hand, or such acts which man imagines are his own such as walking, speaking or motion. Man is completely compelled (*majbūr*) because he is devoid of any power or will. He is like a leaf in stormy weather. God alone creates for him his acts and runs them through him. The Fatalists, therefore, attribute power to man in a metaphorical sense. No man has power in reality (*ḥaqīqah*), al-'Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, ed., H. Ritter (Wiesbaden, 1963), p. 279; Māturidī, *Sharḥ al-fiqh al-akbar* (Hyderabad, 1948), pp. 9–10.

2. Some Mu'tazilites deny that God has a power over the acts of men or animals. They attribute such acts to man's free will (*ikhtiyār*). We have discussed this in various parts above (*Intiṣār*, pp. 53–54; *Maqālāt*, pp. 377–378, 563, 566).

all that which issues from man is from the creation and origination of man and that God has no power to deny or to affirm. Therefore, the Mu‘tazilites necessarily must affirm two abominable enormities. The first is the denial of what the pious forefathers, may God be well pleased with them, had agreed upon, viz. there is no creator but God and no originator other than Him. The second is their attribution of origination and creation to the power of the one who does not know what he has created. For the movements which issue from man and the rest of the animals, were man to be asked about their number and their particularities and their measures, he would not have a notion about them. For, the child crawls from the cradle to suck the breast (of his mother) voluntarily, and the kitten, immediately after birth, crawls to the breast of its mother though its eyes are still closed. The spiders weave houses in strange forms that baffle geometricians by their circular, parallel lines and symmetry of arrangement. We know that spiders have no access to that which geometricians do not know.

Bees, too, form their honeycombs in hexagons without any square or circular or hexagonal or any other form. This is because the hexagon has a characteristic which geometrical proof shows not to exist in any other form. The [honeycombs] are constructed according to certain principles, one of them being that the most inclusive and most spacious form is the circular which is free from angles made of straight lines. The second [principle] is that if the circular forms were to be placed in contiguity, apertures unquestionably would be formed. The third principle is that the design closest to the circular in its inclusiveness is the form with fewest sides, and that is the hexagon. The fourth [principle] is that if all those designs which are close to the circular [in shape], like the hexagon, octagon, and the pentagon, were to be placed in contiguity and side by side, unemployed apertures would be formed and they would become uninclusive. The squares can be contiguous but because of the distance between their angles and their centres, they are far from being inclusive in the way circles are. Since the bees need a form close to the circle to encompass their bodies which are almost round, and since the space they have is limited, and because of their great numbers, they are loathe to waste space by creating spaces between their houses which they cannot use. Since there are no forms that are closer to the circular and possessing these characteristics of contiguity and lack of gaps except the hexagon, God has made it practicable to them to select the hexagon for the building of their houses. Would that I knew, do the bees comprehend these subtleties which most sober men are unable to conceive, or is it the sole possessor of omnipotence who obliges them to attain what they most need? They are in the middle of a course because of the determination of God upon it and in it, and they neither know it, nor could they disobey it.

There are in the works of animals of this sort wonders which, if some of them were to be mentioned, hearts would be awed by the majesty and glory of God, Most High. May misery befall deviators from the right path of God, those who

are deluded by their limited power and weak capacities, who think that they share with God in the creation, origination, and bringing into being of the like of these marvels and signs. How far and remote the inferior creatures are from (sharing with God in creation and origination). The Mighty One of the heavens alone possesses omnipotence. These are the sort of enormities that necessarily follow from the doctrine of the Mu‘tazilites. Observe, now, the people of the *Sunnah*, and how they were guided to what is right and reared to the golden mean in belief. They maintain that the doctrine of fatalism (*jabr*) is absurd and vain and that the doctrine of the origination of his own acts by the creature (*ikhṭirāʿ*) is a frightful invasion [of God’s sovereignty]. Right, [they say], lies in the affirmation of two powers bearing upon one act.¹ The truth lies only in the affirmation of two powers operating upon the same act and in the doctrine of a single power related to two agents. The only thing left to deal with is the difficulty of conceiving the coincidence of two powers on one act, and this is difficult only if the relation of the two powers is the same; but if the two powers differ and so does the pattern of their relation, then the coincidence of these two relations to a single object is not absurd as we shall make clear.

If it is said: What makes you affirm one object of power common to two agents?

We say: The decisive proof rests upon the fact that a voluntary movement differs from a tremor or an involuntary movement, even if the tremor be supposed to be the will of the one who trembles and to be intended by him. The difference, therefore, is in power. Furthermore, the decisive proof is that God’s power is related to every possible thing. Every contingent thing is possible; and since man’s action is a contingent thing, therefore, it is possible. If God’s power is not related to it, then it is impossible. We maintain that in so far as a voluntary movement is a contingent possible movement similar to the tremor, it is impossible that God’s power be related to one of them and fall short of the other which is similar to it. Nay, another absurdity would be required of him, viz. if God were to cause man’s hand to rest when man wants to move it, there would exist either both motion and rest or neither, which would lead to the union of motion and rest or to the absence of both. But the absence [of both motion and rest], though contradictory, would necessitate the negation of the two powers, since power is what produces the object of power when will is realized and the locus is receptive. But if it is thought that

1. The Ash‘arites tried to steer a middle course between the Fatalists who deny man any power and the Mu‘tazilites who attribute to man a power over his acts. The Ash‘arites thus affirmed two kinds of acts: (a) involuntary acts in the face of which man is completely powerless, which shows that they are definitely created for him and over which he exercises no will, and (b) voluntary acts over which man has power preceded by will. Such power is what makes man acquire his acts. *Kasb* or acquisition is this association between man’s power and the act of God which means that if man wills an act, God would at that very moment create for him a power to do it and thus man acquires the power (*Maqālāt* p. 542).

the object if God's power carries greater weight because His power is stronger, this would be absurd because the relation of power to one movement is by no means preferred to the relation of another power to it, since the result of the two powers is origination [of the act]. His power consists in His potency over others. His potency over others has no ascendancy in this [particular] movement with which we are dealing since the destiny of the movement in relation to each one of the two powers is that it should be originated by it; and the act of origination is equal [in each case] so that there is no question of stronger or weaker in it, so there may be a question of preponderance in it. Therefore, the decisive proof affirming two powers leads us to the affirmation of a single object of power having two agents.

If it is said: The proof should not lead to an absurdity which cannot be understood, and that which you have mentioned is unintelligible.

We say: It is our duty to make it understandable [and clear]. The clarification is that God's creation of motion in a man's hand is intelligible without this motion being the object of power of man. Therefore, since He creates motion along with a power over it, then He has the monopoly over the origination of both the power and its object. The conclusion is that He is unique in origination, that motion is existent, and that the mover [i.e. man] is capable of it; and because he is capable, his case differs from that of the one who trembles involuntarily. All the dubious points are, therefore, done away with. The result of [this argument] is that the Powerful, who enjoys unlimited power, is capable of originating both the power and its object. Whereas the names, Creator and Originator, are given to Him who produces a thing by His power, and since both power and its object are products of God's power, He is called Creator and Originator. The object of power is not a product of man's power even though it is associated with it; and that is why he is called neither Creator nor Originator. It becomes necessary, therefore, that this type of relationship requires a different name. The term '*kasb*'¹ has been applied to the acts of men as has been indicated in the Book of God. As for the term 'act' (*fi'l*), there was hesitancy in its application. In any case there should be no dispute over names if the concepts are understood.

If it is said: The aim is the understanding of the concept, and what you have mentioned is not understandable because it is difficult to understand how the power created in man has no relation to the object of power, since power without an object is an absurdity like knowledge without an object. And if power is related to the object, then the relation of power to its object is inconceivable except in terms

1. This term *kasb* which we have discussed in the note above is derived from the Qur'an where it appears in many places to mean what man acquires of sins and good deeds. According to S. Pines (*Madhhab al-dharrāh 'ind al-Muslimīn*, tr. M. 'Abd al-Hādī, Abū Ridāh [Cairo, 1946], p. 31), al-Ash'arī formulated it from its generic form as expounded by Dīrār and al-Najjār (*Maqālāt*, pp. 383, 408, 566). Al-Ash'arī's own definition is as follows: 'The truth as I believe is that the meaning of *al-iktisāb* is that a thing occurs through a contingent power and thus it becomes acquisition (*kasb*) to him through whose power it occurs' (*ibid.*, p. 542).

of effect (*ta'thīr*), bringing into being and the occurrence of the object of power through power. The relation between power and its object is the relation between the effect and the cause, viz. the coming of the object of power into being through power. If the object of power does not occur through power there would be no relation between them and power would not be power because anything that has no relation is not power, for the reason that power is one of those object-taking attributes.

We say: Power is relative. Your saying that the relation is limited to the occurrence [of the act] through it is invalidated by the [analogy of] the relativity of will and knowledge. It is also false¹ to say that the relation of power is limited only to the occurrence [of the object of power] through it since power, according to you, endures. And even if power is supposed to exist before the act, [the question will be] is it relative or not? If your answer is negative, this would be absurd; and if you say, 'yes,' then what is meant is not the occurrence of the object through it, because the object has not yet occurred. Therefore, it becomes necessary to establish another kind of relation other than occurrence [of the object] through power, because the relation at the time of occurrence is expressed by the occurrence through it and the relation before that is contrary to this and is altogether a different kind of relation. Your saying that the relation of power has only one pattern is erroneous. Likewise, you err regarding the pre-eternal capability (*al-qādiriyat al-qadimah*) because it is related to the world in eternity and before the creation of the world. Our saying that it [i.e. power] is relative is true, but our saying that the world occurs through it is fallacious because [the world] has not yet occurred. If these were two expressions of one point, then one would be true whenever the other is true.

If it is said: The meaning of the relativity of power, before the occurrence of the object, is that when the object of power occurs, it occurs through power.

We say: This [kind of relation] is not immediate, but rather it is an expectation of relation. It would be suitable to say that the power is existent while being an attribute which has no relation, but a relation is expected for it when the object of power occurs through it. It is likewise with respect to the divine power. This position requires an absurdity, namely, that an attribute which was not one of the object-taking attributes has become so and it is absurd.

If it is argued that the meaning of this is that it is disposed to the occurrence of power through it, we would say that there is no meaning to predisposition except the expectation of the 'occurrence through it' which does not necessitate an immediate relation. As you would conceive of the existence of a power that is related to the object of power, though the object does not occur through it, by the

1. This is a reference to those philosophers who take an anti-atomist position and maintain that power endures. For Ghazzālī it lasts one moment. This is in accordance with his doctrine of continuous creation.

same token we might conceive of a power like that, though the object does not occur through it but rather through the power of God, Most High. So our opinion here does not contradict yours, except in our doctrine that the object does occur through God's power. But if neither the existence of the power, nor its relation to the object of power necessitates the existence of the object of power, then how can its non-occurrence through God's power be claimed when its existence through God's power has no priority over non-existence with respect to the severance of the relationship from the contingent power? If the relationship is not negated by the non-existence of the object of power, how then could [that relationship] be negated by the existence of the object of power? Whether the object of power be conceived as existing or non-existing, the supposition of an object-taking power having no presently existing object is unavoidable.

If it is said: A power that does not give occurrence to an object of power is on the level of weakness.

We say: If you mean by this statement that the 'psychological' state which man attains at the time of its [i.e. power's] existence, is like the weakness he experiences at the time of a tremor, then this statement is an obstinate rejection of that which is immediately evident. If you place it [i.e. power] on the same level as weakness because the object of power does not occur through it, this is true; but calling it weakness is wrong, if the reference is to God's power.¹ It would be equally absurd, if they, according to their premise, were to say that power before the act is tantamount to weakness because the object does not occur through it, for the reason that [power] is a perceived psychological state, the perception of which differs, in the mind, from the perception of weakness. This is similar to the former case—there is no difference.

Speaking generally, we must admit two powers, one of which is higher and another which is similar to weakness whenever it is related to the higher. You have the option of ascribing a power to man, which suggests weakness, or ascribing the same thing to God. You should have no doubt, however, if you are fair, that creatures are more deserving of limitations and weakness. This is all that this brief summary can permit concerning this question.

The Third Point

If someone says: How do you claim that the relation of power is common to all created things when most of the movements and other things in the world

1. Ghazzālī is for treating the attributes as positive attributes of action, but the possibility of his treatment of these attributes as negation may be expounded, although such statement could not serve as foundation for a negative aspect. We feel, however, its documentation is within the realm of possibility, hard as it may prove.

are generated, one of them generating the other by necessity?¹ For example, the movement of the hand generates, by necessity, the movement of the ring, and the movement of the hand in water generates the movement of the water. These occurrences are observed and reason also bears them out. If the movements of the hand and ring are created by God, it would be conceivable that He may create the movement of the hand without the movement of the water, and that is absurd. The absurdity of this position holds true of all generated things with all of their ramifications.

We say: What is not understood can neither be rejected nor accepted because a doctrine is accepted or rejected after it becomes intelligible. What is known to us by the term 'generation' (*tawallud*) is the coming of one body out of the inside of another body in the way a foetus comes out of the mother's womb and a plant from the earth. But (a similar process) is impossible in the case of accidents because the movement of the hand has neither an 'inside' (*jawf*) so that the movement of the ring may come out of it, nor is it something that contains things so that some of what it contains may percolate out of it. What would be the meaning of the generation of the ring's movement from that of the hand if it [i.e. movement of the ring] is not latent in it [in the movement of the hand] *per se*? This [process of generation] has to be made clear; and if [the process] is not understood, then your claim that [the process of generation] is observed is ignorance and silliness because its occurrence [of the movement of the water or the ring] with it [the movement of the hand] is observed with it and nothing else. That the one is generated from the other is not perceived.

Your claim that if [the movement] is created by God then He would have been able to create the movement of the hand without that of the ring, and that of the hand without that of the water, is sheer nonsense comparable to the claim of those who say that if the will is not generated from knowledge, then He would have been able to create the will without knowledge or knowledge without life. But we say that the impossible (*muḥāl*) is not an object of God's power, that the presence of the conditioned without the condition is impossible, and that the condition for will is knowledge and the condition for knowledge is life; and likewise, the condition for occupation of a place by matter is the vacuity of that place. If God

1. The Mu'tazilites differed on the concept of generation (*tawallud*). Some of them maintained that it is the act which occurs through me and alights in other than me. Others said, it is the act in which I determine its cause and thus it becomes beyond my ability to abstain from it. I may do it within myself or in other than myself. Some said: it is the third act which succeeds my will such as pain which succeeds a blow or motion (*dhihāb*) which succeeds a push (*daf'ah*). Al-Iskālī said: any act which occurs through a mistake or without being intended or willed is generated (*mutawallid*), while any act which occurs only through intention and every part of it requires renewed intention (*qaṣd*), falls outside the boundary of generation, and is to be included within the boundary of the direct act (*mubāshir*) (*Maqālāt*, pp. 408ff.). Consider also Ma'mar's views that all generated things are the acts of bodies naturally.

should move a [man's] hand, then He would surely cause it to occupy a position adjacent to the one which it was occupying. If He does not evacuate [the place], how could He occupy it with [the hand]? The vacuity of the place is a condition for its occupation by the hand. If [the hand] moves and the place is not emptied of water by the non-existence of the water or its movement [displacement of the water], then two bodies would meet in one place which is impossible. The vacuity of one place is, therefore, a condition for the other, which is the reason why they are mutually conditioned and that makes it appear as if one is generated from the other, which is a mistake.

As for consequences (*lāzimāt*) which are not conditions, we think it admissible that they be separate from the logical conclusion¹ necessary for the consequence. Rather their concomitancy is determined by virtue of following custom, like the burning of cotton when it touches fire and the occurrence of coldness in the hand when it touches ice. All this continues to happen by the ordinance of God; otherwise, power in itself does not fall short of creating coldness in ice and the touching of it by the hand along with the creation of heat in the hand instead of coldness when it [the hand] touches the ice. Therefore, what the opponent sees as 'generated' falls into two categories. One of them is a condition which could not be conceived as separate from the logical conclusion and the second is not a condition, and hence its separation from the logical conclusion could be conceived if the usual order of events were violated.

If it is said: You did not prove the negation of generation but only denied that it is understood. It is, however, understood because we mean by it neither the bringing forth of a movement from another by its [movement's] coming out of [a movement's] inside, nor the generation of coldness from ice by the coming forth or coldness out of ice, and its transference, or its coming forth out of the coldness itself. Rather, we mean by it the existence of an existent as a consequence to an existent and its being existent and originated by it [by the existent]. Therefore, we call the originated thing generated, and that by which generation occurs, is called generator [that which generates]. This naming is understandable; what, then, points to its negation?

We say: If you accept that [the above argument], then what indicates the falsity [of your position] is the same as has indicated the absurdity of the contingent power's being a creator. Therefore, if we think it impossible to maintain that an object of power is originated by a contingent power, why should we not consider as impossible the occurrence [of an act] by that which is not power? Therefore, its impossibility [of generation] is due to the relativity of power being common; and its exclusion [exclusion of generation] from the sphere of power negates this common aspect of its [power's] relativity. But this position is absurd and, furthermore, necessitates impotence and mutual hindrance as has been stated before.

1. See note 1, p. 121, above.

Yes, the Mu'tazilites who hold [the doctrine] of generation (*tawallud*) have fallen into innumerable contradictions in their exposition of generation, such as their claim that inquiry generates knowledge, while its recollection [recollection of knowledge] does not generate it [knowledge], etc. There is no need for verbosity in what is not necessary. You have understood from the summation of this [the above discussion] that all contingent things, their substances and accidents, which occur in the essence of living beings and inanimates, occur through God's power and that He is unique in their creation, and not one of the created things occurs through another [none by contingent power of *tawallud*] but rather all occur through God's power. What we have wanted to clarify is the affirmation of the attribute of power in God, its [power's] general properties, and the aspects and consequences associated with it.

Chapter Two The Second Attribute: Knowledge (*'Ilm*)¹

We assert that God knows all existent and non-existent objects of knowledge. Existing things are divided into eternal and contingent things. The eternal things are His essence and His attributes. Whoever knows other than himself knows best his own essence and attributes. It follows, by necessity that He knows His own essence and attributes if it be affirmed that He knows other than Himself. It is known that He knows other than Himself because that to which the name 'other' is applied is His masterly creation and perfectly organized acts which point to the knowledge of the Maker just as they point to His power, as we have seen earlier. Whoever sees arranged lines issuing in harmonious form from a scribe, and then doubts his [scribe's] knowing the craft of writing would be silly in his doubt. Therefore, it has been established that He knows His essence and other than Himself.

1. The Mu'tazilites did not deny the attributes of knowledge but made them equal to the Essence. Al-'Allāf said that God is knowing through a knowledge which is His essence. Affirming knowledge to God meant negating its contrary which in effect is that knowledge is the attribute of negation, i.e. it negates ignorance to God. Al-Nazzām, however, declared that it is an attribute of negation and that all existent things are known to God, (i.e. are unveiled to God's knowledge,) and it is not an attribute superadded to the essence. He also added that it is an eternal attribute which does not change, for, if it changed, God would be a locus for contingent things and what is not free from contingent things is also a contingent thing. To the objection that since objects of knowledge are subject to mutation and change as can be perceived by the senses, why does not knowledge change also? They answer that change is true of the knowledge of Man because it is a knowledge which is acquired by the senses, and the senses only sense what is changeable. But God knows a thing before it occurs and after it is, and knows when it is annihilated. Change in time leads to change in man's knowledge, but the concept of time cannot be applied to the divine knowledge because the revelation of time to God's knowledge is one. All things are known to God eternally without their changeability effecting change in His knowledge or making Him *ḥādīth*. *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, ed. H. Ritter (Wiesbaden), 1963, pp. 158–167)

If it is asked: Do His objects of knowledge have a limit?

We answer: No, even if things existing at the present are limited, the possible things in the future are infinite. He knows the possibles which are non-existent, and whether He shall actually create them or not and these are infinite. He, therefore, knows what is infinite. Nay, if we are to multiply a thing in various ratios and measurements, this would be infinite, but God knows them all. We say that, for example, the double of two is four, and the double of four is eight, and the double of eight is sixteen; and in the same manner if we multiply the multiple of two and the multiple of the multiple *ad infinitum*, a man would know of their [i.e. these mathematical calculations] degrees only what his mind is capable of knowing and his life would end while the infinity of the multiplications continues. Since the knowledge of the multiples of the multiples of two (and it is but a simple number) are unaccountable—and it is the same with every number like it—then what of the other ratios and quantities? This knowledge, and its relation to infinite objects of knowledge, is but one, as will be clarified later along with the rest of the attributes.¹

1. God knows everything, whether universal or particular, but the Mu'tazilites and later the philosophers denied that God knows the particular. For the Mu'tazilites it was thought that if God knows the particulars that would mean burdening Him with the acts of men. This problem of God's knowledge of the particulars is a very difficult one. Sa'd al-Dīn Taftāzānī in his commentary on the 'Aqā'id of Nasafī, *Sharḥ al-'aqā'id, 'ala matn al-'aqā'id li'l-Nasafī* (Cairo, n.d., p. 83), presents the argument this way: Knowledge, he says, is an eternal attribute which uncovers the objects of knowledge when it is connected with them.

The commentary can be paraphrased as follows. These objects of knowledge which are uncovered are all those objects whether existent or non-existent, impossible or possible, contingent or eternal, infinite or finite, particular or universal. This is so because what necessitates being known is the essence of the objects of knowledge and what necessitates knowingness is God's essence, and the relation of the essence to all objects of knowledge is equal. Since His knowledge of some objects of knowledge has been established, it becomes necessary that He knows the whole. But what about the philosophers' argument that particulars are subject to change which necessitates change in the essential knowledge?

Taftāzānī's answer is that God's knowledge of changeable things is of two aspects:

A knowledge which is not bound by time which is God's knowledge of every one of them bound by the time of their existence in a universal way and bound by their non-existence at the time of their non-existence. Knowledge, however, is eternal and does not change. Another knowledge is bound by time and this is God's knowledge of certain change—that things are either existent or disappearing and this is infinite *in actu* according to the finiteness of changeable things, and finite *in potentia* like the eternally changeable things. But the change of these neither necessitates a change in the attribute of knowledge nor something real in God's essence. Rather it necessitates a change in the relation of knowledge and its connection with its objects (p. 84).

Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī in *Sharḥ al-'aqā'id al-'aḍudiyyah* (Cairo, 1322/1904), supports a similar view. For him, God knows all objects of knowledge: He knows all the quiddities with which it is proper for His essence to be connected and He knows what is other than His essence—whether these are universals or particulars. We will let Dawānī himself argue against the philosophers who deny that God knows the particulars:

‘That he knows His essence and other than His essence is agreed upon by all philosophers except a handful of ancient philosophers—who do not matter very much—who maintain that the world issues from Him unconsciously; and by this they want to say that the emanation of existence and its properties is a consequential property of His essence just as the light’s being a consequence of the sun is a perfection’ (p. 109).

Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī in *al-Mabāḥith al-Mashriqiyyah* says that most of the ancient and later philosophers deny that God knows the particulars while Shaykh Abu’l-Barakāt Baghdādī asserts it (pp. 110–111).

To discuss the position of the philosophers, al-Dawānī says that there are four points to be considered:

- (1) Things either have no form and are non-changeable;
- (2) or they are changeable but do not have forms;
- (3) or they have forms but do not change;
- (4) or they have forms and do change (p. 111).

As for (1), God knows them whether they are universals or particulars. How could it be said that He does not know the particulars while most of these philosophers are agreed that He is knowing in virtue of His essence and knows the intelligences?

As for (2), they are like the forms and the accidents and the rational souls. They are not objects of knowledge for God, not because they require a bodily instrument but because, since they are changeable, their change necessitates change in knowledge.

As for (3), they are like the heavenly bodies whose measures and forms are permanent and free from change. And they are, in their view, not known to God individually because the perception of bodily things is done only by a bodily instrument.

As for (4), they are like the existent and corruptible bodies. It is impossible for them to be objects of knowledge for the two reasons that they are changeable and subject to corruption.

Later philosophers replaced ‘having form’ by ‘being material’ and maintained that He does not have changeable-material-particulars. They considered them as they are, i.e. inasmuch as they are material—attached to matter and its accidents—and inasmuch as they are changeable and occupying units of time, in the past, the present, and the future, and because the perception of material particulars since their attachment to matter makes them objects of sensing and imagination. Sensing and imagination are only done by a particularized bodily instrument and also the perception of the changeable particulars which occupy units of time, their change necessitates change in knowledge. Dawānī takes these points posed by the philosophers as they are related by Ṭūsī and refutes them one by one. The first argument, he contends, was not necessary because God is free from matter and its attachments and hence there is no need to deny sensing and imagination—which are properties of matter—to God. The second argument, he declares, is hardly necessary because God’s intellection is not through a faculty like our human intellectual faculty. Thirdly, Dawānī argues that he does not accept the supposition that if God’s knowledge is through intellection that would not refute a supposition of *ishtirāk* because God’s knowledge of His essence and of the intellects is in a particular way. Fourthly, because to contend that ‘being universal’ and ‘being particular’ are among the absolute qualities of knowledge is impossible.

THE BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE

Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn

Reprinted from Ghazzālī's *Kitāb al-'ilm*, Book 1 of the *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, tr. Nabih Amin Faris as *The Book of Knowledge* (Lahore, 1962), pp. 225–236.

On the Truth Concerning the Intellect and its Divisions

Let it be known that people have disagreed on the definition of the intellect and its reality. Many have forgotten that this term has been applied in various meanings, a fact which has led to the existing disagreement concerning the definition of the term. The truth, however, is that the word intellect (*'aql*) is a term used equivocally for four distinct meanings in the same way as the term for eye (*'ayn*) has been used for several meanings. In the case of such words, therefore, no one single definition should be expected to cover the several meanings of the term. On the contrary each meaning should have its individual definition.

First is that quality which differentiates man from the other animals and qualifies him to understand and grasp the theoretical sciences (*naẓariyyah*) and master mental (*fikriyyah*) discipline. This is exactly what Ḥārith ibn Asad al-Muḥāsibī intended when he defined intellect (*'aql*) as an instinct (*gharīzah*) by which man acquires the disposition for perceiving theoretical sciences. It is as though it were a light cast into the heart preparing it thereby to grasp things and understand them. Hence he who denies this and reduces the intellect merely to *a priori* (*ḍaruriyyah*) knowledge only, is wrong because a person who is unaware of the knowledge as well as he who is fast asleep, as long as they possess this instinct, are called intelligent, although they lack the actual knowledge. And just as life is an instinct whereby the body is disposed to carry out the voluntary (*ikhtiyāriyyah*) movements and respond to sense perception (*al-idrākāt al-ḥissiyah*), so is the intellect an instinct whereby some of the animals are disposed to grasp the theoretical sciences.

Furthermore if it were conceivable to regard the donkey as equal to man in instincts and sense perception and say that there was no difference between them except that God, just as a matter of course, imbued man with science with which He did not bless the donkey and the animals, it would also be conceivable to regard the inanimate objects as equal to the donkey in life and say that there was no difference between them except that God, just as a matter of course, endowed the donkey with some particular movements. But if the donkey were inanimate and lifeless, it would have been necessary to say that every movement which the donkey might perform must have been originated in it by God in that particular sequence. And just as it has been necessary to say that the donkey would not differ from inanimate objects in movement except for an instinct characteristic of it which is expressed by the

word life, so would it be in the case of man in relation to the animal; he differs from it in his grasp of the theoretical sciences through an instinct which is expressed by the word intellect.

This is just like the mirror which is distinguished from other objects by its ability to reflect images and colours through a particular quality peculiar to it, namely its polish. The same is true of the eye, which is distinguished from the forehead in several qualities and characteristics which enable it to see. Hence the relation of that instinct (namely, the intellect), to the sciences is similar to that of the eye to vision, while the relation of the Qur'an and the law to that instinct in so far as it leads to the unfolding of the sciences is like that of the light of the sun to seeing. In this manner, therefore, should this instinct be defined and understood.

Secondly the word *'aql* is applied to that knowledge which makes its appearance even in the infant who discerns the possibility of possible things (*jā'izāt*) and the impossibility of impossible things (*mustahīlāt*), such as the knowledge that the two are greater than the one and that the one individual cannot be in two different places at the same time. It is what one of the scholastics meant when he defined the word *'aql* as some necessary knowledge (*'ulūm al-ḍarūriyyah*), such as the possibility of possible things and the impossibility of impossible things. This definition is right, as it stands, because this knowledge is existent and the application of the word *'aql* to it is evident. What is wrong, however, is to deny that instinct, and to hold that only this kind of knowledge exists.

In the third place the word *'aql* has been applied to that knowledge which is acquired through experience (empirical knowledge), in the course of events. Thus he who has been taught by experience and schooled by time is normally called intelligent (*'āqil*), while he who lacks these qualifications is called unintelligent, stupid and ignorant. Here, therefore, is another type of knowledge which is called *'aql*.

In the fourth place the word *'aql* is used when the power of the instinct develops to such an extent that its owner will be able to discern the consequences of affairs, and thereby eradicate and subdue his appetite for immediate pleasure. Whenever such a power is realized, its owner, in view of the fact that he embarks upon an undertaking, or refrains from it only after a thorough consideration of the consequences rather than in answer to the urge of a carnal appetite, is called intelligent. This, too, is among the peculiarities which distinguish man from the other animals.

As to these four usages of the word *'aql* it should be pointed out that the first is the foundation of the other three, their origin and fountainhead. The second is the branch nearest to the first, while the third is an offshoot of both the first and second combined, since through the power of the instinct and axiomatic knowledge the empirical senses are acquired. The fourth is the final fruit and ultimate aim. The first two are natural (*bi'l-ṭab'*), while the last two are acquired (*bi'l-iktisāb*). For this reason 'Alī, may God bestow honour upon his countenance, said:

I found the intellect to be of two kinds
 That which is natural and that which is revealed
 Of no avail is the natural [intellect]
 If there is no revealed [intellect]
 As the sun is of no advantage
 While the light of the eye is ceased

The first type, namely the natural intellect (*al-‘aql al-maṭbū‘*), was intended by the Prophet, when he said, ‘Allah has not created a thing more honourable to Him than the intellect (‘aql).’ The second type, namely the revealed intellect (*al-‘aql al-masmū‘*), was intended by the Prophet when he said, ‘When people draw themselves near unto Allah through their righteousness and virtuous acts, you draw yourself near unto Him by your intellect.’ The same is intended by the words of the Apostle of Allah when he said to Abū’l-Dardā’, ‘Increase your intellect and you will become nearer unto your God.’ Abū’l-Dardā’ said, ‘May my father and mother be your ransom! How can I do that?’ The Apostle replied, ‘Avoid the prohibitions of Allah and fulfil His commandments and thou wilt be wise; do the good works and thou wilt increase in glory and honour in this world and wilt receive a place of favour and exaltation from thy Lord in the world to come.’

It was also related on the authority of Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab that ‘Umar, Ubayy ibn K‘ab, and Abū Hurayrah called one day on the Apostle of Allah and said, ‘O Apostle of Allah! Who is the most knowledgeable of people?’ He said, ‘The one who is wise.’ ‘Who is the most worshipful of men?’ they asked, ‘The one who is wise,’ replied the Apostle. Again they said, ‘And who is the most excellent of men?’ And again he replied ‘The one who is wise.’ Thereupon they said, ‘Is not the wise man he whose manliness is perfect, whose eloquence is manifest, whose hands are generous, and whose status is greater?’ The Apostle replied, ‘These are all the temporary privileges of this world while the eternal abode is reserved by God for the pious ones who fear Him. Verily the wise man is he who is pious, although he may be abject and despised in this world.’ According to another tradition the Prophet said, ‘Verily the wise man is he who believes in Allah, acknowledges the veracity of His messengers and obeys His commandments.’

It is very likely that the basic use of the word ‘aql has been for that instinct, [natural intellect], and the same is true of its technical use. It was, however, applied to knowledge because the latter is, as it were, its fruit, and just as a thing is known by its fruit so that, as a result, it is said, ‘The fear of Allah is knowledge,’ and ‘He who fears Allah is learned,’ because the fear of God is the fruit of knowledge, so has the word ‘aql been used metaphorically for other than that instinct, [natural intellect]. It is not, however, our purpose to discuss language. All we mean is that these four parts exist and that the term ‘aql is applied to all of them alike.

Furthermore there is no dispute regarding the existence of all but the first part, namely the instinct. There is no doubt, however, that it exists; in fact it is the origin of the other three while all the forms of knowledge, are as it were, inherent in it by nature and come to light when some cause which will bring them out takes place. Such is the case with knowledge that it would seem as though there was no external influence whatever in its appearance: it merely was latent in that instinct and later appeared.

This can be illustrated by the water in the bowels of the earth: it appears on digging and collects at the bottom of the well and can be distinguished by the senses; yet throughout the whole operation no new element was introduced. The same is true of the oil in almond nuts and the attar in rose petals. For this reason Allah said, 'And when the Lord brought forth their descendants from the reins of the sons of Adam and took them to witness against themselves, "Am I not," said He, "your Lord?" They said, "Yes, we witness it"'¹ What is meant here is confession in their souls, not verbal profession, because men are divided in the case of verbal profession into two groups, confessors and deniers. Consequently Allah said, 'If you ask them who created them, surely they will say, "Allah"'. This means that if they would only consider their condition, their souls and hearts would subscribe to the fact that God had created them (in accordance with) 'the nature (*fiṭrah*) which God has given them.'² In other words every human being is created and born a believer; still more every human being is born with an inherent knowledge of reality, inherent since it is readily disposed to perceive reality.

With belief installed by nature in the human soul, men have split, into two groups: one has turned away from that belief and has forgotten all about it—it comprises the unbelievers, the other has pondered and remembered, resembling therein one who has a witness, and, in his oversight, for a while has forgotten all about it, but finally has remembered it. For this reason Allah said, 'Haply they may remember';³ and 'that those endued with understanding may recall and remember';⁴ and again, 'And remember the favour of God upon you';⁵ and again, 'And we have rendered the Qur'ān available as a sign to be remembered—but is there any one who will remember?'⁶ It is not, therefore, far-fetched to call this kind remembrance (*tadhakkur*). Thus remembrance is of two kinds: the one is to recall a picture which once existed in one's mind but has since disappeared, while the other is to recall a picture which is inherent in one's mind by nature (*fiṭrah*).

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1. Qur'ān VII: 171.
 2. Qur'ān XLIII: 87.
 3. Qur'ān XXX: 29.
 4. Qur'ān II: 221, XIV: 30.
 5. Qur'ān XXXVIII: 28.
 6. Qur'ān V: 10.

These facts are evident to him who exercises his insight, but are abstruse to him who is given to blind imitation and simple acceptance of things on authority (*taqlīd*) rather than to investigation and personal observation. Consequently you find such men entangled in these and similar verses, hopelessly lost in the interpretation of remembrance (*tadhakkur*) and the confession of the souls, and continually imagining that the traditions of the Prophet and the Qur'ān are full of contradictions.¹ Such an attitude may take hold of him so that he will regard them with contempt, believing that they are utterly incoherent. He is like a blind man who enters a house and, stumbling over some vessels says, 'Why were not these vessels removed from the way and returned to their places?' He is then told that they are in their right places and what is wrong is his sight. The same is true of the disorder of the insight; in fact it is worse because the soul is like the horseman while the body represents the horse; the blindness of the horseman is more serious and disastrous than that of the horse.

The relation between insight and sight is evident. Thus Allah said, 'His heart falsified not what he saw,'² and again, 'And thus did We show Abraham the kingdom of the Heavens and of the Earth.'³ The opposite of both insight and sight has been called blindness. Thus Allah said, 'For surely it is not the eyes that are blind, but blind are the hearts which are in the breasts.'⁴ As to those things which were revealed to the prophets, some were revealed through the sight and some through the insight, but both were called seeing (*ru'yah*). In short he whose insight is not keen will grasp nothing of religion except its husks and outward forms rather than its pith and truth. These, then, are the things to which the word '*aql*' is applied.

On The Intellectual Disparity Among Men

Men have disagreed concerning the disparity which exists among their intellects (*'aql*). But there is no use in repeating the arguments of those of little knowledge. It is more important to proceed immediately to the declaration of the truth. The obvious truth in this case is that this disparity pervades all the four parts of the intellect except the second, namely *a priori* (*darūri*) knowledge, such as the possibility of possible things and the impossibility of impossible things. Thus he who comprehends that two are greater than one will also comprehend the impossibility of one object being in two different places at the same time, or of a thing being both eternal (*qadīm*) and originated (*hādith*). The same is true of all other similar facts and whatever is comprehended with certain comprehension free of any doubt. The three other parts, however, are subject to disparity.

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1. Qur'ān LIV: 17.
 2. Qur'ān LIII: II.
 3. Qur'ān VII: 75.
 4. Qur'ān XXII: 45.

As to the fourth, namely, the ability of the power of the instinct to conquer the appetite, the disparity in it among men is evident and clear; in fact it is evident and clear that, at times, even the individual betrays a certain degree of disparity therein. This is sometimes the result of variation in the intensity of different appetites. A wise man may be able to overcome one appetite more readily than another; but the problem is not restricted to this only. The young man may fail to overcome the appetite of sex and desist from fornication, but when he advances in age and his understanding becomes mature he will be able to subdue his lust. On the other hand hypocrisy and pride increase and grow stronger with age.

This disparity may also be the result of difference in the mastery of the knowledge which reveals the evil of the other appetites. Thus a physician may be able to abstain from some of the harmful foods, while another man may fail simply because he lacks medical knowledge, although he may be the physician's peer in intellect and of the same belief in the harmful effects of those foods. Again the more mature the physician's intellect, the stronger will his fear be. Hence fear is an aid in the service of the intellect, an instrument with which to overcome and break appetites. Similarly, the learned man is more capable of renouncing sin than the ignorant, because his knowledge of the evils of sin is greater. I mean the true learned men and not those of the flowing robes who dote and rave and prate of things they know little about.

If this disparity is due to appetite it will have nothing to do with the disparity of intellect, but if it is due to knowledge, then we shall call this kind of knowledge intellect, because it strengthens the natural intellect and hence the disparity will be that of the particular knowledge then involved, after which it will also be named. It may also be caused by disparities in the natural intellect, the ability of which to stamp out appetite becomes inevitably stronger as it grows more powerful.

As to the third part, namely, empirical knowledge (*'Ulūm al-tajārib*), the disparity among men cannot be denied. They differ therein in the number of times they are right in their quickness to comprehend. This may be the result of either disparity in the instinct (natural intellect), or disparity in practice and experience. In the case of the first (the instinct) which is the origin, the disparity cannot be denied. It is like a luminary which shines upon the soul, whose dawning and first rays begin to illuminate the soul at the age of discrimination and continue to grow and increase very gradually until it reaches its fullness around the age of forty. Or like the light of the morning, the beginnings of which are hard to discern but increase little by little until it attains its fullness at the rising of the sun. The disparity of insight is like that of eyesight where the difference between the weak-sighted man and the keen-sighted is quite evident.

The law of God operates universally among all His creatures and follows the principles of gradual development. Thus the sex instinct does not appear at puberty all at one time suddenly; rather it appears little by little gradually. The same is true

of all the other forces and facilities. In fact he who denies the disparity of men in this instinct is loose outside the confines of sanity, and he who thinks that the intellect of the Prophet is the same as that of any of the outlandish peasants and desert ruffians is himself filthier than any of those peasants.

Furthermore how could the disparity of instinct (natural intellect) be denied when without it men would not have varied in their ability to understand knowledge, nor would they have been divided into the stupid who fail to understand anything except after long and tedious explanation by a teacher, the brilliant who respond to the least sign, and the perfect from whose soul truth emanates without any previous instruction. Thus Allah said, ‘Whose oil would well nigh shine out, even though fire touched it not! It is light upon light.’¹ Such are the Prophets to whom recondite things are clarified in their inward thoughts without having learnt or heard anything of the sort. This is expressed by the word inspiration (*ilhām*). The Prophet expressed the same thing when he said, ‘Verily the holy spirit whispered into my heart and said, “Love anyone, thou shalt part from him; live anyway thou desirest, thou shalt verily die; do anything thou wilt—thou shalt be accordingly rewarded”’.

This kind of imparting information by the angels to the Prophets is different from explicit revelation which involves hearing a definite voice with the ear and seeing the angel with the eye. Consequently the stage (of revelation) has been described as whispering into the heart (*al-naḥṭh fi’l-raw’*). As to the stages of revelation (*waḥy*), they are many, but to embark on a discussion of them under the science of conducts (*ilm al-mu’āmalah*) is not fitting, because they fall under the science of unveiling (*ilm al-mukāshafah*). Do not think, however, that the knowledge of the stages of revelation requires that a person be himself a receiver of revelation, because it is not unlikely for a sick physician to know the difference stages of health or for the trespassing learned man to know the various stages of justice despite the fact that he lacks justice. For, knowledge is one thing and the existence of what is known is another. Consequently not everyone who knows what prophethood and sainthood are will be a Prophet or a saint, and not everyone who knows what piety and abstinence are will be pious or abstinent.

That men are divided into those who take notice by themselves and understand, and those who do not understand except through notice and instruction, and those who benefit from neither, is like the division of the bosom of the earth into parts where water collects and increases until it bursts out by itself into springs of living water, and parts where water collects but cannot be reached without digging, and arid parts where not even digging will avail. This is true of the disparity of men in natural intellect. Attesting to the disparity of the intellect is a tradition narrated by ‘Abdullāh ibn Salām to the effect that the Prophet at the end of a long conversation described the throne and stated that the angels once asked Allāh saying, ‘O

1. Qur’ān XXIV: 35.

our Lord! Hast thou created aught greater than the throne?' Allāh replied, 'Yes, the intellect.' The angels said, 'How great is it?' Allāh answered and said, 'Verily no one can grasp its greatness. Do you know the number the sand of the sea?' They said, 'No.' Allāh then replied, 'Verily I have created the intellect in various kinds as numerous as the sand of the sea. Some men were given one grain, others two, three and four grains, still others received a good portion, others a portion equalling a camel-load, and others even greater.'

You may say, 'Why then do some groups among the Sufis disparage the intellect and reason as well as the rational and the reasonable?' You should know, then, that the reason for it is that people have transferred the term intellect (*'aql*) and intelligible (*ma'qūl*) from their original meaning to disputation and polemical arguments, which are specific to the science of theology. Consequently the Sufis could not tell that men have erred in this terminology, especially since it has not been possible to remove that from their minds in view of its current and well established usage. As a result they disparaged reason and rationality. Could it be imagined, however, that the light of the insight, through which God is known and the truthfulness of His Apostle is recognized, will ever be disparaged or belittled when God Himself praised it? And if it were ever disparaged, what other thing could be praised? But if the praiseworthy knowledge be the law, by what is its truth known? If it were known through the blameworthy and unreliable intellect, then the law itself is blameworthy. No attention, however, is paid to him who says that the law is known through intellectual certainty itself (*'ayn al-yaqīn*) and the light of belief rather than through intellect, because we mean by intellect what he means by certain sight and the light of belief, namely the inner characteristics by which man is distinguished from the animal and through which he comprehends reality. Most of these wild errors have arisen from the ignorance of some who sought realities in words and erred wildly therein, because of the confusion which exists in the technical terminologies of men.

Muḥammad Shahrastānī

Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm Shahrastānī was a notable theologian, philosopher and historian from Khurāsān who was born in 469/1076 and died in 548/1153. He studied jurisprudence and theology with Abu’l-Qāsim al-Anṣārī and is said to have belonged to the Ash‘arite school. It appears however, that Shahrastānī had embraced Ismailism and also developed a particular respect for philosophers as is evident in his major work *al-Milal wa’l-niḥal* (Nations and Sects).

Shahrastānī’s magnum opus, *al-Milal wa’l-niḥal* is a truly remarkable study of Islamic theologians and philosophers in the annals of Islamic philosophical literature. He begins with entries concerning intellectual schools such as the Mu’tazilite and Shi‘i and goes on to discuss other religions such as Christianity, Judaism, Manichaeism and Mazdaism, as well as Greek philosophers. He pays special attention to the dichotomy of light and darkness in Persian religious and philosophical thought which is related to Suhrawardī’s philosophy of illumination (*ishrāq*) that appeared soon after Shahrastānī came upon the scene. Perhaps following the Socratic method, he even creates a dialogue between an orthodox Muslim and a Sabaeon on the nature of prophecy and the spirit of the stars.

In addition to this major work which remains a source book on the history of Islamic hagiography, theology and philosophy, Shahrastānī also wrote an important work on philosophical theology entitled *Nihāyat al-iqdām fi ‘ilm al-kalām* (The Ultimate Step in the Science of Theology) and a treatise on metaphysics called *Muṣāra‘at al-falāsifah* (Wrestling with the Philosophers) which is reminiscent of Ghazzālī’s *Tahāfut al-falāsifah*. To these works he added a shorter treatise on the history of philosophy entitled *Tārīkh al-ḥukamā’*, not to be mistaken for al-Qifṭī’s work of the same title which was written a century later. Shahrastānī was strictly speaking, a philosopher-cum-theologian who did not show much interest in the study of the *Sharī‘ah* and offered mostly analyses and interpretations of philosophical and theological thought. Instead of dealing only with biographical accounts, he offered penetrating analysis of philosophical ideas and discussed them in a manner

that is characteristic of philosophers and theologians. He does not however, show a good grasp of Greek philosophers in general, but does appear to have understood well Plato's theory of forms, Pythagoras' theory of numbers as the underlying principle and reality of beings, and certain aspects of Aristotle's philosophy which he seems to have derived from Ibn Sinā's commentaries. Shahrastānī's interest in philosophical and theological thought extended into Buddhist and Hindu thought as well. He made some remarkably accurate comments on the notion of the Bodhisattva and Buddhist psychology as well as such Hindu rituals as the worship of the goddess Kali, the practice of sacred suicide and ablutions in sacred rivers. He also made some historically erroneous but theologically interesting remarks regarding Pythagoras as the intellectual founder of Hinduism.

In what follows, we have included sections of Shahrastānī's *Kitāb nihāyat al-iqdām fi 'ilm al-kalām*. The first chapter is devoted to a discussion of the impossibility of anything without a beginning and therefore the argument that the world must have had a beginning. In the second chapter, Shahrastānī refutes the dualists and natural philosophers (naturalists) by arguing that the beginning of all things is in God.

M. Aminrazavi

THE SUMMA PHILOSOPHIAE

Nihāyat al-iqdām fī ‘ilm al-kalām

Reprinted from Shahrastānī’s *Nihāyat al-iqdām fī ‘ilm al-kalām*, ed. and trans. A. Guillaume as *The Summa Philosophiae of al-Shahrastānī* (London, 1934), pp. 1–38; 60–66; 78–84.

Proof that the World had a Beginning and a Demonstration of the Impossibility of Anything without a Beginning and of the Existence of Bodies Infinite

All men of true religion hold that the world had an origin as the object of God’s¹ creation. ‘God was and there was naught with Him.’ The ancient philosophers Thales, Anaxagoras, Anaximenes, Pythagoras, Empedocles, Socrates, and Plato, all agree in this. We have discussed their various opinions about the origin of things in our book *al-Milal wa’l-niḥal*.

The school of Aristotle and his followers, such as Proclus, Alexander of Aphrodisias, and Themistius, to whom moderns like al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā among Islamic philosophers pay allegiance assert that the world was made and brought into being by One who is in His essence the necessarily existent One, the world being in its essence capable of existence (yet) necessarily existent through the necessarily existent One, (and) not originated in time with an origin preceded by nonexistence.² The meaning of its origin (*ḥudūth*) is its necessary existence through God, its proceeding from Him, and its need of Him. It exists eternally through Him.

The Creator caused through His essence (*awjaba*) an intelligence which was a non-material self-subsistent substance. By means of this He caused another intelligence, and a soul and a heavenly body. Through these two intelligences the elements and the compounds came into being. From the One only one thing can proceed; and the meaning of ‘proceeding from’ (*ṣudūr ‘an*) is necessity through Him. A necessitator without a necessitated is inconceivable, so the world is eternal (*sarmadī*) and so are the movements of the spheres; they had no beginning and every movement is preceded by another movement, so that they are infinite as to number and time.

1. I have avoided the use of the name Allāh, because much of the language of this author belongs to the philosophy of theism, and might have been written by a member of any of the theistic religions.

2. The point is fundamental. Avicenna held that the world was both ‘possible’ and ‘necessary’: possible, because it could not exist by itself; necessary, because it exists eternally with God. Thus God’s relation with the world is one of necessity. The *mutakallimūn* asserted that the relation was a relation of existence.

These men also agreed that the existence of an infinite (sequence of) cause and effect was impossible, and that actually infinite bodies were impossible. The governing principle of their school in regard to the finite and infinite is that the units of every number can be conceived as existing simultaneously, it having a conventional order¹ (*tartīb waḍ'ī*); or its units can be conceived as existing in sequence, it having a natural order. Hence the existence of the infinite is impossible. An example of the first kind is a body of infinite dimension, and an example of the second kind is an infinite (sequence) of cause and effect. There is, however, an exception. The units of every totality and number can be conceived simultaneously or in sequence without a conventional or natural order. And so the existence of that without an end is not in this case impossible.

Examples of the first kind are infinite human souls, they being simultaneous in existence after separation from the body.² Examples of the second kind are circular movements which exist in sequence. The question really turns on the difference between bringing into existence and causation, and priority and posteriority. Everything comprised by being is finite without distinction between the parts, and the infinite is inconceivable except by the imagination apart from perception and intellect.

In popular terminology *priority* can be in time, as father to son; in place, as leader to the led (though this is sometimes said to be priority of rank); in merit, as the learned to the ignorant; in essence (*dhāt*), as the cause to the effect. But it is not right to weaken the meaning of essential so that it is the mere equivalent of causal. They ought to say priority resides in the causal, so the final cause precedes the effect in the mind and thought of the agent, not in existence. It is posterior in existence, prior in mind, unlike the efficient cause and the formal cause, for these are not conjoined in existence. Examples are cited from the rays of the sun with the sun itself and the movement of the sleeve with the movement of the hand. These movements, though conjoined in time, yet, if regarded as cause and effect respectively, cannot be conjoined in existence, because the existence of the one is derived (*mustafād*) from the existence of the other, and the existence of the origin cannot be conjoined with that which is derived from it. But if the existence of both is taken as derived from the giver of forms then they are conjoined in existence, for then one is neither cause nor the other effect.

Some add a fifth form of priority which they call natural, e.g. the priority of one to two. Why should there not be a sixth form, say priority in existence regardless

1. This is explained better by Avicenna himself, cf. *Najāt* (Cairo 1331/1912), section *Ṭabī'īyyāt*.

2. This argument (abbreviated to a bald statement by Shahrastānī) was combated by Ghazzālī (*Tahāfut*, ed. Bouyges, Beirut 1927, p. 34). Even if an 'infinite' series of immortal souls had been born in the past, there would at any given moment be an actual finite number of them, which on Avicenna's principles would be impossible.

of essential necessity (*al-ijāb bi'l-dhāt*) and of time and place? The priority of one to two is apposite here for one is not a cause requiring the existence of two necessarily because we can imagine two things, one of which exists in its essence while the other's existence is derived from another source.

Further, it must be determined by inquiry whether derivative being comes by choice, by nature, or by essence. Then the priority of existence of the origin over the derivative must be assumed only *qua* existence without considering whether the origin is essentially its cause or is its producer by means of a quality (*bi-ṣifatin*). Next, is the derived existence a necessary existence through it (the origin) because it (the origin) is its cause, or is its existence not necessary through it (the origin) because necessity through another adheres to it? For it would be right to say 'This came into being from it and so was necessary through it' but it is impossible to say 'It was necessary through it and so came into being from it'.

Every sense of priority and posteriority implies concomitance in rank but here they belong to another order. Concomitance cannot be predicated of the Creator and the world. We do not admit the existence of temporal priority as applied to the Creator. He was neither prior to nor with the world in time. As we deny temporal priority so we deny temporal concomitance. That which is not of time and whose being is not temporal can have nothing to do with limitations and order of time any more than with limitations of space.

When our opponents say the world was eternally existent with the Creator they use the ambiguous language of time, for it may be said that of two things one may be prior in essence while both are concomitant in time, for priority in essence does not exclude concomitance in time (cf. the examples given above). But how can the word concomitance be used of that which is not susceptible to time?

We do not deny that fancy can toy with the idea of time before the world as with space above the world, but that is pure fantasy. There is no space and no 'separation' as al-Karrāmī¹ supposes. If a world above this were conjectured that would not justify the assumption that there were worlds i.e. bodies of infinite extent, as the impossibility of infinite distance in the plenum and vacuum has been demonstrated similarly with infinite time and numbers.

Even if there were a body of infinite extent it would not follow that it was 'with' the Creator in space, nor would movements infinite in time require that they should be 'with' the Creator in time, because He is not susceptible of time or place; 'God was and naught was with Him'. To call God *Mūjid* (He who brings into existence) does not imply that the *mūjad* is 'with' Him in existence. Concomitance in any shape or form in reference to God is to be denied.

We will begin with the methods of the *mutakallimūn* and then deal with the points at issue. The *mutakallimūn* have two methods: (a) Positive, which establishes

1. See *al-Milal* (London, 1846), p. 80.

the doctrine that the world was produced; (b) Negative, which refuses the doctrine of its eternity. As to (a) they assert (1) the existence of accidents (2) that they had a temporal origin (3) that no substance is free from them (4) the impossibility of temporal objects without a beginning. From these premises it follows that something that temporal things do not precede is itself temporal.¹

Al-Ash'arī said: If we assume the pre-existence of atoms they must either have been grouped together or separate, or neither grouped nor separate; and as their relation one to another has changed and they do not change of their own essence because essence is unchangeable there must have been one who joined and separated them. Therefore it follows that something that temporal things do not precede is itself temporal.

Abū Ishāq al-Isfarāyīnī adopted this view, though he expressed it differently. Al-Ash'arī maintained that man was formed of mingled seed into the various species of mankind. It is not to be doubted that the diversities in man are due to an eternal, omnipotent, and omniscient maker rather than to man himself, his parents, or nature. Said he: What laws can be applied to the individual can be applied to all, because all share the property of corporeality.

The Imām al-Ḥaramayn (Abu'l-Ma'ālī 'Abd al-Malik al-Juwaynī)² taking another path, said: According to our opponents the earth is surrounded by (successive circles of) water, air, fire, and planets which are spatial bodies. We know that the supposition that these bodies might move from their place or alter in size is not an impossible one. Now anything that has a specific nature of any possible kind, when any other nature would have been possible, must necessarily have needed one to give it that specific nature. It will be seen in what follows that the world's existence is essentially contingent whether it be conceived as essentially infinite or finite as to place and time. Our opponents ascribe contingency to the world, although it is (according to them) essentially infinite as to time while finite as to place. We will divide the questions into local and temporal finitude, taking the need of a determining principle³ as accepted, or necessary, or practically necessary.

Objection: What is the proof that the principle of contingency applies to all the universe? We answer that reason ascribes contingency to all parts of it, and as the whole is composed of the parts contingency must apply to the whole.

Objection: What is the proof that bodies are essentially finite? We answer that a supposed body or distance of infinite extent must be infinite either from all points of view or from one only. Whichever way we look at it we can imagine a finite point in it

1. If we imagine temporal things as points of a line, each will be preceded by its fellow until we reach the first. Nothing temporal preceded it, yet it is itself of time.

2. Of his two important works (*al-Burhān fī uṣūl al-fiqh* and *al-Waraqāt fī uṣūl al-fiqh*) the first is lost and the second has not been printed. He was obscure even to those who admired his works.

3. Arabic: *al-mukhaṣṣiṣ*.

to which an infinite line is joined. Moreover we can imagine another point on a line smaller than the first by a cubit and bring the points together in such a way that the smaller line coincides with the longer. If both lines extend to infinity then the less is equal to the greater which is absurd. If the shorter fails to equal the longer in finitude then the former is finite and so is the latter, seeing that the shorter has fallen short of it in finitude and the longer has exceeded it in finitude and what exceeds something in finitude is itself finite. In any case if one were greater than the other the infinite would contain greater and smaller, more and less, which is absurd also. Hence to assert the existence of infinite body or distance in plenum or vacuum is absurd.

This demonstrative proof can be applied to infinite numbers and individuals. If we assert that a body is finite and might be greater or smaller than it is and if one of these possibilities has already been determined it needed a determinant.¹ ...

This determinant must either be an essential cause, necessitated by nature, or one who produces by will and choice. The first is folly, because the essential cause does not distinguish like from like, seeing that so far as it is concerned spatial bodies, direction, size, shape, and all the attributes are one. We can assert the existence of a creator only by those operations in which there are indications of a choice which determined characteristics that could have been other than they are. Therefore we know of a certainty that the creator is not an essential cause but one who produces by will and knowledge.

This is an admirable position to take up, save that it requires us to verify premises by which we can come to know that the world originated in time and needed a creator. Such are: the assertion (*a*) that bodies are finite in essence and dimension (*b*) that there is a vacuum beyond the world in which the supposition of deviation to right or left (of the planets) is possible (*c*) the denial of phenomena without beginning. (Our opponents admit that the world's existence is essentially contingent and that it needed a determinant to tip the scale of being² against non-being, yet they say that the world eternally existed with the determinant.) (*d*) The confining of phenomena to bodies and that which subsists in bodies. (Our opponents have asserted the existence of objects outside these two categories which exist eternally through another—essentially not temporarily, substantially not locally, without shape or dimension.) (*e*) The assertion that the essential cause is like the natural necessity. (Our opponents do not admit this, but distinguish between the two.)

We divide intelligibles into three: the necessary, the possible, and the impossible. The necessary is that which must exist, inasmuch as its non-existence would be an impossibility: the impossible is that which must be non-existent because its existence would be an impossibility while the possible need neither exist nor not-exist. The world and its intellectual substances and bodies with senses and the accidents

1. Arabic: *al-mukhaṣṣiṣ*.

2. The figure has become a technical term for the action of the *mukhaṣṣiṣ*.

which subsist therein we assume to be finite [and infinite].¹ Similarly, if we assume that it is an individual or many individuals it either must necessarily exist or necessarily not-exist. But that is impossible because its parts change in condition before our eyes and the necessarily existent never changes.

Our position is that everything that alters or increases has a contingent existence in relation to its essence and so its existence is through the production of another. The world alters, and therefore it owes its being to the creative activity of another. If the units composing a whole are contingent then the whole must necessarily be contingent. That which tips the scale of being cannot be such in essence and in respect of his existence only, because existence is common to both the necessary and the possible, so that if it (the tipper) gave the thing in existence in respect of himself being existence or an essence, neither object would have a better claim to be brought into existence than the other. Hence it is clear that it (the world) is produced owing to its being an existence (merely) by way of an attribute or an essence by way of an attribute.

Again, essential cause does not distinguish like from like: its relation to both is the same. Therefore where existence has been determined as against non-existence there must necessarily be a determinant in addition to its being an essence, so essential causation is vain. Again, the essential cause, having no relation whatever to the thing caused, does not produce it. If we imagine two essences or things with no connection between them but each of them having its own real peculiarity, the one cannot have proceeded from the other. The necessary existent *per se* is an essence wholly and far removed from all relations and connections, unique in His reality. It is the necessity of His existence and not an attribute additional to His necessary essence. It is not necessary that anything should come into existence from Him by way of essence, so that essential cause is unintelligible when relations and connections have been ruled out.

You say that as the cause (*mūjib*) was one it was impossible that two things should proceed from it at the same time; and since it was pure intellect, i.e. non-material, it caused an active (*bi'l-fi'l*) intelligence which was also non-material; and since causation involves mutual relation, and relation involves mutual resemblance so that the one can stand in the place of the other, there may be posited of the necessary existent and of that which stands in its place in causation one and the same thing. But essential causation is false and so it is clear that selective creation alone stands.²

Objection: Agreed that the world is contingent and needed a necessary existent One, but why should its existence through another require its temporal origin from non-being? If a thing exists through something else it does not exclude the possibility of its having existed through it eternally. The matter will only become clear

1. I suspect that the words *wa ghaira mutanāhin* are wrongly added by the copyist.

2. See footnote above, *The Summa Philosophiae* of al-Shahrastānī.

if we settle the question 'If He gave the world a beginning from non-existence was the precedence of non-existence a condition in the originating itself?'¹ We say that it cannot be a condition, for the originated is only related to the originator by way of existence; and non-existence has no influence in bringing something into existence, so it is possible that the world eternally existed through something else.

Answer: The use of the term 'non-existence' in the sense of a thing of which time before and time after, or source of origin can be predicated is fantastic ambiguity. We cannot imagine primacy (*al-awwaliyyah*) in a phenomenon (*ḥādith*) unless it is supported upon the notion of time and space; just as finitude in the world rests on the notion of the vacuum and just as we cannot suppose a void between the existence of the Creator and the world, so we cannot suppose that there was time between the existence of the Creator and the world. But neither concomitance in time nor in place follows from this. This distinction should be carefully observed.

Let it be supposed that the existence (variant 'origin') of a thing which does not arise from another thing is the meaning of its origin from non-existence. We mean by origin (*ḥudūth*) having a beginning. 'It was not and it became' is the meaning of 'preceded by non-existence.'

Again, if the world is contingently existent in relation to its essence if it came into existence it was only in relation to that which gave it existence. Were it not for the latter it would 'deserve' non-existence. The necessary existent preceded it in essence and existence. Were it not for the latter it would not have existed. Its existence could not be concomitant with the necessary existent in essence and existence because *before* and *together with* in essence and existence are not found in one thing. It could not be *with* the necessary existent in time because that would require that the latter should be temporal. *With* is a correlative which yokes both parties together. Nor could it be with the necessary existent in rank and dignity ... so that the saying 'God was and there was naught with Him' is right.

What do you mean by saying that that which is possible (the world) continually exists in or with the necessary? Can it be that you suppose that the perpetuity (*dawām*) of the Creator is temporal, made up of infinite moments as you suppose the existence of the world to be? This is a wretched confusion of terms. The perpetuity of the Creator means that He is Necessary *per se* and in His essence: He is the first without a beginning preceding and the last without a later following; His beginning is His end and His end is His beginning. As to the world, it had a beginning and its continuance (*dawām*) is temporal, subject to increase and decrease If *dawām* could be applied to both in the same sense the Creator's existence would be temporal, or the world's existence would be essential,² both false assertions. The folly of

1. *Fī taḥaqquq al-aḥdāth*; I follow Lāhijī, who defines *taḥaqquq* as *wujūd*. See M. Horten, *Verzeichnis philosophischer Termini im Arabischen* (Leipzig, 1912), p. 152.

2. It has been maintained that it is '*alā ṣifatin*'.

this will become plain when we have established the impossibility of phenomena without a beginning, and of the existence of anything infinite.

As to your assertion¹ that a phenomenon is only related to its producer by its existence, and non-existence does not affect it, we answer that if this were so everything that is brought into existence would be so related and that would entail an infinite chain. It is not related to the necessary existent because it exists, but only because it is 'possible'. Possible existence precedes existence. We say that the world came into existence because it was potentially existent not that it was potentially existent because it came into existence. The possibility of its existence is essential to it; its existence is accidental, and the essential precedes the accidental. Thus the possible is essentially non-existent apart from the author of its existence and is preceded by non-existence and the said author.

Objection: What is the difference between the world's being the necessary result of God's causation and its existence being given by Him? For if the world was essentially contingent and came into being through another then it was necessary through Him. This is the law of every cause and effect: effect is always rendered necessary by the cause and is contingent in relation to its essence, necessary in relation to its cause. Cause precedes effect in essence though they are concomitant in existence. You say 'My hand moved and so the key in my sleeve moved'. You cannot say 'The key moved in my sleeve and so my hand moved', even though the two movements are simultaneous in being.

Answer: A thing's existence through the author of its existence (*mūjid*) making it exist is correct in word and meaning as opposed to a thing's necessity through the necessary cause making it necessary. Contingent means that a thing may exist or may not exist. Not that it may be necessary or may not be necessary. Its existence, not its necessity, is derived from the determinant.² You may say: When it came into existence necessity with reference to the cause befell it (*'araḍa lahu*) because the cause conferred necessity upon it so that it could be said it became necessary through the cause making it necessary.³ Nay rather (the cause) conferred existence upon it so that it would be right to say it came into existence by (the cause) conferring existence upon it, and necessity befell it as an accident, and thus its existence was related to necessity because it had been (previously) potentially (*mumkin*) existent, not potentially necessary. This is a nice point which must always be kept in mind.

Potential is midway between the necessary and the non-necessary ... Existence and non-existence are mutual opposites with no intermediate term. The potential owes its existence or non-existence to the giver of existence. Therefore necessity can only be attached to the world as an accident and an accidental thing is not to be referred back to the giver of existence. If you say 'Its existence is necessary

1. See above, *The Summa Philosophiae* of al-Shahrastāni.

2. Arabic: *al-murajjih*.

3. The next four words should be omitted.

through His causation,' you seize upon the accidental. When we say 'It came into existence by His production,' we seize upon the essential reality of that which is derived from another.

It may be said that if the potential came into existence at an appointed time or in a definite form its existence then and thus must be necessary because the Creator knew and willed it so and because what is contrary to His foreknowledge cannot possibly happen. But its necessity was only in the causation of knowledge and will; and if it is established that existence, not necessity, is that which is derived in things of time, essential causation, which they adduce as an argument for the world being contemporary with the Creator, is false. This leads to ridiculous statements, for sometimes they will not admit that the movement of the hand is the cause of the movement of the sleeve and the key, and they will not accept the doctrine of necessary consequence (*tawallud*: see *Milal*, p. 44) refusing to admit the causal force of the particle *fa* (then/therefore) in *fataḥarraka al-miftāḥ* 'and so the key moved'.

With them matter is the cause of the existence of form, so that it would be correct to say that form without matter could not have existed and they are concomitant in existence. Form does not exist by itself; rather matter makes it exist but through the action of the giver of forms. If that be conceded, cause can precede effect in essence and be contemporaneous with it. The impossible is the co-existence of that which had a beginning with that which has no beginning, as has already been explained.

... The only relation subsisting between the Creator and the world is that of activity and object.

If it be asked whether the world could have been created before it actually was, it should be replied that its beginning and end is a necessary intellectual concept (*taṣawwur*). Anything that goes beyond that is mere supposition which is called 'intellectual possibility'. Such suppositions and possibilities are endless ...

Objection: Granted that an infinite body cannot actually exist, demonstrate to us that infinite movements in sequence and continuous phenomena cannot possibly exist. With us finitude and infinity are referred to four divisions. Two of them cannot exist infinitely as to essence, viz. that which has a definite position (*tartīb waḍ'ī*)¹ like a body, or a natural order like a cause. A body infinite as to essence cannot exist, nor can causes and effects infinite in number. A body has a definite position and parts;² and each part is related to another part so that a body cannot be infinite at any one time. Causes have a natural order; the effect depends on the cause and they are both related. Infinite causes are not possible. Two classes are infinite in essence, viz. phenomena and movements which have no necessary relation to each other but follow each other in an infinite temporal sequence—an

1. Cf. *Metaphysica* Δ, Book V, ch. XIX, and *al-Madkhal ilā ṣinā'at al-mantiq*, by Ibn Ṭumlūs (d.620/1223).

2. Or atoms.

intellectual possibility. Also human souls, for they do not follow one another but exist together without a position like bodies or a nature like causes, and can exist *ad infinitum*.

Answer: Whatever existence comprises is finite and the existence of the infinite is inconceivable whether in a definite or a natural order or not. Any plurality which is infinite must either be so from one aspect or from every aspect. Now we can mark off mentally a part of the plurality and take the plurality with that part as one entity or we can take the plurality by itself as an entity. In that case the plurality with the addition must be equal to the plurality without it in number or extent, which would mean that the less was equal to the greater, or not equal to it, and that would mean that there would be two infinite pluralities one greater and the other less. These suppositions are absurd. (There follows a similar argument drawn from Avicenna's *Najāt*.)¹

Avicenna said: 'There is a difference here.

A point can be singled out in a body which has a definite position, and then it is possible to conceive a body of similar size and its extension to infinity.² But movements which are consecutive have no definite position, for they do not exist together and you cannot single out one movement and apply the principle of a corresponding something capable of extension, because that which has no order in position or nature is not susceptible of *inṭibāq*.³

It was said to him: Your answer about this difference falls into two sections. In one you suppose a point in a spatial body which you project to an imaginary infinity and you assume a corresponding body. Assume then that past movements still exist in sequence and that past moments of time are still present in sequence like an imaginary line of infinite extent composed of consecutive points. The dividing points (*ḥudūd*) in the movements and the (atomic) moments in the times are like the points in the lines, and the sequence³ of the one is as the consecution of the other.

The cause which makes infinity impossible and necessitates finitude is that which leads to the less being like the more, and this is present in both places. The *mutakallimūn* apply this argument to time, making today the starting point forwards and backwards, and come to the same conclusion viz. that infinite time is an impossible concept.

Secondly, if movements and individuals have no definite position they have a natural order like causes and effects, and thus must be finite. Every effect is

1. Shahrastānī has made a few changes in Avicenna's terminology; cf. *Najāt* (Cairo, 1331/1912), p. 202.

2. The argument is that anything which is subject to *inṭibāq* (the placing of a corresponding cover) cannot be infinite. The finite is 'covered' by the hypothetical infinite which overlaps it and by so doing shows that it is capable of division and is ipso facto not infinite.

3. The argument as to the finitude of space is the same as that used by Ghazzālī of a number; see note to p. 2 (al-Shahrastānī, *The Summa Philosophiae*).

contingently existent in essence, and its existence is only necessary through its cause, so that its existence depends on the existence of its cause and you are driven back to a first cause which is not contingent. The relation of father and son is similar: the son's existence depends on the father's, and the father's on his father's. Why do you not say they depend on an ultimate first father? According to you individuals are infinite. Then, for every individual human being a rational soul is to be enumerated, and it remains united in existence (with that being). But if individuals are infinite and their existence is possible, because they follow one another not united together in existence, what have you to say about souls? For they are united and infinite.

Avicenna maintained that souls have no natural or fixed order. It was said: If individuals are ranged as begetter and begotten, so are souls also because one of the accidents which especially accompany souls is that they are such that out of their individuals other individuals proceed. The relation persists with them, and therefore they have an order.

Another proof that infinite phenomena and movements have no real existence is this. Suppose we discuss the age in which we live: without doubt the past is finished, and a thing that is finished is finite. If we isolate the past from the present it is clear that past movements are finite, seeing that they have come to an end. For every movement that is created or annihilated movements have passed away before it without number. A finite number of movements are always in existence which is after the past and before the number that lies in the future. Every movement and every revolution has beginning and end. If it is finite at one end it is finite at the other. So all movements are essentially finite as to beginning and end. They are numbered in time and it is time that numbers them; hence that which is numbered and that which numbers are finite as to beginning and end.

Can it be said that movements are infinite in number? We say that every existing number can be increased or decreased and is therefore finite. This judgment applies to numbers whether they are of things existing together like human souls, or in sequence like individual human beings. But according to them souls are infinite in number while subject to increase or decrease and so are individual human beings. Therefore, if the individuals are compared with the souls they must correspond. But if the individuals fall short of the number and the remainder is made to correspond with the number of the souls, if both are infinite the less is like the greater; and if they are finite our object is achieved. An argument used against the Dahriyyah (atheists; cf. *Milal*, p. 444) is that the movements of Saturn in the seventh sphere are like those of the moon in the first, inasmuch as neither has an end. But it is notorious that Saturn's movements are greater than the moon's. Yet they are the same as and greater than the moon's movements—a monstrous absurdity!¹

1. Cf. Ghazzālī, *Tahāfut*, p. 31. Ibn Ḥazm (*al-Fiṣal fi'l-milal*, Cairo, 1347/1928, p. 20) uses similar arguments.

If it is said that their movements are equal because the moon moves more slowly in completing its smaller orbit we reply that their movements are those of circumference and axis. They are in infinity yet the movement of Saturn is twice that of the moon. The point is unanswerable.

Objection: You posit irregularity (*tafāwut*) in God's cognitions and decrees. With you knowledge is connected with the necessary, the possible and the impossible, while Power (*qudrah*)¹ is only connected with the possible. Therefore, what God knows is more than what He decrees. Less and more point to two species both of which are infinite.

Answer: We do not say that God's cognitions and decrees form an infinite number. They are indeed infinite, but knowledge is a quality by which what is rightly knowable is known, and Power is a quality by which what can rightly come into existence is decreed; so both are infinite and there is no question of one being less than another. Indeed, with us it is the existence of infinite numbers which is impossible. The infinite is a mere conception of the mind: it does not exist in reality. Obviously you can go on doubling and redoubling a number and as the mind can conceive of intelligibles and determinables infinite it may be said that the divine knowledge and will (*qudrah*), are infinite. But knowledge and will are not simple things which exercise themselves on infinite objects (lit. going in infinite directions) nor are intelligibles and determinables infinite pluralities. It should be understood that the meaning of our doctrine that the essence of the Creator is infinite is that He is one, and indivisible, and limitless.

The Dahriyyah: You say that the world originated in time after it was not. In that case its existence was after the Creator's.

Therefore:

Either it was later in time or not in time.

If not in time then it was contemporaneous with the existence of the Creator. If later in time then

Either it was later in finite time or in infinite time.

If the former the existence of the Creator must be finite and if the latter we must suppose that infinite object in that infinite time.

If infinite time is not impossible, neither is infinite number.

Answer: Your position is utterly untenable. You say that if the world were originated in time its existence would be 'after'. If by that you mean after God's existence in time it is inadmissible because we have demonstrated that the words *before*, *after*, and *contemporary with* cannot be used of God.² Moreover, the dichotomy 'The world is after in time or not-in-time' is false. You speak as though we admitted that

1. The Divine attribute *qudrah* embraces both Power (*quwwah*) and Will or Volition (*irādah*).

2. It will be observed that controversies in *kalām* seldom attain common ground. Each difficulty is referred back to an earlier dogmatic assertion which the opponent has not accepted.

the world was related to the Deity in time, and when we say that that is impossible you pretend that we are committed to its existence side by side with God which is hypocrisy. The only sense in which 'after' can be used is that the Creator is He who gives existence, and the created is that which derives existence from Him. The one's existence has a beginning; the other's has not. But you cannot speak of 'after in time or not-in-time'.

Objections: There must be some sort of relation between Creator and created (*mūjid* and *mūjad*); and if relation is established it must be either in finite or in infinite time.

Answer: Such a relation must be denied. If it were established God's existence would be temporal subject to change and movement. If anyone were to ask what was the world's relation to God in that it existed and had a limit? Did it touch Him or not? If not was it in the void or in a finite or infinite distance? The question would be absurd. So here.

Returning to the dichotomy, does 'time' mean something existent or the idea of something existent or a pure non-entity? If it is existent then it is of the world and not before it, for the existent subsists either in itself or in another; in either case it cannot be supposed that it was before the world. If it has merely a hypothetical existence, it must be remembered that the suppositions of the mind are not always possible in actual existence. The mind can imagine an infinite number of other worlds, and infinite numbers themselves, and infinite spaces of time. If it means pure non-entity, there can be no finitude and no infinity in a non-entity.

Again why do you say that if time were finite the Creator's existence would be finite? The finitude of time is like the finitude of the world in place, and that is assuming the point at issue. The fact that the world is finite does not require that the Creator's essence should be finite, because place has no relation to Him. So also with time. Why, too, do you say that if time were not finite in our thought (infinite) objects might actually exist therein?¹

Avicenna, following Aristotle, said that everything that comes into being from non-existence is necessarily preceded by the possibility of existence. This is not pure non-existence, but is something capable of existence and non-existence and that can only be conceived in matter, so that everything temporal is preceded by matter. Hence this antecedent matter can only be conceived in time, because 'before' and 'with' have only real existence in time. The non-existent 'before', is the non-existent 'with'² and is not the precedent possibility which accompanies existence, for in that case it (the non-existent) would have a temporal precedence. If the world were a phenomenon (*ḥādīth*) arising from non-existence, the possibility of existence in matter would have preceded it in time. So either there would be an infinite chain, which is false, or (the possibility) would stop at a point where neither possibility nor

1. This is not precisely what the *Dahriyyah* said, see above.
2. Var. 'after'.

non-existence preceded it, and so its necessity would be through another. This is our view that the Mu'tazilites adopted this error in the belief that the non-existent was a thing ...

Answer: We have already explained that 'originated from non-existence' means the thing (*mawjūd*) which has a beginning. Antecedent possibility is not an essence—a thing needing matter—but it is a supposition because of what cannot exist real existence (*thubūt*) cannot be predicted ... We regard the origin of the world in the same way as they regard the origin of the human soul—it has a beginning but not out of something else; so that it can be said that it was preceded by non-existence (it was not and then it became) and it is in its essence contingently existent; but this contingency does not require that it should be preceded by matter, for that would imply that its existence was material.

Possibility as such does not require matter and its precedence of an object is merely subjective, which you call 'essential precedence' and that precedence is not a temporal precedence. Similarly, the first thing caused all the souls; for their existence is essentially possible and the possibility of their existence preceded their existence. So is the first body which is the sphere of all spheres. We hold that every phenomenon of a temporal origin or as you would say of essential origin is preceded by the possibility of existence.

The temporal object vacillates between existence and non-existence, and this vacillation between existence and non-existence, precedence, and possibility are all subjective suppositions, for the thing in its essence is in one attribute of existence, whereas existence so far as its essence is concerned is divided into (a) that whose existence pertains to an existence which it has *per se* (i.e. it is not derived from another so that it can be said existence becomes it rather than non-existence and is primary);¹ and (b) that whose existence pertains to an existence which it has from another, so that it can be said existence does not become it and is not primary. This existence can only be asserted when something has a beginning preceded by the existence of something without a beginning and has in its essence the possibility of existence, i.e. preceded by the possibility of existence. You cannot say that it is *existence* preceded by the possibility of existence. Rather the existence is essentially a possible existence.

Here are two kinds of antecedents: the antecedent existence of the object, and the antecedent possibility of existence. All we know of the latter is that derived existence can only mean that it is possible in its essence. It vacillated between existence and non-existence and needed someone to tip the scale. Without Him it could not have real existence. If every temporal thing 'needs' precedent possibility, which in turn needs matter, which needs time, there is an infinite chain so that it can be said that that matter and time need other matter and other time and

1. Or, perhaps, 'simple'. *Awwal* is sometimes used as a synonym of *basīf*.

no temporal thing would actually have existed! The foundation of their theory is vain. But there must have been a starting-point, viz. the first thing created (*mubda'*) out of nothing, possible in its essence, but its possibility not requiring time and matter. Thus we must think of the precedence of possibility and of non-existence and of Him who brings into existence. The latter precedes in His existence *qua* existence, and consequently he precedes the non-existence, and the possibility (latent) in the object of a logical precedence. Hence is established the difference between essential and existential precedence—a point which should be carefully noted.

Avicenna said: I admit that the world with its substances and accidents is *per se* possible existent, but the question is: Is it necessarily existent through another, while existing eternally with Him? With regard to that which could not or could exist, if it were designated by existence it would need one to tip the scale of existence; it must either be said that what can come into existence from the determinant must necessarily come into existence, or must not necessarily come into existence. Then it comes into existence after it had not existed. But logical thought demands that if the one essence¹ was one in all respects and remains as it was—and nothing has been brought into existence from it in the past (though it could have been) and it is still in the same state, then nothing has been brought into existence from it. And if something had been brought into existence then indubitably something has originated from intention, will, nature, power, exercise of force, purpose, or cause. Therefore either that cause must have originated a quality in its essence, or originated something distinct from itself. The discussion about that originated something whatever it may be is the same as that about the world. In that case (forsooth)² it is impossible that anything should originate, and if it is impossible then there is no difference between the state of doing and not doing yet action has occurred—which is absurd. We have turned the adversaries' arguments against them by the hypothesis of a substance void of action which is false. The contrary position is the true one.

Answer: You are trying to establish three premises: (1) the possibility of the world's existence from eternity; (2) that what could exist must exist; (3) that a temporal cause underlies a temporal thing.

(1) We have demonstrated the impossibility of the eternal co-existence of the possible *per se* with the necessary *per se*.³ That which has a beginning cannot be coupled with that which has no beginning. Wherever possibility and potentiality are the nature of a thing eternity must be denied it. When you say that the world is possibly existent and all possible things must exist in eternity you have joined

1. From which all else have proceeded.

2. Possibly we should read: 'If it is impossible that anything should originate and if it was impossible then ...'

3. Nevertheless the assertions are repeated. I have omitted them.

irreconcilable propositions and given your case away. If you ask why the world could not have existed in eternity, we reply that we have already demonstrated the impossibility of infinite originated things.

(2) Here we have contradiction in (a) word, and (b) meaning. (a) Possibility and necessity are opposites except that it can be said of that which may possibly exist that its existence is necessary through another. Some even refuse to grant as much as this on the ground that this necessity is through another's causation and the possible only needs the necessary in its existence, not in its necessity, as has already been explained.¹ (b) If everything that could exist were necessarily to exist we should have an infinity of things at a stroke! If order is a condition in substances so that they come into existence in order up to a determined number, so it is a condition in the actual existence of things. The order in substances, prior and post, is like the order in existing objects first and last—a noteworthy point.

(3) This is a most pernicious cause of error. Our master and Imām Abu'l-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Nāṣir al-Anṣārī used to say that the mode of the Creator's activity was beyond the comprehension of men's minds. He said that the possibility of the world's existence is established by reason and its emergence in time is established by deduction. It has a relation to the necessarily existent One and controversy is only concerned with the nature of that relation. The relation of the temporal thing to Him before, at the time of, and after, creation and when nothing at all had emerged, is all one. Why, then, did it come into existence, and why did He create, and what is the meaning of creation and origination (*ibdā'*)?

If you say He knew and willed its existence at that time it is replied that knowledge and will (*irādah*) are of universal application, so the relation of its existence to the universal will at that time in that form is the same as the relation of its existence at another time in another form.² Similarly with power (*qudrah*). The divine attributes have no special application³ so how can a special (divine) act be accounted for? It is here that some of the *mutakallimūn* go wrong.

The Karrāmiyyah assert that temporal things such as volition and speech are in the divine essence,⁴ and these designate the world by existence instead of non-existence. According to them the eternal will (*mashiyyah*) has a universal relation, and volition (*irādah*) a particular relation. They distinguish between production in time and the thing produced in time, and creation and the created. The Mu'tazilites posit volitions in time which do not subsist in a substrate and which designate the world by existence, but they do not make the distinctions as to creation and created.

1. See p. 9, al-Shahrastānī, *The Summa Philosophiae*.

2. i.e. the theory that God willed it at a particular time implies ignorance of the nature of divine will.

3. Arabic: *khuṣūṣ*.

4. See *al-Mīlāl*, p. 81.

We will expose the futility of our adversaries' arguments and then indicate the plain meaning of bringing into being (*ijād*).

We say: It is agreed that the world is possible *per se*, needing one to tip the scale of existence against non-existence. Therefore, He who tips the scale of being must either do so inasmuch as He is an essence (*dhāt*) or inasmuch as He is existence. Therefore, it could be argued (1) every essence and every existence could tip the scale of being, and (2) an infinite number of possible existents could originate, for everything is related to essence and existence in the same way: two absurdities. Either He tips the scale *qua* essence or existence by way of an attribute or by a modal relation (*'alā i'tibār wa-wajh*). If He tips *qua* existence by way of an attribute the position is surrendered, and essential causation falls to the ground. If *qua* existence modally (*'alā wajh*) as our opponents say that He is necessarily existent *per se* and He only caused existence because He is necessary *per se*, He being a modal existence, that too is false, because necessary existent *per se* is a negative term meaning 'His being is not derived from another' and we need not assume that that which is not derived from another confers existence on another. Similarly he who thinks, as our opponents do, that He (the maker of this world) is a knower, or an intelligence, or intelligent, need not think that He confers being on others because according to them 'intelligent' is a negative term meaning 'free from matter'; but it does not follow that His freedom from matter confers existence on something else, so essential causation fails from all sides, and it is clear that He (God) brought (the world) into being by way of an attribute.

This attribute in respect of its essence is capable of conferring special characteristics and bringing into being universally. It is that which has made things as they are and not otherwise. Its relation to them and everything else is the same. Also it has a special mode (*wajh*) in relation to what happened as opposed to what did not.

We say that inasmuch as the Creator knew the existence of the world at the time it came into existence He willed its existence at that time. God's knowledge is universal in the sense that it is an attribute by which He knows all that can be known. Intelligibles are infinite in the sense that God knows the world's existence, and the possibility of its existence before and after in every mode of logical possibility. God's will (*irādah*) is universal in the sense that it is an attribute which specifies everything that can be specified. Volitions (*murādāt*) are infinite in the sense that different ways of specifying are infinite; they are particular in that they¹ specify the object of God's knowledge with existence.

God's power (*qudrah*) is also universal because it is an attribute capable of bringing into existence without restriction (the production of everything that can possibly exist). It is also particular in that it produces what He knows and wishes

1. The reading of P, emending *bi'l-wujūd* for *bi'l-mawjūd*, must be followed.

to exist, for what is contrary to His knowledge cannot possibly exist or happen. So all the divine attributes are (a) universal in respect of the capacity of their existence and essence in relation to the infinite things that depend on them; (b) particular in their relation one to another. These attributes act in unison in conferring existence and cause no change in the Creator (*mūjid*).

We cannot grasp this conception because we cannot create, and our attributes are not universal. Our knowledge, will, and power are concerned with one object, and that not creatively. Our attributes cannot endure because they are accidents. Our minds and our senses demand a new cause for the production of a new thing. But could we embrace knowledge, will, and power, of universal and infinite relation, when a specified time came for the production of a new thing it would befall without alteration of our essence for a new thing or cause arising.

Our opponent urges this of the Active Intellect and its emanation, saying that its emanation is universal; it is the giver of forms, not dividing them nor specifying (in what object they shall reside). Then he postulates a kind of particularization in relation to the receivers and conditions which are generated, so that a 'preparation'¹ is brought about in the receivers. So the emanation is particularized by a particular receiver in a particular measure. The fact that an emanation receives a special receptacle by way of a cause external to the emanator does not affect the universal character of the emanation so far as concerns its essence, despite the fact that essential causation according to our opponents is an essential emanation, a universal existence without particularization. From it only one emanates. From that one come Intelligence, Soul, and Sphere; and from that Intelligence and Soul an Intelligence and Soul until the last Intelligence is reached, from which emanate the forms (which descend) upon the lower objects and end with the human soul.

We ask: Why confine objects in these essences if there is no particularization in emanation? The finitude of objects in number and place is the same as their finitude in beginning and time. If you say, particularization with us means the receptivity of the bearers (of form) and the emanation gets its dimensions from them, we reply that we are concerned with the origin of these bearers. Why are the heavens confined to seven or nine? Why four elements and so on? Why are these objects finite in number? Why should not these heavens be infinite as to place as their movements are to time?

If you say, logical demonstration forbids the assertion that the world is infinite as to place, we reply that that is precisely our position. Everything that you have said concerning the Divine Providence² which caused the order of existent things

1. See my article in A. Guillaume and T. W. Arnold, ed. *The Legacy of Islam* (Oxford, 1931), p. 259.

2. This is the first mention of Divine Providence (*'ināyah*), so that it would seem either that the author is quoting from some other work; or, as is more probable, he is using notes of his lectures. He has not, however, given us the running comments on the lecturer.

in the most perfect arrangement we predicate of the Eternal Will which decreed the particularization of things in order according to the knowledge of the Omniscient.¹ You have been driven from abstract existence to a particular necessity, and from necessity to a particular intellection (*ta'āqqul*) and thence to a particular providence. Then you say that these are relative or negative attributes which do not necessitate plurality or alteration in (God's) essence. What you call intellection we call eternal knowledge, and what you call providence we call eternal will. As with you providence results from knowledge, with us will is connected with the thing willed with the concurrence of knowledge. The only difference between the two schools is that they refer the Ideas of the Attributes to essence while the *mutakallimūn* do not.

The opponents say that the order of procession from the Creator was thus: The first thing to proceed from the Creator was the First Intelligence. This caused another Intelligence and a soul and a body which is the sphere of the spheres, and by means of each intelligence a successive intelligence and soul and sphere until the last sphere was reached. This the Active Intelligence, which is the giver of forms in this world, rotates. By means of the heavenly intelligences and movements of the spheres, the elements came into being; by their means the compounds and lastly the human soul, because existence began from the noblest and descended by stages to the vilest, viz. matter; then it began from the vilest until it reached the noblest viz. the reasonable human soul.

It may be said to them: Did these lower forms of existence, in the various shapes and species in which they are seen now, come into being in a moment or in order? If in a moment, then the order which they affirm (*var.* he called into existence) in the existence of things is false. If they happened in order one after the other, how can essential precedence between the first caused and the last caused be substantiated?

We ask: What is the temporal relation between the first and last thing caused if they are essentially timeless, albeit the human soul had a beginning? What, too, is the relation of the soul's beginning to the first intelligence, for if between them infinite souls had originated in infinite time, the infinite would be shut in between two limits, and that is absurd. If they were finite, their argument that phenomena are infinite is false; for if celestial movements were infinite, terrestrial objects would be infinite also, so the theory refutes itself.

They differ, too, about the order in the beginning of things. Some say the order was (prime) matter (*'unṣur*), intelligence, soul, body; others say intelligence, soul, matter (*hayūlā = 'ūlā*), the spheres, the elements (*'anāṣir*), the compounds.

Proclus argued that the Creator (*al-bāri'*) was essentially generous; the cause of the world's existence was His generosity; and His generosity was eternal. Therefore

1. I owe the reference to Qur'ān 29:9 to Professor Nicholson.

the world was eternal. He could not be generous at one time and ungenerous at another, for that would involve alteration in His essence. There could be no impediment in the way of the emanation of His generosity, for if there were, His generosity would not result from His essence, because an essential restraint would operate eternally, whereas generosity in the production of things has been established. And if the restraint came from an external source, that source would be the impelling force of the necessary existent One who cannot be impelled to act or restrained from acting.

Further he said that the Creator (*al-ṣāni*^o) must either have created eternally *in actu* or *in potentia*. If the former, then the created is caused eternally; if the latter, the potential cannot emerge into actual without external aid which must be other than the essence of the thing itself, so it follows that the Creator's essence must change. And that is false.¹

Again, he said no (primal) cause can suffer movement and change for it is only a cause in respect of its own essence not by way of (activity) received from another. If the cause is eternal essentially, so is the effect.

Answer: Why speak of God's generosity when it is admitted that it is not an essential attribute additional to His essence, but an active one? With you the attributes are either negative like *qadīm*, which is the denial of beginning or relation (*iḍāfāt*) like *khāliq* the Creator, and *rāziq* the sustainer in our terminology and the originator (*mubdi'*) and the first cause in yours. God has no attributes outside these two categories. Generosity belongs to the relative not to the negative class, so that there is no difference between the meaning of the Originator and the Generous, for both mean the doer. It is as though you said, 'He creates through His essence', which is the question in dispute.

The opponent says He does not create by His essence and His activity is not eternal, which is the point at issue. You can change the word activity to generosity and make it the proof of the argument. If generosity is the equivalent of activity and bringing into being, then when he says: There was a time when He was generous and there was a time when He was not generous, it is the same as his saying: There was a time when He created and a time when He did not create; and that is the point of the controversy.

The difficulty can be solved in two ways. First operation is impossible before time was, not as regards the agent, but as regards the operation itself, inasmuch as its existence is inconceivable. Activity has a beginning; timeless eternity (*azal*) has not therefore there can be no connection between them. God is generous inasmuch as His generosity can be conceived. To say that an individual who comes into being in our time must always have existed because the Creator is essentially generous is to make oneself ridiculous. The timeless existence of a particular

1. A comparison with the fuller text of this passage in the *Milal* will make the meaning plainer. I have inserted the variant readings in the footnotes to the text.

thing (*al-mawjūd al-mu‘ayyan*) is impossible, and the impossibility of a thing’s existence is the impediment to the emanation of existence, but not so that the impediment can exercise impulsion or compulsion (of itself); on the contrary it is impossible *per se*. Similarly, if God had created things in order, or everything at once without any order, our opponents would say it was impossible; yet it would not militate against God’s being generous. This resembles the doctrine of the *mutakallimūn* that we may ascribe to God power over what can exist, but as to what cannot possibly exist you must not say that God has no power over it, but that the impossible *per se* is not capable of being willed (*ghayr maqdūr*)¹ and so its existence is inconceivable.

This answer applies also to their assertion that if He was not a Creator and He became one, He was first a potential and then an actual Creator, and so His essence changed. We say that He was not eternally a Creator, because operation in eternity is impossible; and if a thing is essentially and in itself impossible it cannot be an object of God’s power, and so it is not created. But if it is impossible for some other reason which ceases to operate, then it becomes an object of God’s power and may be created. Eternal creation is impossible because eternity has no beginning and creation has. Union between them is impossible ...

With regard to the assertion that He is a cause essentially, the meaning of His being a cause is that He is an originator of the existence of something. It is impossible that the effect should exist together (timelessly) with the cause, for that would disrupt their relation. We deny their coexistence in time, for that would necessitate the existence of the (first) cause in time, subject to change, and that is impossible. The Creator’s existence is essential and underived; the existence of the world is derived from Him, and the derivation must always precede in existence.

Secondly, we say: How do you know that God must be generous essentially? They reply: Because what He does is more perfect than what He does not do.

Reply: Suppose the contrary were true—what would your answer be, for what you say is not a necessary proposition of a subject whose perfection is in itself and not in another? What God does is not done for a purpose (*ghard*) nor in order that He may receive praise, nor for any reason involving a reciprocal relation. If an object’s perfection were in itself, and another object’s perfection were derived from something else, obviously the former would be superior to the latter. Now that which is defective unless it does something, is not perfect in its essence, but is defective and finds its perfection in something outside itself and cannot rightly be said to be necessarily existent in its essence.

What is the meaning of ‘If He was not a Creator He became one and innovation resulted’? If it means that innovation occurred outside the divine essence it is

1. Or, not an object meet for the exercise of God’s power.

admitted, but within the divine essence it is inadmissible; it is the point in dispute. Ambiguity, too, underlies their saying 'He was a Creator potentially'. Potentiality (*quwwah*) can mean abstract preparedness (*isti'dād*) or power (*qudrah*). The former is not to be predicated of God, though the latter is admissible. Here is the point in dispute. But there is no need to postulate something to bring a thing from potentiality to actuality.

Proclus' saying that no cause can suffer movement or change, for it is only a cause in respect of its essence, is inadmissible; moreover, it is false on his own premises in the case of the First Intelligence, for it does not suffer movement and change and it is not a cause in respect of its essence, but is the thing caused by the necessary existent one, and a cause in respect of its being necessary through Him not *per se*. The same holds true of the separate intelligences.

[Shahrastānī] The easiest and best way of proving the temporal origin of the world is as follows: we establish that human souls are finite in number, therefore human beings must be. From this it follows that things of composite nature are temporal and finite, and so are the circular movements which unite the elements. Thus the movements and the celestial movers must be temporal, and so the universe as a whole is of time.

We assert that an actually existent number, if it were actually infinite, would not be susceptible of plus or minus for nothing can be bigger than an infinite quantity. The infinite cannot be doubled by the infinite. What is finite from one aspect is finite from all aspects. Now human souls are actually susceptible of increase and decrease. At the present day a certain number of human beings exist, each having a soul. If those souls are added to the souls which survive of past individuals the former will be less and the latter greater by the addition and so it will always be. The relation of the past to the total at any given present is the relation of the less to the more. Thus the infinite cannot actually exist.

It might be thought that things which come into being in sequence are infinite in an unbroken line (lit. first before last and last after first) and that if they have no end they should have no beginning. Though this opinion is intellectually a mistake, fancy often eyes it with approval. But if the supposition concerned infinite objects existing together instead of a sequence, actual not potential, they would have to be free from plus and minus as aforesaid, whereas they are not. Everything composed actually of units is subject to plus and minus, and therefore cannot be infinite.¹

When we say that the infinite number is a subjective idea we mean that the mind is unable to conceive an end to it. Just as a pure number can be known without being tied to a thing counted, so the half and quarter can be known without reference to the infinite, but it is impossible to assert that infinite numbers exist for everything

1. I have passed over the repetition of arguments which have been advanced before.

existent is numbered and finite. The universe had a beginning, and the supposition of a precedent non-existence is mere fancy like the supposition of a vacuum beyond the universe in which the universe may reside. In fact the vacuum is the spatial counterpart of the supposition of temporal non-existence.

Questions as to whether there are worlds infinite beyond this one are ridiculous. It might as well be asked if this world were preceded by an infinite number of worlds. Before the world there existed naught but the Producer of its existence, its Originator, prior in creation and origination, not prior in essential causation or time. He is *above* the world in origination and unimpeded action, not in essential and local 'aboveness'.

Chapter Two

That all Things that Exist had a Beginning through God's Origination

Herein is a refutation of the doctrines of the Mu'tazilites, dualists and natural philosophers and a proof of kasb and the difference between kasb and ijād and khalq

All theists agree that it is God that gives existence to all existent things.¹ He is the sole Creator. The philosophers asserted the possibility of a thing proceeding from (a source) other than God, with the condition that the existence of that other rests on the existence of something else which goes back to the necessarily existent. They differ as to whether more than one can proceed from it, though most of them say no. Then they differ about that one. Some said it is intelligence; others said it is prime matter, then intelligence. They differ as to what proceeds from the First Caused. Some say it is soul; others say it is another intelligence and a soul and a sphere, i.e. body; and thus there proceeds from every intelligence other intelligence until the Active Intelligence which turns the sphere of the moon the giver of forms.

Some of the older philosophers asserted the possibility of a plural thing proceeding from the necessary existent. I have written about these theories in my *Milal* ... The Qadarites from among the Mu'tazilites assert that man's will has an influence in bringing into existence and origination in movement and quiescence The philosophers agree with us that no body or bodily faculty can originate a body; and the Zoroastrians (Majūs) agree with us that darkness cannot have originated through the originating action of light. The Mu'tazilites agree with us that man's power is inadequate to originate bodies, colours, etc., but they differ as to the secondary causes (*mutawalladāt*).

I have appended this question to the discussion about the temporary origin of the world because when it has been proved that the contingent rests on the giver

1. From now onwards I have translated much more freely, summarizing the arguments as much as possible.

of existence and that *ijād* means giving existence, then everything is contingent resting on God's *ijād* in respect of its existence. Intermediaries are preparatory dispositions, not causes.

Against the philosophers we argue that everything which exists through something else is contingent in respect of essence; if it were able to produce anything it would produce it in respect of its existing through another, or in respect of its being contingent in its essence, or in both respects at the same time. But it cannot produce in respect of its being existent through another except in conjunction with its essence, seeing that the essence of one is not free from the essence of the other, and its existence cannot escape from its reality, which is contingent existence. The nature of contingency is privative, so that if it had influence on existence the influence would be in conjunction with privation—which is absurd.

I have drawn this proof from the doctrine of the philosophers on the subject of body (i.e. that it cannot influence body by way of bringing into being). Body is composed of matter and form, so that if it exerted influence it would be in conjunction with matter; and matter has a privative nature, so that it is impossible that it should bring anything into existence. The body also cannot possibly bring into existence. Thus contingent existence is as matter, and the soul of existence is as form. Just as body exercises no influence in respect of its form except in conjunction with matter, so that which exists through another—the contingent—exercises no influence in respect of its existence except in conjunction with contingent existence. Therefore, there is no real bringer into existence except¹ the necessary existent ...

Objection: The contingent merely causes, or brings into being, something else by virtue of the relationship of its existence through another. Simply regard it as existent without reference to contingency and non-existence, because contingency has vanished with the coming of being and necessity has come in the place of contingency and we can ignore contingency altogether. Thus influence is not exercised in conjunction with contingency.

Answer: But if existence *qua* existence can exercise influence without regard to contingency and possibility, then let the existence of everything exercise influence so that intellect has no better claim to causation than soul or body, and body influences body in respect of its form. For existence does not differ insofar as it is existence.

If it be argued that the First Intelligence only causes something else in virtue of relationships (*i'tibārāt*) of its essence in respect of its existence through the necessary existent it causes an intelligence or soul, and in respect of the potentiality in its essence it causes a body (i.e. form and matter). Your attempt to shun the aspect of contingency is vain, because the aspect of necessity is connected with the

1. I omit *bi-wujūd*. If it is to be retained, it would be best to read *mūjad* instead of *mūjid*.

existence of intelligence and soul, and the aspect of contingency is connected with the existence of form and matter. We have laboured this point because only one can proceed from the One. If two so proceeded they would come from two different aspects (*jihatayn*).¹ If it could be established that the One had two aspects, plurality in His essence would result.

Answer: If the (First) Intelligence caused (another) Intelligence or soul inasmuch as it was necessary through another, the (first) body would have caused (another) body or a soul inasmuch as it was necessary through another; for the notion of necessity through another does not differ ... The fact that the body is material does not make production impossible in that it is necessary through another ... On this ground you ought to argue that a body can produce a body or a bodily form. But you agree that that is impossible.

We say, here are four correlatives: intelligence, soul, sphere, and matter which are substances differing in their real natures, which require four other correlatives differing in nature. On you is the onus of asserting that the First Caused had these real natures, for otherwise it would follow that a plurality should have proceeded from one thing which to you is absurd. Also you must prove that these correlative relationships are not (mere) relations and negations. For if plurality of relations and negations does not cause plurality in essence, does it cause things at all? For the necessary's existence is one in every respect, not becoming plural in relations or negations, and the negative and relative attributes do not cause pluralities: if they did, everything would be in the same relation to the necessary existent, without intermediaries which according to you is absurd. Thus they are on the horns of a dilemma. If they assert that the First Caused had different causal qualities they contract their dogma 'only one can proceed from one', and if they say these qualities are relative or negative they are compelled to postulate plural correlatives in the necessary existent, which also contradicts their tenets.

If a correlative contains different species, so must its counterpart, so really you are positing two things: its being necessary through another, and its being possible in its essence. Its being necessary through another caused intelligence and soul, and its being possible in essence caused form and matter. Thus you have posited the procession of two self-subsistent substances from one thing (*wajh*). Here is another contradiction.

The shrewdest of them endeavour to avoid the difficulty by accounting for plurality in the First Intelligence by the relationship of its essence, not by what it derived from another, on the ground that contingency is essential to it, not from another, while its existence is not essential but from another, and so plurality was not derived from the necessary existent.

1. A difficult word to render. Aspects implying different 'sides' are meant, not mere viewpoints. In the argument generally see *The Legacy of Islam*, p. 257f.

Upon my life when Intelligence appeared there appeared ready made four relations: its being necessary through another, its being intelligence, its being one in essence, and its being contingent in essence! Inasmuch as it was intelligence it caused intelligence, *qua* existence through the necessary existent it caused soul, inasmuch as it was one it caused form, and inasmuch as it was contingent it caused matter. Since these relationships were different realities, substances of different species were caused But this is mere sophistry.

Here follows the argument that the necessary existent cannot be freed from the relations which are postulated of the first caused. The philosophers explain the plurality of forms as due to the number of receivers or carriers though the forms are said to emanate from the Active Intelligence whose qualities do not multiply with the infinite variety of forms. They ought to apply the same reasoning to the necessary existent as to the Active Intelligence.

They say that intelligence as applied to the First Intelligence is a negative predication; but how can a negation have any relation to the existence of an intellectual substance (*jawhar*)? And why not include form and the categories as well as matter in the negations, and then everything would be in the same relation to the necessary existent? Again, why is existence through another more fitting to cause soul than being free from matter? If you transposed the terms and made necessity through another the cause of intelligence, and freedom from matter the cause of soul, what nonsense would result!

You assert four relationships of the First Intelligence who is yet one in essence, and you say that this oneness caused soul and body. Then what is derived from the Creator¹ and what has he of his own essence? If he only has potentiality² of existence from his own essence then three relationships are left. If these are derived from the First they demand three correlatives, the necessary existent being one in every respect; while if they are of his own essence, i.e. necessary accompaniments (*lawāzim*) of his essence (of the First Intelligence), your assertion that that which he has of his essence is only potentiality is contradicted. Potentiality can only be related to matter because the nature of matter is privative. Matter is capable of receiving form, and potentiality has a similar nature because it is capable of receiving existence. So form is left without a cause.

It is astonishing that body, composed of matter and form, cannot cause its like; and something whose existence is through another and is in itself potential should cause intellectual substances different in species and should be unable to participate in matter notwithstanding that potentiality exists only in the mind, while matter has existence in the external world! From these objections it can be realized that there is no necessity for the intermediate agents which have been postulated as the cause of things.

1. The necessary existent is identified with Allāh.

2. The word *imkān* sometimes means contingency and sometimes potentiality.

Here follows a criticism of the arbitrary assignment of four relations to the First Intelligence. Why did not the series continue to multiply by four? Why only nine intelligences and four elements? How are the unceasing movements of the stars and the change and flux of the sub-lunar world to be explained? The vast scheme of the universe will not fit into their plan and can only lead to belief in an omniscient omnipotent Creator. The foregoing is sufficient to refute the philosophers who follow Aristotle.

The Majūs are concerned with two questions: the cause of the mingling of light and darkness and the way to free one from the other. Some say: Light thought an evil thought and darkness came into being adhering to particles of light; thus darkness had a temporal origin. It was objected that if light was pure good what was the cause of the evil thought? If it happened in itself, why did not darkness happen in itself? If it happened in light, then how did light originate the root of evil and source of corruption? If all the world's corruptions are to be attributed to darkness and darkness to thought, then thought is the source of evil and corruption. It is remarkable that they shrank from attributing individual evil to light though they had to attribute universal evil to it.

To those who hold the pre-existence of darkness it is sufficient to say that two absolutely contradictory things in nature cannot be mixed save by force: if their essences could be mixed, their contradictoriness would have ceased. Further darkness must either be or not be a real thing. If its existence is real, it is the equal of light in existence and distinction between them must be denied in all respects.¹ Similarly if it is its equal in pre-existence and oneness, it is *qua* existence good. On the other hand, if it is not a real thing, it cannot be pre-existent nor can it form an opposite² to its contrary. And how can the existence of the world result from a mingling of it (with light)?³

Again, if the darkness is pre-existent the origin of the world is a mixture. If the mixture is good then good has resulted from evil: if evil, then vice versa. If the mixture was good, the freedom from mixture would be evil because it is its opposite: if it was evil, vice versa. So whichever view is taken, either good is the source of evil or evil is the source of good! The mingling of two simple substances would produce one nature, whereas the world contains different species and individuals which could not possibly come from a mixture of two simple things.

In dealing with the Mu'tazilites we will first mention the way in which the orthodox attribute everything to God's creative power.

1. The phenomenal world contains clear indications of the wisdom of its architect; and since the order of nature manifestly comes from a perfect agent it must be the work of the wisdom of that agent. Man's knowledge is never entirely in line

1. Namely, inasmuch as both are 'things'.

2. The Berlin MS. has 'equal'.

3. Repetitions have been omitted.

with what man does: it is general not detailed. The operation of (natural) order indicates that the agent is other than he and one whose knowledge is all embracing. Such was al-Ash'arī's system as expounded in his books and applied to the actions of the ignorant.¹

This argument, however, is not confined to the ignorant but applies also to the knower (*'ālim*); for his knowledge does not fully encompass his action. Just as it is impossible to initiate and invent in complete ignorance and unawareness of the thing to be initiated so it is impossible where any unawareness is present. (cf. Qur'ān 67:14)

Objection: This argument does not demonstrate the impossibility of the origin of action by the will of man. For man's complete comprehension of an action is not impossible, and if the connection of man's knowledge with an action is conceived as from all aspects you must admit the possibility of an act through man's will from all aspects, because the intelligent and perfect ordering it displays is proof of the agent's knowledge. But according to you this is inadmissible so your inference that man's knowledge is to be denied is vain. The power by which knowledge is connected with an action must be created by man. With us complete knowledge about an action is not a condition; but knowledge of the root of its existence is a condition of (man's) being an agent and the one does not destroy the other.²

Answer: Our object was not to demonstrate the impossibility of an act through man's will, but to deny that the creature was the creator of his actions for which he will be rewarded and punished. If he were such a creator the excellence of his work would indicate his knowledge: but it does not. He is not a creator because, if he were, he would know what he created from every aspect: but he does not so he is not a creator...

Knowledge of action is (a) necessary (*darūrī*) and (b) reasoned (*naẓarī*). Sometimes more and more acquired knowledge is necessary so that an infinite chain of discovery and reasoning would be required to attain a required operation. Some of the philosophers thought that production came from knowledge, so that if man knew the manifold aspects of operation, universal and particular, time, place etc., he could produce and create. Thence they argued that the Creator's knowledge of His essence is the origin of the existence of the first act. They distinguished between active and passive knowledge. Man has need of will and instruments etc., because his knowledge is passive. Therefore the theologians all agree that knowledge follows the knowable and is related to it as it is: it (knowledge) does not acquire it

1. Arabic *ghāfil*: he who does not know fully what he does: 'unawareness' would seem to be a mental state midway between knowledge and ignorance. However the glosser of al-Sanūsī's *Tawhīd* defines it as 'complete absence of knowledge about a thing'.

2. I take this to mean that knowledge of all aspects and consequences of an act is not a necessary condition of man's free will, but that he must consciously perform an act if it is to fall within his *qudrah*.

(the knowledge) as an attribute and it (knowledge) does not acquire an attribute from it (the knowable).

A second way of demonstrating the impossibility of man's power being capable of giving existence: if man's power were capable of bringing anything into existence it could produce anything consisting of substance and accident because existence embraces all existent things. Substance is not superior to accident because it exists, but because it is self-subsistent etc. Our opponents maintain that self-subsistence, spatial content, etc., are attributes which follow origination (*hudūth*) and are not indications of power. As for the terms, the thing-ness, individuality, substantiality, the accidental, they are in their opinion names of species latent in non-existence,¹ and are not indications of power ...

But the same inability to produce things is found in different persons in different degrees so that Zayd can move what 'Amr cannot. Our opponents say that as power² itself embraces all man's powers they are equal in capability.³ Similarly existence itself embraces all existent things so that they must necessarily be equal in receiving capability; but it can be admitted that capability does not follow power itself but differs in relation to different individuals.

But (say we) capability of power must either be universal and not differ in relation to different objects as aforesaid or be particular and there is no proof of the particularization of one object as opposed to another: the course of nature as we know it shows no anomaly in man's power.

Objection: You yourselves have admitted that man's power is connected with some objects and not with others and you call the connection (*ta'alluq*) 'acquisition' (*kasb*). The particularization you mention in the connection and 'acquisition', we attribute to particularization in production (*ijād*). It is extraordinary that you should deny man's power when you assert his connection (with an act). Why don't you admit the possible universality of this connection so that it can apply to everything, substance or accident? For if you particularize the connection while denying (its) influence do not think it strange if we particularize the connection while asserting (its) influence.

Reply: We assert connection between man's power and the object of it but we are not committed to a theory that *ta'alluq* is of universal application since we do not ascribe to it influence in producing or originating anything as you do and are bound to do. Our master al-Ash'arī denied that man's power had any capability in reference to existence or any attribute of existence. Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013) did allow it a certain influence as we shall explain; but he kept it clear of existence and thus avoided its universal application. He pointed out the necessary difference between voluntary and involuntary movement—for example

1. Arabic: *thābitah fi'l-'adam*.

2. Reading *ḥaqīqatu'l-qudrah* to correspond with *ḥaqīqatu'l-wujūd*.

3. Capability is perhaps too strong: *salāhiyyah* means suitability, fitness, and 'convenience'.

sneezing—a difference which does not reside in the movements themselves. One is within one's power and is willed; the other is not. Therefore, either it must be said that power is connected with one of them with a connection of knowledge without any influence at all—which would be equivalent to denying the difference between voluntary and involuntary, because to deny influence is the same as to deny connection so far as the movements themselves are concerned and we only find a difference in something additional to their existence and the states¹ of their existence. Or it must be said that power is connected with one of them with an influence. The influence must either be referred to existence and coming into being or to a quality of existence. The first is wrong because if it could affect one thing it could affect everything and so it is clear that influence is another quality which is a state additional to existence.

He said that according to our opponent, God's powerfulness only exercised influence in a state viz. existence because all the general and special qualities, substantial, accidental and the like, are relegated by him to non-existence so that only one state 'coming into being' (*hudūth*) is left. 'Grant me then one state in reference to man's power,' said he. His companions replied that he had introduced a term unknown in name or meaning. Never mind said he if I cannot find a special name for my term. If aspects and relationships can be asserted of one act and all of them attributed to one quality affecting it like 'happening'² it is evidence of power and the choice between alternatives for it shows that will and knowledge have been present.

Our opponent says that the categories good and bad, commanded and forbidden, are qualities added to existence, some essential to the act, others due to will just as the qualities which follow coming into existence, like substance, are susceptible of accidents. Now, if he can postulate qualities which are states and relationships additional to existence to which 'powerfulness' does not attach, they being intelligible, why cannot I postulate an intelligible influence on man's power? Take movement as an example. It is the name of a genus embracing species and kind or the name of a species with distinct peculiarities. Movements are of various kinds e.g. writing, speech, handicraft; and each kind has subdivisions. The fact that handicraft and writing are distinct from each other is due to a state in each movement not to the movement itself. Similarly with voluntary and involuntary movement. So that state can be attributed to the creature as an acquisition³ and action (*kasban wa fi'lan*) ... If a divine command is attached to the act and it happens accordingly it is called 'service' and 'obedience'. If a prohibition, the contrary; and the aspect (*wajh*) is the commandment which earns reward or punishment.

Our opponent admits that action is rewarded because it is good or bad not because it is something that exists. Goodness and badness are states additional to

1. See further, Chapter VI, *The Summa Philosophiae* of al-Shahrastānī.

2. Apparently he uses *wuqū'* as synonymous with *hudūth*.

3. See above.

action and existence. Here the Qāḍī was nearer to a just view for he (the opponent) attributed to the creature those acts for which he would not be rewarded or punished while he theoretically required that which lies outside men's power. But the Qāḍī specified (a) what it is that is not required and posited it as God's act and (b) what is man's act and acquisition and is required.

The Qāḍī was not really at variance with his colleagues. Act has intellectual aspects and relationships of a general and specific character ... but in itself it is not made up of these aspects, they are all of them derived from the agent. Itself it is but potential. Its existence is derived from its producer generally. If it is writing it is derived from its writer in a particular aspect. The two ways can be distinguished intellectually but not by the senses: one is production and initiation in a general sense; the other is acquisition and action—the special relation to the quality. The action with reference to its existence needs one to bring it into existence and it also needs a writer and a speaker if the act is writing or speech. The producer's essence or attribute is not altered when the produced comes into existence: he knows all the aspects of the act. But he who acquires (the power to act) suffers change of essence and attribute when the acquisition takes place; his knowledge does not embrace all the aspects (*jihāt*) of the act.

The eternal power is too exalted to possess a capacity confined to special aspects of (man's) actions, while man's power is too lowly to possess a capacity embracing all aspects of action ... Man's special and varying capacity is confined to certain objects whereas the capacity of God's power is one and unvarying, with one connection, namely existence. You must not confine God's capacity within man's limitations nor ascribe God's perfection to man's capacity. You must not say of the giver of existence He is the writer, speaker, etc., nor of the one who acquires power he is the giver of existence, the Creator, etc.

The difference between creation (*khalq*) and acquisition (*kasb*) is that creation is that which is brought into existence in such a way that the producer is unaffected by the act which he acquires as a quality and does not acquire a quality from it and he knows every aspect of his action. Acquisition is that which is willed by man's will (or within man's power). Man is affected by his acquisition. He acquires it as a quality and acquires a quality from it. He only knows one aspect of what he does.

This confirms what al-Ustādh¹ said namely that every act which comes about by co-operation is an acquisition to the one who asks for help. This actually takes place when the individual asserts that he was not alone in his act. This is what al-Bāqillānī meant when he said that acquisition means that power is connected with it in one respect but not in all respects; but creation is the originating of the thing itself and its production from non-existence. There is therefore no difference between them

1. i.e. Abū Ishāq Isfarāyīnī.

and the Qāḍī, except that what they called aspect (*wajh*) and relationship (*i'tibār*), he called quality and state.

Al-Ash'arī held that man's power had no influence at all other than the creature's belief that his action was facilitated by sound limbs and capacity and power, all of which come from God. Al-Juwaynī went too far in asserting that man could confer existence, though he did not say that in so doing man was independent of an antecedent chain of causes which ended in the Creator. He only followed the philosophers in their doctrine of a causal chain and the influence of celestial intermediaries, in an endeavour to avoid the follow of absolute determination (*jabr*). Of all forms of this doctrine the compulsion of an infinite chain of causes is the worst. For all matter is prepared for a special form: all the forms emanate from the Giver of form and assume matter by compulsion so that choice and power over alternatives is compulsion. Men's acts are the result of all-powerful causes and are required by absolute determination. Everything is the result of a prevenient cause. But intermediaries only prepare, they do not create; their nature is contingent.

The Mu'tazilites asserted that a man feels intuitively that a thing happens or does not happen according to his will. He can move or not move. Unless he had the power to produce what he wanted, this feeling would be inexplicable. You agree with us when you distinguish between voluntary and involuntary movements. Now, either the difference resides in movements themselves in that they happen one by the power of the agent, and the other by another agent's power or in a quality in the agent who has power over one and not over the other. If he has power over it then he must influence what he will and the influence must be in existence because the act takes place in existence not in another quality. Your predication of *kasb* is unintelligible: either it is an existent something or not. If it is something then you have admitted that man does exercise influence in existence; if it is not something it is nothing! They asserted that to posit power without influence was to deny power. Its connection with its object was like that of knowledge with the knowable.

Reply: Here we flatly contradict your appeal to intuitive feeling. Involuntary acts are not due to man's impulsion yet according to you he brings them into existence. Many accidents like the colours which come through dyeing, are due to man's impulsion, yet according to you he does not bring them into existence.

We agree that man is conscious of the difference between the voluntary and involuntary but as we have explained this is due to a quality in the subject or to a condition of the movement. But the senses are not conscious of bringing anything into existence. We have found a source for the two movements and states other than 'existence'. Is it not the case that those of your party who say that the non-existent is a thing do not refer the difference to the accidental and the power of

movement in that they are within man's power, for they are internal¹ qualities latent in non-existence, nor to the need for a substrate, for they are qualities which follow existence in time. Therefore we do not refer to that which you regard as worthy of reward and punishment ... A man does not feel the impulse to bring something into being but rather the impulse to stand, or sit, and so on. These characteristics of actions are outside and distinct from existence. You can call them aspects and relationships if you like ...

The connection (*ta'alluq*) of God's power is universal, whereas man's power is particular. The act is decreed by God before man's power is brought into contact with it. Thus a dual nature is latent in every action—the potential and the actual production. The connection of man's power does not destroy these two natures. Existence—indifferent as it is to good or bad—is to be attributed to God as its Creator; the taking over (*kasb*) of the act whether good or evil is to be related to man. There is no question of two creators but rather of two agents working from different aspects or of two distinct decrees which must be referred to their proper and distinct authors.

We differ from you entirely when you assert that man's actions are within his power because most of them are not and result in frustrating his intention e.g. moving one's finger in a straight line without deviating right or left, or hitting a target. Man's power falls short of the impulse which impels him to action. Some other source must be sought.

The second point on which they relied in asserting that man had power over his actions was the relevance of the sacred law. Unless man was an independent agent then commandments were mere folly and even contradictory. Commandments demand something which is possible from mankind. If action is impossible they are absurd and so are the rewards and punishments in the law. In fact the commandments might as well be addressed to fools as to wise men!

Apart from any question of sacred law it is our custom to lay commandments and prohibitions on one another and to attribute good and evil to deliberate choice, rewarding one and punishing the other. If any sophist would dispute this let him submit to insult and blows. If he feels resentment and physical pain and is moved to retaliate he thereby admits that he has felt something, otherwise why be angry and attribute (responsible) action to his assailant! If he proceeds to retaliate he admits that he has judged the act to be worthy of punishment and recompense ...

Reply: We do not admit the validity of your argument as to the relevance of law because the (bringing into) existence which you claim as man's prerogative is the point in dispute. For existence *qua* existence is neither good nor bad nor commanded or forbidden. Moreover the law knows other categories, e.g. what

1. This I take to be the meaning of *ṣifāt nafsiyyah thābitah fi'l-'adam*. Fanārī on Ījī iv. 75. 7 (quoted by Horten) says that such a quality cannot be understood by analogy with anything else.

must and what must not be done. If you say that what is commanded is an aspect of existence deserving praise or blame we agree; according to you it is a quality attaching to the act after it has been performed. Therefore the thing commanded is not subordinate to man's power.

If it be said that that which is decreed is the existence of the act and that the aspect which is obligatory on man is not that which is commanded we reply that you have not grappled with the difficulty ... What is the difference, pray, between a commandment not within the power of the creature, nor of anyone else, and one not within the power of the creature from the aspect of what has been commanded, and within another's power from the point of view of what has not been commanded?

The first proposition resembles absolute predestination. Such people are Qadarites in that they say origin and existence are within the power of the creature and Jabrites in that they say that the thing the creature is commanded to do is not within his power to 'acquire' or to do. 'Blind in whichever eye you like' as the saying runs! ...

The law attains its objects by punishment and reward according to a person's power. If a man is paid to dye clothes white and he returns them black he is punished. The subject of the divine law is that which is within his power ... We have explained that the influence which man's power exerts is an aspect (*wajh*) or condition of the act similar to that which you ascribe to the Almighty will. Does the law say 'bring (or don't bring) into existence' or does it say 'worship God and associate naught with Him'? The aspect of worship which is a specific designation of action becomes worship by command ... related to man's power. Why should you not accept another relation (*iḍāfah*) in which we believe which is similar to what you believe? ...

We differ in that we say that existence is something that 'is followed' fundamentally. It is an expression for essence (*dhāt*) and the thing itself (*'ayn*) and we relate it with all its qualities to God; while to the creature we attribute what cannot be related to God. Thus it cannot be said that 'God fasted', 'God prayed', and so on. His qualities are unchanged by His actions and nothing in creation is outside His knowledge. Man, on the contrary, acquires names from all his actions and his essence changes through his acts and he does not understand all his acts. This is what al-Isfarāynī meant when he said: Man acts with a helper. God¹ acts without a helper.

As for al-Ash'arī he denied that man's power had any influence. Consequently the answer to these arguments is difficult. However he did allow a certain facility and ability (*tamakkun*) which a man feels himself to possess, namely soundness of body and a belief in the course of nature. Whenever a man resolves to do a thing, God creates for him power and capacity commensurate with that act which He originates in him and the man is described with the epithet proper of the character of the action ...

Further the same authority that imposes commands contains prayers for divine help (cf. Qur'an 1:6). If a man were able to fulfil the law by his own power he would

1. The reading of B. and P., 'Man is an agent; God is only called an agent' (*bi-ma'nā* for *bi-mu'in*), is attractive; but O. is supported by Shahrastānī's concluding peroration on p. 89.

not have to ask God's help. Opponents say that the words 'God favours whom He will in guiding them'¹ refer to the creation of man's power which can choose between alternatives; but this view destroys the doctrine of grace and guidance (cf. Qur'ān 49:17).

What makes this doctrine just is man's feeling that he needs a helper although he feels capable of the act. He is conscious of a lack of independence in all that he does or does not do. He can speculate but not arrive at knowledge: he can move his members but if he wished to do so without employing the connecting muscles he could not. Yet our opponents say man's power can choose alternatives and man is independent in producing and initiating action. God's share in man's action is the creation of this power in man.

The truth lies in admitting ability (*al-tamakkun*), facility (*al-ta'attī*), and capacity (*al-istiṭā'ah*), for the act so far as they can rightly be related to the creature in a way which corresponds with his power and capacity. At the same time man's poverty of resource (*iftiqār*) and need of external help must be asserted while it must be denied that he has independence or self-determination ...

Chapter Seven

Is the Non-existent a Thing?

Of matter and a refutation of the theory that matter exists without form

A 'thing' cannot be defined because nothing is so well known and any word that is used to define it involves the notion of 'thing-ness' and existence ... It is a mistake to define a thing as 'an existent' (*mawjūd*) because existence and thing-ness are the same. Again it is a mistake to define it as 'that of which something can be predicated' because the words 'that which' have been introduced into the definition.

The Ash'arites do not distinguish between existence, latency, thing-ness, essence and individual reality.² The Mu'tazilite Shaḥḥām first asserted that the non-existent was a thing, an essence and a reality and claimed for it the relations of existence, e.g. the subsistence of the accident in the substance, etc. Most of the Mu'tazilites followed him although they did not assert the subsistence of the accident in the substance etc.; but a number of them opposed him. Some merely employed the word thing-ness (of the non-existent) while others held that to be impossible, like Abu'l-Hudhayl al-'Allāf and Abu'l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī; others said the thing is pre-existent while the temporal is called a thing metaphorically and by extension. But Jahm ibn Ṣaffwān held that the thing is an originated phenomenon (*muḥḍath*) and the Creator is He who makes things what they are.³

1. Qur'ān 14:11.

2. Arabic: *wujūd*, *thubūt*, *shay'iyah*, *dhāt*, and *'ayn*.

3. Lit. 'The thing-er of things.'

The Negative position: Elementary intelligence assures us that negation and affirmation and also positive and negative assertions are contraries. If you posit a definite thing at a definite moment in a definite mode you cannot deny it in the same conditions. If that which is to-be-denied is latent according to those who say that the nonentity is a thing, this proposition is abrogated. Put into a syllogism we get the following form:

All non-entities are to-be-denied.
 All to-be-denied are not-latent.¹
 Therefore all non-entities are not-latent.

The Positive position: Just as denial and assertion are contraries so are existence and non-existence contraries. We say that existence and latency (*thubūt*) are not synonyms nor are the to-be-denied and the non-existent.

The Negative: If you say that latency is a wider term than existence and embraces both entity and non-entity why don't you say that the to-be-denied is a wider term than the non-entity so that a universal attribute becomes a state or aspect of the to-be-denied positively, just as a particular attribute of the non-entity becomes a state or aspect of the non-entity positively? ...

The Positive: You, too, have attributed universals and particulars to the non-entity since you talk of the necessary, possible, and impossible in relation to it. If the non-entity were not a latent thing you could not treat it thus ... The fact that it is an object of thought and intellectual relation points the same way.

The Negative: We do not assert universals and particulars in non-existence: they are mere expressions and mental suppositions. Moreover, the mental relation with the non-entity is not *qua* non-entity but on the supposition that it exists. Therefore absolute non-existence is a notion resting on the assumption of absolute existence in opposition to particular non-existence, i.e. the non-existence of a particular thing. It can be said of an objective entity that it (no longer) exists or it can be said of a subjective entity, for example, the Resurrection, that it does not exist. It can be denied in the present, asserted in the future. Non-existence itself is neither universal nor particular, and cannot be known without existence or the assumption of existence. Knowledge has the existent as its object. Then if the non-existence of that thing becomes known it can be denied and it may be said that it is not a thing at the present time. If existence is to be asserted of (non-existent) substances then it is clear that the world pre-existed and there was no beginning to the Creator's activity and no influence. If it is to be denied every to-be-denied with you is a non-entity and every non-entity is latent so that the argument is turned against you.

1. Arabic: *laysa bi-thābit*. It has already been said that the Ash'arites do not distinguish between latency and existence. Therefore it follows that they admitted no mean between existence and non-existence.

We say that God gave the world existence with its substances and accidents, so it may be said He gave existence to its reality and essence¹ or something else. If you say it was the former then, according to you, they were two essential attributes latent in non-existence while the divine power had no connection with them ... If you say He gave existence to something else the same argument applies.

The Positive: What you say about knowledge having the existent or the hypothetical existent as its object is false of God's knowledge of the world's non-existence in eternity, for the world did not exist then, nor could it have been a supposition thereof because its supposition or any supposition on the part of the Creator would be ridiculous, for supposition implies doubt.

Therefore God's knowledge was of something known so the non-entity must be a latent thing. When you say that knowledge is connected with the existence of a thing at the time it exists and it necessitates a knowledge of its non-existence before it existed you confine knowledge to objects of cognition and objects are finite and so it follows that intelligibles are finite also—a thesis that you do not hold ...

As to your saying that existence² is to be denied or latent in our system, existence is to be denied and is not latent and all-to-be-denieds and non-entities are not latent because impossibilities are to-be-denieds and non-entities and are not latent things. The key to our system is that the essential qualities of substances and accidents belong to them because they are what they are,³ not because of any connection with a Creator. He only enters the mind in connection with existence because He tipped the scale in favour of existence.

What a thing is in essence preceded its existence, viz. its substantialness and accidentalness, and so it is a thing. What a thing has through omnipotence is its existence and its actuality (*ḥuṣūl*); and what follows its existence is the property of occupying space and receiving accidents. Therefore there is no question of the influence of the Creator's *ijād* for the influence of (divine) power is in existence alone. The omnipotent only confers existence. The potential only needs the omnipotent in respect of existence⁴ ...

Essential things are not related to the Creator but what befalls them from existence and actuality is. If the Creator wished to produce a substance the substance must be distinguished from the accident. For if they were indistinguishable in non-existence and the distinction was a positive⁵ thing the Creator's intention to produce a substance could not have been realized without an accident. Specifying a thing by giving it existence is only conceivable if the thing specified is a distinct entity so that substance, not accident, movement, not rest, results. Hence the real

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1. Arabic: *'aynahā wa-dhātahā*.
 2. The correct reading must be *al-wujūd*.
 3. Arabic: *lahā li-dhawātihā*.
 4. Again the tipping of the scale follows.
 5. i.e., latent.

nature of genus and species does not depend on the Creator's activity. If they are not separate things *per se ijād* is inconceivable and variety in actual phenomena must be due to mere chance.

The Negative: The eternal knowledge has all intelligibles as its object; the world's existence so that it really came to exist; the impossibility of its eternal existence; and the possibility of its existence before it did exist. But the true objective relation (*muta'allaq*) is existence from which all other intelligibles result. You can know that the Creator is God and that there is no other but that does not demand a succession of cognitions that every created thing is not God. If you know Zayd is at home you know he is nowhere else and need not know that he is not *chez* 'Amr or Bakr and so on *ad infinitum*. It cannot possibly be said that such infinite cognitions are latent things in non-existence for example the absence of Zayd in such and such a place ...

As to their assertion that essential qualities are not due to the Creator and that only existence *qua* existence is the object of the divine power, this is something they have heard and not rightly understood.¹

The Negative: A thing's existence, and its individual reality ('*ayn*) its essence, substantiality and accidentality, in our view are all one. That which (God) brought into existence is the thing's essence, and divine power is connected alike with its essence as it is with its existence, and influences its substantiality as it does its actuality and appearance in time. The distinction between existence and 'thing-ness' is merely verbal.

These people²¹ believe that universals and particulars are mere words or intellectual fictions; but the qualities which follow production, e.g. the substance being susceptible of accident, can be argued against them. For (they say) they are not due to God's power. They do not assert them to be prior to appearance in time, so why do they not argue that all the essential attributes also follow appearances in time? One might reverse the argument and say that the properties of substance were created by God's power and existence followed!

They tried to evade the difficulty of distinctive specifying by saying that if substances and accidents were latent in non-existence *ad infinitum* there could be no real specifying; but this is no answer; it only adds to the difficulty.

Now the truth is that this question is bound up with that of the *ḥāl*. The Mu'tazilites have become hopelessly involved in theories which they do not grasp. Sometimes they call the essential realities in genera and species 'states', i.e. qualities and names of entities neither existent nor non-existent: at other times they call them things, i.e. names and states of non-entities. They have mixed philosophy with theology and the doctrine of formless matter, borrowed some logic and some metaphysic, and the result is a house of straw.

1. These last comments are presumably from the author himself.
2. Here follow arguments similar to those already advanced.

We point to a particular substance and ask: Was this substance a positive (latent) corporeal substance before it existed, or was it universal substance, a thing unspecified? If it was this one nothing else shared in it. If it was absolute substance before it existed, it was not this because that is not this. What is latent in non-existence has no real existence and what really exists is not latent¹ ...

The supporters of states maintain that species like substantiality, etc., are things (latent) in non-existence because they are the object of knowledge and the known must be a thing. Individuality, substantiality, etc., are states in existence which cannot be known separately nor exist by themselves. But what an object of knowledge in non-existence which is unknown in existence! Had they an intelligent grasp of genera and species they would know that mental images are the quiddities of things in their genera and species which do not demand that they should have a real existence outside the mind ...

When Mu'tazilites learned from the philosophers that there was a difference between the causes of existence and quiddity they thought that mental concepts were things latent in individuals, so they affirmed that the non-existent was a thing and thought that the existence of genera and species in the mind were states latent in the *individual*, that the non-entity was a thing and that the state was latent. It is annoying to hear and answer such absurdities and unless I had undertaken to explain the various schools of thought in this book I should not have troubled to deal with such things.

(1) The theory that there is formless matter (*hūlē*).

It is said that the first principles are Intelligence, Soul and Matter to which some add the Creator, all of them being void of forms. When the first form, i.e. the three dimensions, appeared, there arose a composite body. Before that it had no form merely the capacity to receive it. When form appeared actually there came into being the secondary matter. Then when the four modes (heat and cold active, and dampness and dryness passive) adhered to it there arose the four elements (*arkān*) viz. fire, water, air, and earth which are tertiary matter. From these arose the composites to which the accidents of generation (*kawn*) and corruption adhere.

(2) The theory that matter is not free from form. This treats (1) as speculative.

The supporters of (1) argue that it is demonstrable that every body is composed of matter and is subject to addition and subtraction and form and shape; that the subject of addition and subtraction is something lying behind them and exists independently of them while addition does not remain after subtraction and vice versa. Hence an atom without bodily form can receive addition and subtraction at the same time. These adjuncts can cease and so can form and shape so that it

1. The word *thābitah* is elusive in meaning. I have sometimes rendered it by 'positive'. It is best defined by the *muthbitūn* themselves. On the whole 'latent' seems to do justice to something that is neither existence nor non-existent, though it comes down on the side of existent somewhat.

is possible for the atom to be void of all forms.¹ Thus a non-composite atom must be the foundation of all composite bodies for otherwise there would be an endless chain of composites like shirt, cloth, cotton, elements and prime matter² which is *hyle* receptive of forms and modes.

The supporters of (2) object that this is to assume the point at issue. Addition and subtraction are accidents and as such alter and change. That which changes is accident, not substance, and you cannot treat them alike.

The *mutakallim* asks why substance is free of all accidents if it is free of one, to which they reply that the self-subsistent is independent of a subject, otherwise it would need an accident as the accident needs it and so there would be no intelligible distinction between them.

The *mutakallim* answers that substance cannot be free from all accidents not because it needs them in its self-subsistence as a substance, but because it is inconceivable unless it is in a definite place.

The supporters of (2) argue: Assume that matter is a self-subsistent substance void of form and then that it acquires dimension; either dimension must have come suddenly or gradually. But dimension carries with it place and volume and it must have had the latter before it got the former. If dimension came gradually and by extension then direction is implied and once more all the categories are present.

The supporters of (1) argue that potentiality preceded the temporal thing's existence and also the matter (*hūlē*) in which potentiality resided, though neither potentiality nor *hūlē* were eternally pre-existent ...

Plato's proof of the temporal origin of the world: the existence of universal objects can be conceived in the mind and outside the mind; they are differing realities with different characteristics like the celestial intelligences.

The supporters of (2) argue: If potentiality can only be posited in matter,³ matter is inconceivable without form and form subsists in the Giver of form.

[Shahrastānī] If we regard *hūlē* as a subsistent object it is either one or many: if it was one and then became two was it (*a*) by the addition of another or (*b*) by the multiplication of that one without external addition? If (*a*) then they are two substances one added to the other and their mutual relation presupposes form. If (*b*) then *hūlē* became divisible: at one time having the form of unity at another the form of plurality and we are driven to the endless chain ...

It is clear that *hūlē* is never free from form but it actually subsists therein. Form subsists not in *hūlē* but in the Giver of form. Matter preserves form by receiving it and form comes into being in *hūlē*. Both are substances because body is composed of them and body is a substance. Actual distinction between them is inconceivable: only a logical difference can be drawn.

1. The opponent quotes the argument rather differently, see below.

2. Arabic: '*anāšir*'. This has not been mentioned above in (1).

3. Arabic: *māddah* not *hayūlā* = *hūlē*.

Chapter Ten
Concerning the Eternal Knowledge in Particular

*That it is eternally One, embracing all that is knowable both
universals and particulars*

Jahm b. Ṣaffwān and Hishām b. al-Ḥakam posited in the Godhead temporary cognitions about the knowable which constantly change. These conditions were not in a substrate. They agreed that God knows eternally what will be, and knowledge about the future is not the same as knowledge about the present.

The early philosophers asserted that God only knows His essence and from His knowledge of His essence there arose of necessity existent things which are not known by Him, i.e. they have no form with Him separately or as a whole. Some said He knows universals but not particulars: others said that He knows both ...

We reply to the Jahmiyyah that if God originated knowledge for Himself either it must be in His essence or in a substrate or not in either. Origination essentially demands alteration; and origination in a substrate would demand that the substrate should be of time while origination not in a substrate would demand the denial of God's specifying ...

To consider the meaning of 'not in a substrate' ... if it applies to the essence of knowledge it must apply to all knowledge; if it applies to something additional to the essence of knowledge it must be the work of an agent,¹ and if that were admitted it could be argued that no accident needs a substrate which is contrary to experience ...

[*Hishām*]: God knew eternally that the world would exist. When it came into being did His knowledge remain knowledge that it would exist or not? If it did not then His knowledge or perception² suffered change either in His essence or in a substrate or not in His essence and not in a substrate. The first is impossible ... and so is the second ... so He must have originated the knowledge not in a substrate. If His knowledge that the world would be remained unchanged in its original connection then it was ignorance and not knowledge at all.

You derive the belief that God has knowledge from His being knowing; and we derive the belief that His knowledge receives new additions from His being a Knower of new things. Therefore to say that eternally He knew the world is absurd. It was not known to exist in eternity but it became known to exist at a definite time. Therefore God did not know in eternity that it existed; He knew it at the time it happened. Therefore His knowledge changed. If we know that Zayd will come tomorrow that is not knowledge that he has come.

1. i.e. discursive.

2. Arabic: *ḥukm*. The intellectual perception of relations is meant.

[*Al-Ash'arī*]:¹ There are no changes or novelties in God's perception state or quality. God's knowledge is one eternal knowledge embracing all that is and will be knowable ... There is no difference between its relation to things in eternity and things that happen at different times. His essence is not affected by the advent of the knowable as it is not affected by changes in time. The nature of knowledge is to follow the knowable without acquiring a quality from it nor acquiring it as a quality;² and though knowables differ and multiply they are one in being knowable. The way in which they differ is nothing to do with knowledge about them but is peculiar to them. They are known because knowledge comes into contact with them but that does not alter. The same argument applies to all the eternal attributes ... We do not say that God knows the existent and the non-existent simultaneously for that is absurd; but He knows each in its own time and knowledge that a thing will be is precisely knowledge of its being in the time that it actually comes into being ...

If we knew of a certainty that Zayd would come tomorrow and could suppose with our opponents that such knowledge could remain and then Zayd came there would be no new knowledge and no need of it seeing that it had preceded his coming. What was known had happened. Their argument that we find a difference between the state of our knowledge before and at the advent of Zayd and that this difference lies in new knowledge applies only to the creature. In God there is no difference between the decreed (*muqaddar*) the established the accomplished and the expected. All cognitions are alike to Him ...

A cogent argument against them was this: are these new cognitions knowable before they come into existence or are they not an object of knowledge? If they were knowable was it by eternal knowledge and cognitive power or by other cognitions which preceded their existence? If the former, then our answer that everything is known by eternal knowledge is your answer about the new cognitions. If the latter, then those cognitions would need other cognitions and so an endless chain would result.

[*The Mu'tazilites*]: God knows eternally through His essence about the future and the relation of His essence or the mode of His knowingness to the knowable in the future is the same as to the knowable in the present. We know the future on the assumption that it will exist the present as something actually existent. There is no impossibility in the assumption of knowledge (about a past state of things) persisting and the same knowledge holding two knowables either as to human or divine knowledge³ ...

1. I am unable to verify this reference to al-Ash'arī.

2. This is a formula which constantly recurs.

3. Here follows a long extract from 'the philosophers.' It is really from Avicenna's *Ilāhiyyāt*, p. 588. (The only printed edition ceases to number the pages after 554.) It is to be found in Shahrastānī's *al-Milal*, and a translation is given in Haarbrücker, *asch-Schahrastānī's Religionspar-*

[*Shahrastānī*]: We do not use the words Intelligence and Intelligent of God but change them to Knowledge and Knower in deference to revelation. The *mutakallim* infers God's knowledge from the order in nature but this way is not open to you because you say that (divine) knowledge does not embrace singulars which can be perceived. As for universals they exist as suppositions of the mind. You are therefore in the position that the order is not knowable in the way that order requires and what is knowable shows no trace of order.

The philosophers replied that God was free from matter and all relation with it. He is not veiled from His essence. It is matter that forms the veil and God who is transcendent above matter knows Himself in Himself.

Answer: But what has the denial of matter to do with God's knowledge? ...

[*Avicenna*]: Everything that is free from matter is Intelligence in its essence. Every abstract quiddity can be linked with another abstract quiddity and may be intelligible i.e. impressed (*murtasamah*) on another quiddity. The impression of it is its union and Intelligence has no meaning but the union of one abstract quiddity with another. Therefore if an abstract quiddity is impressed on our intellectual faculty the impression itself therein is its knowledge and perception of it and that is intelligence and abstract thought (*ta'qqul*). If there were need of any form other than the impressed one there would be an infinite regress. Therefore if the union itself is intelligence it follows that every abstract quiddity could from its essence be intelligent.

[*Shahrastānī*]: All you have done is to treat the union (*muqāranah*) as a middle term. No doubt you do not mean corporeal union or the union of substance and accident nor of form and matter. But as you have explained you mean conveying an image,¹ and impressing; and by these two latter you mean abstract thought. But this is to assume the point at issue. You might as well have said the proof that He knows is that His essence could be impressed with a form i.e. be knowing. The inference that God is intelligent because He is intelligible is absurd ...

(a) Does His knowledge come into connection with His essence (and) then that knowledge come into connection with what He knows as it happens; or (b) does His knowledge come into connection with His essence and another cognition come into connection with what He knows? According to (a) it must be said that He only knows His essence because no form is present with Him except His essence, and His intellect has no impression but its own thinking. For you say that Intelligence is the union of quiddities and that the union is the impression of one quiddity on another, so that on this showing nothing can be united to God's existence but His existence. And no impression can be made on His thought but His

theien und Philosophen-Schulen (Halle, 1850), ii. 256. The passage is also to be found in the *Najāt* (Cairo, 1331/1912), p. 403. There is nothing to indicate that the author departs from his text in the middle of p. 222, line 15.

1. Arabic: *tamthīl*.

thought. All accidents, being separated from His essence, must be the object of its thought (*ma'qūliyyatahā*) separate from the object of the thought of His essence. As to (b) plurality would result. For if His knowledge of His essence and of the First Intelligence was one from one aspect that would necessitate that His essence was the First Intelligence and vice versa. If they were not so from one aspect then the aspects (*wujūh*) of the divine essence would be many. Again if His intelligence and knowledge are active and not passive, it would follow that every object of cognition would be passive to Him, while He would be the object of cognition to His own knowledge. What a conclusion!

[*Avicenna*]: God's knowledge of things is necessary because He knows His essence ... The First Intelligence's knowledge of God is not necessary because it knows its essence for its origin preceded its essence: it is not a consequence of it ... The known is not the knower nor a result of it so it must be additional to the knower. Thus plurality came into being.

[*Shahrastānī*]: You distinguish between His knowledge of His essence and His knowledge about things calling one essential and the other necessary knowledge. Do you mean by necessary cognitions things knowable by Him by one knowledge necessarily, which is correct; or do you mean other cognitions necessary to His knowledge about His essence? In what subject are these cognitions and how are they connected with knowables? ... But 'Naught in Heaven or Earth is hid from Him' (Qur'ān 3:5) ... God's knowledge like His other attributes is perfect and not reached by induction and reflection as ours is. Nothing is hid from Him whether universal or singular, truths essential or accidental. To distinguish between them is to postulate plurality of relation and aspect and effect.

Those who affirm that the knowledge of the First Caused about the First (Cause) is not necessary to its knowledge about its own essence (because the origin of the First Caused preceded its essence, so that knowledge of what preceded its essence is not necessary to its knowledge about its essence, and so is another separate knowledge), follow Avicenna in asserting that he who knows something of his need does not necessarily know what he needs, because what he needs preceded his essence ... but he only knows it by another knowledge.¹ This is not so. But though knowledge often results from knowledge it does not follow that a thing knowable results from a knowable. Avicenna fell into this mistake because he believed that the existence of the First Caused resulted from the First Cause's knowledge of it, and his knowledge about it was the result of the First Cause's knowledge of its own essence ... He contradicted his fundamental principle that 'from one only one can proceed' and it did not avail him to plead that one was *per se* and the other from its cause ...

1. See *The Legacy of Islam*, pp. 258–259. This acute criticism of the dominant theory of the cosmos and its relation to the Creator deserves to be read *in extenso*. I have had to reduce it to as small a compass as possible.

To those who say that God knows things universally ... we reply that all singulars demand a universal proper to them ... Universals increase with the classes of singulars. If God only knows the singular from its universal so that knowledge of the universal does not change while knowledge of the singular does change, it follows that knowledge about its universal must be plural, as it is of its singular. If all universals were united in one that one universal would be the only knowable and it would be necessary to Him in His existence. Thus knowledge about it would be necessary to the knowledge about His own essence and so we get back to the position of those who say that He only knows His essence ...

Again God's knowledge is not conditional upon happenings and events as when we say there will be an eclipse of the moon if such and such conditions are fulfilled. The Šifāṭiyyah say that the difficulty in the schools had arisen through adding the notions of past, present and future to knowledge and thinking that (God's) knowledge must change with changing events as our knowledge does ... But to those who perceive that the eternal knowledge is one, this difficulty does not exist.

God's knowledge is one for if it were many it would multiply with things knowable; and things knowable, necessary, possible and impossible are infinite whereas the existent is finite; or it would multiply to a specified number and this implies one who specified. The Eternal cannot be specified so that His knowledge is one ... though knowables are infinite. The Ash'arites hold that what God knows about every knowable is infinite, giving as instances the logical possibilities of every knowable, for at any and every moment the phenomenal may be changed

Objection: What difference is there in a specified number of cognitions and one knowledge—one who specifies the number is required. God's cognitions are either general or specific. If general in that He knows the infinite then it is one knowledge of one knowable and what is specified therein remains unknown; if specific in that the things knowable are distinguished in His cognizance by their special characteristic then it is impossible to reconcile specifying with the denial of finitude.

[*The Šifāṭiyyah*]: By the connections of God's knowledge we do not mean those of sense and conceptual imagery ... but we mean that the eternal attribute is capable of perceiving what is presented to it in a way that is not *per impossibile*. That capacity is called connection (*ta'alluq*); and the aspect of presentation for perception is object of connection (*muta'allaq*). Both are infinite ... The eternal knowledge is a quality meet to perceive what is presented to it as a possibility ... and the eternal power is a quality meet to give existence to what is presented to it as a possibility. Thus the meaning of presentation is the mode of possibility ... The meaning of that to which presentation is made is capacity either to perceive or to bring into existence. It is generally believed that the changing forms that matter constantly receives are infinite and proceed from the Giver of form whose essence is one, yet by way of a quality it has the capacity of emanating ... The presentation of possibility to power is as the disposition of matter to receive form; and the capacity

of the quality such as perception and bringing into existence is as the capacity of the Giver to emanate form ... Capacity as applied to the Eternal is metaphorical; of the temporal it is real ...

God comprehends all possibilities by one faculty, namely capacity of knowledge like perception, and gives them being by a faculty the capacity of power, specifies them by a faculty of will, and acts as He pleases by commandment and by a faculty, namely the capacity of speech. We do not mean by this capacity the power of disposition in matter which Aristotle imagined but perfection in every attribute. Whether these faculties and properties are found together in one attribute or in one essence caused such difficulty to the scholastics that al-Bāqillānī declined to discuss the matter and took refuge in the authority of revelation.

Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī

His full name is Abū ‘Abd Allāh Abu’l-Faḍl Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī al-Imām Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, also known as Ibn al-Khaṭīb or Imām al-Mushakkikīn (the leader of doubt-inducers). His family was originally from Ṭabaristān but he was born in Rayy, near the Tehran of today in 543/1148 and died in 606/1210 in Muzdakhān, near Herat. He was born to a Shāfi‘ī and Ash‘arite family and began his early education with his father Ḍiyā’ al-Dīn ‘Umar who taught him the Shāfi‘ī school of jurisprudence and Ash‘arite theology.

Rāzī continued his studies in philosophy with Muḥammad al-Baghawī, jurisprudence with Kamāl al-Simnānī and theology with the famous master Majd al-Dīn al-Jilī, who was also the teacher of Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī. Although it is not certain that Rāzī and Suhrawardī actually met, many years later when Rāzī received a copy of Suhrawardī’s *Talwihāt* (Intimation), he kissed it and put it to his eyes in a gesture of respect. Rāzī soon came to be known as a master of all the sciences of the day, even mathematics, medicine and the natural sciences.

Following the completion of his studies, Rāzī, like many other great Muslim thinkers and philosophers, travelled extensively throughout the Islamic world meeting with the learned men of his time and enjoying the patronage of princes and kings. His first trip was to Khwārazm where his extensive and disruptive controversies with the Mu‘tazilites led to his departure back to Rayy. Soon, in 580/1184, he set forth for Transoxiana where he also held numerous discussions with such masters as ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sarakhsī. Although he was warmly received by the court of the Ghurid rulers, the jealousy of certain scholars and courtiers led to his departure. Rāzī took a number of other trips but wherever he went controversy followed him and he either escaped or was expelled. Even in Herat where he settled in 600/1203 and gained fame as the Shaykh al-Islām, he ran into difficulties with the Ḥanbalites who accused him and his family of heresy. It was in Herat, however, that Khwārazm-Shāh built a school for Rāzī where he taught for the rest of his life. Part of the reason for the difficulties of this controversial figure may have had to

do with Rāzī's temperament which often appears to have been out of control and for which he apologizes in several odes.

There is a disagreement as to the originality of Rāzī's thought. There are those who considered him to be a compiler of ideas whereas others regard him as an original thinker. Yet, they all seem to agree that despite his prolix and difficult style, he was a man of encyclopedic knowledge. Fortunately, he offers an account of other philosophical doctrines which allows us to construct the ideas and texts of many of the sects such as the Karrāmiyyah, knowledge of which is mostly lost.

In theology Rāzī belongs to the later school of philosophical Ash'arite *kalām* which employs syllogistic methods. His theological works represent a rapprochement between theology and other branches of wisdom such as ethics and Sufism. As evident in his major work *al-Muḥaṣṣal* (The Acquired), Rāzī divides theology into four parts: preliminaries, Being and its divisions, rational theology and mysteries (*sam'iyyāt*). While Rāzī follows the Ash'arites in method, he criticizes them on the question of atomism in his earlier works such as in the *al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyyah* (Oriental Discourses).

There are several points of particular interest with regard to Rāzī's theology. First, he considers faith to be the necessary and sufficient condition for salvation. Second, Rāzī believes in determinism but maintains that despite the fact that all things are ultimately determined by God, humans remain morally responsible for their actions. Third, God's Names and Attributes must be regarded as symbolic and not literal. Finally, on the question of knowledge, Rāzī argues that reason is neither the cause of knowledge nor the source of it, but that God creates a reasoning process through which knowledge follows necessarily.

Philosophically, Rāzī was influenced by Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and Zakariyyā' Rāzī, and theologically by Ghazzālī. Rāzī, who had mastered the works of the above mentioned philosophers and theologians and has been identified mostly with their rationalistic thought, uses reason vigorously. Despite his great admiration for Ibn Sīnā, however, Rāzī criticized him severely, an act which led Ṭūsī and Mullā Ṣadrā to defend him against Rāzī's charges. It must be understood that Rāzī was a *mutakallim* with a philosophical tendency and not a *faylasūf* in the technical sense given to this term in the Islamic intellectual tradition.

Although Rāzī was above all a synthesizer of philosophical and theological thought, he made some original contributions even to Islamic philosophy. He criticized Plato's theory of forms arguing that all higher modes of being are absorbed in God. He also criticized Plato's theory of recollection on the ground that it ignores the divine origin of knowledge. Rāzī's greatest contribution to Islamic philosophy was his criticism of certain principles of Peripatetic philosophy as reflected in his commentary upon Ibn Sīnā's *al-Ishārāt* and Rāzī's own *al-Muḥaṣṣal* (The Acquired). This criticism in effect paved the way for *ishrāqī* philosophy and gnosis. Moreover, Rāzī's major *opus*, *al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyyah*, which influenced many later

philosophers especially Mullā Ṣadrā, contains certain *ishrāqī* ideas as reflected in its title.

Rāzī's other contributions were in diverse fields of knowledge including medicine, in which he wrote several treatises including a commentary on Ibn Sinā's *Qānūn* and a medical encyclopedia entitled *al-Jāmi' al-kabīr* (The Great Compendium) or *al-Ṭibb al-kabīr* (The Great Book of Medicine). He also wrote several treatises on geometry, astronomy, agriculture and even politics and history. One of his major works *Jāmi' al-'ulūm* (The Compendium of the Sciences) is indicative of his mastery of a wide range of Islamic sciences. In jurisprudence, too, he made great strides in the theological principles of *fiqh* rather than in their actual applications. He composed a number of important works on jurisprudence such as *al-Maḥṣūl fī uṣūl al-fiqh* (The Result of the Principles of Jurisprudence) and *Iḥkām al-aḥkām* (Making Firm the Principles).

Rāzī was also a master of poetry, rhetoric and dialectic, abilities which he used to overcome his many opponents. As is evident in his *Munāẓarāt* (Controversies) he pounces forcefully upon his adversaries, and yet there was a poet in Rāzī whose beautiful odes were full of emotion and spiritual subtlety. The more spiritual side of Rāzī also manifested itself in his interest in Sufism. While he did not practise Sufism, the fact that he had strong Sufi inclinations is well established by the many quotations in his works of Sufi poets such as Abu'l-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī. Also, Ibn 'Arabī wrote a letter to Rāzī urging him to leave dialectical and discursive reasoning, a fact that reflects the importance of Rāzī in the eye of the great master of Islamic gnosis.

Rāzī met the great Sufi master Najm al-Dīn Kubrā and had a discussion with him on the nature of certainty regarding the existence of God. Kubrā had a profound influence on Rāzī by turning his powerful intellect from an outward direction, inward, and convinced him to go on spiritual retreats. Rāzī who was a theologian/philosopher and not destined to be a Sufi, asked Shaykh Najm al-Dīn Kubrā to restore him to his previous state for he suffered from intellectual and existential paralysis. Whereas Ghazzālī embraced Sufism in mid-life, in later life it seems that Rāzī remained attracted to Sufism without fully participating in it. Towards the end of his life he expressed remorse for having placed so much emphasis on reason alone and stated:

The ultimate steps of the intellects lead to bondage,
And the striving of the intellectuals ends astray.

Finally, Rāzī is known for his numerous Qur'ānic commentaries, the most important being the voluminous *Miftāḥ al-ghayb* (Key to the Unseen World) known also as *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr* (The Great Commentary). Rāzī uses his theological, mystical and poetic gifts as well as his vast general knowledge of other subjects in this great Qur'ānic commentary.

Rāzī had two sworn enemies: the Karrāmites and Ibn Taymiyyah. He had spoken harshly of the Karrāmites who accused him of refuting their views and prejudicing the sultan in this regard. Referring to a book that is attributed to Rāzī entitled *al-Sirr al-maktūm fī asrār al-nujūm* (The Veiled Secrets in the Mysteries of Astrology), Ibn Taymiyyah accuses Rāzī of making blasphemous statements, such as believing in star and idol worshipping and having recommended drinking wine to the mother of the sultan. It appears that Ibn Taymiyyah had not read the book, since even if Rāzī were the author, there is nothing in it to substantiate these accusations. Rāzī was also accused by some of his enemies of having made claims of an anthropomorphic nature regarding God, and of himself as an equal to the Prophet of Islam. These claims are simply not true. In many of his works, in particular *Kitāb nafs wa'l-rūḥ* (Treatise on the Soul and the Spirit), he refers to the Prophet by his traditional honorific titles. As to anthropomorphic claims, Rāzī says, 'By Allāh! I never said Allāh, the Exalted and the Gracious Creator and Nourisher, is a body, nor did I compare Him with any creature, nor did I assign any shape or place to Him.'

On the significance of Fakhr al-Din Rāzī it has been said that after Ghazzālī, his attempt to reconcile reason and revelation represents one of the most serious and noble endeavours in the history of Islamic thought. Sixty-eight books are attributed to this prolific thinker, books that are a testimony to his encyclopedic knowledge. This great theologian, philosopher and scholar of Islamic sciences is said to have been poisoned by the Karrāmites, who never forgave him for his attacks upon them and their spiritual leader. Rāzī died at the age of sixty-three.

In this chapter we have first included a section of Rāzī's *Sharḥ al-ishārāt*, a commentary on the *Ishārāt* of Ibn Sīnā. This work which is used as a standard text to teach philosophy in traditional *madrasahs* in Iran to this day, is followed by a translation of sections from one of Rāzī's major works *al-Mabāḥiṭh al-mashriqiyyah fī 'ilm al-ilāhiyyāt wa'l-ṭabī'iyyāt* (Oriental Discourses Regarding Theology and the Natural Sciences) edited by Muḥammad al-Mu'taṣim al-Baghdādī (Cairo, 1990). This section undertakes a discussion of the nature of an extended body, corporeality and atomism, the problem of divisibility, eternity, temporal generation, the nature of light and its incorporeal nature.

In the next section, we have included a translation of Rāzī's *Kitāb al-naḥs wa'l-rūḥ wa sharḥ quwāhumā* (Treatise Concerning the Soul, Spirit and the Elaboration of their Faculties), which is also known as *'Ilm al-akhlāq* (The Science of Ethics), translated by M. Ṣaghīr Ḥasan Ma'sūmī (Islamabad, 1969). This treatise represents Rāzī's views on ethics and morality where he elaborates the universal principles that underlie the field of ethics.

M. Aminrazavi

Sharḥ al-ishārāt

Translated for this volume by Robert Wisnovsky from Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's [*Kitāb*] *Sharḥ al-ishārāt li'l-Khwājah Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī wa'l-Imām Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī* (Qumm, 1983–1984), pp. 189–198.

Section Four: On Existence and Its Causes

Rāzī: Interpretation: Someone might object to this chapter-heading by saying: 'If existence *qua* existence were to have a cause, then the Necessary Existence would need a cause, on account of Its being an existent.' The response to this is that when we say 'existence has a cause' we do not necessarily imply that 'existence *qua* existence has a cause.' On the contrary: what is implied is that its need for a cause is not due solely to the fact that it is an existence but rather due to the fact that it is an existence to which some other condition is attached. The word 'existence' is carelessly used: it does not necessarily imply universality, so the objection is rash.

Know that there are eight problems to be dealt with in this section: 1) refuting those who maintain that whatever is not sensed is neither knowable nor conceivable; 2) analysing the theory of causes; 3) affirming the reality of the Necessary Existence; 4) [affirming] the singularity of the Necessary Existence; 5) exempting the Necessary Existence's essence from multiplicity (in which is included the fact that It is not composed of genus and differentia, or of intelligible or sensible parts); 6) [affirming that] It has no opposite or equivalent; 7) [that] It is intelligent and intelligible; and 8) stating that affirming the existence of the Necessary Existence and affirming the existence of Its attributes by the aforementioned method is better than affirming Its existence by other methods. These are the overarching problems. Most of them are the kind that are treated only in [separate] chapters, so, God willing, at the end of the commentary on each there will be [a discussion of] how each relates to the other.

1. Refutation of those who maintain that whatever is not sensed is neither knowable nor conceivable

The First Problem, refuting those who maintain that whatever is not sensed is not knowable, contains four chapters.

Remark: [Know] that people's faculties of estimation are sometimes seized [by the notion] that what exists is what is sensed—and [conversely] that the existence of that whose substance sense has not perceived may be held to be impossible—and that whatever is not specific to a place or a position, either in and of itself (such as

a body) or on account of something it contains (such as a body's states), does not partake of existence. Now, you can easily reflect on that self-same object of sense, and discern in it the falsity of these people's assertion, because you and whoever deserves to be addressed both know that a single name may apply—not equivocally but univocally—to these sensed things: the term 'human.' Neither of you doubts that it applies univocally to Zayd as well as to 'Amr. That existing meaning is either perceived by sense or it is not. If sense is far from perceiving it, then close examination will extract whatever is not sensed from amongst those things that are sensed. This is even more astonishing, given that if it is sensed, it will doubtless have a position, space, and some specific quantity; [yet] how could [a thing] be made specific [when] it only derives from sensation, let alone imagination, in this way, for every object of sense and imagination is invariably made specific by one of these states? And if this were so, it would not be consistent with anything that is not in one of these states, for it could not be said of most other things in which that state obtains. Consequently 'human', insofar as it consists of a single inner reality, or rather insofar as its fundamental inner reality is one in which the multiplicity [of individuals] is not dissimilar, is not an object of sense, but purely an object of intellection. This situation also obtains for every universal concept.

Interpretation: The evidence pointing towards the incorrectness of those who claim that whatever is not sensed is neither intelligible nor conceivable consists in the fact that we know by necessity the fact that individual humans share in the inner reality of humanity. Now they will share in that inner reality either in the sense that they have a specific shape, magnitude, or measure, or in the sense that they have none of those [characteristics]. If it is the former, it will follow that those individuals possessing different attributes will not have anything in common, because each specific thing will be incompatible with whatever is outside it. If it is the latter, then they will share a thing to the extent that it is isolated and possesses no magnitude, shape or measure. An example of this is its being unsensed despite being intelligible. Thus what has been said—whatever is not sensed is not intelligible—is already shown to be false. On the contrary: research and close examination separate what is not sensed from what is sensed. So let us return to interpreting his statement that 'people's faculties of estimation are sometimes seized [by the notion] that what exists is what is sensed.'

Know that he said 'people's faculties of estimation are sometimes seized [by the notion]' and not 'people's faculties of imagination' only, inasmuch as we have made clear that the faculty which determines what is not sensed by means of what is sensed is none other than estimation. The meaning of his statement that 'the existence of that whose substance sense has not perceived may be held to be inconceivable' is, that whatever is not actually sensed cannot possibly possess existence.

The meaning of his statement that 'whatever is not specific to a place or a position, either in and of itself (such as a body) or on account of something found in it

(such as a body's states), does not partake of existence' is that something is either a body or a state found in it, or is not a body or a state found in it. The train of thought is this: the body has position and place in and of itself, as well as the state found in it. The two [position and place] come to exist in it on account of the body which is their locus. Those people acknowledge these [first] two [position and place], yet deny the third category [the body's states].

The meaning of his statement 'Now, you can easily reflect on that self-same object of sense, and discern in it the falsity of these people's assertion' is that those people maintain that whatever is not sensed will not possess existence. This is false, because if you reflect on sense objects you will become aware that they include what is not sensed. After that he mentions the thought experiment which we have omitted for obvious reasons that require no commentary.

Someone might say: 'In this chapter the Shaykh is trying to refute merely those who claim that nothing exists except bodies and accidents, and that whatever thought experiment he mentions will not show their claim to be false, because he is making clear that the universal "humanity", stripped of all extra concomitants, is unsensed. Now, the universal "humanity" has no existence outside the mind, and exists only in the mind. But those people are only rejecting the existence of anything unsensed outside the mind'. The gist is that while those people are only rejecting the existence of anything unsensed outside the mind, the Shaykh is affirming the existence of an unsensed entity in the mind. So his discussion does not prove that those people's theory is false.

One may respond to this [objection] from two angles. The first is that we have previously made clear that whatever amount of humanity that is possessed by individuals outside [the mind] is an existent in the outside world, because 'this human' is an expression for 'human' that is restricted to being this [particular] one. Given that when the composite is an existent, its simple elements will be existent as well, 'human', insofar as it is a human,¹ is something whose existence is not conditioned upon anything. Now, 'human' that is not conditioned upon anything is unsensed, given that whatever is not confined by some particular individualizing restriction will not be sensed. It is thus established that whatever is not sensed may be an existent.

The second [angle] is that if we were to accept that the universal entity is only found in the mind, we would then be saying that we already know, by means of the thought experiment, that something's being unsensed does not necessarily imply that its quiddity is unintelligible and inconceivable. Once that is established, it will be established that one cannot claim that one has to reject the existence of this type of existent. This satisfies the objective, because it is not this chapter's objective to establish the existence of abstract² existents. Rather, the objective is to prove that

1. Omitting *huwa*.

2. Reading *al-mujarradati*.

whoever claims that rejecting their existence is necessary, is speaking falsely. This objective has been satisfied.

Erroneous opinion and warning: Perhaps one of them might say that ‘human, for example, is only a human inasmuch as it has parts such as hand, eye, eyebrow, and so on; and inasmuch as it is like this, it is an object of sense. We warn against this and say that the [ontological] status of every part—whether you mention it or not¹—is universal,² just like every human’s own status.

Interpretation: Bringing this question to the fore is the fact that it might be said: ‘You have mentioned that the share of humanity common to Zayd, ‘Amr and others, is an entity stripped of all concomitants, and this is not allowed. Instead the share [of humanity] common to both consists of the fact that [each] is a structure composed of specified parts, such as the hand, leg and others, and each one of these parts is an object of sense.’ He responds to it with the fact that the argument we mentioned concerning human individuals also applies to each of these parts. For the hand that belongs to Zayd and ‘Amr is a thing shared [by both] in terms of its being a hand, yet it is distinct in terms of its specific qualities. At this point the argument about these parts stands complete.

Warning: If every existent were such that it be subject to [the faculties of] estimation and sensation, then estimation and sensation would be subject to sensation and estimation, and intellect, which is the absolute criterion, would be subject to estimation. Above and beyond these fundamentals, no love, shame, fear, anger, or courage, would be included amongst the things that are subject to sensation and estimation, being [instead] corollaries of sensed entities. So what will your opinion about existents be if they themselves fall outside the realm of sense objects and their corollaries?

Interpretation: He says this is a second argument against the incorrectness of the theory of those who say there is no existent other than the objects of sense and estimation. Laid out, it consists of the fact that whoever acknowledges that there is such a thing as an object of sense and an object of estimation must acknowledge that there is such a thing as sensation and estimation. Neither of these is an object of any of the senses, nor is either an object of estimation. Acknowledging that there is such a thing as the sensible and the estimable therefore necessarily implies acknowledging that there is such a thing as the non-sensible and the non-estimable. What is more, no intelligent person will deny the existence of his own intellect, despite the fact that his intellect is an object neither of sensation and nor of estimation.

The meaning of his statement ‘Following these principles, etc.’ is that acknowledging that there is such a thing as a sensible and an estimable logically requires that one acknowledge that there is such a thing as the non-sensible and the non-estimable, that is, sensation, estimation and intellect. As for these attributes, the

1. Reading *immā* for *mimmā*.
2. Adding *kulliyun* with Ṭūsī.

last [i.e. intellect] is not like this; that is, acknowledging that there is such a thing as it does not necessarily follow from acknowledging that there is such a thing as a sensible and an estimable. Instead, we know of its existence, and that a part of it is an object neither of sense nor of estimation, out of intellectual necessity. Now once he has affirmed that amongst existing sense objects are entities that are not objects of sensation, how can it be far-fetched [to affirm] the existence of existents that are in no way causally related to objects of sensation?

Appendix: Every real being, in view of the essential inner reality by which it is a real being, is internally coherent¹ unitary, and something other than what has been indicated. What is the quality of that by which every real being attains its existence?

Interpretation: The gist of his statement ‘each real being’—that is, each existent—is that whenever you take each existent’s quiddity to be that from which its [i.e. each real being’s] peculiar characteristics are struck off, it [i.e. the quiddity] is an object neither of sensation nor of estimation. If this is so for every inner reality, then the inner reality which is the cause of all inner realities—that is, the cause of the existence of all inner realities—is the most entitled to this act of abstraction. This argument is decisive.

2: Analysis of the theory of causes

The Second Problem concerns the analysis of the four causes—the material cause, the formal, the efficient and the final—and the criteria by which they are judged² The Shaykh makes a clear exposition of the scope of this problem in three chapters of this book.

Warning: Something may be caused when taking its quiddity and its inner reality into account, and it may be caused in terms of its existence. You may consider the triangle to be an example of that. Its inner reality is causally dependent on the plane and the line which is its side, both of which constitute it inasmuch as it is a triangle (so that) it possesses the inner reality of triangularity, as if the two were its material and formal cause. As far as its existence is concerned, [the triangle] is sometimes dependent on another cause apart from these, which is not a cause that constitutes its triangularity [nor a cause that] is³ a part of its definition⁴ This is the efficient cause, or the final, which is the efficient cause of the causality of the efficient cause.

Interpretation: Something which another thing needs is either a part of it or is not. If it is a part of it, then the part on account of which the thing is in potentiality

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1. Arabic: *muttafiq*.
 2. Arabic: *aḥkāmuhā*.
 3. Reading *takūnu* for *yakūnu*.
 4. Reading *min ḥaddihā* for *min aḥadihā*.

will be the material cause; (e.g., the plane, for it is the matter of the triangle), while the part on account of which the thing is in actuality will be the formal cause (e.g., the three-sidedness of the triangle). What is not a part of the thing, will act either upon the existence of the thing—namely, the efficient cause—or it will act upon the efficiency of the efficient cause, namely, the final cause. Man performs a specific act only on account of some purpose. If there were no purpose, he would remain a potential agent, just as his becoming an actual agent is something caused by that purpose.

Remark: Know that you may understand the concept of ‘triangle’, yet remain uncertain whether or not concrete existence is to be attributed to it, given that what appears to you to be a kind of line and plane may not appear to you to be a concrete individual.

Interpretation: When he mentions that the cause of quiddity is distinct from the cause of existence (the discussion is derived from [the principle that] quiddity is distinct from existence), he then raises an objection to that by [citing] the fact that you may know something’s inner reality while at the same time doubting its existence, given that what is known is different from what is not known. He applied this argument to this question in the First [Chapter] of the *Logic*. We have already mentioned [there] what its strengths and weaknesses are, so there is no need to reiterate.

Hint: The cause that gives existence to something that has causes constituting its quiddity will be a cause of one of these causes—such as the form—or [it will be a cause] of all of them in existence, it being the cause of their being brought together. The final cause—that on account of which the thing is—is a cause, through its quiddity and its meaning, of the causality of the efficient cause, yet is an effect of it in terms of its existence.⁹ The efficient cause will be a kind of cause of its [the end’s] existence if it is one of the ends that actually come into being, but [the efficient cause] is not a cause of its [the end’s] causality, nor of its meaning.

Interpretation: The scope of this chapter is the criteria of the four divisions of causes. One of the criteria of the efficient cause is that if something is composed of parts, it [the efficient cause] will sometimes be¹ a cause of one of those parts and other times be a cause of all of them. If the former obtains, it will be the quiddity, just as it is said of the builder that he is the agent of the house, that is, he is the one who made its form come to exist in its matter. Human actions are all like this. If the latter obtains, it will be like the separate [substances] that are causes of matter and form and of bringing them together. One of the criteria of the final cause is that it be a cause, in terms of its quiddity, of the fully actual causality of the efficient cause, yet that it be an effect, in terms of its existence, of the efficient cause. The former is as we have made clear. The latter is because the efficient cause moves only in order

1. Reading *takūnu* for *yakūnu*.

to realize that purpose and end. If the realization of that purpose were not an effect of that act of moving, then the act of moving would not be on account of it.

Someone might say: ‘There are several problems implicit in your theory that the final cause is a cause, through its quiddity, of the efficient cause, because you are foisting the final cause onto natural acts and natural potentialities that possess no intentionality or consciousness whatsoever. The final cause’s quiddity here cannot be said to exist in the mind because in this case there is neither mind nor consciousness; yet it [the final cause] does not exist in the outside world because its existence in the outside world is the effect of the efficient cause. If this is so, it will be an absolute non-existent, and no absolute non-existent can be a cause of an existing entity. So how can the efficient cause’s causality be by virtue of the final cause’s quiddity?’ The only option is to say that natural acts have no ends, but this is contrary not only to their [i.e. the Peripatetics’] doctrine but also to what he himself ascertained in *Physics 1* of the *Shifā’* (The Book of Healing).’

Now with regard to his statement that amongst ends are those that actually exist, you should know that the agent’s act sometimes comes about through intention and will and other times through emanation and providence. In the first category, the end of its act will always come into being. In the second category, its end will never come into being. They maintain that He, may He be exalted, is both agent and end, and such is the theory with regard to the Intellects. What is meant by his statement ‘[the efficient cause] is not a cause of its [the end’s] causality nor of its meaning’ is that even if the efficient cause is a cause of the existence of the final cause, it will be still impossible for it [the efficient cause] to be a cause of its [the end’s] causality, because its [the end’s] causality is a cause of the causality of the efficient cause. Were the efficient cause the cause of its [the end’s] causality, a vicious circle would result.

3: *Affirmation of the existence of the Necessary Existence*

Hint: If there is a First Cause, it will be a cause of every [individual] existence as well as of the real cause of every [individual] existent in existence.

Its meaning is that if there is anything in existence which is a first cause, it will be a cause of the existence of each thing as well as of the existence of the causes of things’ quiddities. This is the apparent point of the Third Problem, concerning the affirmation of the existence of the Necessary Existence. Discussion of this problem rests upon other issues: 1) ascertaining the quiddity of contingency; 2) explaining that the contingent needs something to tip the balance towards its coming into existence; 3) [explaining] that the cause invariably co-exists with the act of causation; 4) refuting the charge of infinite regress; 5) refuting the charge of vicious circularity. For a reason we will mention later the Shaykh did not mention refuting the charge of vicious circularity. We shall interpret his discussion of these topics in seven chapters.

Warning: Every existent, when examined in and of itself and apart from any other, is such that existence is either necessarily implied in it, or not. If it is necessarily implied, then it [the existent] is what is real by itself and that whose existence is necessary in itself, namely, the Self-subsisting¹ If it is not necessarily implied, it cannot be said to be impossible in itself once it has been taken to be an existent. No: regardless of whether it has a condition attached (such as the condition that its cause does not exist, in which case it will become impossible; or the condition that its cause exists, in which case it will become necessary) or not (neither the occurrence of a cause nor its non-existence), the third alternative, contingency, will obtain, so taken in and of itself, it will be something that is neither necessary nor impossible. Every existent is thus either a necessary existent by itself or a contingent existent by itself.

Interpretation: When each existent is considered with reference to its [ontological] status, it is such that non-existence either cannot be correctly said of it on account of what it is, or can be correctly said of it. The former is what is necessary in itself, the second what is contingent. Every existent is either necessary or contingent. Know that the contingent will remain contingent only when you examine its reality in and of itself. When you do not examine it in this way, it will sometimes not remain contingent but become necessary or impossible. If you were to make its existence or the existence of its cause a condition, then it would be necessary, because the status it has as an existent makes its being a non-existent impossible, due to the impossibility of uniting existence and non-existence. Also, the status it has [as a result of the fact] that its necessitating cause is present makes its being a non-existent impossible. The status of its being a non-existent—or when the cause of its non-existence is present—also presupposes the impossibility that it be an existent. However, its being contingent is on account of what it is, and does not negate its being necessary or impossible under these circumstances. In this chapter the wording needs no interpretation.

Hint: That whose reality is to be contingent in itself² does not become an existent by itself, for inasmuch as it is contingent its existence is, in itself, no more likely than its non-existence. If one of the two becomes more likely, it will be due to the presence or absence of something else. The existence of every contingent of existence thus comes from something other than it.

Interpretation: Since he has spoken about the quiddity of the necessary and the contingent, he now speaks about the fact that the contingent only exists on account of a cause. He makes this clear by proving that the contingent's being an existent by itself is impossible. For the contingent is something to which both existence and non-existence may correctly be applied. It itself contains no presumption that one of the two is more likely than the other. It is thus established that the contingent's

1. Arabic: *al-qayyūm*.

2. Or, 'that which, in and of itself, is truly contingent'.

existence cannot come from itself. Once he proves that wrong he establishes that it exists through another.

Someone might say: ‘In this chapter you have brought up two issues. One of them is that the contingent’s existence cannot come from itself. The second is that if its existence can not come from itself, its existence will have to come from another. The former is tautologous, because the contingent is presumed to be that which in itself presupposes neither existence nor non-existence. And if the contingent is presumed in this way, then focusing on the fact that the contingent’s existence does not come from itself is like arguing that “the existence of that whose existence does not come from itself will not come from it”, and this is something completely worthless. The latter requires an additional argument, because the correctness of our saying that it exists from another does not follow necessarily from the incorrectness of our saying the contingent exists in itself. [This is] because there is an intermediate position between the two alternatives, namely, that its existence will not come from anything at all, neither from itself nor from another. If this is so the demonstration will be incomplete if this [third] alternative is not mentioned and then proven incorrect, either by appealing to [intellectual] necessity or by mentioning the demonstration of its incorrectness. But the Shaykh has said none of this.’ Perhaps the response is that since this alternative is known by [intellectual] necessity to be incorrect, the Shaykh, unsurprisingly, pays no attention to it.

Warning: As for that regressing infinitely as a series, each single unit of the series will [still] be contingent in and of itself, and the sum total will be dependent upon them with the result that it too will be non-necessary, it being necessary through another. Let us add this as an extra explanation.

Interpretation: Since he has made clear that the contingent must have a cause, he speaks now about the invalidity of the infinite regress. Before this chapter he needed to explain that an effective cause cannot be temporally prior to what is caused. If that were possible, then it would not be impossible to trace every contingent to another before it, and not to a first [cause]—something which, according to him, is not impossible—so how can he possibly be proving that [his own] proof of the Necessary Existence is invalid? Now if he bases the argument on the fact that the cause’s existence must be simultaneous with the effect, then should he determine that infinite regress to be valid, those causes and effects, taken as a whole, would all be present at once—something which, according to him, is impossible. The demonstrative proof he mentions is specifically devoted to this form [of argument]. It would have been better if he had discussed this problem just before this point in the text. But whatever the reason that prompted him to bring it up at another point in the text—chapter (*Namaṭ*) 5.1 of this book—the fact remains that he neglects [to discuss] it here.

Know, then, that the demonstration cited to prove the infinite regress invalid is sometimes brought up in a way which does not require [further] analyses, and

other times brought up in a way which does. The Shaykh proceeds in the first way to begin with and then carries on in the second way. The explanation of the first way is that he says: if these causes (which, taken as a whole, are contingent) were to regress infinitely, then they would have to require another existent. Therefore the sum total of these contingents would require something on which they depend. [Given that] each one of [the sum total's] units and every existent is something different from the totality of the contingents and from the totality of each of their units, it follows that it [the totality] is not contingent, since if it were contingent, it would be one of them, not something above and beyond them. Tracing the totality of contingents to an existent that is necessary for existence has therefore been proven, this being the [original] objective. Let us agree to apply this sense to the way the writing is expressed.

We say: know that the meaning of his statement 'As for that regressing infinitely as a series, each single unit of the series will [still] be contingent in and of itself, and the sum total will be dependent upon them with the result that it too will be non-necessary, it being necessary through another' is that if it does not regress it will terminate at an independent cause, this being the [original] objective. Since this is the very thing that was sought, the Shaykh, unsurprisingly, raises no objections to it; instead he raises objections only in the other section. This is the reason for cutting short one of the two parts of the division. Now the argument against judging that it regresses infinitely is that each unit is contingent. Given that the totality dependent upon these units is contingent, then the totality, as well as the units, taken as a whole, is contingent. The totality as well as the units will need something else; otherwise, what is contingent would be independent of some cause. Whatever is different from the totality of contingents and from each of their units cannot be contingent. If it is not contingent, it will be necessary, this being the [original] objective.

Commentary: Every sum total, each of [whose units] is an effect, requires a cause above and beyond its units. This is because it [the sum total] either (a) requires no cause at all, with the result that it is necessary, not caused (and how could this come about, [when] it is necessary only through its units?); (b) requires a cause, namely, the units in their entirety, with the result that it [the sum total] is caused in itself, given that that sum total and the universe are a single thing (although universe, in the sense of every unit, does not necessarily imply sum total); or (c) it [the sum total] requires [a cause] which is a particular unit, none of the units being better suited to that than another if each is an effect, because its [each unit's] cause will be better suited to that; or (d) requires a cause outside all of the units, it being the remaining option.

Interpretation: He [Rāzī], may God be pleased with him and please him, says: Since the demonstration has been established in a general way, he [Avicenna] will comment upon that general sense in this detailed way. We say: If we were to determine that every contingent may be traced back to another contingent *ad*

infinitum, then the sum total of all the units would be ascertained to be an effect. We say: This sum total is either necessary in itself or is not. The former cannot be true because every sum total needs every single one of its parts. Given that every single one of its parts is something other than it [i.e. from the sum total] every totality will need something other than it. Everything that needs something other than it is contingent in itself. Therefore every totality is contingent in itself.

What is more, this sum total needs every single one of its parts. Given that every single one of its parts is contingent, and given that what needs something contingent deserves the name 'contingent' more, this totality is proven to be a contingent. It either needs something effective¹ or it does not. The latter is false, for otherwise, the contingent would be independent of something effective. If the contingent were independent of something effective, then no contingent would be traceable to any other. And if that were so, the regress would also be false, because it will obtain only if every contingent needs a cause. It has therefore been proven that the sum total needs something effective. The effective thing must be either that collection [of contingents], a cause found within it, or a cause found outside it.

The first is absurd, because the collection is the same as the sum total, and a single thing, from the point of view of its being one, will not be something that is effective on itself. The second alternative is divisible into three subdivisions, because something that is effective on that sum total will either be every single one of its units, or the cause will be an unspecified unit, or the cause will be a specific unit. The first is false because every one of its units cannot be thought of as separate from the act of causing that sum total to exist. The second is also false because when we say the cause is one of them in a non-specific sense, the meaning is that every single one of them, alone, can be thought of as separate from the act of causing that sum total to exist. This is reducible to the preceding alternative. The third is also false, because every single one may be presumed to be subject to the act of specification, in which case it will not be a cause of itself, nor of its cause, nor of the cause of its cause, and so on *ad infinitum*. If this is so, that unit will not be a cause of the other units in the sum total, and whatever is not a cause of the other units in the sum total will not be a cause of the sum total. Since this alternative is false, it has been proven that this sum total needs something from outside, and this other [thing] is what we have settled upon in this chapter. The way the writing is expressed needs no commentary.

Hint: Every cause of a sum total is something other than one of its units, for it will first be a cause of the units, and then of the sum total; so let the units not require it [the sum total]. If the sum total is complete in its units, it will not require them. On the contrary, a particular thing will sometimes be a cause of some units

1. Arabic: *mu'aththir*.

without [being a cause of] others, and thus will not be a cause of the sum total in an absolute sense.

Interpretation: We have proven only the third subdivision of the second division to be false, namely, the hypothesis that the sum total's cause will be one of its particular units. If we say that it is not a cause of some of the units of that totality, then given that whatever is not a cause of some of the units of the sum total will not be a cause of that sum total, this premise will need some evidence to back it up. So in this chapter he furnishes some evidence for it, namely, the fact that everything that is a cause of a sum total will either not be a cause of any one of its parts, or will be a cause of some of its parts and not of others, or will be a cause of all of its parts collected together. If it is not a cause of any one of its parts, it cannot possibly be a cause, because if none of its parts needed that cause, then—given that when all of a thing's parts come into being that thing necessarily comes into being—that thing's coming into being at that moment will not need that cause. It may not be said: 'Why can those parts, taken as a whole, not be independent of the cause', apart from the fact that that sum total only comes into being at the moment those parts come together, and that act of coming together needs that cause because we say that the parts' coming together is the quiddity of that composite. If in the act of coming together they need that cause, then not all of them will be independent of it [the cause] but some will need it, namely, that disposition to come together.

The second alternative, namely, that some of the sum total's parts need a cause that is not another [part], is possible. In reality, however, the cause will not be a cause of what has come together, but only of that part. The third alternative, namely, that the cause of the sum total will be a cause of all its parts, is the [original] objective. It is now clear that the cause of every sum total must be a cause of all its parts.

Hint: In every sum total arranged according to a series of causes and effects, one of which is a cause that is not an effect, [this uncaused cause] will be a limit, because if it [the uncaused cause] were in the middle, it would be caused.

Interpretation: Since he has proven that the sum total of contingent, infinitely numerous causes and effects needs something outside of it, it follows that that outside thing will be neither a contingent nor an effect, because if it were, it would be a part of that sum total and not something outside of it. Know that by 'limit' he means the necessary and by 'middle' [he means] the contingent, because every contingent is traceable to something else, with the result that it is like the middle, whereas the necessary is not traceable to something else, with the result that it is like the limit. The meaning of his statement 'In every sum total arranged according to a series of causes and effects, one of which is a cause that is not an effect, [this uncaused cause] will be a limit'—in the sense of a necessary thing—and of his statement 'because if it [the uncaused cause] were in the middle, it would be caused', is that if

it is contingent, it will be caused. We [i.e. the *mutakallimūn*], however, proceed on the assumption that it will not be caused. This is a point of contention.

Hint: Every chain arranged according to a series of causes and effects is finite or infinite. It is obvious that if it [the chain] contains only what is caused, it will require a cause outside of it. However, it [the chain] will certainly be connected to it [the outside cause] at the limit. It is [also] obvious that if it [the chain] contains what is not caused, then it [what is not caused] will be a limit and a terminus. Thus every chain terminates at the Necessary Existence in Itself.

The status of every chain arranged according to a series of causes and effects, regardless of whether we proceed on the assumption that it is finite or infinite, is such that one of two alternatives must obtain. Either every single one of its units must be caused, or instead, one of its units will be uncaused. If the first [obtains], it [the chain] will need a cause outside it, and what is outside contingents is not contingent but necessary, and it will be the limit, for this sum total has a limit. If the second alternative [obtains], namely, that the sum total contains something uncaused, then given that whatever is uncaused is necessary in itself and is the limit, every chain will eventually terminate at the Necessary Existence in Itself, that is, the limit. This is the end of the Shaykh's discussion of the affirmation of the Necessary Existence.

Another matter remains, namely, refuting the charge of circularity: that the former is reducible to the latter and the latter is reducible to the former.¹ Know that the charge of circularity is false, and what is used to demonstrate its falsity is the fact that the cause is said to be prior to the effect.² If each were the cause of the other, then each would be prior to the other. And if this were so, each of the two would be prior to something prior to itself, given that what is prior to what is prior to something is prior to that [first] thing. Thus the priority of each to itself will be logically necessary, and that is absurd.

Someone might say: 'You mean by the cause's priority to the effect either priority in time, in essence, or in some third sense.' The first is invalid by general agreement.³ Moreover, if the cause were disconnected from the effect at one time, it would be possible for it to be disconnected at all other times. Whatever is like this will not be anything's cause. And if the cause exists at one time free of the effect, and then the effect comes into being at some second time, then the cause's causation of the effect will either obtain at the first time or at the second time. If it is at the first [time] then the effect's existence will be posterior to the moment the cause exists, and we have already shown that if this is so, the method by which the philosophers affirm the Necessary of Existence is blocked. If it is at the second [time], then the cause will not be prior to the effect in time because it will only become a cause of

1. Reading *yatarajja'u*.

2. Arabic: *yuqālu'l-'illatu mutaqaaddimatan 'alā' l-ma'lūl*.

3. Arabic: *bi'l-ittifāq*.

that effect at the second time and the effect will have come into being simultaneously with it¹ at that time.

The second [i.e. priority in essence] is also false because after this, God willing, we will show that we do not conceive of the cause's essential priority to the effect except [in terms of] the cause's being 'effective' on the effect, with the result that the statement of someone who says 'If there were two things and each were a cause of the other, then each would be prior to the other' is reducible to meaning that 'If there were two things and each were a cause of the other, then each would be a cause of the other', at which point there will be no difference whatsoever between the consequent and the antecedent. Indeed, if we were to understand the cause's priority to the effect as being something above and beyond 'effectiveness'² then the discussion would be sound. Yet [the hypothesis] still contains the problem.

The third [priority in a third sense] will need to be explained, and if it appears to have some basis, there could then be a discussion about our objection that what is prior to something is prior to that thing. For if that priority is temporal, it will be correct, but if it is essential, it will be impossible.³ We have mentioned some investigation of this [problem] in the *Epitome* and the *Fair Treatment* and it is fair to say that the charge of circularity is necessarily known to be false. Perhaps the Shaykh has left it at that because of this.

1. Reading *ma'ahā* for *ma'ahu*.

2. Arabic: *al-ta'thīr*.

3. Arabic: *mamnū'*.

ORIENTAL DISCOURSES

al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyyah

Translated for this volume by Majid Fakhry from Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī's *al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyyah fī 'ilm al-ilāhiyyāt wa'l-ṭabī'iyyāt*, ed. M. al-Mu'taṣim al-Baghdādī (Cairo, 1990), pp. 9–31.

Chapter One **Definition of Body**

Body is commonly defined as that which is long, broad and deep. We have at the beginning of the section dealing with quantity, distinguished between these properties and corporeity, and have shown that body may exist, in the concrete world, apart from the line. However, with respect to the surface, although it cannot exist apart from it in the concrete world, it can be conceived apart from it in thought.

As for quantity,¹ although it cannot be conceived apart from it either in concrete or conceptual reality, it differs nonetheless from the corporeal form, as shown in the case of the piece of which, if you give it various shapes, will retain the same corporeity, while the quantitative values differ. This will prove that the body is not a body by virtue of any of these things, and therefore cannot be defined in terms of these.

The advocates of the above definition² have supported it by urging that a body cannot be conceived apart from the valid supposition of these dimensions in it. Thus, those supposed lines are either supposed in relation to the continuity of the body or not supposed in it, but rather in something else, whether a matter or the like. Therefore, the continuity must exist upon that supposition, and that continuity doubtless existed prior to that supposition. For, were the validity of the supposition contingent on that continuity, it would be impossible for continuity to be contingent on the existence of the supposition, as a form of circular argument. Therefore, if continuities existed prior to the supposition, then those continuities must, doubtless, have existed as extensions in all directions. Therefore, the body cannot exist apart from these extensions.

Here we might ask: 'What does your statement that those continuities existed, in fact, mean?' If you mean by it that the continuity, which involves intersecting lines, exists, then that would be true; but this would unquestionably be the corporeal form. If, however, you mean by it that these are distinct and diverse directions in which the supposed intersecting lines are supposed; then this will not be true, for

1. In the text, body, which does not make sense.

2. Or description. Definition is given in terms of essential, description in terms of accidental, attributes.

two reasons: First, because it is not necessary that the number of directions should actually be equivalent to possible lines by supposition; or else the directions would be actually infinite, just as the lines which could be supposed in it are infinite. Second, because a direction is simply the limit of the act of pointing, as you have learned, and that direction becomes that direction actually once that line comes to exist in actuality; and without it that direction, as such would not exist in fact.

It follows that, prior to the supposition, the continuity which is attached to it now, if it is asserted to be identical with this direction or is in this direction, did exist. However, it is not the case that it existed, prior to the supposition; since prior to the supposition that direction was not that direction in actuality, but only in potentiality; just as if a line were to come to be in a plane, that line could not exist prior to the existence of this line, even if the continuity in which that line exists now existed prior to that line.

In short, this problem has arisen because the difference between our statement that the continuity which exists now in this line and our statement that it was a continuity which existed in that line may be problematic. The difference between the two (statements) is similar to the difference between our statement that the man who is now white existed prior to being white and the statement that he was white prior to becoming white. The first statement is true and the second false.

In general, if linear continuities can be supposed to exist in the body, each of which being distinct from the other before that supposition, it would follow necessarily that there are an infinite number of parts in the body actually; which is absurd. Therefore, those dimensional continuities exist in the body in potentiality only.

If it is argued that were dimensional continuities to exist in the body potentially and the dimensional discontinuities to exist potentially too, then a body would be in a state of continuity or discontinuity potentially and what is potential does not exist in fact. Therefore, a body is neither continuous nor discontinuous actually, which is absurd. We answer that linear continuities exist potentially, but continuity in the sense of corporeal form does not exist potentially, but rather actually.

If the weakness of the common description¹ is confirmed, let us give the right description, which is that the body is that in which three dimensions intersecting at right angles may be supposed. Even if it could be divested of these three dimensions, it is never divested of the possibility of these dimensions. The Shaykh (Ibn Sīnā) has said that this possibility is the general possibility which applies: (a) to that whose dimensions exist by way of necessity, as in the case of the (heavenly) spheres, (b) that [whose dimensions] exist actually, but not by way of necessity, such as the dimensions of the elemental bodies, and (c) that none of which exists actually, but its existence is possible, such as a compact globe. Now, if we interpret

1. Or, rather, definition.

this possibility as that possibility which corresponds to not being, then criticism can be levelled at him directly, telling him: 'Having posited this possibility as part of the definition of body or, as part of its description, it follows that part of the definition or description of that body in which some of these three dimensions or their sum-total are actually supposed will be falsified, because potentiality does not coexist with actuality and thus it will cease to be a body.'

It may be objected that this description is false for three reasons. First, with respect to prime matter, the three dimensions may rightly be supposed to inhere in it, by virtue of the corporeal form. Now, the right supposition of the three dimensional in it by virtue of the corporeal form is more specific than supposing the three dimensions in it absolutely; but where the more specific holds the more general will hold too. Therefore the supposition of the inherence of the three dimensions in matter is justified, so that what you have proposed as a description of body will include matter.

Secondly, the supposition of three dimensions may be possible in the imagination and thus 'imaginative dimensions' are called 'a mathematical body,' although the imagination is not a body. Thirdly, possibility and receptivity, as has been said previously, are descriptions which have no positive concrete reality. Definition by reference to non-existing entities may be permissible in the case of simple entities; for, not being compounds, it is necessary to resort in their definition to concomitant attributes.

However, body is one of the compounded entities for two reasons. First, since it is subsumed under the [category of] substance and is generally regarded as a genus, body will be a compound of genus and differentia. Secondly, being a compound of matter and form, the definition of body by reference to its essential attributes is more appropriate than defining it by reference to what you have mentioned.

The answer is that the first objection has been resolved by saying that prime matter is not receptive in reality of these dimensions, but rather of corporeity. Then, once corporeity is received, dimensions are received; so that the reception of dimensions really pertains to body, and not to prime matter. Moreover, the First Teacher¹ has defined the continuous as that in which various parts which have a common definition may be supposed to inhere and described² it as that which is receptive of infinite divisions. Then, he defined the moist as that which is easily receptive of different shapes. Moreover, nobody has repudiated these definitions by recourse to matter, arguing that that in which parts can be supposed to inhere is matter, that which is susceptible of divisions is matter, and that which is receptive of shapes is matter. If this repudiation of these definitions has not been given, then it will not apply to the definition we have given.

It may be contended that body refers to the sum of matter and form and that form has no bearing on the receptivity of dimensions. For the essence of matter consists in that it is the part whereby possibility and receptivity are realized,

1. Aristotle.

2. See note above.

whereas the essence of form is that it is the part whereby coming-to-be and existence are realized. It is impossible, then, that form be the recipient or part of the recipient, as such. Therefore, the recipient of the three dimensions is really matter. The most that can be said in this context is that matter's receptivity of dimensions depends on its receptivity of corporeal form in the first place.

However, we maintain that there is a difference between considering matter insofar as corporeity inheres in it and insofar as it is the sum of matter and corporeity. For, matter, on condition that it be conjoined to corporeity, is identical with matter; whereas the sum of matter and corporeity is identical with the body which is receptive of dimensions. However, the dimensions are not the same as the sum of matter and form; since, as we have shown, corporeity has nothing to do with receptivity, the recipient being simply matter on condition that corporeity inheres in it. If the proximate recipient of dimensions, then, is not the body, but rather matter on condition that corporeity inheres in it, then the above-mentioned definition does not apply to body as such, but to matter, on the specific condition that it be conjoined to corporeity.

If one were to claim that form is not a condition of matter's receptivity of magnitudes, but is part of the recipient of magnitudes, which is the conjunction of matter and corporeal form, he would run counter to the consensus of philosophers that form is not a principle of receptivity and possibility, but is rather a principle of coming-to-be and actuality. Moreover, we do not understand matter except the fact that it is a receptive substance; so that if we reduce form to that, it would follow that there is no difference between matter and form. As for what they said in the second place, to the effect that this repudiation is levelled at the definition of the continuous and that of the moist, it may be countered that if a case can be made for barring that repudiation from applying to those definitions, then the problem would be resolved. Otherwise, those definitions would also be false and what motive could compel us to correct false definitions? As for us, we do not subscribe to the view that body is a compound of matter and form and, therefore, that objection does not bother us.

The answer to the second objection is that we only meant by that which the three dimensions may be supposed to inhere in, that which is such in the external world. Thus, if we say that the moist is that which is easily receptive of various shapes, one should not understand from this anything other than that which is receptive thereof in its concrete existence; and the same is true in this case.

The answer to the third objection is that there is no doubt that body is a compound of genus and differentia in one sense, and of matter and form in another sense; but not perceiving the truths of these constituent elements, we have been led to define body by reference to its effects and its concomitant attributes. Moreover, not perceiving the essence of the continuous and that of the moist, we have tended to define them both by reference to their concomitant attributes; namely, the

possibility of supposing the common parts in one definition, and the receptivity of different shapes easily [in the other], as is the case here. As for ourselves, we assert that we have explained that substance cannot be predicated of what is beneath it as a genus. Therefore, it is not necessary that body be compounded of genus and differentia; nor has it been proved that it is made up of matter and form. Therefore, body is a simple substance which cannot be defined except by reference to its concomitant attributes and effects. This then is our position in this regard.

Chapter Two

Discussion of the Various Views Regarding the Divisibility of Bodies

Compound objects made up of bodies whose natures are different undoubtedly have a finite number of parts; but simple bodies,¹ such as the same [drop of] water, are undoubtedly susceptible of division. We assert that subdivisions [of the body] are possible either in actuality or not. Both categories are either finite or infinite. From this classification, four alternatives result:

First, the body will have a finite number of parts in actuality.

Secondly, it will have an infinite number of parts in actuality.

Thirdly, parts in [the body] do not exist in it in actuality, but in potentiality and are finite.

Fourthly, parts exist in it in potentiality and are infinite.

The first is the view of the majority of the theologians,² who hold that each one of these parts is not susceptible of subdivision, either by cutting, because of their minuscule size; or by breaking, because of their solidity, by imagining, due to the inability of the imagination to distinguish one extremity from the other, or finally by supposition, because such supposition will entail a series of absurdities. The second is the view of al-Nazzām and of the ancients Xenocrates.³ The third is the view of Muḥammad al-Shahrastānī and a similar view is attributed to Plato, who held that body will terminate upon subdivision in non-entity, and thus revert to prime matter.

The fourth is the view of the majority of the philosophers. Let us expound their view in detail. They hold that the simple body is one in itself, and is one for sensation. There are no ligaments or joints in it originally, but it is susceptible of cutting up or breaking up. Now, whatever is in potentiality will not pass into actuality except by the action of a cause, and the causes conducive to breakage are three: 1) Cutting up, 2) differentiation of accidents, whether relative accidents, such as the

1. That is, the four elements, water, fire, air, and earth.

2. The *mutakallimūn*.

3. A disciple of Plato who died in 314 BC.

difference between two continuous objects and the like; or non-relative such as a body, half of which is black and half is white, and 3) imaginative separation, as in imagining one extremity of a certain body being distinct from another. Now, when all these causes are abstracted, so that none of them will actually exist, then the body is in itself one and the same, as it is one and the same for sense-perception.

You should know that what they¹ mean by saying that body is liable to infinite subdivisions is not that that body is liable to these subdivisions at once. For, they agree that it is impossible for infinite parts to exist. They rather mean that a body does not terminate at a given point but is still liable to subdivision. Therefore, subdivisions existing actually are finite, and may not terminate at a point at which possibility ceases; just as God's creative powers are infinite, not in the sense that He can produce infinite entities at once, but rather in the sense that He does not reach a terminal point but is always capable of going beyond it.

Let one understand by the body's liability to subdivision what one understands by God's ability to increase possible entities. Moreover, they agree that the imaginary liability for subdivision can go on to infinity. As for subdivision by dissolution, it has also been an object of controversy. Some [philosophers] have contended that bodies terminate in the process of dissolution in a series of solid particles which are not susceptible of breaking up or disintegration; although they are susceptible of imaginary subdivision *ad infinitum*. Those are the followers of Democritus, who disagreed among themselves regarding the shapes of those particles. Some held that they are polygons; for if they were spherical certain gaps between them would appear upon contact, which are smaller than they. Others held that they are spherical in shape; for if they were polygonic then the side of the angle would be smaller than that of the diameter and this would entail the liability for subdivision. Moreover, the circle is the farthest figure from corruption and nature does not perform contrary actions, the farthest figure from contrariety being the circle.

The majority of the philosophers, however, are agreed that the susceptibility for division by disintegration is always possible, unless an outside impediment intervenes, as is the case with the heavenly spheres. Those, however, include two groups. There are those who claim that the corporeal form does not only exclude divisibility, since the specific form excludes that too. That is why water has a definite point which, once it is reached, would lose the aquatic form, were it to be divided past it. The same is true of each of the specific forms. Others have denied this, contending that just as corporeity does not bar that at all, the same goes for the other specific forms.

You should also know that Democritus is at loggerheads with all the other philosophers. For, he held that sensible bodies are compounded of those solid particles, and that sensible bodies are not continuous in reality; since those particles exist in them

1. That is, the philosophers.

distinct one from the other, and are not susceptible of subdivision by disintegration. That which is susceptible of subdivision is not continuous in reality, but only with respect to sense-perception; thus what is continuous in reality is not susceptible of subdivision. The [other] philosophers allow that a large body may be such that there is actually no single part in it. They also allow that particles which exist actually could meet a second time, giving rise thereby to a single entity, such as numerous quantities of water, which once they unite, will become one body of water.

In all those matters we mentioned, wherein controversy between Democritus and the [other] philosophers has arisen, concurrence between him and the *Mutakallimūn* has emerged. However, he disagrees with them in another respect; for the *mutakallimūn*¹ regard the particle as something other than body, whereas he regards it as a body susceptible of imaginary subdivision. These, then are the accredited views in this matter.

Chapter Three Proofs in Rebuttal of the Indivisible Particle²

These proofs number twenty.

I. The First Proof

If we imagine a particle lying between two other particles, the intermediate [particle] will either prevent them from contact or not. If it prevents them, then the face which is in contact with one of the two sides is different from the one which is in contact with the other side; in which case it is divisible. If it does not prevent them from contact, the two sides would interpenetrate in the middle.

However, interpenetration is impossible for two reasons. One is that if they interpenetrate, then the [original] order and the intermediate position would cease, and there would be no increase in size. For, if two particles can be compressed into one particle, it would then be possible for three or four to be so compressed; and in this way their coming together would not necessitate any increase in size. Therefore, there will be no increase in size; but the consequent is absurd and so is the antecedent.

The second is that the particles are equal in point of their specific nature and their concomitants. If they interpenetrate, then they would be equal in point of accidents, too. Then none of them would be distinct from the other, and they would all be the same; which is absurd. Even if we allow interpenetration, that would entail divisibility in two ways. 1) If the magnitude of the two particles were equal to that of one of them and the magnitude of their sum is susceptible of subdivision, then that would be true of its equal. The simple particle, being its equal, must be susceptible of subdivision. 2) If [the particle] penetrates something else, it must meet it at its

1. Or Muslim theologians.
2. Or atom.

extremity first, and then penetrate it. Therefore, the full penetration would occur, so that what it meets prior to penetration would be different from what it meets upon penetration. However, what it meets upon penetration is less than what it meets upon complete penetration, and this entails divisibility.

Against this [first] proof three objections have been urged. One is that if the body meets one extremity with one thing and the other with something else, then each one of its two extremities would acquire a specific condition not found in the other. That would undoubtedly necessitate actual multiplicity. Therefore, it is necessary that that body be halved. Then, one of its two halves would meet the other half at one of its extremities rather than the other, and that body would be halved and so on and so forth. That would lead to subdivisions which are actually infinite. This, however, is not acceptable, according to the eminent philosophers; although the proof which you¹ have mentioned entails that. Therefore what this argument entails is false, and what you regard as true does not follow from this argument.

This objection cannot be countered by saying that the difference between the two continuous [particles] necessitates that one of the two extremities of the body should be distinct from the other; nor does it necessitate the halving of the body itself. For we hold that the two extremities are either accidental to the body or form part of the body. In the first case, the distinctness of the two accidents will necessitate the distinctness of their two substrata; then if their two distinct substrata are two accidents the process will not go on *ad infinitum*, but must terminate in two accidents subsisting in the body. Moreover, those two accidents, being distinct one from the other, their distinctness will necessitate the subdivision of the body itself, and the same absurdity will follow. If, however, the two extremities are part of the body, the same objection will hold.

If one who posits actually infinite subdivisions of the body were to uphold this argument, he would also be misguided. For, this argument excludes the existence of one particle in the body; since anything supposed to be one will meet with one of its extremities one thing and with the other extremity something else, which will necessitate divisibility. Then that thing will not be one. Therefore, this argument will exclude the existence of one particle, and once unity does not exist multiplicity will not exist either; since multiplicity is the sum of unities. Thus, this argument excludes the existence of multiplicity, while necessitating its existence; which is absurd. Therefore, we know now that this argument does not yield a valid conclusion and is therefore a sophistical argument.

Secondly, why cannot one argue that the indivisible particle is one in itself, but multiple with respect to its sides; since the multiplicity of sides or aspects does not entail the multiplicity of the thing itself? This can be shown in two ways. The first is that contact is a form of relation, and were multiplicity of relation to

1. That is, the opponent.

necessitate multiplicity in the thing itself, then unity, which is the farthest thing from the nature of multiplicity, would be the most multiple of things; since it has, according to each of the ranks of infinite numbers, a particular relation. Similarly God Almighty would be multiple, by virtue of the multiplicity of His relations [to other things]. The second is that the point of the centre [of the circle] is adjacent to the sum of the parts of the circle; but this does not entail divisibility according to the divisibility of the circle.

Thirdly, the upper surface of bodies is in contact with what is below it, and is in contact with the air outside it. Thus, it is one thing in contact with two things; and it cannot be said that the part in contact with the air is other than that which is in contact with the inner surface. For that which is the extremity of the body is undoubtedly identical with that which is beneath it. Otherwise, it will not be its extremity and it is undoubtedly in contact with air.

The reply to the first [objection] is that relative accidents do not require that one half of the body be distinct from the second half, so that the two halves will be different, but only the possibility of dividing the substratum. That is why if a body is in contact with two bodies, it will not be halved in a perceptible way, just as when two non-relative accidents inhere in it. Instead, reason stipulates rightly that the thing which is in contact with two things is divisible potentially; but to say that subdivision takes place actually is wrong.

The reply to the second objection is that contact takes place with respect to the sides; so that if one side were distinct from another, it would be divisible. We do not claim that the multiplicity of relations entails the multiplicity of related entities; but claim that this is true in the case of contact, which is a form of relation. Now, if a species of a genus is subject to a rule, it does not follow that the genus is subject to that rule. As for the point which is adjacent to all the parts of the circle, it is in its entirety adjacent to all the points we posit in a circle, and this is not impossible in adjacent entities. However, it does not follow from allowing this, with respect to adjacency without subdivision that the same thing be allowed with respect to continuity without subdivision. The truth of this rule will appear to reason in the case of continuity, but not adjacency or other forms of relation.

The reply to the third objection is that we do not grant that the upper surface of the body is in contact with what is beneath it. Only those who hold that the body is made up of particles maintain this view, but we do not subscribe to it. We hold, instead, that the body is a simple thing and its extremity is the surface, which is not in contact with what is beneath it, since it is not a body. It is as though the exponent of this objection wishes to suggest that the surface is a single sheet, below which there is another sheet, and then that the first sheet is in contact with the second sheet—which is a petition of principle.¹

1. Or, begging the question, when the conclusion of an argument is identical with the premise.

You should also know that this proof is not very sound. For one could argue that contact is either with parts of the body or not, and is rather with the surfaces. If with the parts, then the first objection will hold necessarily and each body would split into an infinite number of parts at once. If with surfaces rather than parts, then the subdivision of parts will not follow at all; although the central point will be adjacent to each point on the circumference, in whole and not in part. That is why its conjunction will not result in a larger size; whereas the corporeal parts will touch each other from one extremity, rather than the other. Otherwise, their conjunction will not result in a larger size, as was mentioned.

II. The Second Proof

If we form a line out of three particles, then place two particles on both extremities of the line; then the two particles will admit of motion along each of them, the intermediate particle between both of them being vacuous and no impediment interfering with motion. Therefore, motion along both extreme particles together is possible until they meet. If they do that, each one of them will be in touch with half the intermediate particle, from the lower line, and the half of each of the extreme particles from the lower line also; then all the particles would be subdivided.

It cannot be argued that their motion is impossible, because it leads to the subdivision of the parts. For, positing the desired result as a premise in rebutting the premise used in rebuttal is wrong; because the desired result is doubtful, while the premise is known to be valid. Thus, using the certain [premise] as a means of refuting the doubtful [pro-position] is more justified than the opposite. For, we say that plain reasoning stipulates undoubtedly that, if the side is vacuous and the particle is susceptible of motion, that motion will not be impossible. This argument applies to every line made up of single particles.

III. The Third Proof

If we form a line out of four particles, and then place a particle on the right extremity, another particle below the left extremity, then assume that they begin to move at once and terminate at the end of the line at once, there is no doubt that each one of them will pass by the other. This will be impossible except once they are adjacent, and adjacency is impossible except along the second and third continuous [lines]. Therefore, the particle is lying on the continuous [line] formed by both particles; and this must be susceptible of subdivision.

IV. The Fourth Proof.

Were slow motion not due to the interception of moments of rest, the assertion of the indivisible particle would be false; but the antecedent is true, as was shown in the section dealing with motion, therefore the consequent is true. The proof of the conditional proposition is that were the indivisible particle stationary, then if we

crossed a certain distance at a fast pace, we would have covered all the indivisible particles in that distance. Now, it is necessary that crossing the indivisible particle at a fast pace should occur in a given period of time. Then, in that period, it is necessary that a slow mover should cover less than that particle. Therefore, the indivisible particles have been divided.

V. The Fifth Proof

When a particle moves from one particle to another, it will either be described as movable upon meeting the first, which is absurd since it has not started to move yet; or upon meeting the second, which is also absurd, for at that point, motion would have ceased. Therefore, it will be movable when it lies between the two particles, and thus divisibility will follow necessarily.

VI. The Sixth Proof

If we imagine a sheet consisting of indivisible particles with the sun shining on it, so that one of its two faces is luminous, but not the other; it will follow that the luminous face is different from the face not exposed to the light, and this will entail divisibility.

VII. The Seventh Proof

A particle is finite. Now, every finite entity has a shape and every shaped object is surrounded by a limit or limits. If the simple particle is surrounded by a single limit, it will be a sphere. If spheres are joined to one another, there will be gaps between them; and if those gaps widen, so as to make room for the particles, we could then fill them with the latter. In any case, the gaps which are smaller than the particles will remain [unfilled], and then the particles will be divisible. If, however, [the particle] is surrounded by limits so as to take the shape of a triangle or a square, that would entail partition; for from the side of the angle, it would be smaller than from the side of the line.

VIII. The Eighth Proof

Let us stick a piece of wood in the ground, so as to cast a shadow upon the ground when the sun rises. It is well-known that the shadow will continue to decrease as the sun continues to rise, till the sun reaches its zenith; whereupon the shadow will continue to increase from the opposite side. In that case, when the sun crosses a particle, a particle of the shadow will either decrease, so that the length of the shadow would be equal to the sun's orbit, which is absurd; or the sun will continue to rise, without any part of the shadow decreasing, which is absurd for two reasons. First, because if the sun could rise relative to one part, without the shadow decreasing at all, that would be possible with respect to the two, three or four parts, till the sun reaches its zenith while the shadow remains the same. Secondly, because the

line drawn between the sun and the extremity of the shadow will (if the extremity thereof which is contiguous to the sun, but not the one contiguous to the shadow, were to move) have two ends; but this is absurd, because the larger would be equivalent to the smaller, unless it is said that whenever the sun crosses a part, a part of the shadow smaller than a part will decrease; which is the point.

IX. The Ninth Proof

If we take the largest circle and the smallest circle of a spinning top on a single centre, and draw a line emanating from that centre until it crosses a part of the smallest circle and terminates at a part of the largest circle, then if the top rotates, that line will rotate with it. Now, it is obvious that the point of the largest circle which lies on that line is faster than that of the smallest circle lying on it. For, the point of the largest circle would have covered in one rotation a longer distance than the point of the smallest circle. It could be said, then, that if the point of the largest circle has covered one particle, the point of the smallest circle would have either covered less than one particle—and then the particle would have been divided—or the point of the smaller circle would be at rest during some of the times of the largest circle. From this, the disintegration of the particles of the top would follow; but this is absurd for four reasons.

1. First, by the evidence of the senses.
2. Secondly, let us apply this argument to the heavenly sphere. Then, the orbits⁶ closer to the two poles would be slower than those closer to the equator. We shall show later that crossing over is impossible in the case of the heavenly sphere.
3. Thirdly, because we would have here a strange phenomenon, which has given each particle of the top such talent and intelligence that the slower particles are able to apprehend how many times they should stop, so that their zenith will not cease to be aligned with that of the faster. For whatever is closer to the pole is slower and whatever is closer to the extremity of the top is faster. Therefore, every part of the pause would need a specific amount [of power] different from the pause needed by the others, so that the original alignment might remain. Now man, despite his perfect intelligence cannot apprehend this. For if two persons heading towards the same place, one of them being closer to that place than the other, were to reach that place at the same time, the closer of them will not be able to tell how often he must stop on the way to that place so that his arrival there will coincide with that of the other.
4. Fourthly, because if a man placed one of his heels on the ground and stayed put, then made a complete turn, we would have to say that in that state his particles and components have disintegrated to such an extent that no continuity between two parts of his body is left, which is false.

You should also know that this argument entails the divisibility of time and distance. For, if the larger circle covered an arc, the smaller circle would have

covered less than that arc. Then, the smaller circle would have covered up the distance and the larger circle would have covered the same arc that the smaller circle has covered in a shorter time than that. Then, the larger circle would continue to divide time and this division would continue successively once for time and again for magnitude.

X. The Tenth Proof

If the outer prong of a three-pronged compass crosses one particle, the intermediate prong will cross a smaller particle as we have shown.

XI. The Eleventh Proof

If the existence of the circle is possible, then the existence of the indivisible particle becomes impossible. Now, the antecedent is true; therefore the consequent must be true. The truth of the antecedent has been proved in the section dealing with quality. As for the truth of the conditional proposition, this too has been dealt with in the section on quality.¹

However, we will prove this in another way. The line made up of indivisible particles may either be turned into a circle or not. If not, then turning a broad body into a circle will be impossible. For a body having breadth consists simply of lines conjoined to each other, so that if each one of them could not be reduced [to a circle], the whole cannot either. That such a line can be turned into a circle follows from the fact that either the outer sides of the particles will meet as their inner sides do, or not.

If the inner sides meet and the outer sides open up, then the particles will be subdivided; but if their outer sides meet like their inner sides, then the inner side of the circle would be similar to the outer in point of distance; so that if we draw around it another circle, the outer part of the surrounding circle which is equivalent to the outer part surrounded by it, which is equal to the inner surrounded part, would be equivalent to the surrounded part. We could then, continue to draw another circle until its circumference becomes equal to the circumference of the outermost sphere; then, there will be no gap in it whatsoever. Nevertheless, its parts would not exceed the parts of the original small circle; which is absurd. It is clear, therefore, that the inner sides of the particles will meet and their outer sides will open up, so that divisibility will follow necessarily.

Moreover, each one of those gaps will either be large enough to contain all the particles or not. If not, then a smaller quantity thereof exists; if they do, then that is absurd. For if the inside of those particles could meet, the divergent particles would be some of them; so that if we fill that some with a particle, it would follow that if part of the particle rose above that gap, then it would have been subdivided;

1. Earlier in this book.

if it did not, then the particle filling that gap would be smaller in number than those particles in which those gaps appeared in their outside parts. Therefore, those particles are divisible, and so the possibility of drawing a circle disproves the indivisible particle.

XII. The Twelfth Proof

Let us imagine a right angle, each of its sides equivalent to ten particles; then the product of multiplying each side by itself is one hundred and the total two hundred, whereas the product of multiplying the hypotenuse by itself will be equal to the sum of multiplying each of the two sides by itself, as Euclid has shown.¹ Therefore, the product of multiplying the hypotenuse of this angle will be two hundred. Thus, the hypotenuse of this angle will be the square root of two hundred. However, two hundred has no integral root; therefore, the particles will be divisible.

XIII. The Thirteenth Proof

Let us imagine a line consisting of two particles. We could, then, draw on it an equilateral triangle. However, this is not possible unless each of the particles coincided with continuous segments made up of the two particles and this entails divisibility.

XIV. The Fourteenth Proof

Let us take a line made up of two particles and place another particle upon one of those two: we will, then, have a right angle which, were its hypotenuse made up of two particles, would be equal to each of the sides enclosing it—which is absurd. If on the other hand [the line] is made up of three particles, the hypotenuse will be equal to the sum of both sides—which is also absurd. Therefore, it is more than two and less than three. Thus, there is something smaller than the particle.

XV. The Fifteenth Proof

Let us imagine four lines, each one of which is made up of four particles, then join them together, so that there is no gap between them at all. There is no doubt that the diameter will result from the first particle of the first line, the second from the second, the third from the third, and the fourth from the fourth. These particles to the side of the diameter will either meet or not. If they meet, then the diameter will be equal to the side; but this is disproved by the triangle enclosed in a semi-circle.² If they do not meet, then there are some gaps, which will either contain a particle or not. If they contain, we might fill them with particles; but the gap, being three, the length of the diameter will be seven particles, which is the same as the number of the particles of the two sides, and then the diameter will be equal to the two sides,

1. The reference is to the Pythagorean theorem in plane geometry as follows: $c^2 = a^2 + b^2$
 2. The Arabic calls this the figure of the bride.

which is absurd. Therefore, each one of those gaps will contain less than a particle, and accordingly the particle is divisible.

XVI. The Sixteenth Proof

Euclid has proved that every line can be bisected. Thus, a line made up of a single particle can be bisected and thus the particle can be halved—which is the point.

XVII. The Seventeenth Proof

Let us draw a straight line forming the hypotenuse of a right angle, so that the hypotenuse will be equal to the square root of the sum of the square of both sides. Let us then assume that each of the two sides is equal to five, then this hypotenuse will be equal to the square root of fifty. Next, let us move the extremity of that hypotenuse from one side by one particle; the other side will move necessarily by less than one particle. For, if one particle moves so that one of the two sides equals six and the other four, then the hypotenuse will equal the square root of fifty-two; but this is absurd, and therefore it must have moved less than one particle.

XVIII. The Eighteenth Proof

Let us imagine three particles [forming a line] as follows: a, b, c—then place upon one of the extremities a particle. If the line moves, so that (a) occupies a new place, or (b) occupies the place of (a) and (c) the place of (b), then when (a) moves towards the new place, the particle over it will move away from it towards the zenith of its side. We may say, then, that either it moved towards the place, lying above the place in which (a) has settled—which is absurd—because then it would not have moved away from (a), as was supposed—which is absurd. Or, alternatively, we may say it has moved towards the place which is continuous to what lies above the new place, and then the motion of the upper particle would be faster than that of (a), since it would have covered two particles in the same time.

Now, the time of the motion of (a) being divisible, the motion of (a) will be divisible too, because the part thereof taking place in one of the two halves of that time is different from the part taking place in the second half. Thus, since motion is divisible, the place from which (a) has moved will be divisible too and the [place] to which it has moved will be divisible, having taken place in half that time and half that motion; in such a way that half of it has left the place it occupied and entered the new place. Therefore the particle is divisible.

This proof can be stated in another way as follows. If the line moves, the particle placed on it may move in a different direction. Thus, if it moves away from (a), it will meet (a–b), which is impossible; since (b) has entered in the place (a). If we say, then, that the particle lying alone (a), and having moved away from (a) has only moved towards (b) and (b) come to occupy place (a), then the upper particle has not moved away from (a), although we have assumed that it has—which is absurd.

It can only be asserted that it has moved away from the place it occupied originally to the place next to it, which is that one lying above place (c), upon the motion of the line. Therefore, the upper particle has moved with it and reached the third in the time in which what is below it has crossed one particle. Thus, time will be divisible, and the rest of the argument will ensue.

XIX. The Nineteenth Proof

Let us imagine a well, one hundred cubits deep, and in its middle a piece of wood to which a rope fifty cubits long has been suspended, while to the other extremity of that rope a bucket has been suspended. If [another] rope fifty cubits long to which a hook is tied is tied to the end of the rope to which the bucket was tied, and then it is pulled to the top of the well, the bucket will reach the top of the well from its bottom in the same time in which the hook reaches the top from its middle. This entails that time and motion are divisible, as we have shown previously.

XX. The Twentieth Proof

A body will cast at certain times of the year a shadow equal to twice its length [at other times]. Thus the length of its shadow will equal the shadow cast by half of it. If we imagine a body whose particles are odd, then its shadow will be even in number. Then, its shadow will have a half, and half its shadow will be equal to the shadow of its half, and consequently that body made up of the odd number of particles will have half—which is the point at issue.

There is another form of this argument, such as saying, were the body made up of particles, then particles would be essential to it. Now, the essential is clearly affirmed of a thing; therefore, our knowledge of the fact that the body is made up of particles ought to be primary.¹ However, not being so, we actually know that it is not made up of particles. There are other persuasive forms of this argument, but what we have mentioned already should suffice. God knows best!

Of Eternity and Temporal Generation, in Five Chapters

Chapter One:

Explanation of Their Real Meaning

Temporal generation² is used in two senses: first relatively, to mean a thing which from the duration of its existence a lesser interval than that of something else has elapsed; and secondly, absolutely, which is of two types. One is temporal, and indicates the coming-to-be of a thing which did not exist previously. In this sense, it is inconceivable that the beginning of time could come to be; for its coming-to-be

1. That is, self-evident.

2. Arabic *hudūth* and its derivatives could mean both temporality and generation in time.

cannot be determined unless it was preceded by time, accompanied by not-being, so that time would have existed while it was supposed not to exist—which is absurd. The second is non-temporal, which consists in the fact that the thing has no independent existence in itself, but depends on something else, regardless of whether that dependence has a specific reference to a given time or is continuous throughout all time. This is essential temporality.

Eternity is also used in two senses; one relatively; such as a thing which from the duration of its past existence a longer interval than that of something else has elapsed. The other is absolute eternity, which is also of two types. One is according to time, which refers to a thing the time of whose existence has no beginning. (Time in this sense is not eternal, because time has no time.) The other is according to essence, which refers to a thing, the existence of whose essence has no principle necessitating it. Eternal in this sense is synonymous with necessary.¹

Chapter Two: Demonstration of Essential Temporality

Two such proofs are given. One is that everything possible is susceptible in itself of not-being, and through something else is susceptible of existence. Now, what is in itself is prior to what is through another, so that not-being with respect to it is prior to being in the sense of essential priority; thus it will be generated temporally in an essential way. An objection may be raised: namely, that it cannot be said that the possible is susceptible of not-being in itself, for if it did it would have been impossible, not possible. Instead, the possible is rightly said, insofar as it is possible, to be that which does not exist, and yet it cannot be rightly said, insofar as it is possible, that it does not exist. (You have learned the difference between the two propositions previously.) For, just as the possible is susceptible of existence, by virtue of the existence of its cause, it is susceptible of non-existence by virtue of the non-existence of its cause. Thus, if its susceptibility of existence and non-existence were dependent on something else, and neither alternative was a corollary of [its] essence, and neither one of them was prior to the other, then its non-existence would not have an essential priority over its existence. Perhaps, the import of this argument is that the possible is susceptible in itself of the non-susceptibility of existence and non-existence, this non-susceptibility being a privative property preceding susceptibility; and this is how temporality is determined.

In the second place, it has been said that the essence of every possible is distinct from its existence, and so far as everything of this type is concerned, it is impossible that its essence should be identical with its existence—otherwise essence would be

1. The distinction here is between eternity as continuous duration and eternity as timelessness.

existent prior to its being existent. Therefore, it is necessary that its existence be derived from an agent, and everything whose existence is derived from an agent is such that its existence must be preceded by something else essentially, and whatever is of this type is temporal essentially. (You have learned already what discussions this argument involves.)

Chapter Three:

Whether Temporality Could be a Cause of the Need for a Cause

Most dialecticians¹ concur in this, whereas the philosophers deny it. For temporality consists in the thing's existence being preceded by non-existence, and this is a property subsequent to the existence of the thing; while the existence of the thing is posterior to the effect of the cause upon it, and that effect of the cause upon it is posterior to that for the sake of which it has needed the effective cause. Therefore, it is excluded that temporality could be the cause of the need or part of the cause, otherwise it would be vastly prior to itself—which is absurd.

The philosophers sometimes predicate on this the explanation that possibility is what calls for the cause. For they hold that there is no doubt that the temporal requires the cause, that requirement being due either to possibility or temporality. For, if we suppose their absence, the thing would be necessary and eternal; but this kind of thing does not require a cause. Therefore, it has been proved that requirement is due either to possibility or temporality. From what we have said, the claim that temporality is what calls [for the cause] has been refuted; and thus it has been proved that what calls for the cause is possibility.

Chapter Four

Whether Temporality is a Property Superadded to the Existence of the Temporal or Not

You should know that the temporality of the generated entity is not equivalent to its actual existence in the present, or else every existing entity would be temporal; nor is it equivalent to the non-existence preceding it, insofar as it is non-existence, or else non-existence would be equivalent to temporality. Temporality is rather the fact that a thing is preceded by non-existence, which is a condition superadded to existence and non-existence. If it is asked: 'Is that condition temporal or not? For, if temporal, then its temporality is superadded to it, and so on ad infinitum. If not temporal, then the temporality of the temporal would be eternal, and this is absurd.' We answer that just as existence exists in itself, temporality is temporal in itself; the complete confirmation of this has already been given.

1. Meaning, perhaps, the theologians.

Chapter Five

That Temporal Coming-to-be is Contingent Upon the Priority of Matter and Time

As far as matter is concerned, everything generated must have been, prior to its coming-to-be, possible; and this possibility is not the same as the possibility pertaining to the capable agent. For, if we said that it was possible for that agent to bring the possible into being, but not the impossible, we might be asked: 'Why was it possible for him to bring the possible into being, but not the impossible?' We could then reply, because the possible in itself is susceptible of being, whereas the impossible is not, and our reply would be sound and well-ordered. For, had not the susceptibility pertaining to the essence of the thing possible been other than the susceptibility pertaining to the essence of the agent that would have been an explanation of the thing by reference to itself, which is absurd. Thus, it has been proved that the susceptibility pertaining to the essence of the possible is different from the susceptibility pertaining to the essence of the agent.

We assert that the susceptibility pertaining to the essence of the possible is an affirmative condition, as we have shown previously; and it is either a substance or an accident. The first alternative is false, because possibility is a relative notion and, therefore, cannot be a substance; hence it is an accident, which must have a substratum. Now, if its substratum is temporal, it will need another substratum and so on *ad infinitum*, which is absurd. Therefore, it must have an eternal substratum which is prime matter.¹ It has been proved, then, that everything generated in time is preceded by matter in which the possibility of its existence inheres, and that generated object could sometimes exist *from* that matter as an accident, and sometimes *in* it as a form, and sometimes *with* it as a rational soul. This proof involves certain problems which we have investigated in the section dealing with possibility. The proof that every generated entity must be preceded by time will be given in the section dealing with time.

You should know that the most serious inquiries into temporality and eternity turn on the question, whether temporality is a condition of the need for an agent, and whether the temporal duration² could be from this or not. We will put off the discussion of this [question] until we come to the section dealing with cause and effect, for it is more appropriate to it. Success is with God.

1. Arabic, *hayūlā*.

2. Arabic, *qīdam*, i.e. eternity.

The Second Treatise: On the Principles of Substances and Accidents

Chapter Two That Light is not a Body

Some have argued that light consists of small particles, which leave the luminous and cling to the illuminated object. However this is wrong for four reasons:

1. First, their being lights is either identical with their being particles or is different. The first alternative is false, because the concept of luminosity is different from that of corporeity. Thus, a dark body can be conceived, but not a dark light. To say that [those particles] are bodies which possess that property, leave the luminous object and cling to the illuminated object is equally false. For those bodies¹ which possess those properties will either be perceptible or not perceptible. If not perceptible, then light would not be perceptible. If not perceptible, they would conceal what is beneath them. It will also follow that the more they coalesce the more they will conceal. However, the facts contradict this, since the more light coalesces, the more it reveals.

2. Secondly, were a ray of light a body, its motion would naturally be in one direction. However, light is such that it falls on every object in all directions.

3. Thirdly, if light enters a window and then we close it at once, the light particles will either remain or not. If they remain, they will either remain in the house or get out. If it is argued that they went out of the window before we closed it, that would be impossible. If it is said that they vanished, that would be impossible too. For, how can one claim that a body, upon dissolving into two, will vanish in one part? Therefore, the particles have remained inside the house and there is no doubt that they lost their luminosity. This is what we have said, to the effect that the juxtaposition of the illuminated objects is the cause of the emergence of that property.² If this is true in the case of some bodies, it should be true in the case of all bodies.

4. Fourthly, when the sun rises from behind the horizon, the whole surface of the earth is illuminated at once. It is too far-fetched to assume that those light particles have travelled from the fourth sphere [of the sun] and reached the surface of the earth in that short moment, especially since penetrating the sphere is impossible.

The opponents have responded that the ray of light moves and everything that moves is a body. The proof of the minor premises is threefold. First, because the ray of light is transmitted downward by the sun or fire and what is transmitted downward is movable. Secondly, because it moves due to the movement of the luminous object. Thirdly, because the ray may be reflected by the object it meets towards something else and reflection is a form of motion.

1. Or particles.

2. Of reflecting the light.

We answer that the notion that the ray is transmitted by the sun is false, or else we would have seen it in the middle of the distance. In fact, the ray emerges opposite the recipient at once, and since it emerges from something high, it gives the impression that it is coming down. Their statement, that the ray is transmitted [may be countered] by saying that the shade is transmitted, although it is not a body. The truth is what we have asserted: namely, that it is a property which arises in the recipient, and when the juxtaposition shifts towards another recipient, light recedes from it and reappears in that other. The same may be said concerning reflection. For the medium is a pre-condition of the ray passing from the luminous object into that body.

Chapter Three **The Reality of the Light**

Those who acknowledge that [light] is a quality differ. Some hold that it is simply a matter of colour manifesting itself. They also hold that absolute self-manifestation is light, whereas absolute self-concealment is darkness, shade being the intermediate condition. The degrees of [this condition] differ, depending on the degrees of proximity or distance from both extremities, so that if sense¹ becomes accustomed to a certain degree of self-concealment then it is perceived in between something more manifest than the first. It assumes that there is a certain brilliance or radiation, although this is not the case; that being simply due to the weakness of sense.

The proof of this is that the self-manifestation of bright objects at night is weaker than that of a lamp; whereas the self-manifestation of the lamp is weaker than that of the moon, which is weaker than that of the sun. When sense is weak at night and those bright objects have a certain measure of self-manifestation, which objects do not have, it imagines that that manifestation is an adventitious quality. But when sight is strengthened thanks to the light of a lamp and gazes upon those objects, it will not see any brightness pertaining to them, due to the cessation of the weakness of sense. Similarly, the brightness of a lamp disappears in the light of the moon, and the light of the moon disappears in the light of houses deriving their light from the sun in daytime. However, people perceive a certain brilliance of the moon's self-manifestation, but do not perceive any brilliance in the light coming out of lit houses; the reason is the one we have given.

It cannot be argued either that we apprehended the difference between an illuminated colour and a dark one; for we say that due to the fact that one of them is concealed and the other manifest, not due to any other property. Then, there are those who have gone so far as to assert that the light of the sun is nothing other than the complete manifestation of its colour and that is why it dazzles our eyesight.

1. Of sight.

For then colour is concealed due to the weakness of eyesight and not due to its own concealment as such; just as we perceive at night the brilliance of the stars, but not their colours. For eyesight, due to its weakness at night, is dazzled by the manifestation of those colours. No wonder that we do not perceive them; but when the day is strengthened by the light of the sun,¹ it is no longer vanquished by the manifestation of these colours, and so we are able to perceive them.

This is the exposition of their view. As for us, we do not deny that what they propose may have some influence on the differences of perception with respect to their strength and weakness, due to the differences of the conditions of sense, in point of strength and weakness. Nevertheless, we maintain that light is an existential property, superadded to the essence of colour. This is shown in five ways:

First, the manifestation of colour is a signal of the renewal of something. Now, that thing is either colour, a non-relative property or a relative property. The first alternative is false; because it either presupposes that light is a matter of colour's renewal or of the renewed colour. The first alternative entails that a thing is not illuminated except in the instant of its illumination; the second that light is identical with colour; and then their statement that light is the manifestation of colour would become meaningless. If they regard light as a positive property superadded to the essence of colour and call it manifestation, then that would be a semantic dispute. If they claim that that manifestation is the renewal of a relative condition, then that thesis is false, because light is not something relative and cannot possibly be explained in terms of that relative condition.

Secondly, whiteness may be both luminous and bright, just as blackness is. Therefore, light is a definite feature of both. If being luminous in each case were the same as its essence, it would follow that part of the light in itself would be contrary to the other part, which is absurd. For the only contrary of light is darkness.

Thirdly, colour may exist apart from light. For, blackness may not be luminous, and the same is true of other colours. Similarly, light may exist apart from colour, such as water and crystal in a dark spot, when light shines on them. For, then their light is perceived and is, therefore, a light not a colour. If either of them exists apart from the other, they cannot be different.

Fourthly, we may concentrate on some colours intermediate between black and white: for example, red. Then either they will have to grant that the colour has a specific reality, or claim that it is the combination of white manifestations and black concealments. If they opt for the second we would answer that the red object is such that, if light is refracted by it and falls on another object, then that object becomes red; and then the manifestation will either be refracted from the manifest parts and concealment from the concealed parts, or the manifestation is refracted by the manifest parts, but concealment will not be refracted from the

1. From the context, the subject appears to be sense, not day.

concealed ones. The first alternative is false, because the concealed parts do not impart concealment to their counterpart. For, if concealment were pure, it would not affect the counterpart.

The second alternative is also false, because if the manifest parts were to cause manifestation in their counterpart, manifestation being simply the process of becoming white, it would have been necessary, then, that the whiteness of the object receiving the refraction should have increased, rather than become red. If they concede that redness is a real colour in itself, and then contend that, when manifested it would cause the same effect in its counterpart, we would respond that, if it is manifested slightly, it would impart to that counterpart light only, and would not conceal the colour of the counterpart. If its manifestation strengthens, it would conceal the colour of its counterpart. Now, were there no more than colour, then it would generate upon weakening a weak colour, similar to itself; and upon strengthening, a strong colour similar to itself. However, this is not the case, for it causes first the strong manifestation of the colour of its counterpart; then if it strengthens, it will begin to reduce the colour of its counterpart or conceal it, and generate another colour, similar to itself. Thus, the one action would necessarily result from something other than the source of the other and the source of illumination would, then, be the light, which, were the body colourless but having a light, would cause that—such as the illuminated crystal. The other action would be due to the same colour, once it is manifested strongly, due to that light, to such an extent that it is able to pass into its counterpart.

Fifthly, sometimes light alone is refracted from the luminous and coloured object and falls on something else; sometimes both light and colour. That happens when it is strong in both of them, and then the object on which the refraction falls becomes red. Were light the manifestation of colour, it would not be possible to impart to something else a simple brilliance. If it is said that this brilliance consists in the manifestation of the light of that object, we would ask: 'Why is it, then, that when the colour and light of the object from which refraction occurs increase, they blot the refracted colour of that object which received the refraction, obliterate it and give it its own colour?'

Chapter Four

The Difference Between Light, Radiation and Brilliance

You should know that coloured objects, if manifested in actuality, are illuminated. For that manifestation is either a fixed property therein, diffused in them without being described as blackness, whiteness, yellowness or redness; or simply brilliance which shines upon the object and illuminates its colour, as though it were something emanating from them. Either part belongs to it, either in itself or from something else. The manifestation which belongs to the thing in itself,

as is the case with the sun and fire, is called luminosity;¹ whereas the manifestation derived from something else is light. Shining, which belongs to the thing in itself, as is the case with the sun, is called radiation; what the thing receives from another, as is the case with the mirror, is called brilliance.

Chapter Five: Definition of Luminosity

It is defined as a property consisting in itself in the perfection of the transparent, insofar as it is transparent; or rather that property whereby vision through it does not depend on vision through anything else. This is due to the fact that the reality of its being visible either will not depend on taking anything else into account or will depend on it. That which does not depend is luminosity, and that which does depend is colour. The latter cannot be seen unless it becomes luminous; and everything which can be seen will bar from seeing what is behind it. For, when the eye perceives something in one spot, it cannot perceive in that instant and in that spot anything else. Now, since its perception of the intermediate object must occur first, it is not strange that this should prevent it from perceiving what lies behind it. It follows that colour prevents perceiving what is behind it; and so does luminosity, as shown by the shade cast by a lamp. This is due to the fact that one of them prevents the other from acting on the opposite object. Similarly, man is unable to perceive what lies between him and that object. From what we have just stated, it is clear that a transparent object cannot be visible.

Chapter Six That Colour Appears in Actuality When Luminosity is Present

Colours do not actually subsist in bodies while the latter are dark. The proof of this is that we do not see them in the dark. That is either due to the fact that they are nonexistent, or that the dark air impedes vision. The second [alternative] is false because air, as such, is not dark and does not impede vision. For, if you are in a cavern in which there is air, all of which is of the type you believe to be dark, and then a visible object therein becomes luminous, you will be able to see without being impeded by the air interposed between you and that [visible object]. It follows, then, that there is nothing in that air to impede vision.

One might argue that colour doubtless has an essence in itself and is susceptible of being seen. Why, then, cannot the corollary of the existence of luminosity be this condition: namely, its susceptibility for being visible, rather than its acquiring that essence? If it is said that colour is that property which is susceptible

1. *Ḍaw'*, as against *nūr*.

of being seen, then the object which lies in the dark, but cannot be seen, is not really coloured. It is true that when an object is dark, it is still susceptible of acquiring a certain colour, once it has become luminous. We say, then, that the object's susceptibility to have a certain colour is one thing, and the existence of that colour is something else, and the susceptibility of that colour to be seen is something else still. Why cannot the corollary of the existence of luminosity be this condition, rather than the existence of colour originally? It has been proved, then, that the opinion entertained by the Shaykh¹³¹ in opposition to the commonly held view is not strong enough.

A corollary of this question is the following proposition: namely, that it is commonly known that colours subsist in the surfaces of objects, whereas colours do not actually subsist in their cores. For the subsistence of colour in actuality is contingent on the presence of luminosity in actuality. Now, having questioned their claim that the actual subsistence of colour depends on the luminosity of colour, we naturally suspended judgment regarding this corollary also. It is rather more reasonable to assume that an object's being actually coloured does not depend on its being actually luminous. That is why a transparent object is not actually receptive of luminosity and light. Thus, if a body's receptivity of luminosity were dependent on the presence of colour, and the actual presence of colour dependent on the actual presence of luminosity, circularity would ensue necessarily.

Chapter Seven

Enumeration of Intermediate Colours

Since you have already learned that black and white are two real properties and that luminosity is a real property superadded to them, it can, therefore be argued that white and black are two colours which, if one of them combines with the other, the colour grey arises. If black combines with luminosity, so that it resembles the cloud on which the sun shines or the black smoke which combines with fire, then where black is preponderant redness arises, and if that preponderates further, darkness arises. However, if luminosity preponderates, then yellow arises; and if yellow combines with bright black, green arises. Next, if greenness combines with another black, then olive green arises; and if whiteness is added to it, then the colour of rust will arise. If olive green, then, combines with black, plus a little red, indigo arises; and if red combines with indigo, the colour purple arises, and so on and so forth.

1. That is, Ibn Sīnā.

Chapter Eight **That Darkness is a Negative Property**

For, if we close our eyes, we would be in a state similar to our opening them in total darkness. Just as in closing our eyes we perceive nothing, opening them in the dark we cannot perceive any property of the dark object. Similarly, if we imagine an object devoid of light, without any other property added to it, its condition would be no other than this darkness. If this is the case, then darkness is not an existential entity.

Chapter Nine **Whether Some Objects are Visible in the Dark or Not**

It has been argued that an object is either perceived through a property in it or a property in another. The first kind is the transparent; the second's visibility is either dependent on some condition or not. If dependent, it would be visible in itself and is therefore luminous. If its visibility depends on some other condition, that condition is either luminosity, as in the case of colour, or darkness, as in the case of objects which scintillate at night.

The Shaykh¹ has argued that darkness cannot be a condition of the visibility of phosphorescent objects [at night]. For, the luminous will be seen regardless of whether the perceiver is standing in a dark or light spot, as in the case of fire, which one can perceive whether one is standing in a lighted or dark spot; whereas the sun cannot be seen in the dark, for once it rises, darkness is dissipated. The planets and shooting stars may be seen in the dark rather than during the day, because the light of the sun exceeds their light; and if the sense-organ is affected by a strong light, it is not surprising that it will not be affected by a weak one. Nevertheless, at night, there is no light exceeding their light; it is not surprising, then, that they are visible.

In general, their becoming visible is not due to their being dependent on darkness, but rather because the sense [of sight], not being affected by strong sensibles, is able to perceive the weak ones; whereas during the day it is an opposite state. This is similar to the dust in the air which is of that kind which can be seen in the light; although it is not visible because man's vision, being countervailed by the light of the sun, which is a strong sensible object, not surprisingly, cannot perceive it. However, if one is indoors and is not subject to a strong light, one is obviously able to perceive it. It is clear, then, that darkness is not a precondition in this case.

1. That is, Ibn Sīnā.

THE SOUL, SPIRIT AND ELABORATION OF THEIR FACULTIES

*al-Nafs wa'l-rūh wa sharḥ quwāhumā*¹

Reprinted from Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī's *Kitāb al-nafs wa'l-rūh wa sharḥ quwāhumā*, ed. and trans. M. Şaghīr Ḥasan Ma'şūmī as *Imām Rāzī's 'Ilm al-Akhlāq* (Islamabad, 1969), pp. 44–86.

Part One

The Universal Principles of Ethics

Chapter One

The First Chapter explains the place of mankind in the various ranks of the existents.²

Know that it is possible to describe 'the being' in more than one way, each one manifesting the rank of mankind amidst the ranks of the existents.

The First Division

It is said, the created objects are of four kinds:

1. The first is that which possesses intellect³ and wisdom⁴ but is devoid of na-

1. The work entitled *Kitāb al-nafs wa'l-rūh wa sharḥ quwāhumā* has survived in a unique Bodleian manuscript, no. Hunt 534 [editor's note].

2. *Marātib al-mawjūdāt*: According to al-Fārābī the principal existents by which the bodies and accidents are constituted are of six kinds in six stages each one of which encompasses the lower stage—the First Cause in the First Stage, the Secondary Cause in the Second Stage, the Active Intellect in the Third Stage, the Soul in the Fourth Stage, the Form in the Fifth Stage and the Matter in the Sixth Stage. The first three are not corporeal and the remaining three though not corporeal are in bodies. Bodies are also six—the heavenly body, the rational animal, the non-rational animal, plants, minerals and four elements. All these bodies taken together form the world, see al-Fārābī: *al-Siyāsat al-madaniyyah*, Hyderabad 1346/1927, p. 2.

3. *'Aql*: Human intellect or human understanding is a faculty by which man can know anything from the simplest objects of sense to the ultimate realities. The Arabic word *al-'aql*, especially as used by Ghazzālī, is more comprehensive than the English word 'reason'. Imām Ghazzālī has traced four stages or elements in *al-'aql* as it develops in man: (1) an undeveloped primitive rational faculty, (2) self-evident truths, (3) knowledge *'ulūm al-dīn*, and (4) a highly developed faculty in man capable of understanding or knowing the ultimate realities. Of these 'knowledge' is generally expressed by the word reason. Cf. *Ihyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, vol. I, p. 76, *'Umaruddin: Some Fundamental Aspects of Ghazzālī's Thought* (Agra, n.d.), p. 33.

4. *Al-ḥikmah* means understanding and knowledge. See Imām Rāzī's *magnum opus*, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, known as *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr* (Cairo, 1308/1890), vol. 1, p. 265.

ture¹ and appetite²—they are the angels³ whose characteristic is that ‘they do not disobey Allāh concerning what He commands them.’ ‘They fear their Lord as He is above them, and carry out what they are ordered to do.’⁴

2. The second is that which has no intellect, no wisdom, but possesses nature and appetite,⁵ as are the rest of the animals except mankind.

3. The third is that which has no intellect, no wisdom, no nature, and no appetite, as are the inanimate things and plants.

4. The fourth is that which possesses intellect, wisdom and also nature and appetite as is man.

1. *Ṭabī‘ah* or ‘Nature’ is a most ambiguous word, both in common language and in Aristotle. Nature, according to Aristotle, is concerned with the invariable, as habit with the frequent. Aristotle often says that things that happen by nature happen invariably or in a majority of cases, see *Physics* B 8. 198 b35; *Rhetoric* A 11. 1370 a7. The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA), 1956.

According to Ibn Miskawayh, ‘the movement of the Soul is in two directions. In the first it moves towards its source and contemplates it, and thereby perceives all the intelligible verities which are in the Intelligence. The second movement of the Soul is downwards, and to this movement the whole world and all the spheres owe their existence and activity. This downward motion of the Soul has two levels: the higher where it acts as a transcendental principle of form, order and intelligent direction, and the lower where it operates as an immanent principle of life and growth. The lower becomes so distinct from the higher that it may be treated as the fourth principle. It is called Nature. Nature is simultaneously the totality of material beings, and the law that governs their motion, the active force that energizes them to growth and perfection. Nature is not material nor is it a function of matter. It is the lowest of all spiritual existences, the slumbering Soul, so to say,’ see M. ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Anṣārī, *The Ethical Philosophy of Miskawayh* (Aligarh, 1964), p. 55, cf. Miskawayh, *al-Fawz al-aṣghar* (Misr, 1329/1911), pp. 150–152.

2. *Shahwah* is the disposition which enables the body to obtain what is good for it; it includes such qualities as hunger, thirst etc. According to Aristotle (*De Anima*. 9 ad fin.), moderate men, although they have desire and appetite, do not follow their desire, but obey reason.

3. *Al-malā‘ikah*: Angels. ‘The philosophers identify the Aristotelian concept of a separate intellect with the concept of an angel. In the scholastic philosophy of the thirteenth century this identification of angel and separate intellect by the Arabic philosophers was known, but it was often denied’ (see Simon Van den Bergh, *Averroes: Tahāfut al-tahāfut* [Oxford, 1954], Notes, pp. 135). Ibn Sinā says that the spiritual abstract angels, of the highest degree are called intellects, whereas the angels of the second degree, the active angels, i.e. the movers of the Stars, are called Souls. In Qazwīnī’s *Cosmography*, ‘*Ajā‘ib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharā‘ib al-mawjudāt* (ed. Wüstenfeld [Göttingen, 1848–1849] pp. 55ff.), there is given a long list of angels who are inhabitants of heaven, ‘some of them are wholly absorbed in adoration of God’. He mentions also the movers of the stars, of whom (he says) there are seven but according to him the exact number of angels is known only to God. Van den Bergh (*Notes on Tahāfut al-tahāfut*, p. 162) displays his ignorance of the Qur’ānic conception of angels when he says: ‘Muslim angelology was influenced by Neoplatonism (cf. Plotinus, *Enneades*, III. 5–6), which regarded the stars as gods of a secondary order, subsidiary and related to the intelligible gods and dependent on them’ Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī has elaborately discussed the nature, the function and importance of angels in his *Tafsīr* (see *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, vol. I, pp. 377–381), which clearly establishes that the Muslim conception of angels is quite different from that of Plotinus.

4. Qur’ān, *al-Tahrīm*: 6, *al-Nahl*: 50 [The translator has made use of Mohammad Marmeduke Pickthall’s, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*.]

5. Cf. Aristotle: *The Nichomachean Ethics* (no. 4), Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA, 1956), p. 129.

Since it has been asserted concerning rational science that the Necessary Being pervades all possible beings by means of general emanation; it demands the inclusion of this kind of existence. Hence, Allāh has said, 'Lo! I am about to place a viceroy in the earth',¹ so that no kind of possibles would remain deprived [Fol. 268a] of the effect of His invention and the bounty of His first creation.

When Allāh revealed to the angels: Lo! I am about to place a viceroy in the earth, they said: 'Wilt Thou place therein one who will do harm therein (and will shed blood)?' which meant that when you would unite appetite, desire and intellect together this would violently flare up into the fulfilment of appetite and the outburst of anger. This would necessitate destruction due to appetite and His expression '(he) will shed blood' indicated the usage of anger. Allāh, thereupon, revealed to them, 'Surely, I know that which ye know not.'

While Allāh knows best, this speech bears more than one meaning:

1. First the angels are pure intellects, and simple lights, so there will inevitably come from them only *tasbīh*, *taḥmīd*, and *taqdīs*² (Invocation of *subḥān Allāh*, How sublime is Allāh! *al-ḥamdu li'LLāh*, All praises go to Allāh, and *quddisa'LLāh*, all Sanctity is due to Allāh).

This is the first kind of the created beings³ which possesses intellect and wisdom but no nature (habit) and anger. And the motive for including this first kind in existence is not to include the benefit of their *tasbīh* and *taqdīs*, rather, the motive of this being the all-pervasiveness of generosity. This meaning stands valid for the fourth kind of existence.

2. Secondly, although this division contains destruction due to appetite, and bloodshed due to anger, it also contains *tasbīh* and *taḥmīd* due to intellect. Their engagement with this virtue is greater than their engagement with and execution of the evil. To abandon a good deal of virtue for the sake of a little of evil is a great evil (in itself).⁴ For this reason, it was deemed absolutely wise to invent this division (kind).

1. *Sūrat al-Baqarah*: 30.

2. Cf. *al-Taḥsīn al-kabīr*, vol. I, p. 444.

3. *Al-mawjūdāt*: Rāzī has divided the existents in a logical way into four kinds which he explains afterwards. Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī has divided them into two broad kinds: (1) Heavenly spiritual objects, and (2) terrestrial sensible objects. He then mentions that Allāh created the *Ruḥāniyyāt*, Spiritual beings, next, the four elements, the inanimate, the growing objects and animals, and set the seal with the human form. Cf. *K. Taḥsīl al-nash'atayn wa taḥsīl al-sa'adatayn li'l-imām Abū'l-Qāsim al-Ḥusain b. Muḥammad b. al-Mufaḍḍal al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī* (Beirut, 1319/1901), p. 15.

4. Cf. *al-Taḥsīn al-kabīr*, vol. I, p. 425: The good is what everything desires. When the first being knew the perfect good *in potentia* ... it emanated from him ... and that is the eternal providence and will. Thus good came within the Divine decree essentially, not accidentally, while evil came accidentally. Evil may be said to be deficiency, like ignorance and impotence, or like pain and sickness, or like fornication and theft. In fact, evil per se is privation, i.e. the loss of a thing's true and perfect nature. Evil absolutely does not exist, except in speech and thought. Accidental evil exists *in potentia*, because of matter. It begins through a certain countenance (*hay'ah*) which prevents its proper receptiveness of the perfection towards which it moves. The pernicious result is due, not to a privative act of the agent, but to the unreceptiveness of the object, thus arise bad

3. Thirdly, the pious angels, and Divine objects of knowledge are available to Angels, but the desire for Truth is not 'available to them, and while desire has a noble station, it was necessarily wise to include human nature in existence in order to achieve this station.'

That desire¹ is not available to Angels is well explained by the fact that desire is not perceived except in relation to an object which is perceptible in a particular way but not perceptible in other ways, inasmuch as what is not perceived by man in a way (out of so many ways) is not desired by him. As for that which he has perceived perfectly and completely is obviously not desired by him, because desire is a demand and the demand of that which is in hand is absurd.

Nevertheless, the attachment to the beloved can develop in two ways: First, it is like this that when he (lover) sees the beloved the impression of the beloved's form remains in his imagination after its disappearance. So the spirit desires to transmit the impression from the world of imagination to the world of sensual perception. Secondly, he looks at the face of his beloved, that is, his essence (person), but has not seen the other parts. He, therefore, longs to unravel for himself that which he has not seen.

When you have realized this, we say:

As for the first kind of desire, this is only possible concerning him who realizes something after its disappearance. This is not so concerning the Angels, as all that is known of the angels is eternally present and free from the nature of power and ability. Their knowledge, therefore, does not change due to indifference, nor is their presence affected by the disappearance. This is the meaning of Allāh's expression—Sublime is He—'They glorify (Allāh) night and day; they flag not.'² The same is the meaning of the expression of the Prophet, 'verily, there are some angels who keep standing and do not bow, and there are some others who keep bowing and do not prostrate (themselves)'. Hence, it is impossible that they should have the desire of the first kind. If desire is obtained by them at all, it is of the second kind.

As for mankind, both of the kinds can occur in mankind in so far as men have aptitude for the Divine objects of knowledge. Both of them are, rather, evidently necessary for all Gnostics.

morals, the dominion of the bestial over the human mind, giving rise to evil practices and corrupt beliefs; or the evil influence may come from without, as from parents or teachers. Evil, coming in thus accidentally, is rightly rewarded with destruction because of the existence of the opposing cause. When evil is mixed with good it is most proper that it should be brought into existence ... otherwise a universal good would be lost in the interest of a particular evil ... A good example is fire. See Shahrastānī, *Kitāb nihāyat al-iqdām*, ed. and trans., A. Guillaume (Oxford, 1934), pp. 90–91.

1. Cf. *al-Taḥṣīn al-kabīr*, vol. I, p. 448: See also *Ma'ālim uṣūl al-dīn* on the margin of *al-Muḥaṣṣal* (Cairo, n.d.), p. 107.

2. *Sūrat al-Anbiyā'*: 20.

The first kind is necessary, because the Divine affairs, which, though they matter to the Gnostics in an extremely clear, vivid and illumined manner, they are mixed up with the mixture of imagination, because the ideas do not continue in this universe, nor do they remain free from images and phantoms which, in fact, darken the illumination of the objects of knowledge. The holy Prophet has, therefore, said,¹ 'Verily affliction overtakes my heart; and verily I seek the forgiveness of Allāh seventy times every day.'

The perfection of imagination is only obtained in the next world where thoughts disappear and phantoms are rendered absurd. This is the first kind of longing for Allāh, the Almighty.

You must know that the second kind of longing knows no limit. Had the Gnostic been created at the very outset of the origin of the universe and continued until the present times, and travelled with the utmost speed through the grades of Divine objects of knowledge, rather, he would have flown around the Throne of the August most quickly, and continued in this state until the last time of the people of the Paradise and the people of the Hell, that would have been achieved by his travel and flying would have been limited and whatever would have remained outside his reach would have been limitless. When the case is this, it is manifest that the first kind of desire of Allāh would very often disappear in the other World. The second kind of desire will, however, not cease, rather, whenever the travelling will be severe and the exertion increase in volume the desire will be greater, and the thirst severer and greater.

If someone says 'truth' is the absolute individual free from all kinds of composition. If at all, an individual is known it is known in its entirety, otherwise it is not known. How then that which you have mentioned (could) be understood as its due.

We say, we shall cite an example in support of our contention, so that the rest may be accordingly reasoned.

We, therefore, say: This physical world which exists at present is, according to the majority of philosophers, composed of particles which do not accept further division. Now, if we suppose that Allāh, the Exalted, has created, in respect of every atom which cannot be separated from this world, thousand of thousand worlds like this one and then, suppose that these worlds are expanded so much so that they reach the extreme thinness just to be void of thickness, rendering, rather, the whole into something like a surface which has no depth according to one who asserts that an atom does not split further, and we suppose that a scribe writes on this huge

1. It is narrated from the Prophet (Peace be upon Him): 'When a Gnostic finds himself before God a slight error committed by him is considered a great sin.' The Holy Prophet therefore constantly sought forgiveness from Allāh just to remain free from any blemish. The *ḥadīth* has been referred to in Rāzī's *Lawāmi' al-bayyināt* (Cairo, 1323/1905), p. 103, also with some difference in wordings.

sheet arithmetical figures representing the stages of years, the intellect knows it that there is no way open to it of recording the spans of these years; nor can even a small part of the same be recorded.¹

Then, verily we know when we guess these elongating durations in relation to the meaning of eternity² which they dispute, since howsoever they may prolong, heighten or put it out of the grasp of intellect and estimation, they cannot but be limited, while the reality of eternity is limitless; and the limited has no relation whatsoever to the unlimited. Here is, to some extent, realized the nature of our expression that intellects fail to realize the reality of Allāh's Grace. When like this you understand the eternity of Allāh, the Exalted, you should, similarly, know the objects of His Knowledge, Decree, and the impresses of His Wisdom.

It is, therefore, established by what we have mentioned that love (lit. desire) of Allāh, the Exalted, is a lofty place and a noble station. Now, even all that is pleasant while surviving and continuing does not remain pleasant throughout. Similar is the case with that which is painful. But pleasure and pain are only felt when transmitted from one side to the other.³ And Allāh alone possesses (true) Knowledge!

Let us use a parable for it. This is a fact that the state of the creatures in relation to delicate and palatable foods are of three kinds: To the first stage belong the kings who enjoy the favours of Allāh and who are generous in all good and pleasant things. As those who continuously eat good food become used to them, they would, therefore, necessarily feel not so much pleased with them as with others.

To the second belong those who never eat but coarse unpalatable food and who have surely had no chance of enjoying pleasant foods, drinks and putting on (fine) clothes etc.

The third consists of those who mostly eat coarse and distasteful foods, but sometimes they get a chance of eating good and tasty meals. When once they [fol. 259a] have tasted good food but find nothing of the kind, later they express their strong desire for it. When they get it they become greedy of it and enjoy it a good deal.

1. This argument seems to have been derived from the Divine statement in *Sūrat Luqmān*: 27: 'And if all the trees on earth were pens, and the sea, with seven more seas to help it, (were ink), the words of Allāh could not be exhausted. Lo! Allāh is Mighty, Wise.'

2. See Imām Rāzī's *ʿIlm al-akhlāq*, p. 38, n. 5.

3. *Al-ladhdhah*: Pleasure is defined as the perception of that which is agreeable to human nature, the stronger the perception and the nobler the perceptible the more perfect the pleasures. Now, what is agreeable to the human soul is to perceive the intelligibles, intellectual perception being nobler per se than the sensible perception. Cf. Fakhr Rāzī: *al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyyah* (Hyderabad, 1924–1925), vol. 2, p. 427. Cf. Aristotle: *Nichomachean Ethics*, X, iii 6: ... if pleasure is a replenishment of the natural state, the pleasure will be felt by the thing in which the replenishment takes place. Therefore it is the body that feels pleasure. But this does not seem to be the case. Therefore pleasure is not a process of replenishment, though while replenishment takes place, a feeling of pleasure may accompany it just as a feeling of pain may accompany a surgical operation.

When you have known this, we say, 'Though the archangels (*al-malā'ikat al-muqarrabūn*) enjoy high ranks in gnosis, they are surely in their ranks (and) free from change. They are, therefore, like those kings who constantly eat good food. The angels though constantly receive nutrition with the light of the Grace of Allāh, and enjoy the sweet fragrance of zephyr of the Mercy of Allāh, do not have any gap in this state, nor do they suffer transference from one rank (to another).

As for the animals, their condition in relation to the appetites is like the condition of the needy who continue in the state of need, harm, misery and disgrace. Nor can they get transferred from these harmful states to natural states. They do not, necessarily, feel pained in the states they find themselves in.

A man,¹ sometimes, sinks down in the darkness of the maladies of the body, sometimes escapes from them towards the lights of the world of sanctity and the majesty of the canopy of grace, and sometimes he changes from hardship to comfort, and from despair to hope. Now, when they move from darkness to light and from hiding to access, they feel pleased with this enormously. Moreover, they achieve pleasure and bliss so much that no eye has ever seen nor any ear has heard of.²

Here, there is another delicate point. In the case of a man when presence is achieved after absence, pleasure reaches its extremity. Then, when absence occurs after presence while the intellect knows the bliss³ it enjoys in presence and observation, the pain rises to its extremity. When these two sorts of states occur (intermittently) in succession, pains and pleasures occur invariably resembling the spiritual titillation.

This sort of bliss and joy is felt by man alone. It is neither felt by those angels who are stationed near Allāh, and not in the least by the rest of the animal world. It is, therefore, not far to derive this meaning from the word of Allāh, 'I know what you know naught'. This is the fourth reason.

1. Arabic *al-insān*: Man is composed of various dispositions. He sometimes resembles angels and sometimes animals through his intellect and appetitions. Cf. Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī: *al-Dharī'ah ilā makārim al-sharī'ah*, (al-Watan Press, n.p., n.d.) p. 17.

2. This idea has been expressed more clearly in his *al-Mabāḥith*, vol. 2, p. 427.

3. Happiness or *sa'ādah* is 'the actuation of virtue in a complete life. Virtue deals with Pleasure and Pain': Cf. *Magna Moralia*, II. VIII (2) Loeb Classical Library, p. 615. Every pleasure is not a 'process of becoming'. The pleasure arising from mental contemplation is no process, nor is that which arises from hearing and sight and smell for, these are not the consequence of some need or deficiency, as in the case of the others, those, for example, which follow eating or drinking. These latter arise from deficiency or excess, either when the deficiency is replenished or when we are deprived of the excess; and so we regard them as a process. But deficiency and excess are pain; so that where pleasure arises, there is pain: *ibid.*, pp. 617–619. Pain is to perceive the contrary; see *Muḥaṣṣal*, p. 115, note last line. Pleasure is to perceive the agreeable, see *al-Mabāḥith*, vol. 2, p. 427; above, note no. 3, p. 234.

On Explaining Wisdom in Creating the Fourth Kind, the Man

We, therefore, say, verily by creating the angels, Allāh has manifested his Power, since the fullness of their power indicates the perfection of the might of their Creator; their total immunity from sin also indicates the perfection of generosity and mercy. As for the perfection of generosity, this is because there is no relation between dust and the Grace of the Lord of Lords. Then, al-Ḥaqq (lit, Truth namely Allāh) by His complete Mercy and Perfect Generosity has made dust the attribute of the atom that bears Divine lights and eternal illuminations.

As for the perfection of Mercy, this is a fact that though man is composed of appetite, anger, and blameworthy habits, his heart has been entrusted with the light of gnosis, his tongue has been honoured with the recitation of *tawḥīd* (Oneness), his eyes have been made a means for seeing the signs of Allāh and his ears an instrument for hearing the speech of Allāh. So through the angels the Power and Wisdom were revealed, and through man Generosity and Mercy were manifested.

The Second Division

We say: The existent either exists without having any beginning or end—such existent is Allāh, the Creator, the Exalted and the Glorified—or exists with a beginning and an end, as is the world—or with a beginning but no end, as we are the human souls and the Last Abode (the world hereafter). As for the fourth form of existence which has an end but not beginning, it cannot exist, since it is impossible that anything the eternity of which is established should be void of existence.

When this is established, it is manifest that there is more resemblance between human souls and the next world than there is between the human souls and the world. It is also evident that the *‘abd* (slave, man) is akin to the next world and not to the world. This kinship is a matter of consideration for the souls. It is therefore necessary that man should be more inclined towards the other-worldly [fol. 259b] spiritual bliss than towards his interest in the immediate happiness.

The Third Division

The created beings are of three kinds:¹ they are either perfect, incapable of imperfection, as are the beings of the celestial world whose bodies are celestial spheres, whose hearts are stars, and whose souls are those angels who enjoy nearness to

1. This tripartite division seems to be derived from Rāghib's *Tafṣīl al-nash'atayn*, Chapter 3, according to which man has been declared as holding an intermediary position between *al-malā'ikah*, angels, and *al-ḥayawānāt*, animals; see p. 29. Also see Rāghib, *al-Dharī'ah*, p. 16. Cf. al-Ghazzālī: *Ihyā'*, III, p. 9. Also see *Mizān al-'amal*, second ed. (Cairo, 1342/1923), p. 25.

Allāh, who remain pure and perfectly purified. Or, the created objects are imperfect which do not admit of perfection, as are animals especially the genii, devils, the plants and minerals.

A third kind of the created objects consists of those who are sometimes perfect and sometimes imperfect. When they reach the climax of perfection they are with the angels, closely placed near Allāh, stationed at the threshold of the Might of Allāh, the Exalted, constantly occupied with the remembrance of the Power of Allāh, contemplating the ascending steps of the bounties of Allāh, relying entirely on the outflow of the grace of Allāh, absorbed in the love of Allāh, the Exalted. Sometimes, they descend to the level of cattle and the place of appetite and anger. When they descend to the place of appetite, they, sometimes, become like a pig kept hungry, then let loose upon filth which he eats; and sometimes, like a fly which is attracted towards refuse whenever it is kept away from it. When they descend to the place of anger, they behave sometimes like a biting dog, and sometimes, like a violent camel, and some other time like a consuming fire, and devastating floods. Such a man, in spite of the fact that he is a single individual, is aptly called an illuminating angel, a darkening devil, an avaricious swine, a patient ass, a barking dog, and a sly fox. For there is no doubt that a single individual manifests all those conflicting conditions and contradictory states which only indicate the existence of a dominant power and an unlimited wisdom.

You must know that man marked with all these qualities¹ has been sent to this world as a traveller. Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī says:² 'People are on a journey and this world is a place of temporary halt; it is not a house, where man can settle down permanently, the womb of his mother is the beginning of his journey, his lifetime being the extent of the distance, his years, his halting places, months his miles and *farsakhs*, days and breathings his steps. The next world is his desired goal. He travels towards this goal like the travelling of the boat with its passenger, having been called to the House of Peace, as Allāh says: "And Allāh summoneth (them) to the abode of peace"³. The 'House of Peace' is the noblest of all places. Allāh Himself says: 'Gardens underneath which rivers flow'.⁴

1. Cf. Rāghib, *al-Dharī'ah*, p. 11.

2. The same idea has been expressed in his *Tafsīr* and is obviously derived from the saying of Imam 'Alī b. Abi Ṭālib. See *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, vol.1, p. 5; Rāghib, *al-Dharī'ah*, p. 9.

3. *Sūrat Yūnus*: 25.

4. *Āl 'Imrān*: 15; *al-Mā'idah*: 122; *al-Burūj*: 122; *al-Ḥadīd*: 21.

Chapter Two
On the Assertion of What Preceded in a Way Different but
Nearest to the Established View

You must know, the existents are of four kinds, in respect of Intellectual classification, because they:

- (i) either affect and are not at all affected in any way,
- (ii) or, receive effects but do not affect anything in any way,
- (iii) or, affect and are also affected at the same time,
- (iv) or, neither affect nor are affected at all.

These are the four kinds of existents and they do not admit of any more.

As for the first kind of existent which affects but is not at all affected, it is Allāh, the True, the Sublime and the Exalted, as He is the Necessary Being in respect of His Essence and in respect of the Reality of His ipseity¹ and that which is a Being Necessary in respect of this essence is a Necessary Being in all respects, since if His Particular Essence satisfies this definite affirmation and this definite negation, the affirmation and the negation must become eternal due to the Eternity of His Essence.

If, however, His particular Essence does not satisfy then, the negation and affirmation will depend upon considering the condition of others and his Ipseity will depend upon the realization of this affirmation and this negation. Now, that which depends upon something which itself depends on something else depends upon

that last something else. His reality is then described as depending upon this something external. Now, that which depends upon something else is in its essence a possible being and a possible being is only produced by a Being which is necessary in its essence. Production itself is a mode of affecting something. In so far as this productive Being is essentially independent it does not accept any effect [Fol. 260a] from other than itself, as it exists by itself. In so far as it affects everything other than itself and brings into being everything that is other than itself, it sustains something other than itself. That which exists by itself and sustains something else is in the highest rank of self-sustenance. The title of Him Who holds this description is the attribute of Qayyūm,² an exaggerative noun derived from 'Qiyām'. It is, therefore, established that Allāh, the True, Who affects others and is not affected is a pure Qayyūm, Self-existing. It is for this reason that the well-versed savants have agreed that the most sublime a verse in the Book of Allāh, the Exalted, is His expression: 'Allāh! There is no God save Him, the Alive, the Eternal.'³

1. Cf. al-Qaṣṣārī: *Sharḥ fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, n.p., n.d.

2. God must be essentially One and all else is possible depending on the One Who will, thus, be a cause for establishing everything else in general. Thus Allāh must be *Qayyūm*. Cf. al-Rāzī, *Kitāb lawāmi' al-bayyināt* (Cairo, 1323/1905) p. 226.

3. *Sūrat al-Baqarah*: 255.

As for the second kind of being which receives its effects but does not affect others, it is matter. To us it is established that the matter of this corporeal universe is (a collection of) atoms which are indivisible. According to others the matter of the body is an existent which does not occupy space, its form being acceptance of space and size.

Now that you have recognized this we say: These particles are not *per se* hot, cold, moist, dry, nor joined and disjoined. But they accept these descriptions and conditions.

These particles are called by some of them 'the forms' (the figures) which only contain absolute receptivity, obedience and submission. Since existence is conferred by way of generosity, it can only be caused by the existent. Receptivity and getting affected are only caused by deprivation (of existence or effect). It is, therefore, said in the Divine Book: 'Allāh is the Rich, and you are the poor.'¹

When you have known this we say: Existence is nobler than the absence of existence. It is for this reason that the noblest being which affects and is not affected is Allāh, the Sublime and the Exalted; and the most debased is that which is affected but does not affect others and it is 'matter'.

As for the third kind which affects and is, at the same time, affected, it is the universe of spirits and souls. This is because of the fact that when it is established that the Necessary Being is only one it is established that anything other than the One is possible in its essence and what is possible in its essence does not exist except when it is produced by something else, and the object receives effect from this something else. It is, therefore, established that spirits receive effect from something else. As for the fact that spirits affect others, some of them hold that which affects is one only. This is because the beings which are possible are sharers in the meaning of possibility and the meaning of possibility stands in need of an agent which affects either a definite agent in itself or an indefinite agent in itself. It is, however, absurd that possibility should depend on an indefinite agent, as what is essentially not definite does not exist *per se*, and what does not exist *per se* cannot impart existence to something else. When this second thesis is reduced to absurdity, the first is necessarily established, *viz.*, the possibility stands in need of something which is definite in itself. Every possible thing stands in need of the definite, as demonstrated. Hence, there is only one affecting agent.

Again, they say, spirits cause change; they are not affecting agents. Others say spirits produce effect in the corporeal world; they set bodies in an order and organize them. This view has been supported by philosophical arguments and has been strengthened by prophetic revelations. Allāh has said describing the angels: 'By those winds who distribute (blessings) by command', and said, 'By those who govern the event.'²

1. *Sūrat Muḥammad*: 38.

2. *Sūrat al-Dhāriyāt*: 4; *al-Nāzi'āt*: 5.

When this has been established, it is evident that according to either view the world of spirits is in between the Divine world and the corporeal world not by way of shape and direction but by way of nobility and rank. Therefore, in so far as they (the spirits) produce effects in corporeal objects, they are not below the physical bodies. Undoubtedly, the rank of the spirits is in between the first two ranks (the Divine World and the Physical world).

When you have known this, we say, ‘The spiritual objects¹ are of different ranks and positions. The highest position is held by those who [fol. 260b] have completely lost themselves into the light of the glory of the Nourishing Lord so much so that they hardly find time for administering the corporeal universe, their food being *Tawhīd*, Oneness of Allāh, and their drink *al-tafrīd* and *al-tamjīd*, that is separating Him from everything else as Unique and exalting Him. They have lost themselves in the lights of His Grace and are never free for anything other than Allāh—They are the Angels who (by their service and worship) stand close to Allāh. This rank has been indicated by the Divine Book in the expression: ‘And those who dwell in His Presence are not too proud to worship Him, nor do they weary.’²

Again, this category of spiritual beings occupies ranks in gnosis to which there is no end and which are known only to Allāh. This is because we have explained that lights of the glory of Allāh have no end. Similarly the ranks of Gnostics have also no end in their gnosis.

Now, since this category of spiritual beings have no other description except their absorption in the Divine gnosis and their understanding of those August glories, the Metaphysical philosophers necessarily call this category of Spirits pure Intellects. This is because although they are substances which exist in themselves, the abundance of their number and strength of their gnosis have made them appear as though they were identical with the intelligibles and were same as their realizations.

If anybody says: ‘On what basis do you say that for this category of spiritual beings nothing remains but to accept existence form the True one and sanctity from the lights which reveal the glory of the True one. This is all passivity and acceptance of causality. Now, where is the capacity to cause effects and where is action?’

1. The spiritual beings are the angels. According to the Christians, Angels are in reality immaterial rational souls. They further hold that if these souls are pure and good they are angels, but if they are evil-natured and vicious they are devils. Philosophers hold that Angels are self-supporting independent substance which have no place or shape, and which differ in nature from the human rational souls. Moreover, they are more perfect than the human souls in power, knowledge, and are divisible into two—one group having no duty of administering the heavens, for example, and remaining fully absorbed in Divine gnosis, love and obedience, and another group looks after heavenly affairs. Some philosophers speak of some other kinds of angels—those which are terrestrial and administer the worldly affairs, the good and virtuous which are called angels and the vicious are the devils. See *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, vol. 1, pp. 376–377.

2. *al-Anbiyāʾ*: 19; also *al-Aʿrāf*: 205.

We shall say: Though the spiritual beings are deeply absorbed in the understanding of the Divine Everlasting Lights, it is not a remote possibility that they emit their impressions to the world of the Celestial Spirits or the heavenly bodies in the same way as light emanates from the sun and life from the spirit. On this assumption they are active agents. It is also not a remote possibility that the spirits occupy a grade out of the grades accorded to the illuminating souls, when they are in a lower state than others. They receive lights from this 'other' who is more perfect than themselves. Take, for example, the sun and the moon. Although both the sun and the moon are two high noble substances in the corporeal world, the moon is evidently weaker in condition than the sun, and necessarily derives light from the sun. But, after receiving light from the sun the moon becomes generous and transmits it to the lower terrestrial world. It is not unlikely that the same is the condition of the spiritual beings.

To the Second rank of the world of Spirits and Souls, however, belong those who attend the administration of the world of bodies and who do not go to excess in their absorption into the passion for the August Eternity so as to become unmindful of attending the horizon of the lowest corporeal body. This rank also varies in nobility, the nobler and stronger the body they understand, the higher and more illuminating is they in themselves.

Since the most sublime of all that exists in the corporeal horizon is the Empyrean¹ (*al-'arsh*), the strongest of all the spirits related to the administration of bodies in the Spirit that rules the globe of the Empyrean. It is by no means a remote possibility that this Spirit is called the greatest spirit,² nor is it unlikely that it has

1. The philosophers called *al-'arsh* '*falak al-aflāk*', the highest heaven. Cf. M. al-Tahānawī, *Kashshāf iṣṭilāḥāt al-funūn* (Calcutta, 1862), vol. 2, p. 981. According to the Sufis the Highest Empyrean (*al-'arsh al-akbar*) applies to the heart of the 'Perfect Man': *ibid*.

2. The Greatest Spirit. But Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī applies it to the human spirit. Taftāzānī's exposition distinguishes three conceptions of angelology: there is that of Islamic orthodoxy; there is that of our *falāsifah*, diving the angelic hierarchies into pure Intelligences or Archangels—Cherubs, and Angels—Souls entrusted with the government of a body; finally, there is that of the *aṣḥāb al-ṭilismāt*, the theurgic Sages, a designation that can here include the 'Sabeans' of Ḥarrān and the Ishrāqī theosophers. Their doctrine has the peculiarity that it does not stress the '*aql*', the Angel's organ of self-intellection, which permits the philosophers their angelological deduction of the cosmos, pressing the hierarchy of the heavens as a sort of phenomenology of the angelic consciousness. The theurgic doctrine lays more stress on the *rūḥ*: instead of '*aql al-awwal*', it says *al-rūḥ al-a'zam*, the Supreme Spirit; it recognizes, for each species, for each category of beings, a governing and protecting Angel. This notion is in harmony with the fundamental notion of *ishrāqī* Neo-Zoroastrianism, and it finally leads to that of the Perfect Nature.

The exposition drawn from Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī has the advantage of defining a principle of systematization from the outset. Everyone, Rāzī declares, agrees upon the existence of Angels, regarding it as the super-eminent prerogative of the world above, and conceiving them as personal essences subsisting of themselves. The divergence arises at the point of determining whether these pure essences occupy space or, on the contrary, cannot be situated in space. See Henry Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital* (London, 1960), p. 51 sq.

faculties and offshoots which exist in the sides of the globe. These offshoots may have other branches which have been referred to in the Qur'ānic expression: 'and eight (angels) will uphold the Empyrean of their Lord that day, above them'.¹ Reference has been made to the branches of the offshoots in another Qur'ānic expression: 'And thou (O Muḥammad) see'st the angels thronging round the Empyrean, hymning the praises of their Lord'.²

The next rank belongs to the Spirit that rules the *Kursī*, as Allāh has said, 'His Throne includeth the heavens and the earth'.³

This second rank is followed by the Spirits that administer the sphere of the Zuḥal (Saturn), next the rest of the spheres of heavens and the orbits of stars in accordance with their various ranks and positions until we come to the spirits that administer the sphere of the moon, the sphere of the air, the water, the oceans, the earth and its mountains. All this we have mentioned in accordance with the speech of the law-giver. The Prophet has [fol. 261a] said, 'There came to me the angel of oceans⁴ and said so and so, the angel of mountains, the angel of thunder, the treasurer of Paradise and the treasurer of the Hell'.

All that we have mentioned and explained has been established by proof and has further been stressed by the revelation and the Qur'ān.

Know that you have now realized that the first kind is nobler than the second kind among the categories of spiritual beings. It is not unlikely that noble and high lights flow⁵ from the first kind over the second kind and impart strength to the spirit to administer these bodies through the lights that flow from the first.

You should also know that it is evident from what we have explained that the worlds of the souls and Spirits begin with the noble ones gradually descending to the lower ones till they reach the parts of the ranks touching the terrestrial spirits which are in relation to general spirits like the relation that the bodies enjoy with each other. Now, the terrestrial spirits vary among themselves very much in nobility and abasement, the loftiest and nobles of them being the human spirits which are followed by the animal spirits which are followed by the vegetative faculties which

1. *al-Hāqqah*: 17.

2. *al-Zumar*: 75.

3. *al-Baqarah*: 255.

4. The *ḥadīth* could not be traced. The idea that an angel is in charge of ocean is supposed by the following expression of Ibn 'Abbās recorded by Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, n.p., n.d., vol. 5, p. 382.

5. *Saiḥ* (to flow), Cf. al-Qāmūs, also, al-Qurṭubī (Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Anṣārī) vol. VIII (Cairo, 1938), p. 270, and *al-Taḥfīr al-kabīr*, Vol. 4, p. 504. Rāzī uses this word in a particular meaning. He says that when a man follows the path of submission to Allāh and refrains from eating, drinking and mating, he keeps himself away from the evils of passion and the doors of wisdom opens to him and the lights of the divine Grace become manifest for him. In the text the peculiar meaning of Rāzī is, obviously, understood. His reference to *ḥadīth* is, however, strange, as it does not find place in reliable collections of *ḥadīth*.

also belong to the genus of spirits, and are the last of the ranks of the realm of spirits. This is the discussion on the ranks of the Third Division which deals with existents that affect and receive effects at the same time.

The fourth kind, that is, the existent which neither affects nor receives an effect cannot exist among the intellects. For, when we have proved that anything other than the One, the True, is essentially possible in existence, necessary due to something else, it follows logically that what is other than the One has received effects from the One, and exists due to the One, and has come into being through the One. Hence, this kind is impossible.

Some people hold that the sphere that has no end and the duration that has no limit belongs to this kind. But it involves many delicate, hidden mysteries which do not deserve to be mentioned in this place.

Chapter Three On Explaining the Ranks of Human Spirits

You must know that the precise discussion of this subject cannot be made in a regular manner without advancing an introduction which is as follows: We evidently know that we like something and dislike some other thing. We, therefore, say that here there is either something which is essentially liked or something which is essentially disliked.

Or, it may be said that a thing must either be liked because it contains something, or disliked because it contains something else. The second possibility is absurd, as it leads to an infinite¹ chain of argument (*tasalsul*) or to a circular² argument (*dawr*) (with infinite regress) both of which are absurd.

Even if we agree with the genuineness of continuity and circularity, it is certain that on the supposition of the continuous or circular matter there is no such thing as to be liked or disliked in itself. According to this view everything that is liked is liked because it contains something else. It is therefore necessary to hold that there is nothing which is absolutely desirable or absolutely undesirable. But we have explained that it is evidently known that there is surely something which is liked or disliked. Hence, the case is contrary to the assumption. It is, therefore, established that there is someone who is essentially liked and something which is essentially disliked.

1. Arabic *al-tasalsul* means to arrange things without any limitation. It can be of four kinds: firstly, continuation of entities available in existence, or not. The second is like continuation of events, continuity with an arrangement, or without arrangement; the second is like that of rational souls either naturally, such as continuity of cause and effect (*'illat* and *ma'lūl*) and description, and the object of description, or in constitution like the continuity of bodies. The last two kinds are impossible.

2. Arabic *al-dawr* is to make a thing depend on something that depends on the thing itself. Cf. *al-Ta'rifāt* of Sayyid Sharif al-Jurjānī (Istanbul, 1318), p. 72.

Now, after a thorough discussion and consideration we find nothing about which it may be possibly said that it is essentially liked, except 'pleasure' and 'perfection'. Truly speaking, there is no difference between the two, since what is 'pleasant' is the cause of achieving a perfect state of pleasure, and what is 'perfect' is 'pleasant.' Only we call what is physically pleasant 'pleasure' and what is spiritually pleasant 'perfection.'

Again, what is essentially disliked is 'pain' and 'loss' which in fact, for the reason mentioned above, have no difference in reality. For, 'perfection' is essentially liked due to its essence in so far as it is perfection, and 'loss' is essentially disliked due to its essence in so far as it is 'loss'.

After the strong argument has been cited, this [fol. 261*b*] introduction is well-established by several reasons:

1. Firstly, when an imperfect one is described with the attributes of praise and eulogized, he feels pleased though he is aware that the speaker is a liar. And when a perfect man is condemned with the attributes of disparagement, he feels aggrieved though he is aware that the speaker has lied. This is only because of the fact that the very idea of achieving perfection is 'pleasant' in its essence and that of incurring loss is repugnant in its essence.

2. Secondly, when you listen to the story of Rustam and Isfandyār¹ and hear of their immense courage and their victory over their contemporaries, you feel in your heart extreme admiration for them. This is the reason why the storyteller causes the people to crowd around him by telling stories of a similar nature and induces them to take money out of their pockets and offer him. This indicates that 'perfection' is desired for its own sake.

3. Thirdly, when we undertake any kind of trade, we put the question to ourselves: 'Why have we undertaken to bear the burden of this profession?' We answer, 'We have only undertaken this to make money.' When we ask, again, 'Why do we seek money?' The answer is given by us: 'We need money in order to be able to secure pleasures.' When we repeat by saying: 'Why should we seek pleasures?' We say our intellect decides that we seek pleasure for its own sake. The case is similar to 'perfection' which is also sought for its own sake.

When this introduction is established we say: 'Perfection causes strength either by its essence or by its attributes. Perfection in the essence must be essentially necessary in so far as it does not accept in any way, the absence of existence and annihilation. But to achieve this perfection is not possible, since a thing is either essentially necessary or not. If it is essentially necessary the necessity will be achieved for the essence. What is achieved cannot further be achieved, and if it is not essentially necessary, it becomes impossible for it to turn into what is essentially necessary. Now, that of which the existence is not possible cannot be an object of desire.

1. Rustam, son of Zāl, the most renowned hero among the Persians. Isfandyār, son of Gushtāsp of the first dynasty of Persian kings.

It is, therefore, established that the perfection achieved through inherent necessity cannot be the desired object. On the other hand, what is essentially possible comes into being only through something else and whenever which exists due to something else, is a necessary being as long as this 'something else' exists. Hence, it is this 'something else' through which the necessity of its existence is accomplished. When the necessity of existence is desired for its own sake, then anything that causes it is also desired. Now, due to this concept anything that causes the existence of an object and its continued subsistence in accordance with its best possible condition, will be desired for its own sake; and anything that causes the non-existence of something in itself due to the absence of its excellent conditions, will be disliked for its own sake.

Since the True, the Exalted and the Eulogized, is a Necessary Being in His Essence, He is the Lover of His Essence, and is the Beloved by virtue of His Essence, and since it is a necessary function of His Essence to cause the possible objects to emanate from Him and we have already explained that that which emanates from the beloved is also lovable, therefore, the actions of Allāh are lovable. It is for this reason that Allāh said: 'He loves them and they love Him.'¹ Some of the Sufi masters who listened to this verse said: 'surely though Allāh loves them, He, in fact, loves His self only.'²

As for perfection in attributes, we have pondered but found nothing of this kind except Knowledge and Power. Since Knowledge is perfection in its essence, it is essentially lovable.

When you have known this we say: Human spirits, as you have realized, has no way of achieving the essential necessity. They, therefore, desire to achieve necessity through something else. Hence, everything that is the cause of man's life and the continuity of his existence is dear to him essentially and whatever is the cause of his death and annihilation is essentially disliked by him.

As for the discourse on Knowledge and Power, [fol. 262a] you have known that human spirits have two functions that are (1) receiving effects and (2) acting on his own initiative. When they attend to the Divine world they receive effects and when they attend to the corporeal material world, they act on their own initiative.

When they receive effects from the Divine world, they sometimes receive existence and sometimes the sacred manifestations and spiritual forms which constitute the sciences.

As for their acting upon the material world, this is because they possess authority over this world in so far as they possess the power of managing (things) according to their will.

Since there is no end to the stages of knowledge and power, there is also no end to the stages of human love for them, nor is there any end to brooding over the

1. *al-Mā'idah*: 54.

2. Al-Qushayrī has recorded a saying indicating the same meaning. See *al-Risālah al-qushayriyyah* (n.p., 1940/1359), p. 158.

means of achieving the two desired objects. But it is impossible that a man should attain knowledge without limitation or have power over the objects without any limitation. The knowledge attained by human spirits as well as their power over material existents, despite its wide scope, is limited. Whatever its extent, is also limited. Evidently, the human soul does not reach a stage in knowledge and power where it may achieve unlimited things. Hence, it is impossible for the substance of soul to be free from lust and demand. Human lust for securing wealth is only because he wants power over inanimate beings, his lust for attaining high positions is only because he wants power over the spirits of the intelligents and his lust for contending with figures and wrestling with the brave ones is only because he wants to be powerful and dislikes to be overpowered. All this goes back in origin to the root of power which is an attribute of perfection.

If a man is able to enforce his commands in a town, his ego aspires to be able to enforce his commands over the whole country, and when he is able to do this, he aspires to execute his commands over the countries, seas and mountains; nay, he even aspires to gain command over the stars and heavenly bodies. Nevertheless, sometimes he does not want this power due to a cause that renders it impossible for him to achieve it. Hence, he refrains from such an attempt due to some obstacle that stands in his way, and not because he is devoid of such ambition.

Here is a delicate point and that is, a man does not desire very much to achieve this position before he enjoys the pleasure of power and authority. His longing for achieving this state increases when he tastes it and becomes familiar with it. His inclination towards this can be compared with his other faculties. For example, a man hears the name of a beautiful woman and falls in love with her by merely hearing her name without seeing her. When he tastes the pleasure of executive power and authority over her, he loves the woman because of the fact that he saw her, liked her and enjoyed the pleasure of mating with her. Now, mating simply strengthens his love in the substance of his spirit and adds to his lust for mating with her. Similarly, whenever he has access to lofty positions in state and authority, his lust for having more power and more authority increases. It is, therefore, established that there is no end to the lust of a man for achieving knowledge and power. It is also established that the whole of the corporeal world is limited. So, when we suppose that a man governs the whole of the world, the necessary result is that he enjoys a limited kingdom.

We have already explained that man wants unlimited power. The assertion is therefore that even if man enjoys power over the whole of the corporeal world he does not refrain from demanding more power. If a man achieves the knowledge of all that is covered by existence, his lust for achieving knowledge necessarily remains, as we have explained that what knowledge and power he has achieved is limited and what is absent from him is unlimited, [fol. 262b] though it lies within his power that the law-giver (peace be upon him!) said: ‘There are two

greedy persons who are never satisfied—a seeker of knowledge and a seeker of the world.¹

Now that you know this, we say: ‘Though the achievement of power to exercise sway over the lower sphere, i.e., the corporeal world, is a perfection, but it entails a limited affair. I mean, the power of the soul to exercise sway over the corporeal world is conditioned by the continuous connection of the soul with body. But this connection may be severed. Now, when the connection is severed, the power is lost; the loss of the beloved after having a long love-affair and suffering a loss that cannot be repaired, necessitates a great catastrophe and a strong desire that brings destruction. As a precaution against falling into this undesirable state, this desired object becomes the object of dislike.

As for the engagement of the soul in seeking perfect knowledge, it is pleasure in the present and happiness in the future. This is because the authority of the Soul over the corporeal world is conditioned with the connection of the soul with the body.

As for the fact that the soul receives the pure manifestations² and Divine Knowledge, this does not depend upon the connection of the Soul with the body; rather this connection is, as it were, an obstruction in achieving perfection. When this connection is broken, the Divine Manifestations becomes illumined. It is, therefore, established by what we have mentioned that attention to the higher sphere for a seeker who receives the Divine Manifestations necessitates perfection in the present and in the future.

Attending to the lower sphere for the sake of achieving domination over the corporeal world, necessitates pleasure in the present time but, at the same time, it necessitates great pain after death. This is why the people of intelligence have agreed that it is their duty to keep themselves engaged in attaching their spirit to the higher world by turning it away from the lower world. Those who attend to the world of purity surely enjoy continuity without annihilation, honor without disgrace, pleasure without pain, and peace without fear.

When you have known this, it becomes evident that the souls³ are of three kinds:

1. The full *ḥadīth* is recorded by Khaṭīb al-Dimashqī in his *Mishkāṭ al-maṣābiḥ* (Delhi, n.d.) p. 29. The same *ḥadīth* has also been narrated on the authority of Anas b. Mālik. The *ḥadīth* has been referred to by Ghazzālī in his *Ihyā’*, III, p. 232.

2. The Arabic *al-jaliyyah* means a sure piece of information, Cf. Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wa’l-tanbīhāt* (Tehran, 1379/1959), vol. 3, p. 298.

3. On the term *al-nufūs*: In fact human souls differ in nature, some are noble and divine, some mean and abased; some are kind and tender and some despotic and dominating; some do not like the body and some desire to rule and achieve position. They never deviate from their nature and disposition but by training and caution they may change their manners and habits. Cf. *al-Taḥṣīr al-kabīr*, vol. 1, p. 121. As for the three states of the human soul in relation to appetite (*hawā*), Rāzī has likely described it after Rāghib, *al-Dharī’ah*, p. 241.

1. The highest is the position of those who attend to the Divine World, and sink themselves in these everlasting lights, and in the branches of Divine gnosis (Knowledge) and are sometimes called in the Qur'ān, 'the foremost', as the Qur'ān says: 'The foremost in the race, the foremost in the race: Those are they who will be brought nigh',¹ sometimes they are called, 'Those who will be brought nigh', as the Qur'ān has it. 'Thus if he is of those brought nigh'.²

2. In the middle position are those souls which attend to both the worlds. Sometimes, they advance upward to the higher world by obeisance and devotion, and, sometimes, descend to the lower world for the sake of administering the affairs of the world and exercising sway over it. They are the people of the right hand (or righteousness) and the balanced people.

3. The third position belongs to those who attend to the lower world and are exceedingly occupied in seeking its pleasures. They are the people of the left hand and are transgressors.

Now, Knowledge that leads to the path of the nearly-placed souls is the science of spiritual exercises and discipline, and Knowledge that leads to the path of the people of the right hand is the science of morals (Ethics).

1. *al-Wāqī'ah*: 11.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

‘Aḍud al-Dīn Ījī

‘Aḍud al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad Rukn al-Dīn ibn ‘Abd al-Ghaffār al-Bakrī al-Shabānkārī known as Ījī was probably born after 680/1281 in Īj, near today’s city of Shīrāz. Having gained fame both as an Ash‘arite theologian and a Shāfi‘ī jurist, he was invited by the Īlkhānīd sultan, Abū Sa‘īd, to Sulṭāniyyah in 716/1316 and was appointed as the chief judge, probably at the recommendation of the wazīr Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Rashīd al-Dīn whom Ījī had befriended. Ījī held a similar position at the court of Abū Ishāq Injū in Shīrāz (736/1336) where he met the legendary Ḥāfiẓ, the supreme Persian poet, whose mystical poetry remains to this day a source of inspiration in the Persian speaking regions of the Islamic world. Like so many other prominent theologians and philosophers, Ījī became a victim of power struggles between various kings and their territorial ambitions. He died as a prisoner in 756/1355.

Ījī’s theological thought was influenced by his teacher Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan al-Jarābardī and he received some of his education among the students of Bayḍāwī with whom he had also studied. Ījī was particularly influenced by Bayḍāwī’s *Maṭālī‘ al-anwār* (Rising of the Lights). Ījī was a contemporary of Simnānī, the grand metaphysician of Sufi doctrine and the founder of the doctrine of *wahdat al-shuhūd* (unity of witnessing) as well as Ḥaydar Āmulī with whom Shi‘i mystical theology reached a new peak.

Ījī is not known for the originality of his thought but his works are highly respected as representative of the types of theological debates that took place in the Islamic world in the eighth/fourteenth century. Ījī should be given credit for having compiled a philosophical and theological encyclopedia containing a vast array of *kalām* discussions which were prevalent in his time. His major work, a *summa* of *kalām*, is entitled *Kitāb mawāqif fi ‘ilm al-kalām* (Book of Stations in the Science of Theology). This work, which is still being taught in a number of theological seminaries in many countries of the Islamic world and especially Egypt, is divided into six parts: (1) epistemology, (2) ontological principles, (3) discussions concerning

accidents and their categories, (4) substance, simple and composite bodies, the elements and the celestial bodies, (5) the soul, the intellect, angelic intelligences, the Divine Essence and Attributes and what can be called 'rational theology', and (6) prophetology and eschatology. His other important works include *Fawā'id al-ghiyāthiyyah* (Ghiyāthian Benefits) and *Miftāḥ al-'ulūm* (Key to the Sciences).

In this chapter we have included a section from the *al-Mawāqif* consisting of *Observations* and *Intentions*. Here Ījī undertakes a discussion of such issues as the definition and divisions of science, speculation and the manner in which it takes place and the question of methodology with respect to theological inquiries. Particularly noteworthy are the numerous references in the passage to major figures of the Mu'tazilite school and brief presentations of their opinions.

M. Aminrazavi

THE BOOK OF STATIONS IN THE SCIENCE OF THEOLOGY

al-Mawāqif fī ‘ilm al-kalām

Translated for this volume by Majid Fakhry from ‘Aḍud al-Dīn Ījī’s *al-Mawāqif fī ‘ilm al-kalām* (Cairo, 1983), pp. 7–40.

First Station

Introductions Containing Some Observations

First Observation:

What ought to be prefaced in every science, in several intentions

First Intention: Definition of theology

This is required so that its student should be well informed; because whoever mounts a blind beast is bound to blunder. Now, theology is a science which enables one to demonstrate religious dogmas by recourse to arguments and rebut doubts. By dogmas is meant what is a matter of inner belief regardless of action, and by religious what pertains to the religion of Muḥammad, may God bless and greet him. As for the opponent, even if we declare him to be at fault, we do not exclude him from the class of theologians.

Second Intention: Its subject matter

For that is how the different sciences are distinguished one from the other. This is the known, insofar as it bears on the affirmation of religious dogmas from near or far. It is said that [the known] is the essence of God Almighty, since His attributes and actions in this world, such as the creation of the world, the hereafter and the resurrection are discussed in it; as well as His ordinances, such as the commissioning of prophets, the appointment of the Imām, reward and punishment.

This is open to question in two ways. First, subjects may be discussed in it, as substance and accidents, not insofar as they depend on Him. For this is not done by way of principle; since we do not hold this to belong to the class of self-evident matters; therefore, it must be demonstrated in some science or other. If it is demonstrated in this science (i.e. theology), then it must be part of its problems; or alternatively in another science, assuming that there is a higher, religious science, which is impossible by convention. Secondly, the existence of the subject-matter of a science is not demonstrated in it. Therefore, either the existence of the Maker is self-evident, or it is demonstrated in a higher science—but both alternatives are false.

It has also been said that [its subject-matter] is being *qua* being.¹ However, it differs from metaphysics in this respect, that discussion here is restricted to the Islamic canons. There are two views on this point. First, we might discuss in [theology] non-being and states, as well as other matters, not insofar as they exist in reality, such as speculation and proof; but conceptual existence is not envisaged by them.²

Second, the Islamic canon is the true part of these problems, and in this respect [theological] knowledge is not different; since everyone claims to possess it. For, even those in error are among the masters of theology, even they are liable to error or innovation.

Third Intention: Its utility

To guard against futility and increase the [student's] desire for it, if he happens to be well-disposed. This consists of the following:

1) Rising from the low level of imitation to the apex of certainty. 'God shall raise those of you who have believed and those who have achieved knowledge many grades.' (Qur'ān 58:12)

2) Guiding those who seek guidance by making the arguments clear, and compelling the disputants by recourse to argument.

3) Preserving the fundamentals of religion so as not to be racked by the doubts of sceptics.

4) Building upon the juridical sciences; for it is the cornerstone and to it belongs adopting them and clinging to them.

5) Ensuring sound intention and belief; since through these the good reception of works is expected. The aim of all this is to gain felicity in both worlds.

Fourth Intention: Its rank

To know its importance, so as to accord it the seriousness it deserves. You already know that its subject-matter is the most general and the highest of matters and its aim the noblest goals and the most profitable, and its proofs are certain and determined by pure reason, having been reinforced by tradition, which is the most reliable. These, then, are the exclusive modes of the nobility of science. It is then, the noblest science.

1. As stated in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, VII.

2. That is, the theologians.

Fifth Intention: Its problems

These are its aims: namely, the theoretical decision regarding any one of the known religious dogmas or that upon which the demonstration of any of them depends. It is thus the highest science, for there are no principles therein which can be demonstrated in another science; its principles being either self-evident or demonstrable by it. These are problems of [this science] or principles of other problems therein, not dependent on these; so as to avoid circularity. From it are the other sciences derived, but it is not derived from any other science. It is, then, the master science absolutely.

Sixth Intention: Its name

It has been called theology (*kalām*), either because it corresponds to the logic of the philosophers or because its chapters were entitled ‘discourse’ (*kalām*), on such and such, or because the problem of discourse is its best-known part; so that controversy proliferated in it and blood-lettings prevailed therein, or finally because it imparts the power of discourse to religious questions or against the enemy.

Second Observation:*Definition of absolute science, with respect to which there are three views*

1. The first view is that it is necessary. This was chosen by Imām [Fakhr] al-Rāzī, for two reasons. First, that everyone’s knowledge of his existence is necessary. This is a particular mode of knowledge, of which the absolute science is a part. Now knowledge of the part precedes knowledge of the whole, and that which precedes the necessary must be necessary *a fortiori*. Therefore absolute knowledge is necessary.

The response is that what is necessary is a mode of knowledge pertaining to one’s existence; but this is different from conceiving it and does not entail it. Therefore, it is not necessary to conceive of absolute knowledge, let alone of its being necessary. [The knower] is not said or known to be a knower. Moreover, knowledge is one form of my conceiving this assent.¹ If I say the self-evidence of assent does not entail the self-evidence of conception, then the self-evident is that which does not depend, once the two terms [of a proposition] are conceived, on discourse. Therefore, it is contended that this assent is possible without discourse, since idiots and children are capable of it. However, it is futile to dispute about terminology. For we say it is enough in assent to conceive of the two terms somehow, just as we judge of a given body that it occupies a given locus, although we may not know its reality. We simply

1. Conception, corresponding to definition, and assent corresponding to judgment are the two major parts of Aristotelian logic.

judge that it is necessary for it to be a soul or not even if we do not know the reality of either of them, except with respect to something general.

Secondly, everything other than knowledge is known through knowledge; for if knowledge were known through something else, we would be involved in a vicious circle. This is an argument against those who say that it is known, but not necessarily. The response is that anything other than knowledge is known through a particular mode of knowledge, not through the conception of the reality of knowledge; and what we are trying to know through something other than knowledge is simply the conception of the reality of knowledge. Therefore, there is no circularity. The crux of the solution of the two objections is discrimination between the act of knowledge and its conception.

2. The second view is that upheld by Imām al-Ḥaramayn (al-Juwaynī) and al-Ghazzālī. It states that it is not necessary and its definition is difficult. Sometimes they appeal to the second argument, whose mode of knowing, as they both say, is division and example. However, this is far-fetched, for if these two yield distinctions then they could serve as definers, otherwise they would not yield any knowledge.¹

3. The third view states that it is theoretical. Many definitions have been given thereof:

The first is that of some Muʿtazilite authors, namely that it consists in believing the thing to be as it is; but this is not conclusive due to the possibility of imitation therein, if it accords with it. Therefore, they have added ‘either by necessity or by proof’, but this will only apply to the probable belief, unless belief is specified as decisive by convention. This can be rebutted by noting that it excludes knowledge of the impossible, for it is not a thing by convention. Whoever denies that knowledge can bear on the impossible is a quibbler and a disputant; since this is a judgment, therefore its knowledge is necessary. It may be objected, however, that the impossible may be called a thing linguistically; its not being a thing, in the sense of being unstable in itself, does not contradict that.

The second is that of al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr [al-Bāqillānī] who defined knowledge as the knowledge of the known as it is. This would exclude God’s knowledge, since it is not called knowledge. Moreover it involves circularity; since the known is derived from knowledge and it cannot be known except after it is known, and with respect to what is added to it; since knowledge is not possible except in this way.

The third [definition] is that of al-Shaykh [Ashʿarī], who says in one place that which necessitates calling whomever it subsists in a knower, or the one in whom the name knower subsists; but this involves obvious circularity. In another place, he says the apprehension of the object known as it is. This also involves circularity and the fact that apprehension is only a metaphor for knowledge, together with the above-mentioned addition.

1. In the sense of discursive knowledge.

The fourth is [the definition] of Ibn Fūrak; namely, what is predicated of one in whom the perfection of action subsists. This introduces the concept of power and excludes our notion of knowledge. For perfection does not enter into it, according to us. Moreover, he illustrated it by reference to our knowledge of ourselves and of the Creator. We respond that this will hold, if it refers to what contributes to perfecting the action in question. However, if he meant what makes it possible in general, then it is wrong. They¹ use other expressions close to this one, such as making the known [object] clear or affirming it, or the conviction of its being what it is.

The fifth is that of Imām [Fakhr] al-Rāzī; namely, that it is a firm conviction corresponding to what is necessary. This is unobjectionable; but it excludes conception, which is a form of knowledge, since we say that I know the meaning of the triangle and the reality of man.

The sixth is that of the philosophers; namely, the incidence of the form of the thing in the mind, or the representation of the essence of the thing known in the soul of the knower. This is based on the notion of being in the mind, which we will discuss later, when we deal with the question of conjecture, ignorance and imitation, as well as doubt and imagining. Calling these knowledge conflicts with linguistic usage, custom and religion; however, there is no disputing about conventional usage.

The seventh, which we favour, is that it is a property which endows its bearer necessarily with the ability to distinguish between different notions without allowing for any contradictory. He mentions ordinary sciences as allowing for contradictories. The response is that allowance for contradictories in the case of ordinary [notions] in the sense that, if their contradictory were supposed, nothing would follow except the possibility of that distinction which involves the contradictory. This is the intent, but it is not allowed, since notions pertain to rational matters only. The apprehension of the senses is excluded; but whoever believes it to be equivalent to knowledge excludes this condition. Some people add another condition, saying that the universal notion plus this addition, although dispensable, bars this generalization; since knowledge of particulars would then be excluded. This is the case of people who say that knowledge is a property involving certain relationships. Those who say it is the same thing as relationship have defined [knowledge] as the act of distinguishing notions in the soul in a manner which does not admit of contradiction.

1. The theologians.

Third Observation:*On the divisions of knowledge, containing several intentions**First Intention*

If it is independent of judgment, then it is conception, or else assent. These are of two kinds essentially distinct and are relative to the necessary and well known, which is the possibility of truth and falsity or their opposite.

Second Intention

Contingent knowledge is divided into necessary and acquired. The necessary, as the Qāḍī [al-Bāqillānī] has put it, is what clings to the soul of the creature in such a way that he cannot disengage from it. He gave as an example the possibility of its cessation, through its contraries, such as sleep, oblivion, and the fact that it could be missed, prior to sensation and feeling, without being capable of being restored, since its expression gives the impression of power.

If it is said that the same is true of the theoretical, once it has been gained, we reply: 'It does not follow from the loss of power, once it has been gained, that the loss of power absolutely is possible.' For, we could not say that it is that whose acquisition is not possible for the creature. The intuitive is what pure reason affirms; therefore it is more specific; whereas the acquired is the opposite of the necessary.

As for theoretical [knowledge], it is what sound reasoning entails, but not what it necessitates (since this is not our view); nor what is learnt subsequently. For, there enters, then, into this definition some necessary [cognitions]. Whoever holds that acquisition is not possible, except through reasoning, believes it to be the same as the acquired variety, and then the definitions of the two are indistinguishable. But whoever believes that acquisition is possible in some other way regards it as more specific than the acquired variety and is a concomitant thereof accidentally.

Third Intention

That both conception and assent are necessary by means of feelings. For without it, circularity or regress would follow necessarily, and these two exclude acquisition. It cannot be said that this is also theoretical and cannot be demonstrated; because we say theoretical on that assumption and not with respect to the essence of the matter; whereupon that assumption falls to the ground. The truth is that this is an argument levelled at those who acknowledge cognitions, but regard them as acquired, not at those who deny them completely; since some of them are theoretical necessarily.

Fourth Intention

Refutation of some feeble views regarding this problem and they are four. The first is that everything is necessary, which some people have maintained, including Imām al-Rāzī. This falls into two groups: one allowing its dependence on theory, so that the dispute with them is purely semantic; and another group who deny this. If the members of this last group mean that it does not depend upon theory necessarily but customarily, or that knowledge ensuing upon it is not due to it or to our [human capacity], but rather to God's creation, then it is the view of right-speaking Ash'arites; but if they say that it does not depend upon [theory] at all, then they are quibbling.

The second view is that conception cannot be acquired, and this is the view of Imām al-Rāzī, for two reasons. One is that the object sought is either something which is felt, therefore it is not sought; or not [felt] then it is not sought either. For what is not attended to cannot be an object towards which the soul turns. I answer, that generalization is not allowed; because it is possible for the object to be known in one sense, but not in another. One may turn around and say that the sense in which it is known is known absolutely; and the sense in which it is unknown is unknown absolutely, therefore, neither of them can be sought.

The response is that we do not grant that the unknown aspect is unknown absolutely. For the unknown absolutely is that whose essence or anything rightly predicated of it cannot be conceived. Yet something has been conceived which rightly belongs to it, which is the known aspect. For the unknown aspect is the essence and the known aspect is those fixed attributes belonging to it; just as we know the spirit as something upon which life, sensation and motion depend, and as having a reality whose properties are these. Then, that reality can be sought in itself. Some have added to those two aspects a third thing in which they subsist, and yet it is not needed.

Some of the moderns have argued that our statement that whatever is felt cannot be sought, and whatever is not felt cannot be sought; but both statements cannot be true at the same time. For the converse of the converse of the contrary of all contradicts the other. Therefore, I answer by denying the convertibility of the universal affirmative proposition into a singular one, by converting the contrary once, and converting the subject in both of them through conception, another time.

The second aspect is if essence is known, it will be either by itself, its part or by something external, but all these alternatives are false; the first, because that would entail that it is known prior to being known; the second, because all the parts are the same. Thus, if some parts can define it, while it can only be known through the knowledge of all the parts, then those same parts would define themselves, which has been rejected. The third, because the external cannot be known unless it comprises all its individual members to the exclusion of everything else; but that

knowledge depends upon conceiving them, which involves circularity and the conception of everything else in detail, which is absurd.

Some modern scholars have responded that all the parts of essence are different from itself, since every one of them is prior, and so they all are. We reply that, if the essence were different from all its parts, then together with it, these parts could not be all, and without it, they would not be parts. Nor does it follow from the priority of the whole that the whole should be prior to it; or else the whole would be prior to itself. If they mean the material parts, then that would not be the whole, nor would it suffice for the knowledge of the reality of the essence.

Others have said that through all the conceptions of the parts a single conception of the parts arises; but the truth is that if the parts were conjured up, then they would be equivalent to the essence, instead of being a collection requiring the presence of something else, which is the essence. For the *definiendum* is the sum of elements each of which is prior, and this is similar to the external parts, insofar as they constitute the essence. For, it is constituted by all the parts, in the sense that every part must enter into its constitution.

The whole *is* the essence, not something dependent on it. You will find [the opponents] generalize this fallacy in denying external composition of something due to some alteration. The alternative for us is that it is due to some parts or that it does not require definition or to be definable by something other than itself or by something external; then a specific determination, not a specific knowledge thereof, would be required. If this is granted, then specific knowledge will depend on conceiving essence in some sense, so that circularity will be avoided. Or it may depend on conceiving something other than it in a general way, which is not detailed. This is possible, just as body has a specific location and no other. If it is said that if internal or external matters existed necessarily and entailed knowledge of the essence, then essence would be known and would not need to be defined or else it could not be made known; we would reply that what is needed is their presence together and in order, which is possible by acquisition only.

The third view is that whatever is believed in as essential for demonstrating the Maker, His attributes and prophethood is actually necessary. This can be countered by saying that the knowledge of God Almighty is necessary universally, either religiously or rationally, and nothing is impossible. Similarly, [the opponent] may argue that, were that knowledge inexistent, then the servant would be religiously obliged to seek it, and this is similar to laying an obligation on an ignoramus, since he who does not know these things does not know what obligation is at all. The response is that an ignoramus is one who does not understand discourse or has not been told that he is religiously responsible, not one who does not know that he is responsible; otherwise infidels would not be held religiously responsible. Knowledge of responsibility depends on its application and were its application dependent on knowledge thereof, we would be involved in circular reasoning.

The fourth view is that the whole is theoretical. This is the view of the Jahmites, which is refuted by what has preceded. They argue that the necessary is what the soul can never be divested of, and there is really no knowledge but that which the soul is divested of at birth, it is then acquired gradually as certain conditions are fulfilled. The response is that the soul may be divested of necessary [knowledge]. As for those who make it dependent on certain conditions or dispositions, that would be due to the absence [of those conditions or dispositions]. For us, it is possible that God Almighty may not create it¹ at one point, then create it in [the knower] without prior capacity or theoretical acumen.

Fourth Observation:

On vindicating the necessary sciences

For they are the terminal point and they are divided into:

- 1) Feelings, which are of little use in the sciences, since they are not general and thus cannot be used in an argument against others,
- 2) Sensations and intuitions. People fall into four groups, according to probabilities:

a: The first group includes those who recognize both varieties and they are the majority.

b: The second group includes those who are critical of sensible knowledge only.

This view is attributed to Plato, Aristotle, Ptolemy and Galen. Perhaps, they meant that rational conviction is not due to sensation alone, but together with other things conjoined to it, forcing us to assert with conviction, but we do not know when or how they arise. Otherwise their sciences would terminate at them. For, they argue, if the judgment or sense were taken into account, that will have to bear either on universals or particulars; but both alternatives are false. The first alternative is obviously false, especially since the learned scholars maintain that the judgment in our statement that fire is hot does not apply to every fire existing externally only, but to it and to all instances thereof too; for there is no doubt that the senses have nothing to do with it at all. The second alternative is false because the judgment of the senses with respect to particulars is frequently liable to error, for many reasons.

First, we often see a small object large, such as a distant fire in the dark, the grape appearing like a pear, and the ring, brought close to the eyes, appears like a large hoop. Contrariwise, far-off objects and such as are one may [appear] many, as is the case with the moon if we look at it while blinking one eye, or water when it rises. For we see it as two moons. Similarly, the one-eyed sees the one as two.

1. That is, necessary knowledge.

Contrariwise, if adjacent lines of different colours are extended from the centre of the millstone to its circumference, they will appear when it rotates, to have one colour made up of them all.

The non-existent sometimes appears to exist, such as the mirage and what the master of sleight of hand or sorcery shows, and the line when a water-drop falls on it and the circle turning the flame quickly, and the moving object appearing to be at rest. Contrariwise, the shade appears static while it moves and the passenger in a ship sees it as stationary and the shore as moving; and the moving object to one side as moving to its opposite and the moon as moving towards the clouds, while it is the clouds which are moving towards it. If we move to one side, we see it moving towards it, even if it is moving up in the opposite direction. We also see trees bending over and faces long, broad and crooked, depending on the shape of the mirror.

Secondly, the senses do not discriminate between equals; sometimes they assert their continuity when they come together as the orthodox [Sunnis] say in the case of colours and al-Nazzām in the case of bodies. Therefore, this is probable in all cases.

Thirdly, the sleeper sees in his sleep what he is certain is real, just as he asserts with respect to what he sees while awake. The same is true of the subject of inflammation; therefore this is possible in other cases. This cannot be said to be due to a cause which is inexistent, when one is in the state of waking and good health; for the absence of a given cause will not do, since it is necessary to exhaust the causes and to show that they are inexistent and to show the necessary existence of the effect when [the cause] is inexistent, as well as each one of the three, which if true, would be the result of close inspection, to the exclusion of self-evidence. It is strange that whoever hears this will continue to seek the causes of error; but stranger still is the case of one who denies that sensation is a reliable judge, and yet holds that reason through the intermediary of the senses actually is.

Fourthly, we see snow looking extremely white, although it is not actually white. For if we examine it closely, we will find that it is made up of transparent parts, which they say is caused by the interpenetration of air and the crossings of the rays reflected by their small surfaces which are of the first type. Even clearer than this is the pulverized glass, which if it is not put together causes whiteness, since solid, hard parts do not interact. Even clearer than both cases is the cleavage between the parts of thick, transparent glass; since it consists of nothing but glass and compressed air, and neither of these is coloured. The corollary is that reason should not affirm anything by itself alone, and we should not be content with it; not that we should not trust its affirmation and hold it to be simply probable.

The third group comprises those who question intuitive truths only. For they say that these are weaker than *sensibilia*, of which they are subsidiaries. That is why whoever loses one sense loses a whole science, such as the blind and the

impotent. Therefore, we should not question *sensibilia*. They also have various doubts regarding them.

First, the most obvious intuition is that the thing either is or is not, and this is uncertain. The former, because those who hold this view illustrate it by this [example] and three others depending on it. One is 'the whole is larger than the part', or else the second part counts or does not count. The second is 'things equal to one thing are equal' or else their reality is either one or not one. The third is 'the same body cannot be in two places at the same time;' otherwise it would not be different from two bodies, and the other body will either count or not count. Those deductions are notable, although some people are unable to sum them up.

The second [doubt] is manifold. First, it depends on conceiving the inexistent; and this is inconceivable because everything conceivable is distinct and what is distinct is certain, so that the inexistent is certain, which is absurd. Moreover, to declare it to be inconceivable entails that it is conceived; for we hold that speaking of the inexistent absolutely cannot have any meaning. The other is a criticism not a solution; it confirms the opposition of definitive statements, which is one of our decisive arguments. Secondly, it entails that the inexistent is different from the existent; and if different it would have a reality, which reason may negate; or else existence would be negated, and if negated would be a particular inexistent, so that a part of the existent would be a part of it. This is absurd.

The third [doubt] is the assertion of the existence of the thing and its inexistence at the same time, either in itself (such as the statement blackness either exists or does not); or in another (such as the statement a body is either black or not, both of which are false; the first, because a thing cannot be understood from both its opposite sides.) Regarding existence, the existence of the thing is either itself, and thus cannot be predicated of itself, such as saying black is black and the existent is existent or it is something else, so that it will be inexistent in itself, or the argument would resume and it would exist twice, which is absurd. Moreover, the existent would exist, or else the two contradictories would both be true together; or the intermediate would exist in which the object sought would inhere. It would follow, then, that the existent subsists in the non-existent; the same would hold in the case of motions and colours, and the desired result would follow. Moreover, this would entail that two are the same as one, which is absurd; and we do not mean that blackness is said¹ to exist, for then we could ask the same question regarding qualification, and the regress² would ensue. If it is said that the regress is not impossible in conceptual matters, we would answer that qualification is a relation between the qualified and the quality, and so it subsists in them both, and not in something else, which is the mind. Nevertheless, the judgment of the mind either corresponds to the external reality (and then the above conclusion would follow)

1. Literally: is qualified.
2. That is, to infinity.

or not, so that it will not matter. As for negation, it is because its existence is either itself, so that it is negated of itself, (and that would be contradictory), or of another, then its negation would depend on the conception of the latter, which requires its distinct existence, but not in the mind, for the above reason. That would also entail that essence is devoid of existence, which we shall refute.

The second statement is false, because the positive part thereof cannot be conceived, since it amounts to affirming that two is the same as one. For, qualification is not synonymous with negation since it is the opposite of non-qualification, which is negative, and it applies to the non-existent too. Therefore, qualification is affirmative or else both opposites would be negated and no existence would be possible. As for being themselves, they cannot be conceived without [existence], but if they are other than themselves, then they would have the character of qualification through [existence], and then we will have a regress *ad infinitum*. Therefore, the truth lies in negation all along, which you [namely, the foe] deny.

The intermediate between them is certain, as will appear later; and as some, who have affirmed it have implied, so that their position may be taken as positive proof. However, one party doubted the self-evident and the other has no confidence in it. The answer is that it is the concept which is meant by the non-existent, which is the same as what inexistence refers to, and not that there is an entity to which inexistence attaches necessarily in the same thing, that is distinct and certain. Predication of otherness, as a concept, unity or identity, qualification and similar conceptual matters have no real existence, nor have their contradictories in the outside world, just as impossibility. You will be offered later additional confirmation, which will enable you to grasp the answer in detail.

Secondly, we affirm the truth of customary facts, just as we affirm primary truths, there being no difference between the two, in point of certainty. An example of these is that this old man was not generated at once, without father or mother, but rather gradually; he was first a baby, then a child, then an adult and finally an old man. Another example is that these home utensils did not turn, after I left them, into virtuous people competent in the metaphysical and geometrical sciences, or into precious stones; the sea did not turn into grease and honey, and finally there is not, under my feet, a diamond. Another example still is that whoever responds to my discourse in an appropriate manner is obviously a living, understanding, knowing and capable person.

Now, if we examine these propositions we will find that they are such that we can affirm their truth definitely, so that probability arises with respect to all [the previous examples], as all reasonable men would concede. According to the theologians, however, the reason is that all such occurrences depend upon the All-powerful, Willing [Creator], who could actually refer some of these to possibility or universal [created] power. According to the philosophers, the reason is the dependence of terrestrial occurrences on the positions of the spheres. It could perhaps happen that a certain

strange, celestial occurrence might take place, the like of which did not happen or happened once, but was not repeated for thousands of years and historical records did not document; hence, that strange occurrence. Moreover, I myself can affirm that my son is not the [angel] Gabriel or that fly, but you allow it, reporting that [the angel] could appear in the shape of Dāḥya al-Kalbī. The answer is that possibility does not contradict necessary occurrence, as in some observable cases.

Thirdly, humours and customs have an effect on our beliefs. Thus, the hard-hearted likes inflicting pain and the soft-hearted dislikes it; and he, who has practised a certain religious creed for some time and was brought up in it, will affirm its truth and the falsity of its opposite. It is possible, then, that affirmation in all matters is due to a common behaviour or habit, and although we do not suppose ourselves free of all humours and habits, we find ourselves compelled to affirm those matters. For, we say we do not grant the possibility of being free of these feelings because we do not feel some of them. Even if we grant that, it does not follow that being free of these feelings is essential; for a persistent habit could become an ingrained condition, which cannot be removed by the cultivation of character during one's lifetime, let alone by mere supposition. The answer is that this does not prove that all conditions are similar.

Fourthly, the practice of the rational sciences has shown that sometimes two conclusions are in conflict, but we cannot disprove them, having affirmed their premises, although one of them is definitely false; otherwise the two contradictories would be valid together. If it is said we are not able to disprove them, because this does not last long, the truth is eventually vindicated and the falsehood exposed; we answer that, while one is unable to assert what should not be asserted, that is sufficient to destroy confidence. Our response is that the self-evident is what is asserted upon the conception of the two terms [of the proposition] and thus it depends on their abstract apprehension, which might involve an error.

Fifthly, we sometimes affirm the truth of a demonstration and the corollary it entails, but subsequently its falsity is revealed. That is why positions change and this is possible in all cases.

Sixthly, there are in each theological creed certain propositions whose proponent claims are self-evident, while his opponents deny this. Therefore, doubt and the absence of confidence are inevitable in such matters. Let us list some of those doubts:

The first, according to the Muʿtazilites is this: telling profitable truths is good and telling harmful lies is evil; but this has been denied by the Ashʿarites and the philosophers.

The second according to them (i.e. the Muʿtazilites) too, is that the servant is the creator of his deeds; which both other parties have questioned on the basis of another necessary principle: namely, that a determining factor from outside is necessary, or else we would be involved in a regression to infinity.

The third argument is that of the philosophers, who say that it is impossible for a Chinese blind man to see a bug in Spain, or to see that which is not facing him or the like; whereas the Ash'arites regarded this as possible.

The fourth, according to them all is that accidents endure for a while, but this has been denied by the Ash'arites as well as many Mu'tazilites.

The fifth, according to the corporealists, is that every existing entity is either comprised in the world or distinct from it; but this has been denied by Muslims universally.

The sixth, according to the theologians, is that bodies must terminate in a plenum or a void; but this is denied by the philosophers.

The seventh, according to the philosophers, is that it is irrational that time should be preceded by its opposite, but only by some previous time. However, the advocates of creation deny this.

The eighth, according to the philosophers, is that out of nothing, nothing comes; but the Muslims generally deny this.

The ninth, according to them, too, is that the possible can only be actually determined by a specific determinant; but the Muslims allow this on the part of the Almighty.

The tenth, according to the theologians, is that man¹ is the centre of pleasure and pain; but according to the philosophers, it is rather the body which is an instrument thereof.

The eleventh, according to the Ash'arites, is that action by a sleeper or in-existent person is impossible; but the Mu'tazilites allowed it by reference to 'generation' (*tawlid*).² The answer can be inferred from the answer of the fourth case.

This has also been countered by pointing out that this assertion is made on the evidence of the imagination, which is unreliable, since we can assert the corollary of its opposite. Thus, asserting it will depend on this proof and then we will be involved in circularity. Moreover, assertion cannot be made unless [a proposition] does not yield its contrary; and then it is not certain. The most that can be asserted is the absence of feeling. Add to this that, having listed these doubts, they argued that if you counter them, then you have conceded that self-evident propositions are not free of doubts unless they are countered, and that this requires careful scrutiny. Therefore, they are no longer necessary, which is the question. Moreover, this will entail circularity and if you do not counter the opponents' claims, then they are sound, and positive assertion is not justified.

The fourth group consists of those who deny both positions and these are the sophists, who say that the arguments of both sides clearly disprove them both, and theory is a subsidiary thereof, but there is no other way. The most radical of them

1. That is, man's soul.

2. That is, an action of the sleeper or the dead may result or be 'generated', or caused by a prior action, he performed before he fell asleep or died.

are the agnostics, who argue that our discourse never yields a certainty which cannot be questioned, but merely doubt. Therefore, I am a doubter, and a doubter that I am a doubter, and so on and so forth. Disputing with them has been prohibited by the learned scholars because the purpose [of disputation] is to exhibit what is unknown by recourse to the known, and it is not possible to conceive of necessary propositions as unknown. Now, since the opponents do not concede that anything is knowable from which the unknown can be inferred, then to engage in disputation [with them] is to concur in their own position. The only way to deal with them is to put to them a series of questions which they cannot answer until their obduracy is revealed. For instance, do you distinguish between pleasure and pain, stepping into fire or water, or your own belief and its contrary? If they persist in denial, then they should be beaten hard and exposed to fire, unless they admit being in pain, which is one of the sensible experiences, and the difference between pain and pleasure, which is self-evident.

Fifth Observation:

On speculation leading to the desired object

It consists of various intentions:

The First Intention: Its definition

The Qāḍī (al-Bāqillānī) has said that it is that reflection whereby certain knowledge or probability is sought. He gave the following examples:

1. Conjecture, not corresponding [to reality], is tantamount to ignorance, and will not be sought by any reasonable person. Therefore, what is sought is what you know to correspond [to reality] and thus it is certain knowledge. We reply, it is rather sought, insofar as it is conjecture, without any regard to correspondence or its opposite. Nor does it follow from seeking the general that the particular is also sought, insofar as it is conjecture, without any regard to correspondence or its opposite. Nor does it follow from seeking the general that the particular is also sought.

2. Preponderance of conjecture is not the same as conjecture itself; therefore, this will exclude the way in which conjecture itself is sought. We reply that conjecture is what preponderance of conjecture expresses; because preponderance is implied in its reality; since its essence is probable belief. Al-Āmidī has remarked that [conjecture] has two aspects: conveying conjecture and conveying its probability, and he was content to mention one of them only; because reference to both is not necessary. This is open to question; since it entails necessary conviction, as his saying 'certain knowledge is sought thereby implies,' and since this aspect does not apply to all its parts, it is not all-inclusive.

3. Definition bears on the essence insofar as it is itself, but this is an enumeration of its divisions. We reply that division into both parts is a distinctive property thereof. This point may be repeated here together with other definitions involving repetition by saying 'or by way of repetition'; this being for the sake of the ambiguity which contradicts definition that aims at clarification. The reply is to deny that it is given for the sake of repetition, but rather for the sake of division; namely, that whatever part of the division is taken is part of the *definiendum*.

4. The term reflection is superfluous, since the rest of the definition suffices. The reply is that by reflection is meant imaginative notions of whatever variety. It is the genus of theory, and the rest is the differentia, and we do not say that the differentia is a sufficient explanatory factor or that the genus can dispense with it.

Al-Āmidī said that he (al-Bāqillānī) did not mention it as part of the definition; but said that theory is the same as reflection and what follows is part of the definition of both terms. (This involves a certain artifice, which is obvious, for this is its comprehensive definition.)

It has other definitions, depending on the various schools. Those who think that it consists in acquiring knowledge of the unknown from previous cognitions are the mathematicians, who say that it consists in arranging certain known or believed matters in order to arrive at other cognitions. Two objections can be urged against this. One is that it is not exhaustive, since the definition is constructed by reference to differentia and property only; and it is trivial and incomplete, as Ibn Sīnā said, and is far from being satisfactory. The second is that it is a definition of every form of theory and not the sound one only; otherwise we would have to confine conjecture to correspondence and replace 'in order to conduce' by 'so as to conduce to'. For its premises may not be known, but rather unknown. We say ourselves that it is the mind's inspection of what it has already acquired so as to acquire something more. Some of those who identify it simply with the attempt [to know] consider it negatively as stripping the mind of distractions; others regard it positively as the mind's contemplation of intelligibles and have compared it to fixing one's gaze on perceptible objects.

The Second Intention

This consists in holding that it is of two types: (1) a sound one leading to the desired result, and (2) a false one which is its opposite. Now, since the preferred view is that it consists in ordering cognitions and that each form of ordering has a form and a matter, it follows that its truth depends on the truth of the form and matter together, and its falsity on the falsity of them both, or of either one of them. Some have divided it into clear and obscure; but the truth of the matter is that the proof is liable to both conditions in two ways: the first, according to the form, since forms vary in point of clarity or obscurity; and the second, according

to its matter. For the object sought may depend on a number of premises, either numerous and more, or few and fewer; despite their differences, consequent upon the differences in the degree of abstractness with respect to the two terms. If so, then, it does not affect theory, and the latitude does not exclude it; but if not, then it is not certain.

The Third Intention

Sound theory leads to certain knowledge, according to the public. It is necessary, then to explain the points of controversy:

Imām al-Rāzī says that it conduces to certain knowledge and if its demonstration is easy, its utility is small; since the particular can only be demonstrated by the universal.

Al-Āmidī has said that every sound reasoning regarding conclusive matters is not followed by the opposite of certain knowledge; such as death, of which sleep is an indication.

The opponents have argued that if this is known, it would be either necessary or theoretical; but both alternatives are false. The first, because the necessary is not a subject of controversy for reasonable people, whereas this is; and second, because we do not find between it and the statement 'one is half of two' a necessary difference. We actually assert: (1) that it is weaker than that; but this is possible only if it is liable to contradiction, even in the remotest way, and (2) that it negates self-evidence.

The second, because this is a form of demonstrating speculation by recourse to speculation, which is self-contradictory. A group of theologians, including Imām al-Rāzī, have opted for the view that it is necessary. However, the statement that, were it necessary, no disagreement regarding it would arise can be countered by saying: 'We do not agree.' For a few people may disagree thereon; since some people have denied self-evident propositions altogether, by reason of the difficulty of conceiving the two terms [of the proposition] and the hardship of abstracting them, as stated earlier. The statement that: the difference between speculation and the statement that one is half of two is due to the fact that it admits of contradiction. We reply that this is impossible except in the case of a thousand or of different aptitudes for abstracting the two terms.

Another group, including Imām al-Ḥaramayn (al-Juwaynī), holds that this is a speculative matter; but there is no contradiction in proving speculation by recourse to speculation. This was contested by Imām al-Rāzī, who said: 'Proving a thing by recourse to itself requires knowing it before itself; and this entails that it be known while it is unknown, which is contradictory.' We reply that we only reject proving speculative matters by resource to speculation, if it consists in proving a thing by reference to itself, not that it is granted or its being contradictory is denied. The

truth is that we prove a universal or indefinite proposition, despite the difference of the two opinions, by recourse to a singular. The singular could be necessary rather than universal or indefinite, due to the difference of the title. For self-evidence is contingent on conceiving the two terms, and conceiving of a thing as a certain speculative object is different from conceiving it in its specific nature.

This objection has been countered by saying that the statement that no part of speculation yields certain knowledge, which is necessary, is not disputed by most reasonable people, and this cannot be denied. If it is speculative, it would be necessary to prove by recourse to a specific speculation which yields certain knowledge thereof; and this is an explicit contradiction.

The opponents are legion. The first group includes those who deny that [speculation] can yield knowledge absolutely, and of those are the Sumāniyyah,¹ who raise these objections:

1) To know that belief resulting from speculation amounts to certain knowledge is necessary, and then its falsity will not be apparent. The consequence is false, since views change, or it is speculative. In that case, it will require another act of speculation, which leads to an infinite regress. (We reply that that whose falsehood is obvious is not sound speculation, and it is this that is the subject of dispute.)

2) The two premises do not occur in the mind together, because when we are seeking an intended judgment, it is impossible for us in that case to seek another one by intuition. We reply that it is not impossible for two premises to occur together; such as the two terms of a conditional preposition. But for their occurring together, judging of them by concomitance or disputation would be impossible. Moreover, seeking is different from certain knowledge; it is rather speculation, and it does not follow from the fact that the two acts of speculation occur together that the two forms of certain knowledge cannot occur together.

3) If speculation could yield certain knowledge, then opposition would cease, for upon it depends cessation of discourse. But its negation is not necessary, or else it would not happen; therefore it is speculative and requires another speculative act. Moreover, it is liable to the advent of an opponent and so on and so forth. We reply that sound speculation regarding definitive premises, in addition to yielding knowledge of the truth of the conclusion, yields the knowledge of the absence of opposition. For this absence of opposition is necessary regarding the essence of the question.

4) Speculation will either entail knowledge or not. The former contradicts the fact that absence of knowledge is a precondition thereof; the latter is the desired alternative. We reply that it entails it in the sense that it usually ensues upon it, not that it is a necessary cause thereof. This does not contradict the fact that the absence of knowledge is a precondition thereof.

1. The Sumāniyyah, believed to be an Indian sect, denied rational knowledge, allowing for sense-knowledge only.

5) The object sought is either well-known, so it cannot be sought or not; if not, and it is then revealed, it will not be known to be the object sought. We reply that what is known conceptually is not known in terms of assent, so it is distinguished by virtue of the conception of its two terms.

6) If the signification of the proof depended on knowledge, by virtue of signifying it, we would be faced with circularity; or else the status of proof, as proof, would be necessary, even if its mode of signification is not taken into account, and that is false. We reply that it does not depend on it. Moreover, the mode of signification is different from the proof as a proof; since it is the thing whereby the mind passes from the proof to the thing proved, as given in the proof, regardless of whether the knower investigates it or not. For its being significant is an adventitious quality attaching to it subsequently to the act of speculation and its imparting knowledge.

7) Knowledge ensuing on [speculation] is either necessary, and then regarding it as a [religious] obligation would be repugnant, because it is not within our power and is, in addition, contrary to the consensus of the community, or it is not. In that case it can be dissociated from it, as we stipulate. We reply that religious obligation is dependent on speculation and this will contradict the Mu‘tazilites, who deny predestination and believe in the authority of reason.

8) Were [speculation] to impart knowledge, that would have to be simultaneously with it or subsequently to it. The first alternative is false, since they do not occur together; and so is the second, since it is possible that [speculation] be followed by the opposite of knowledge, as in sleep or death. We reply that it will impart it subsequently, provided its opposite does not ensue, as we have intimated when we discussed this question.

9) If we demonstrate the existence of the Creator by recourse to a logical proof, its corollary is either the existence of the Creator or of knowledge; but both alternatives are false. First, because it would then follow from the absence of that proof that the Creator does not exist; and secondly, because it would follow that the proof, in the supposed absence of speculation or its imparting knowledge, would cease to be a proof. We reply that it will entail the existence of the Creator necessarily, and it does not follow from denying the consequent that the antecedent be denied, or necessitate knowing it; that is, once it is known. This condition is inseparable from the proof, regardless of whether it is an object of speculation or not.

10) Firm assent could be a form of knowledge or a form of ignorance, and they cannot be distinguished, especially by those who hold that ignorance is analogous to knowledge. How, then, can we guard against the possibility that what ensues upon speculation is ignorance rather than knowledge? We reply that this will convict the Mu‘tazilites, who cannot rid themselves of this error by defining knowledge as the act of the soul’s acquiescing in it. Moreover, it will convict the obdurate infidels.

The second group is the geometers, who say that [speculation] imparts knowledge of geometrical truths, but not metaphysical truths, wherein the ultimate stage reached is opinion and probability or likelihood. They support this claim in two ways: the first is that metaphysical realities cannot be conceived and assenting to them is a subsidiary of conception. We reply that we do not concede that those realities cannot be conceived at all. If this is granted, then it is enough to conceive of them in terms of a certain accident. Moreover, this will convict you with respect to opinion; to which your answer will be similar to our answer. Secondly, the nearest thing to man is his identity, which is unknown; considering that controversy has raged around it to such an extent that none of the different views entertained regarding it are credible, as you will learn in due course. Now, if the nearest thing [to man] is that inaccessible, what should we think of the farthest from him? We reply that we do not concede that man's identity is unknown to him, and the multiplicity of differences regarding it shows simply its difficulty, not its impossibility.

The third group is the atheists, who say that speculation does not impart the knowledge of God Almighty, without a teacher. They have been rebutted in two ways. First, the truth of the teacher may be known either from his own statements, and this would entail circularity; or by reason and then that would be sufficient. I reply that the teacher's statements may be conjoined to reason, by proposing premises from which the truth of his statements may be known. Secondly, if reason is not enough, then the teacher will need another teacher and so on *ad infinitum*. I reply that his own reason may be sufficient, rather than the reasons of others; or else one will be referred to the authority of revelation. The chief recourse is the claim of necessity; for whoever knows the sound premises, suited to the knowledge of God in a necessarily conclusive manner, will have attained the knowledge [of God] necessarily. As for those who argue that knowledge ensuing upon speculation alone does not ensure salvation, as traditions transmitted from anybody other than the Prophet do not ensure sound belief, their thesis cannot be refuted in this way. The right way is the consensus of those who preceded them, to the effect that definitely ensures salvation, added to the numerous [Qur'ānic] verses commanding reflection repeatedly, in the context of calling people to seek salvation, without the need for instruction.

Moreover, they adduce two arguments. First, controversy regarding knowledge has proliferated to an infinite degree. Were reason enough, that would not have happened. We answer that controversy has arisen, because some forms of speculation are false; only sound speculation can induce genuine knowledge.

Secondly, we find people in need of a teacher, in the inferior sciences such as grammar and etymology. How could they dispense with a teacher in those abstruse sciences which are farthest removed from sense and nature? We reply that if by need is meant hardship, we would grant it; but if by it is substituted impossibility, then we do not.

The Fourth Intention: On the manner in which speculation imparts knowledge.

There are three credible views, based on a variety of principles.

1. The first is the view of al-Shaykh (Ash‘arī), to the effect that it is a matter of habit, since all possible occurrences depend upon God Almighty initially and God is All-powerful and free. The relation between occurrences is simply a matter of habitual succession, resulting from creating one [occurrence] after the other; as in the case of burning upon contact with fire or quenching of thirst upon drinking water.

2. The second is the Mu‘tazilite view, according to which [knowledge] results by generation. By generation is meant, according to them as will appear later, that an action by an agent causes another action, such as the motion of the hand and that of the key. Speculation is an action of the [human] servant initiated by him and from it another action is generated, which is knowledge.

You should know that recollection of speculation does not generate knowledge, according to them. Thus our friends have compared the initiation of speculation to recollection, in order to refute them; since there is no difference between the two, as far as giving rise to knowledge is concerned. Their response has been that we have denied the generation [of knowledge] by recollection, due to a differentiating factor, which is the fact that recollection is not in our power. If this is true, then the argument is false, or else we reject the conclusion and grant the validity of generation. In short, this is a compound argument, in which the opponent vacillates between denying the common denominator or the conclusion. Moreover, recollection ensues upon knowledge, whereas the beginning of speculation precedes it.

3. The third is the view of the philosophers, who say that it depends upon disposition. The basic principle is that emanation is universal, and the act of emanation depends on a particular disposition calling for it; differences are simply a matter of differences in the dispositions of recipients. Speculation disposes the mind, and then the conclusion emanates necessarily [from the Active Intellect].

There is also another view, favoured by al-Rāzī, according to which [knowledge] is necessary, but is not generated by [speculation]. Its necessity is due to the fact that we know necessarily that whoever knows that the world is changeable, and whatever is changeable is created, cannot but know that the world is created. As for its not being generated, that is due to the fact that all contingent entities depend upon God Almighty initially. Therefore, [generation] is irreconcilable with the assertion that everything depends upon God, who is all-powerful and free, and nothing is incumbent upon Him; there being no necessity emanating from God or incumbent on Him.

The Fifth Intention: On the conditions of speculation.

Absolutely speaking, there are two conditions [of speculation] next to life: the first is possession of reason, which will be explained later, the second is the absence of its opposite. This is either general, which includes whatever is contrary to apprehension; or particular which consists in knowing the object sought or compound ignorance of it, whereby the subject in both cases cannot reason about it. If you say: 'What do you think of someone who knows something demonstratively, then turns around and asks for another demonstration?' I would reply: 'Speculation here bears on the mode of demonstration proper to the second demonstration which was not known.' Genuine speculation has two aspects: one is to bear on the demonstration without any doubt, and the second is to bear on it insofar as it demonstrates. For speculation upon the demonstration, not insofar as it demonstrates, is useless.

The Sixth Intention

Speculating upon the knowledge of God Almighty is obligatory by consensus. There is controversy with respect to the method of its validity; for our fellow-scholars,¹ this is revelation, and for the Mu'tazilites, this is reason. Our fellow-scholars follow two paths: one is demonstration by reference to external phenomena, as God Almighty states (in Qur'ān 10:101): 'Say, look what is in the heavens and the earth,' and the verse (30:49): 'Look at the marks of God's mercy; how He revives the earth after its death.' Now, the imperative here implies an obligation. When verse (3:187) was revealed: 'Surely, there is in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the succession of night and day certain signs for those who understand,' the Prophet, prayer and peace be upon him, said: 'Woe unto him who chews it in his jaws and does not reflect upon it.' This makes it obligatory, but it does not proceed beyond its being a matter of opinion.

The second path, which is the authoritative one, states that the knowledge of God Almighty is obligatory, as a matter of consensus, and is not possible without speculation. Now, any obligation which cannot be fulfilled without it is obligatory. However, some objections can be urged against this, such as:

1. The possibility of knowing God Almighty is contingent on the fact that speculation imparts knowledge absolutely in divine matters and without a teacher. The response to this was made earlier and so was the reply.

2. The necessitating character of knowledge compels either the knower, which is a tautology, or someone else, which is a form of imposing obligation upon the distracted. We reply that the second alternative is excluded; since a precondition of obligation is the understanding of it, not simply knowing it.

1. That is, the Ash'arites.

3. You say the community is unanimous with respect to that. We reply that consensus is not possible in cases such as "Ali ate his food and spoke at the same time." This is possible only with respect to something which has a common denominator, such as the presence of motives and the possibility of demonstration; but what you mentioned has no common denominator.

4. Even if consensus is affirmed, it is not possible to communicate it, due to the dispersion of discretionary scholars¹ and the possibility of one of them being absent or lying, or returning before the decree has been passed by another. We reply that this is disproved by what is known to be an object of consensus, such as the pillars [of Islam] and the possibility of adducing conclusive proof of what are mere opinions.

5. Even if the communication [of consensus] is possible, this does not constitute a proof because of the possibility of error in each case, and thus in the whole, and because the addition of one error to the other does not entail truth. We reply that this is known necessarily in religion, and it does not follow from the possibility of error in the case of each that all are in error, because the two cases are different and so are their status.

6. Consensus regarding [error] is impossible, but consensus regarding the opposite is possible, as shown by the agreement of the Prophet, prayer and greetings upon him, the companions and all the generations of old, who form the majority without asking for proofs, while they actually knew that they did not know them absolutely. We reply that they knew the proofs in a general way; just like the Bedouin who said: "The droppings point to the existence of the camel and the footsteps to the fact of walking. Will not a heaven with constellations and an earth full of labyrinths point to the existence of the Subtle and All-Knowing One?" The upshot is that they fall short of the power of disputing and affirming; but this will not affect us. We might, however, claim that it is a supererogatory duty, obligation being more general than this.

7. We do not agree that proofs are not possible without speculation; for they could arise by inspiration, instruction or emptying [the mind]. We answer that all this requires the assistance of speculation; otherwise the object is not attainable without speculation, or we restrict it to Him who cannot be known without speculation. For whoever knows God through anything other than He is not under an obligation.

8. Demonstration is disproved by the fact of ignorance or doubt. We answer, the discussion turns on absolute obligation and the premise is one of possibility. Obligation here is qualified by absence of knowledge or doubt.

9. We do not agree that that without which obligation is not fulfilled is obligatory. We answer that knowledge is not possible in itself, but by finding the cause;

1. Plural of *mujtahid*.

so that regarding it as obligatory entails that its cause is obligatory. This is like one commanded to kill; for he has been commanded to perform that of which he is capable, which is striking with the sword. We might reply that were he commanded to perform an act, without reference to what depends on it, he would be required to perform the impossible. This is a weak response since impossibility consists in that an action is obligatory, without the preliminary conditions, not without commanding it.

10. Objections can be multiplied. First, this is an innovation; for it is reported of the Prophet, prayer and peace upon him, that he practised this [speculation]. Now, every innovation is a rebuttal. The Prophet said: 'Whoever introduces into our religion what is not in it is an innovator.' We say, it has been widely reported that they were looking for the proofs of God's unity and prophethood and affirming them against their opponents. The Qur'ān is full of these [proofs] and what is mentioned in theology books is a drop in an ocean, compared with what the Book has spoken of.

It is true that [the early scholars] did not record or occupy themselves with writing down the technical terms, or listing the various views, classifying the questions and detailing the proofs or summarizing the questions and answers. Nor did they exaggerate by giving the long footnotes or addenda because they were marked by a purity of soul, observing the revelation and possessing the power to refer to those who could instruct them on every point, especially since the disputants were few. In fact, doubts did not proliferate as they have done in our time, because of what has happened in every age. That is how we witnessed a gradual accumulation and this is similar to what happened in the case of jurisprudence, which was not recorded and its parts were not divided into quarters, sections and chapters; nor did they discuss matters in terms of the conventional terminology, such as negation, conversion, combination, separation, correcting the relative and rationalizing it. In short, some innovations are good.

Secondly, the Prophet has prohibited disputation, as in the case of the question of capacity (*qadar*). We answer that was done where disputation was a matter of obduracy and quibbling, as the Almighty has said (in Qur'ān 40:5): 'They resort to falsehood, so as to rebut the Truth thereby.' He also says: 'They are indeed a quarrelsome people,' (43:58) and 'some people dispute with God, although they are devoid of knowledge' (Qur'ān 22:8). However, disputing in truth is commanded by God Almighty. 'And dispute with them in the best way' (Qur'ān 16:125); and the Almighty says, 'Do not dispute with the people of the Book except in the best way' (Qur'ān 29:45). The Prophet's disputation with Ibn al-Zubayr and 'Alī's with the Qadarite is well-known. Moreover, speculation is different from disputation and it has been extolled by God Almighty in the verse: 'And they reflect upon the creation of the heavens and the earth; Lord, you did not create that in vain' (Qur'ān 3:188).

Thirdly, [The Prophet's] statement: 'Follow the religion of old women.' We say, assuming that this is a sound tradition; it only stipulates delegation of authority and submission. Moreover, it is a singular tradition which does not conflict with the certain ones.

As for the Mu'tazilites, this is their favourite method; except that they believe knowledge to be obligatory by way of reason, because it inhibits fear caused by difference of opinion and the like, which is an evil; preventing evil from troubling the soul being rationally obligatory. Once we concede the authority of reason, we are able to avert fear due to the loss of feeling; the claim that feeling is necessary is excluded, since it does not happen for the most part. Even if this is granted, we do not grant that [reason] will bar it, since it could be in error. Nor do we say that engaging in it is preferable absolutely to discarding it. We say it is prohibited; for dull wit is closer to salvation than lame intelligence.

We also advance in support of the view that [knowledge] is not obligatory rationally, but by revelation, God's words; 'And we do not punish until we send a messenger' (Qur'ān 17:16). This precludes the possibility of punishment before the advent of revelation, and this is one of the necessary conditions of obligation, according to them. Thus, obligation before the advent of revelation is precluded, and it precludes its dependence on reason. Nor can it be said that by messenger [in the verse above] is meant reason, or that 'we will not punish anybody' for ignoring religious obligations. For we hold that in reversing the convention, it is not allowed to change the words, except by means of a proof. The Mu'tazilites have countered by saying were [speculation] not obligatory except upon revelation, it would follow that the prophets are to be rebutted, since the person under obligation could say, 'I will not speculate unless that is obligatory; and that is not obligatory until revelation is confirmed; but revelation cannot be confirmed unless I speculate.'

I respond to this in two ways. First, it is not specific, since if [speculation] is obligatory by means of reason that would be by speculation accidentally. He¹ will respond: 'I will not speculate unless it is obligatory and it is not obligatory until I speculate.' It cannot be claimed that it could depend on natural discourse and then certain premises are proposed conducive to knowledge necessarily; for we can answer [the opponent] thus: 'He may listen to [revelation], but could not sin if he ignores it; and then the mission [of the prophets] would not be possible, and this is what was meant by rebutting [the prophets].'

Secondly, against your saying that that is not an obligation upon me unless revelation is confirmed, we reply that would be true if obligation depended upon the knowledge of obligation; but it does not. For, the knowledge of obligation depends upon the obligation; so that if obligation depended on the knowledge of obligation we would be involved in circular reasoning.

1. A Mu'tazili.

The Seventh Intention

There has been some disagreement regarding the first obligation incumbent on the religiously responsible; but the majority hold that it is the knowledge of God Almighty, which is the foundation of all religious cognitions, from which all other obligations flow. It was also said that it is speculation upon it, because that is obligatory and is prior to it. It was said, too, it is the first part of speculation. The Qāḍī (al-Bāqillānī) has said that the intention to speculate is enough, which Ibn Fūrak chose too. The controversy, however, is purely verbal. For if obligation resulting from the first intention is meant, then it is knowledge, or else it is the intention of speculation. Otherwise our provision is that it is possible through speculation, or else it is the intention to speculate.

Abū Hāshim (al-Jubbā'ī) has said that [the first obligation] is dubiety, but this can be countered in two ways. The first is that doubt is not within our power, which is open to question. For, were it not in our power, knowledge would not be in our power, since the relation of power to the two alternatives is the same. The truth is that its persistence is in our power; for it is possible to quit speculation and then [doubt] would persist, or to speculate and then [doubt] will cease.

Secondly, the obligation of knowledge is conditioned by doubt; so that regarding it as obligatory would not render the former as obligatory, like the obligation to pay the alms which, being conditional upon the revenue is not obligatory until revenue has been assessed. This is the true position. (Subsidiary remark: If we regard speculation as necessary, then one who has enough time to achieve perfect speculation, but does not speculate, is a sinner; and he who cannot do it at all is like a child. The case of those who are capable of some speculation, but not the whole, may be considered one of probability; it is more likely that it is a sin, like the woman who has completed her menstrual cycle and so breaks her fast; then becomes unclean. Such a woman is a sinner, even if it appears that she could not complete the fast).

The Eighth Intention

This refers to those who hold that sound speculation entails knowledge necessarily; for they differed with respect to false speculation and whether it entails ignorance. There are here many views. The first view, which was favoured by al-Rāzī, states that the former entails the latter absolutely. For whoever believes the world to be eternal and that everything eternal does not require a cause cannot but believe that the world does not require a cause.

The second view is that the former does not entail the latter absolutely. This has been defended by saying that, were this the case, then the speculation of the truth-seeker about the doubts of the negator of the truth would lead to

ignorance. We reply that if this were the case, then sound [speculation] would not conduce to knowledge; or else the speculation of the negator of the proof of the truth-seeker would conduce to knowledge. If you say the precondition of requiring knowledge is belief in certain premises, in which the ignorant does not believe, we would answer that this is equivocal. For the precondition is belief in these [premises]. The learned scholars have proved this by observing that false speculation is not capable of entailing ignorance, although it could lead to it accidentally. The explanation of this is that sound speculation must turn on certain premises which have, in the nature of the case, a relation to the object sought and through this relation knowledge of the object ensues, but this is not true of false [speculation]. Sound speculation conveys the way in which the proof exhibits the relation between the two essentially, contrary to the false [speculation] in relation to ignorance. This ceases to be obscure once the proof is given. Imām (al-Rāzī's), statement 'he who believes' is true, but one who engages in false speculation will not believe in the same way.

Thirdly, if falsity is due to the matter, it will entail it [belief] as we said; or else the various arguments will not conduce to belief at all.

The Ninth Intention

Ibn Sīnā says: 'The precondition of speculation conducing to knowledge is being conscious of the mode of subsumption. For if one knows that this is a mule, and every mule is sterile, but notices that it is big, one might think that it is pregnant; but this will be simply due to his unawareness of the connection of the minor premise with the major premise, and the subsumption of this particular [observation] under the universal [rule]'. Al-Rāzī has denied this on the ground that the knowledge that this is subsumed under that is another form of assent; and if knowledge thereof were necessary, then another premise would be conjoined to it. Therefore, we should watch the order another time, which will lead to regression to infinity. We reply that there is not another premise, but only observation of the relation of the two premises to the conclusion. Some have objected to Ibn Sīnā's view on the ground of the diversity of the figures [of the syllogism] with respect to clarity or obscurity. This is worthy of consideration, due to the diversity of corollaries; since some of them may yield a conclusion more clearly than the others. The truth is that if [Ibn Sīnā] meant the union of the two premises in the mind, then this will be granted; but if he meant something else beyond that, then that will be rejected. The example he mentioned implies that it is true when one is unaware of one of the premises, but not if both are in view.

The Tenth Intention

There has been some disagreement over the question of whether knowledge of the proof's demonstrative force is different from knowledge of the object of proof. Imām al-Rāzī has said, 'There is a proof, which demonstrates a necessary demonstrable and a demonstration, which consists in the relation between the two which is subsequent thereto. There is no doubt that these are different, so that modes of knowledge pertaining to them are different.' Then, other people have said that the mode of demonstration is other than the proof; just as we say that the world proves the existence of the Creator, due to its being created. The proof, in this case, is the world and the mode of its demonstration is 'being created', which is different from it and incidental to it. Others have said that this is not necessary; for a thing may prove something else by reference to itself, or else regression will follow. 'Being created' is nothing other than the world, since there is no intermediate between the Creator and the world, and thus there is no third thing other than the proof and the object proved. This is close to what our teachers have said, to the effect that the quality of a thing is neither itself nor something else, but is probably a subsidiary thereof. For, the mode of demonstration is a property of the proof and you will learn about it in due course.

Sixth Observation:

On method which leads to the object sought

The First Intention

This consists in what can conduce, through some speculation, to the desired object. Now, since apprehension is either a form of conception or assent, the desired object is that, too. If it is conception, the way leading to it will be called definition; if it is assert it will be called proof; which comprises both probable and conclusive, although it [usually] designates conclusive. The probable is sometimes called a sign, and is limited to what the effect indicates regarding the cause; the converse of which is called giving a reason.

The Second Intention

The definer should be known prior to the *definiendum*; therefore it has to be other than it and clearer; so that we do not define by means of what is not known but through it, to the same extent or more. Therefore, it must be equal to it in point of generality or specificity; so that discrimination will result. Otherwise there would enter into it something other than the *definiendum*, and then it would not be definitive and all-inclusive; or one of its members would be left out, and then it would not be comprehensive and convertible. It must also include a differentia; if essential it

is called a definition, if accidental a description. In either case, if the full essential differentia common to it and to the other term, called the proximate genus, is mentioned in it, it is complete; otherwise it is incomplete. The compound is defined without reference to the simple, and if from both something else is compounded, it is defined by them both, or else it is not. Every required [condition] which has a distinct property can be described, otherwise it cannot. If it is compound, it can be described completely, otherwise incompletely.

There are also two types of definition. The first is by example, which is really a definition by analogy. If this [analogy] indicates distinctiveness, then it is a property and the description would be incomplete. Otherwise it is not appropriate for definition. The second is the verbal definition, which consists in the fact that the term may not be clear and consequently is explained by the use of a clearer term. It is also used in general definitions, where strange and barbaric terms are avoided, as well as common and figurative terms which are not contextual; and in general, every term not explicitly denoting the intent too.

The Third Intention

Demonstration is possible either of the particular through the universal—and this is the syllogism, defined as discourse made up of certain propositions, which once stated, something other than them follows necessarily¹—or of the particular through the universal, and this is induction. It consists in making an assertion regarding a universal, on the ground of its application to its particulars, either to all of them, whereby it yields certainty, or only to some, whereby it yields opinion; for it is possible that what has not been surveyed by induction may be different from what has. Thus, we may say every animal moves its lower jaw when it chews the cud, since men and horses and other animals are seen to do so, while the crocodile does not.

We may also demonstrate the particular by means of the particular, and this is called example, although legal scholars call it analogy. This consists in one thing sharing a property with something else, with respect to the reason for making the statement. Should you object that there is another division, which is demonstrating the universal by means of the universal, we would answer that if they fall under a third common denominator, entailing a judgment, then they would be particular instances of it. For by the particular is meant here that which is subsumed under something else, and is called relative, not that whose very conception precludes being common, and this is called real [particular]. Otherwise, there is no connection between the two, and judging one does not extend to the other in principle. If it is argued that every man is rational and every rational being is man, you would have judged one of the two equal

1. cf. Aristotle. *Prior Analytics* I, 24.

terms by reference to the other, not the particular by reference to the universal. I would reply that the point is that we attribute animality to each individual man, because he possesses the property rational. Therefore, it is the observation of the property rational which allows us to judge [man] by reference to it.

The Fourth Intention: On the syllogism which is the foundation, and its five moods

1. The first mood is to gain knowledge of a positive or negative condition proper to all the members of a class, then to know that it applies to something else, in whole or in part. We would know, then, that that condition applies to the other in the same way absolutely.

2. The second mood is to be aware of a condition belonging to each member of a group and of its opposite to another, in whole or part. We would know, then, that that thing is negated by the other.

3. The third mood is to be aware of two conditions applying to a third. We would know, then, that they converge on it, and not the rest, unless the corollary is a particular.

4. The fourth mood is when a condition is a concomitant of two things, from which it follows that from the existence of one concomitant the existence of the other follows, and from the non-existence of the one the non-existence of the other. Otherwise, there would be no concomitant without conversion, because the primary concomitant could be more general.

5. The fifth mood is when negation has been proved between two things. Then from the affirmation of one the negation of the other necessarily would follow. There are many detailed aspects of this problem, for which a separate science has been developed.¹

The Fifth Intention

Here there are two weak procedures. The first, they argued, does not admit of proof, and so it should be rejected. This first [procedure] consists sometimes of transferring the proofs of those who affirm it and showing their weakness; or of exhausting the variety of proofs and then rejecting them on the basis of induction. It reduces to the first except for the added burden. The second is such that if it did not exist, necessary truths would be excluded, since it would be possible for mountains to exist in front of us, yet we would not see them, because we have no proof that they exist; and speculative matters would be denied, because a possible contender whom we do not know opposes their proof, or because of an error for which we have no proof. Moreover, that whereof there is no proof is infinite and its demonstration is impossible. We

1. That is, formal or Aristotelian logic.

reply that the absence of proof, with respect to the same subject is not allowed, and you hold that it does not help. Otherwise, the masses and the infidels would know necessarily, and the more ignorant of proofs the more knowledgeable, which could happen in fact. Moreover, the knowledge of the non-existence of the mountain would not depend on this premise; otherwise it would be purely theoretical, and the absence of a contender or of error with respect to necessary propositions inevitable. Similarly the existence of the infinite, being impossible to exhaust, could not be the basis of demonstration, or else we could not judge of it. In addition, from the absence of the proof of both parties we should be able to affirm both [necessary and theoretical propositions.] Thus the absence of the proof of prophethood does not entail its non-existence absolutely, contrary to the absence of the proof of its non-existence. Similarly, it will be necessary here to affirm the infinite and then deny it; yet this is not excluded, because we are referring to affirming the negation of [a claimant of] prophethood, not for that seeker, but rather for the decisive proof that there can be no other prophet after Muḥammad, prayer and peace be upon him. With respect to the second alternative, its thrust is that there is no difference between them in reason; it would hold, if concomitance is proved.

The second procedure consists in judging the absent object by analogy to the present; but it is necessary to prove a common cause, which is problematic, because the specific character of the original allows it, and that of the subsidiary factor bars it. However, they have therein different approaches. One of these is generalizing and conversion. Now if this is valid, it would show the causal status of the effect. Moreover, it is possible for the determining factor to be a collateral object. Nevertheless, this possibility can be refuted in a number of ways.

1. Reverting to the principle that there is no proof thereof, it should be denied.
2. Showing that they are known to be concomitants. We reply, however, that this can be rebutted by reference to the two correlatives. For is it not true that not everything known by means of another is a cause thereof, and that the knowledge of the cause does not necessitate the knowledge of the effect?
3. If circularity did not help, then mobility could be referred to immobility. We reply that if otherness is conceded, we would only mean by motion that which necessitates mobility.
4. If the correlative accompanies the circular, then the point in question would be made; otherwise it would not be circular. We reply that the circular could be a more general concomitant and then something inferior to it would appear in the disputed form.

The second approach consists in probing, which is an inexhaustible division. If it is said that the cause could be something else, we would answer that there is no proof of this, and so it would fall to the ground.

The third approach is conviction, which is a form of drawing an analogy with what the opponent contends, due to the distinctive cause. This does not conduce

to certainty nor to the conviction of the opponent, because the latter has shown the cause of the original condition and its status.

The Sixth Intention: On categorical premises which are seven in number

The first are primary notions from which the soul is never devoid, once conception of both terms has taken place.

The second are propositions whose deduction is built into them, such as that four is divisible into two equal parts; therefore it is even.

The third are perceptible entities, or what reason judges of upon pure perception.

The fourth are experiences, or what reason judges of through repeated perceptions.

The fifth are intuitions, such as the artist's knowledge of the perfection of his work.

The sixth are corroborated reports, or what is judged of on the basis of the reports of a group who cannot possibly concur in error.

The seventh are imaginable objects of perception, such as that each body must be to one side.

Doubtful premises are four: 1) The first are postulates accepted on the ground that they have been proven elsewhere. 2) The second are generally accepted [propositions] in which a large number of people have concurred. 3) The third are conventions received from someone who is presumed, on faith, not to lie. 4) The fourth are contextual observations, such as rain falling due to the existence of clouds.

Let us now discuss certain well-known premises, which have certain subsidiaries.

1. No number is more prior than another, or else number would be negated, as is the case with unity, or the dependence of one science on two objects of knowledge, or power on two objects of power. They argue that either no number can be affirmed or an infinite number is affirmed, such as that God has knowledge of every possible object of knowledge and is capable of every object of power. We say that the negation of priority with respect to the thing itself is not allowed, and is not helpful in thought. If it is objected that what applies to one thing must apply to its like, [the opponent] would be forced to deny number one, and then he would be forced to admit the truth of the eternity of the world. Moreover, the negative aspect would be questioned specifically as follows: if the infinite is impossible logically, the impossible cannot be said to be analogous to it, or else it cannot be negated.

2. They predicate equality of two things which have a certain property in common, such as the Mu'tazilites' denial of the eternity of [divine] attributes, on the ground that they would then be equal to the [divine] essence; and denying that God knows by virtue of possessing knowledge, on the ground that His knowledge

would be equal to our knowledge; or the theologians denying abstract entities, on the ground that they would be like God. The weakness [of this view] is obvious.

3. This is a property of perfection, so it applies to God, and that is a property of imperfection, so it should be negated of Him. The same is sometimes said to be true of actions: namely, good or bad, and essences and attributes. This would hold only if essence preceded it and the meaning of perfection was properly grasped; and finally if it were a perfection of it, and every form of perfection belonged to it logically.

The Seventh Intention

Proof is either rational, with all its premises [being given]; or traditional, with all its premises being given too, or finally a compound of both. Now, the first is rational, but the second is not. However the truthfulness of the reporter must first be established; but it cannot be established without reference to reason. The third is what we call traditional [proof], whose proximate premises are either purely rational or purely traditional, although some of them might be derived from reason and some from tradition. This part may therefore be called compound.

Questions are of three types:

1. One is the possible, (or not impossible,) namely what can be proved or disproved rationally, such as that a crow is now perched on the Alexandria Lighthouse. For this can only be proved by reference to an actual report.

2. Another is what tradition depends on, such as the existence of the Creator and the prophethood of Muḥammad. For this cannot be proved except by recourse to reason, since, were it to be proved by recourse to tradition, circularity would ensue.

3. Anything else, such as creation in time. For it is possible to prove the Creator without reference to it. The same is true of [divine] unity, which can be proved by recourse to reason; since its opposite can be shown rationally to be impossible; or it may be proved by recourse to tradition, since it does not depend [exclusively] on it.

The Eighth Intention: Do traditional proofs conduce to certainty?

Some have said no, because [tradition] depends on the knowledge of transmission and on the will. The first can only be proved by the transmission of knowledge, grammar and derivation, whose principles are confirmed by the reports of single individuals, and their subsidiary parts by means of syllogisms; but both of these are questionable. The second depends on the absence of transmission, equivocation, metaphor, suppression, specificity, priority and posteriority; all of which, being contingent, cannot be definitively denied. Its utmost limit in fact is conjecture.

Moreover, in the wake of the two modes [of knowledge], it is necessary to be aware of the absence of the rational antithesis. For if it exists, it would supersede the traditional proof absolutely; since they cannot be both accepted at the same time as their opposites. To accord to tradition priority over reason is to refute the essential by recourse to the subsidiary; and this in fact entails refuting the subsidiary. If affirming a thing could lead to its repudiation, it would contradict itself and would be void. But the absence of the rational antithesis is not certain; for the utmost is the absence of inner sense, which does not entail the certainty of non-existence.

It is thus established that their significance depends on certain doubtful matters, and hence they are doubtful, because the subsidiary cannot exceed the primary in force. The truth, then, is that [traditions] could yield certainty on the basis of observable or reported facts indicating the absence of impossibility. For, we know that the words earth, heaven, and the like were used during the lifetime of the Prophet in the same sense in which they are used today. To doubt this is a form of sophistry. However, that they could yield certainty in rational matters is open to question, because certainty is based on whether it is possible to affirm the non-existence of a rational antithesis thereof, simply by their means, and whether the context has no part in this. But we cannot affirm with certainty the truth of either side of this proposition.

Mīr Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī

Mīr Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī whose family was originally from Astarābād was born in Gurgān in 740/1339. Very little is known about the life of Jurjānī. He was a contemporary of Taftāzānī, as well as a pupil of Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī and a teacher of Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī. Jurjānī, who lived in the Tīmūrid era, was a great theologian and Sufi who, in the tradition of many other great sages, travelled to different parts of the Islamic world. In 766/1365 he went to Herat and then to Egypt. From there he travelled to Shīrāz where he was appointed by Shāh Shujā' as a teacher to dignitaries but was forced later to migrate to Samarqand by Tamerlane when he captured Shīrāz. Following the death of Tamerlane in 1405, Jurjānī returned from his exile in Samarqand to Shīrāz, where he died.

Although it appears that Jurjānī was a Sunni, there is some evidence to the contrary. (In his major work *Majālis al-mu'minīn* [The Assemblies of the Believers], Qāḍī Nūr Allāh Shūshtarī, the Safavid Shi'i scholar, refers to a number of scholars who defended the Imamate, one of whom was Jurjānī.) In addition to this, Sayyid Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh, the eponym of the Nūrbakhshī Sufi tradition as well as Ibn Abī Jumhūr Aḥsā'ī regarded Jurjānī as a Shi'a. All of these sources, however, must be considered with prudence as far as this question is concerned.

Apart from his major work *Sharḥ al-mawāqif* (Commentary on the *Mawāqif*) a detailed commentary on Ījī's *Kitāb al-mawāqif*, Jurjānī authored *Kitāb al-ta'rīfāt* (The Book of Definitions), a well-known dictionary of technical terms of philosophy, theology and Sufism, which as a result of its great fame in later Islamic history attracted the attention of Western Orientalists early in the nineteenth century.

In this chapter, we have included two sections. The first section is a translation from *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*, which deals with the question of good and evil and their relationship to religious laws. Jurjānī not only treats the issues involved from an Ash'arite perspective but quotes Mu'tazilite perspectives as well.

In the second section, we have included Jurjānī's *Risālat al-wujūd* (Treatise on Being). In this treatise, Jurjānī deals with the doctrine of the 'Unity of Being' and in

so doing, attempts to synthesize the doctrine of the 'Unity of Being' associated with the school of Ibn 'Arabī, and the illuminationist (*ishrāqī*) philosophy of Suhrawardī. He also discusses the differences between theologians and Sufis in the understanding of *tawḥīd*. In this aspect of his writings, Jurjānī could be regarded as one of the forerunners of Mullā Ṣadrā.

M. Aminrazavi

Sharḥ al-mawāqif fī ‘ilm al-kalām

Translated for this volume by Majid Fakhry from Mīr Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī's *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*, ed. Aḥmad al-Mahdī (Cairo, 1977), pp. 297–330.

The Fifth Intention: Of Good and Evil

For us, (evil)¹ is what is prohibited by the religious law, either as unlawful or as repugnant. (The good) is its opposite; that is what has not been prohibited by the law, such as the obligatory (*wājib*), the recommended (*mustahabb*) and the lawful (*mubāḥ*). Thus, the lawful, according to the majority of our colleagues,² is analogous to the good, such as God's actions; since it is always good by general consent. The actions of beasts cannot be described either as good or bad, according to all parties, while the actions of small boys are a matter of controversy. (Reason cannot determine the goodness or badness of things and this) i.e. the goodness or badness of things (is not referable to something real subsisting in reason prior to the religious law, which that law simply exhibits), as the Mu'tazilites contend. (Rather, it is the religious law which confirms and explains it.)

For, actions are neither good nor bad prior to the advent of the law (*sharī'ah*); (had the lawgiver (*shāri'*) reversed matters, making good what he had proclaimed bad, or bad what he had proclaimed good, that would not have been impossible and matters would have been reversed); and then the bad would have become good and the good bad, as in abrogating the prohibited by rendering it obligatory and the obligatory by rendering it prohibited. (The Mu'tazilites have argued that it is rather reason which discriminates between [good and evil],³ so that an action is said to be good and bad in itself) either essentially by reason of a necessary property thereof, or due to certain aspects and considerations, which vary according to their various views. (The religious law simply reveals or exhibits) the good and the bad which are fixed according to the three modes.⁴ (It does not belong to him⁵ to reverse the matter) on his own. It is true that, where the goodness or badness of actions varies according to the times, persons or circumstances, he could reveal the changes the action has undergone in itself with respect to goodness or badness. (We must first), i.e. prior to engaging in argument (define the point of the controversy), so

1. The parentheses indicate the original words of al-Ījī in *al-Mawāqif* commented upon by al-Jurjānī.

2. That is, the Ash'arites.

3. The brackets refer to the translator's additions.

4. That is, the obligatory, the recommended and the lawful.

5. That is, the lawgiver.

that the controversy may be made clear and affirmation or negation may refer to something definite. (We hold) with God's help (that good and evil may be used in three senses.

1) The first sense refers to the property of perfection or imperfection), so that goodness would denote the property of perfection and badness that of imperfection. (Knowledge is said to be good) i.e. one who is described by it has acquired a perfection and high estate; (while ignorance is bad) i.e. one who is described by it has acquired imperfection and a low estate. (There is no question) that this sense [of good and bad] is a definite feature of attributes in themselves (and is perceived by reason), so that the religious law has nothing to do with it.

2) (The second sense refers to conformity with the purpose [of the agent] or non-conformity with it); so that what conforms to that purpose is good and what conflicts with it is bad; everything else is neither good nor bad. (Sometimes they are described,) i.e. good or bad in this sense (as advantage or disadvantage); and so it is said that the good is what involves some advantage, the bad what involves some disadvantage; everything else is neither. (That, too, is rational); i.e. is perceived by reason, as in the first sense; (but it differs with respect to one's viewpoint; so that killing Zayd is advantageous to his enemies and agrees with their purpose, (but is a disadvantage for his supporters) and disagrees with their purpose. This difference shows that it is a relative matter, not a real property; or else people could not differ regarding it, just as no one can conceive of the same body being both black and white, in relation to two different persons.

3) The third sense refers to the relation of praise and reward to the action sooner or later¹ (or of blame and punishment) [to that action]. That to which praise in the herebelow and reward in the hereafter attach is called good; that to which blame in the herebelow and punishment in the hereafter attach is called bad. That to which neither attaches lies outside both [categories]. This applies to the actions of humans.² If it is meant to include God's actions, then it is enough to speak of praise or blame and to leave out punishment and reward.

This third sense (is the focus of controversy, it is for us legal); because actions are all the same; none of them being in itself such as to require praising its doer and rewarding him, nor blaming and punishing him. They become deserving, by reason of the command of the lawgiver or his prohibition. (However, for the Mu'tazilites it is rational). For (they say the action) has in itself and regardless of the religious law (a good aspect) entailing that its doer is deserving of praise and reward; (or a bad aspect) entailing that its doer is deserving of reproach and punishment.

Moreover, (it) i.e. that good or bad aspect (may be apprehended necessarily³) without deliberation or reflection (such as the goodness of profitable truth-telling

1. Or herebelow (*al-ājil*) and hereafter (*al-ājil*), that is in this world and the next.

2. Literally, servants.

3. That is, intuitively.

and the badness of harmful lying); for every reasonable person will affirm them without hesitation. (It might also be apprehended by deduction; such as the goodness of harmful truth-telling and the badness of useful lying, and it might not be apprehended by reason) whether necessarily or deductively. If, however, the religious law has stipulated it, it will be known that it has a good aspect, such as the fasting of the last day of Ramaḍān) which the law has enjoined (or a bad aspect, such as fasting the first day of Shawwāl)¹ which has been prohibited by the law. Thus, the apprehension of the goodness or badness of this type depends on its being revealed by the lawgiver, through a command or prohibition.

This revelation in the first two cases confirms the judgment of reason regarding them, either in a necessary or a deductive way. (Moreover, they² have disagreed among themselves, so that the earlier of them have held) that the goodness or badness of actions is intrinsic and does not depend on certain properties stipulating them. However, some of the successors of that early group (have affirmed a real property entailing that absolutely) i.e. in both the good and bad, contending that the goodness or badness of an action is not intrinsic, as those who preceded us among our colleagues held, but is due to an inherent property necessitating either of them. (Of the later [Mu'tazilites], Abu'l-Ḥusayn [al-Baṣrī] asserted a property pertaining to the bad action and entailing its badness, but not the good action); since it does not need any property to render it good. For it to be good, it is enough that the property rendering it bad should be negated. (Al-Jubbā'ī was in favour of negating it); that is, negating the real attribution to them [of such properties] in both cases absolutely). The goodness or badness of actions, he argued, is not a matter of real properties pertaining to them, but rather a matter of arbitrary considerations or relative qualifications which differ according to one's point of view; such as slapping a poor orphan, either to reform him or to browbeat him. (The best part of what has been transmitted from them in the form of definitional expressions is Abu'l-Ḥusayn [al-Baṣrī's] statement that the bad is that which one who has power as well as knowledge of its status cannot possibly perform). He laid down the condition of power to guard against the powerless or compelled, since this is not described as good or bad, and the condition of knowledge in order to exclude unlawful actions performed by one who has not heard the call of any prophet or has recently adopted Islam. He also regarded full knowledge sufficient, so as to include, among infidels, one who is so highly placed, since he should know God Almighty well by means of rational proofs. By 'cannot possibly perform,' he meant that to embark on [such an action] does not accord with the intelligence of rational people.

This definition of the bad is followed by two other definitions. The first is that (its doer deserves blame), if one is capable of it and understands its status, because one did not have to do it. The second is that it is an action (which is such as to

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1. The month which follows Ramaḍān, or the month of fasting.
 2. The Mu'tazilites.

deserve blame); for were it not so, then the one capable thereof who understands it could perform it, (blame being either a statement, an action, an omission or an action which exhibits the lowliness of someone else and his inferior status).

If you understand this explanation, we will add that, against the view that the good and bad are not rational, we have two arguments. (The first is that the human servant is compelled in all his actions, and if so, reason cannot judge that they are good or bad). For what is not a voluntary action is not so qualified, as we and our opponents concur. The proof of this is that (if the servant is unable to quit [the action] then he is under compulsion); because action is, then, necessary and quitting it is impossible. Were he able to quit and the action did not depend (on a determining factor, and emanated from him sometimes and did not emanate from him at other times without a cause countervailing its occurrence against its non-occurrence); then that action would be a random one, taking place without a determining factor and, therefore, not voluntary. For voluntary action necessarily requires a firm will which determines it.

(If the existence of the action depended on a countervailing factor), then that factor would not depend on the servant, or else we would need to inquire about the emanation of that factor from him, and then go on *ad infinitum*¹ which is absurd. (Then the action would be necessary), as far as the defining factor on which it depends is concerned. (Otherwise action or quitting the action would be possible, so that it would then need another determining factor). For, if it did not need it, but emanated from him one time, but not at another time, it would be a random action, as was mentioned above. If it needs another countervailing factor, we would deal with it in the same way (and that would go on to infinity, so that the action, assuming it came to exist along with that factor, would be necessary). However in all cases, I mean that of the possibility of quitting and the action being random or necessary (the human servant would have no choice in his actions and would be under compulsion) and then none of them could be described as rationally good or bad, by general convention. For us² however, that is because reason has nothing to do with it; but for them³ that is due to the fact that both are attributes of voluntary actions.

(If it is objected that this), i.e. your reasoning that the servant is compelled, (amounts to offering proof against necessity), since every reasonable person knows that he has a choice when it comes to his actions, and is able to distinguish between the voluntary and compulsory kinds of actions; (but this will not be attended to), because it is sheer sophistry and patent obduracy. (Moreover, it), i.e., your proof (contradicts God's power, due to the stringencies of the proof regarding His actions, with

1. That is, we could, then, ask what caused the agent to act and what caused this cause and so on *ad infinitum*.

2. Ash'arites.

3. Mu'tazilites.

respect to the advanced premises and the positive affirmation). It will be replied that if [man] cannot quit, then it is true; but if he can, and the action did not depend on a determining factor, as already mentioned, then the alleged proof will be contradicted by the fact of God's actions. This argument not only disproves the rationally good or bad (but also the religiously good or bad) which stems from the fact of religious obligation. If man is compelled, then he is not liable to religious obligation (because that would be a form of demanding the intolerable, which we¹ do not allow), and although you regard it as possible, you do not claim that it actually happens, and that all obligations are of that type, namely, demanding the intolerable, as your proof implies. In sum, the claim that the servant is compelled contradicts his being liable to obligation; so that his actions could not be described as good or bad religiously, despite the fact that the two propositions are asserted by you. Therefore, your proof is contradicted by that fact. What then is your answer?

Our² answer is patently to say that that would nullify the religious [good and bad] also; for these are attributes of voluntary actions. Thus the motions of convulsed or sleeping persons are not described as good or bad, according to the religious law. This will also entail that all obligations are forms of demanding the intolerable, which no one actually entertains. (Moreover, the countervailing factor) upon which the action of the servant depends (is a cause thereof entailing its choice, which necessitates it; and that does not negate choice), but confirms it instead. This question amounts actually to the solution, and what precedes is either a negation thereof or something similar. (Our³ reply is that, first, it is the existence of power and choice which is necessary) (not the occurrence of the action through his power) and choice. Our argument is intended to disprove the second alternative, not the first. Therefore, it will not contradict necessity.

As for the second argument; namely rebuttal by recourse to God's actions (the premise which states that the action which occurs, but not due to a random determinant) is not a voluntary [action] (is in fact a compelling premise, as far as the Mu'tazilites are concerned); since they hold that the power of the servant does not effect the action unless a determinant, called motive, is added to it. (We do not accept this. For determination resulting from choice alone), insofar as it bears on one aspect of the action, but not for a motive, (is possible according to us. Such action does not cease to be voluntary, as was stated in the case of one who runs away from a beast, and that of the thirsty person, lighting on two equal cups [of water]). Since we do not accept this premise, then the rebuttal, based on God's power, will not affect us.

Moreover, assuming that this premise is true, it is still the case for us that this proof does not apply to God's action. For we hold that He is capable of refraining

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1. The Ash'arites did in fact admit (demanding the intolerable).
 2. The Mu'tazilites.
 3. The Ash'arites.

from action and that His action depends on a countervailing factor; but this factor is eternal,¹ so that it does not require another countervailing factor, entailing thereby an infinite regress, as was the case with respect to the human servant, whose action emanates from—and must for that reason be in—time and require another countervailing factor. For the proposition which states that if a determinant of action emanates from its doer, regression to infinity is necessary, does not apply to God Almighty, but only to the human servant. It is for this statement of ours that [the author]² alludes in his statement (that the determinant of His activity is eternal), which is that His will and power are grounded in His essence in a positive way, but are related to the action at a specific time.

If you say, should this eternal determinant necessitate the action, then choice is excluded, otherwise it will be possible for the action to emanate at one time, but not at other times, and then it would be a random kind of action, as was stated with respect to the human servant; I would reply that we could choose necessity without difficulty because the necessary determinant is His will which is grounded in His nature, contrary to the will of the servant, which depends on someone else. Were it necessary, then compulsion would follow absolutely. This has already been referred to once, with an allusion to the deficiency of affirming it. Now the eternal, determining agent does not require another determining agent, so that the matter could go on to infinity. (For the decisive factor, according to us, is emergence in time, rather than possibility), contrary to the determination attributed to human efficacy; for this is a form of emergent requiring an efficient cause. If this cause is the servant, then it will go on to infinity; if another, then he is compelled in the performance of his actions).

(As for the third [alternative]); namely, invoking, in the rebuttal, the religious good and evil, (it is not necessary according to us, that the religious obligation should be effected by the power of the agent; but rather that the action should be such as to be within the power [of this agent] customarily); i.e. that it should be attended by power and generally speaking, choice. This is not sufficient, with respect to the rationally obligatory, according to you, since the effect of power in it is indispensable. Therefore, the religious rebuttal does not affect our case.

The fourth alternative, which amounts to the solution, is that our intent in advancing a proof that the servant is compelled necessarily is to show that (the servant is not free to perform his action without a motive), and a choice consequent on that motive necessitating that action. (It comes about); i.e. the motive and its consequent (by an act of God creating it, as we have shown); i.e. its lack of independence in this sense. (This is enough for negating the assertion) of good or bad rationally; since there is no difference between God creating the action

1. That is, the divine will.

2. The author of the text being commented on i.e. al-Ijī.

in the servant, as al-Shaykh¹ has said, and creating that which causes the action to come to pass necessarily, as some of his followers have maintained), such as Imām al-Ḥaramayn (al-Juwaynī). (This also disproves the role of reason in discriminating between good and evil, as the opponent holds). Therefore, if the motive leading to the choice necessitating the action [of man] is of God's doing, then our case has been made good.

The second aspect of the problem which might be levelled at others than al-Jubbā'ī (that, were the badness of lying intrinsic), i.e. initially or due to an essential property; (then badness will not be separable from it. For what is essential to a thing or an intermediate essential to it is not separable from it.) This is obvious and the consequence is false; for lying (might be deemed well if it entails sparing the life of a prophet) threatened by an aggressor. Indeed, lying is obligatory in that case, because it consists in repelling the aggressor from [harming] his victim; (the delinquent in that regard is blameworthy absolutely). Therefore, lying acquires the quality of utmost goodness. Moreover, it is good (if it involves saving someone threatened with murder) unjustly.

We do not say that the good and the obligatory consist in guarding or rescuing which could happen without lying; for it could happen by way of current, rather than deliberate, information, or [the speaker] could intend by his words something else by way of allusion and casual talk; so that it would not be a form of lying essentially. That is why it has been said that innuendo is a means of escape from lying. If lying is not definitely intended for repelling [harm], it would be bad, not good; for we say that the questioner makes it hard for the questioned person to evade the intended reply or to resort to innuendo. Moreover, if his words, in such a case, could be interpreted as fully unintentional, or as vaguely intentional, then it will not be possible to affirm positive intention in any statements and none of them would be a lie; since there are no statements, from which addition or excision can not be effected so as to render them truthful. If lying is said here to be good, then truth-telling would be bad, because it is a form of assisting an unjust person in his injustice. Then the goodness of truth-telling would not be intrinsic, and the same goes for other actions.

(Our friends have some weak procedures) with respect to rebutting rational judgments of good and bad (which we will mention and indicate the aspects of their weakness.) One of these is to say: 'I shall lie tomorrow'. Now if tomorrow comes, then his lying is either good, in which case lying will not be bad in itself; or it is bad, and then refraining from it will be good, although refraining from it would entail lying with respect to what he said yesterday. Now, what entails something bad is bad). Therefore, this refraining is good and bad at the same time, which is absurd; and then the first alternative would follow; namely, that the badness of lying is intrinsic, since it has changed into something bad, which is the point.

1. al-Ash'arī.

(We reply that we do not agree that what the bad entails is bad; for the good in itself could entail the bad; so that the aspects of goodness and badness will vary thereby, which is not impossible). The same statement, for instance, insofar as it bears on its subject-matter in itself, would be good, and insofar as it entails something bad, which is lying about what one has said yesterday, would be bad. The same is possible for the followers of al-Jubbā'ī, who believe in aspects and considerations; so that this gambit would not serve as an argument against them, as the second alternative does; for it is proposed there that the badness was not subsequent to lying; since it was bad by reason of its subject-matter, not in itself, but good by reason of entailing guarding and rescuing [the prophet], as you have been shown.

(However, we might concede their badness); namely, the badness of his words tomorrow (absolutely since it is bad either in itself), if it is a lie, (or because it entails something bad), if it is true. (We also hold that the good), such as true speech in the present case (is good if it does not entail anything bad). You also know that [the claim] that good changes into bad follows from subscribing to the view of arbitrary considerations;¹ and the weakness of this view appears clearly, if it is used as a proof of the falsity of all the views of the Mu'tazilites.

The second weak argument is that (of those who say: Zayd is at home, when he is not; so that this statement will be bad either in itself simply, or so long as Zayd is not at home), there being no third alternative. (Now both alternatives are false; the first because it entails its badness, even if Zayd is at home; the second because it entails that non-being is a partial cause of being. We hold that its badness is contingent upon Zayd not being at home; and it is not excluded that the cause could be privative).

(The third argument is its badness) i.e., that of telling lies (because it is lying which subsists in every letter thereof; for every such letter is a lie). For, it is supposed to be something bad, reducible to lying; (since it is a statement) and lying is an attribute of statements. (The falsity of [this claim] is obvious. If, on the other hand, it subsists in the whole; then it does not exist for they are ordered) i.e. the letters (so that the preceding part will cease when the subsequent part arises). Now if the whole does not exist [as a whole], how could we conceive of its being qualified as bad, which is a positive quality? The author has repeated the question, with respect to badness, whether it subsists in each letter or the whole of them.

Al-Āmidī, on the other hand, has argued that were a false statement rationally bad, the reason for its badness is either a quality of the whole of its letters or of each one of them. Now, the first alternative is false; because what does not exist cannot be described by a quality which entails something positive; because what is the subject of entailment must be a positive quality, which cannot be predicated of a non-entity. The second alternative is also false, because the subject of badness in

1. As held by al-Jubbā'ī and his school.

a false report is lying, which cannot subsist in bad letters or else each letter would be a report, which is absurd.

(We reply that badness is one of its essential properties), not one of its conceptual ones; (therefore, it does not need a property which causes it [to be bad] (as some hold) contending that the goodness or badness of actions is intrinsic to it, rather than the result of real properties subsisting in it. This reply is aimed at the assertion of al-Āmidī; but as regards the author of the book,¹ it must be stated that it does not follow from the fact that badness is intrinsic; that is, pertaining to the thing in itself, that it should be an entity existing in fact, so that a property may not be a property pertaining to a non-entity; since it is possible for a thing in itself to have a conceptual property which it cannot be divested of. (Otherwise badness will subsist in each letter, provided it is conjoined to another. Its badness, then, would be part of a false report, or badness will subsist in the whole due to its being a lie. What then is your reply? This is actually our reply with respect to the badness subsisting in it.)

(The fourth [alternative] is that the action is bad, not by virtue of itself) nor a part of it, since it falls short of that; but is rather extrinsic to it and (is an existing entity because it is the contrary of non-badness which subsists in the known notion. Therefore, the notion which is badness must exist in the notion which is action). (We have already discussed the premises [of this argument].) Now, the contrary of the non-existent need not be an existent; the negation of two contraries is impossible with respect to truth, but not with respect to existence. Nor do we grant the impossibility of an accident subsisting in another accident; since no conclusive proof has been advanced thereof, as you know; (let alone that it has been disproved by the fact of possibility and temporality). For this proof that you have advanced to the effect that badness is an existing entity applies to them both, although they are purely conceptual.

(The fifth alternative is that the cause of badness exists prior to action, therefore one need not do it). But for the fact that the cause of its badness exists prior to its existence, it would not be [bad]. (Then a real property would subsist in something non-existing); the cause of badness being an existential property. One may also argue that were badness intrinsic, then the effect would precede its cause; for the badness of the action exists before it, as you have learnt; its cause being either the action itself or a property thereof, none of which comes to be prior to it.

(We reply) that we do not agree that badness or its cause exists prior to the action, but rather (by virtue of the judgment of reason that it is bad and what it would entail, if it came to be). This judgment is what (obviates its performance) or embarking on it, not it's being described as bad or what it entails. However, the ancients² have contended that entities subsist eternally; therefore they are susceptible

1. The reference is to al-Ījī, the author of *al-Mawāqif*.

2. That is the Platonists, who held that Ideas exist in a world of their own.

of possessing positive properties. (Moreover, the Mu'tazilites adopt two real courses and two compelling ones. One of the two real courses is that all men are categorical that injustice, harmful lying, belief in the Trinity and the killing of prophets unjustly are bad), just as they are categorical that justice, useful truthfulness, religious faith and guarding the prophets against any kind of injury are good. None of this assertion of badness or goodness (is a matter of religious legislation; since it is held by those who do not submit to the law or even believe in any religious creed, such as the Brahmans. Nor is it a matter of convention; since conventions differ from nation to nation). This, which we mentioned is not a matter of disagreement, since all nations concur in it.

Our reply is that the vindication of the reality of good and bad by all rational people regarding such matters (in the sense of conformity or conflict, the property of perfection or imperfection is undisputed). For we do not question that in these two senses they are rational (but in the disputed sense that is not allowed). However, it is possible that there might be a general convention which is the basis of that common vindication.

(Secondly, whoever intends to achieve a certain goal, wherein truthfulness and lying are equivalent, will certainly choose truthfulness), without hesitation or interruption. Were it not that the goodness [of truthfulness] is embedded in his own mind, he would not choose it. (Similarly, if one sees a person in mortal danger and is capable of rescuing him, he will certainly be inclined to rescue him) and will exhaust every effort in the process, (even though he does not expect any reward or thanks; just as if the rescued were a baby or a madman and no one saw him; so that he could not expect any advantage to accrue to him, nor repel any harm). On the contrary, he might incur therein a lot of hardship. Thus, there only remains one incentive [for his action]: namely, that rescuing is good in itself.

(The reply is that speaking of the choice of truthfulness is reducible to the fact that it has been firmly established in people's thoughts that it is suited to human welfare, while lying conflicts with it; nor is it necessary, on the assumption that they are both equivalent, that [truthfulness should prevail]. For the reason of one's choice of truthfulness would be that it accords with that welfare, not that it is good in itself. (As regards rescuing, it is due to a genetic sensitivity. For it is implanted in human nature, the reason being that one imagines oneself in the same situation); that is, he imagines himself in mortal danger (therefore he deems good the action of his own rescuer, if he is capable thereof, and this leads him to deem it good if attempted by himself in relation to others.)

(The two definitive methods are these. First, were everything done by God good, as your view¹ stipulates); namely, that badness is simply due to the fact that it is inconceivable that God could prohibit anything good; that is, that He could

1. The Ash'arite view.

lie. (For that would render religious laws and the commissioning of divine messengers entirely null and void; since He could be lying in supporting the truth of a prophet's claims by recourse to miracle, and then we could not distinguish between a genuine and a false prophet), and religious ordinances would have no force and the advantage of [prophetic] commissions would cease and that would be universally null and void. (It would also follow that causing a miracle to be performed by a liar is good; and then the unwarranted conclusion would follow); namely, the impossibility of prophethood.

(Our reply is that the ground of the impossibility of predicating lying of God, according to us, is not its badness rationally); so that it would follow from its lack of badness that we could assert that it is impossible for Him to do it; (since it is possible that it could have another ground; which has been already discussed) in the context of God being capable of speech. (As for the probative evidence of miracles, in confirming the claims [of the prophet], it is a matter of custom); for it does not rest on the impossibility of lying, as is the case in other customary sciences, whose contrary assertions are not impossible. For we assert the truthfulness of one who performs a miracle categorically, although the possibility of lying cannot be ruled out in principle. Therefore, there is no equivocation here, as will follow. (Secondly, consensus regarding the justification of religious legislation by reference to advantages and disadvantages). Now, if good and bad depended on the advent of the law, as you claim, then such legislation cannot be advanced in their justification; (but were this the case, then reasoning would be ruled out and most applications of this legislation would be excluded, which you do not admit).

(We reply that reason's discovery of advantages and disadvantages is not part of the intention, as was said above); since advantage and disadvantage refer to the conformity with the given goal or its opposite, and we do not dispute that this is rational. However, God's regard for the welfare of His servants is a divine favour, according to us, and a duty incumbent on [God], according to our principles and yours. (It may also be argued that, silencing the prophets) and showing their inability to prove the genuineness of their prophetic claims will confirm the thesis that good and evil are religiously determined. (This has already been discussed in the context of speculation in the First Station.

(Note: If it is proved that the arbiter of good and bad is religious legislation rather than reason, it would follow that none of the five legal decisions¹ and their derivatives apply to (actions prior to religious legislation).

(The Mu'tazilites, however, argue that what can be known by reason to be good or bad, in the case of actions which are not necessary, is divided into five varieties because: 1) If discarding it involves a disadvantage, then it is obligatory; and 2) doing it is unlawful; 3) If doing it involves an advantage, then it is recommended;

1. That is, obligatory, unlawful, recommended, repugnant and permissible.

while 4) discarding it, is repugnant). 5) Finally, if neither [doing nor discarding it] involves an advantage or a disadvantage, then it is permissible. (What cannot be known by reason), namely, whether it is good or bad (is not judged prior to the advent of the law in any specific way, as a given action), since it is not known what aspect it involves.

(In general terms, it has been stated with respect to all those actions, that there are three alternatives; prohibition, permissibility and suspension of judgment. The proof of prohibition is that it consists in disposing of the property of another, without his permission,) that is, prior to the advent of the law (so that it is prohibited, as observation shows.) (In response, we note that the difference here is between the injury done to the present, rather than to the absent party). In addition, the prohibition pertaining to the property of the present party is derived from the religious law.

(The proof of permissiveness is twofold. First, it could be an action which does not injure the owner of the property, and then it is permissible; such as taking shelter behind the wall of someone else, or kindling one's fire from his flame or looking into his mirror. (The reply is that the principle rests upon the religious law; therefore, the judgment of reason in that respect) i.e. regarding the principle, (is not allowed in the sense which is in dispute). It can only be judged in the sense of conformity or suitability to the good or the advantage sought.

(Second, that God Almighty has created the servant and created desire in him, as well as the products) which are beneficial, such as edible fruits and the like. (Therefore wisdom stipulates that that should be permissible); i.e. benefiting from it, or else its creation would be in vain. (How could its prohibition be known by reason? That would be like one who scoops a bucket of water from an inexhaustible source to quench his unbearable thirst. How can reason possibly claim that the Most Generous Giver will bar him, or expose him to death? Not at all!)

(The reply is that God may have created [the servant] to practice sobriety or to control his desire or fancy, so that he might be rewarded for such action, and this is a great advantage; or maybe He created him for a purpose that we do not know.) (As for suspension of judgment, it is sometimes interpreted as absence of decision, and therefore entails permissibility; since what is not prohibited will be permitted, unless a condition is attached to it, with respect to permissibility; whereupon it turns out to be the outcome of a religious decision, not a rational one; and this is the point of our discussion). This will follow if the condition in question is that of the lawgiver, not that of reason. It may be argued, however, that this interpretation amounts to affirming the absence of decision, not suspension; unless the suspension of the decision of reason is meant.

However, it is sometimes interpreted also (as absence of knowledge), there being a permission or prohibition, which we do not know. This is preferable to the first interpretation, which involves certain arbitrariness in interpreting suspension, as

you have learned. Instead absence of knowledge could mean the absence of proof, rather than conflict of rival proofs, in support of either of the two decisions in itself. This last alternative has been shown to be untenable.

The Sixth Intention

(You should know that the [Muslim] community is unanimous that God does not perpetrate evil or discard the obligatory. The Ash'arites, on the one hand, hold that nothing evil comes from Him and nothing is incumbent on Him); so that one cannot conceive of an evil action coming from Him, nor that He would discard anything obligatory; (whereas the Mu'tazilites hold that what is evil [in itself] is discarded by Him and what is obligatory is done by Him). This dispute regarding the nature of the judgment upon which they agree is subsidiary to the previous question; namely, the rule for distinguishing good from bad, (seeing that there is no arbiter of the badness of the bad from Him, or the obligatory incumbent on Him, except reason), so that whoever regards it as the arbiter of good or bad will maintain the badness of certain acts of His and the obligatory character of certain other acts incumbent on Him. (We, however, have refuted its¹ role as arbiter and shown previously that God Almighty is the Arbiter, and therefore, He can judge as He wishes), and do what He pleases, nothing being incumbent on Him or from Him and no evil emanating from Him.

The Mu'tazilites have imposed upon Him, glory to Him, on the basis of their thesis, certain things which we will mention and then rebut, on the basis of certain claims pertaining to them, although the rebuttal of their root principle is enough. (The first of these is favour, which they interpreted as that kind of action which brings man closer to obedience and farther away from disobedience) without involving compulsion, (such as the commissioning of prophets; since we know necessarily that, thanks to it, people are closer to obedience and farther away from disobedience).

One could respond that this argument which you propose with respect to the necessity of divine favour (can be overturned in innumerable ways. For we know that, were there, in every age, a prophet and in every country, an infallible teacher, who commanded the right and prohibited the wrong, and even the governors of the provinces were learned and pious, that would definitely be a form of favour, but you do not stipulate all this), as incumbent upon God Almighty. Instead we assert its opposite, so that nothing will be incumbent on Him.

The second of their stipulations (is the reward of obedience, for it is due to the servant) as a reward from God. Therefore, forgoing it is bad, which is impossible in the case of God. Now, if foregoing it is impossible, then performing it is obligatory.

1. That is, reason's.

(Now obligation is either for no reason, which is vain and is very bad,) especially in relation to God Almighty; (or for an advantage, accruing to God, who transcends that, or to the servant either in this life—which is a burden without reward—or in the life to come. This could be either to harm him, which is absurd by general consent) and unworthy of the generous and noble God (or to benefit him, which is the point at issue.) For imparting that benefit is obligatory, unless we deny the meaning of purpose.

(Our response is that obedience demanded [from man] is never commensurate with prior favours, due to their number and volume, the triviality of man's actions and their paucity in relation to those [favours]. That would actually be like countering the innumerable favours of the king by moving one's little finger. How can reason, then, determine that rewarding it is obligatory?) Or that the agent deserves it? (Religious obligation, according to us, is laid down for no reason), and this will not entail any absurdity, as will be shown shortly; or it might be called for in order to injure some people, such as infidels, and profit others, such as believers, (which is actually the case. Nor is that a matter of obligation); but rather a favour meted out to the righteous and a form of justice, as far as the impious are concerned).

(The third stipulation refers to the punishment of disobedience by way of forbidding it or else the obedient and the disobedient would be equal in merit) and this is bad, just as a present master who has two servants, an obedient and a disobedient one [would agree]. For in foregoing it,¹ the disobedient would have a license to perpetrate disobedience, or even an inducement to do so, since God Almighty has implanted in them the desire for abominations. Had the servant not been categorically warned that he deserves punishment for perpetrating evil actions—and this cannot be foregone—or even been allowed the foregoing of punishment altogether, that would be like a license from God Almighty allowing the disobedient to commit acts of lust, and even an inducement to commit them. This is clearly evil and cannot come from God Almighty.

(We would answer [the Mu'tazilite] that punishment is man's desert, foregoing it a divine favour; how, then can its impossibility be perceived by reason?) Moreover, foregoing punishment does not entail equality of merit; since the obedient is rewarded but not the disobedient. (The claim of license and inducement, despite the expectation of punishment by allowing the countervailing side to be chosen, is very weak). He means that it does not follow from the possibility of foregoing the punishment of disobedience, license or inducement. That will follow only if the expectation of punishment does not appear to countervail foregoing it; for if it countervails, then merely allowing it as a possibility does not amount to license or inducement. Similarly, the possibility of foregoing it, let alone its necessity, on

1. That is, punishment.

the assumption that the reward ensuing upon it is possible, does not entail either of the two corollaries.¹

(The fourth [stipulation] according [to the Mu'tazilites] is the welfare of the servant in this life. We will respond that the welfare of the poor infidel, who is miserable in this life and the life to come, would have been not to be created); but having been created, his welfare was not taken into account. Therefore, [man's] welfare is not incumbent upon God Almighty.

Here is an interesting story corroborating the (negation of the rule), stipulating that God must observe what is fittest. (Al-Ash'arī said to his teacher, Abū Alī al-Jubbā'ī: 'What do you believe to be the fate of three brothers, one of whom lived righteously, the other sinfully and the third who died while still a child?' [Al-Jubbā'ī] answered: 'The first will be rewarded by being admitted to paradise, the second to hell and the third will neither be rewarded nor punished.' Al-Ash'arī then said: 'Suppose the third were to say: "Lord, had you given me a longer life, I would have lived righteously and thus gained paradise, just as my righteous brother did.'" Al-Jubbā'ī replied: 'The Lord would say, "I knew that, had you lived longer, you would have sinned and corrupted others, and then you would have entered hell.'" [Al-Ash'arī] said: 'Thereupon the second would have said: "Lord, why did you not cause me to die young so as not to sin, and thus end up in Hell, just as you caused my [other] brother to die?"' Then al-Jubbā'ī was stunned; whereupon al-Ash'arī abandoned the latter's creed and adhered to the right creed²), which is that of the righteous ancestors. This was the first issue over which al-Ash'arī disagreed with the Mu'tazilites; then he undertook to demolish their doctrines and to raise the edifices of truth, with God's assistance and His good counsel.

The fifth [of these stipulations] is compensation for suffering. For (they have argued that, if pain is inflicted as punishment for the sins committed by the human servant—such as the pain of religious sanctions, then God is under no obligation to compensate him), otherwise it would not be a form of punishment. (If however, pain is inflicted by God, then compensation is an obligation incumbent upon Him. If the [pain] is inflicted by another responsible agent who has earned certain good deeds, some of these deeds would be taken and assigned to the victim, as compensation for the pain the agent has inflicted on him. If, however, that agent has not earned any good deeds, it is incumbent on God either to deter the culprit, or compensate the victim, through a divine relief equivalent to his suffering); i.e. not less than his suffering, to guard against its being less, than more. (The Mu'tazilites have built upon this principle): namely, the obligatory character of compensation—defined by them as a deserved benefit, free of aggrandizement or glorification—many tenuous arguments, which prove the falsity of that principle.

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1. That is, licence and inducement.
 2. Namely, Ash'arism.

1. (The first is this: some, like Abū Hāshim, his followers and many of their predecessors, have argued that the compensation could be accorded in this life, since it is not necessary for it to last). Others, like al-Jubbā'ī and [Abu'l-Hudhayl] al-'Allāf have argued that it should rather be accorded in the life to come so as to last forever, just as reward should. For its cessation would cause pain, and so the victim would be entitled to compensation for that pain and so on *ad infinitum*; or, as was also reported, to be made unconscious of this cessation.

2. (The second [argument] turns on the question of whether the pleasure accorded as compensation will last, as rewards will last, or cease instead); namely, whether it is necessary for it to last, or whether its cessation is possible. This is the case of the first difference, and you have learned how to counter it above.

3. (The third [argument] is whether compensation can offset sins, just as it offsets reward, or not.) Those who believe in offsetting have maintained that, without it, the sinner and the infidel would, for the duration of the life to come, experience the bliss of compensation and the misery of punishment for sin or infidelity at the same time. However, the union of the two would be impossible. Those who did not accept this position have maintained that the denizens of Hell are compensated by dropping a part of their punishment in such a way that it does not appear to be lightened; and that through spreading the part which has been dropped over a long period of time; so that they will not suffer as a result of lightening their punishment.

4. (The fourth [argument] is this. Is it possible to inflict what is intended as compensation for pains initially, prior to the pain being inflicted?)

5. (The fifth [argument] is whether that possibility will cause pain and thus will need to be compensated; or is that possible upon starting it, by way of favour, contrary to the dictates of wisdom?)

6. (The sixth [argument] turns on denial and whether one could be subjected to added pain, so that it would serve as a favour to him and to others since that added pain could be a lesson to him so as to refrain from evil actions). This means that those who deny the possibility of favouring the subject with what is equal to granting him as compensation have disagreed. Some have allowed inflicting some pain, for the purpose of compensation only; others have argued that there should be something else added to compensation; namely, that it should be a favour deterring him and others, compensation being commensurate with the added [pain]. For, they hold that divine compensation should be additional, so as to induce every reasonable person to bear that pain, for the sake of that compensation. Moreover, it is mentioned in al-Āmidī's work¹ that those who reject the possibility of favour have allowed inflicting pains for the sake of compensation only, such as al-Jubbā'ī and Abu'l-Hudhayl.

1. *Abkār al-afkār*.

The early Mu'tazilite scholars and those who allowed for favour did not allow inflicting pain except on condition of compensation, and the lessons that pains teach others and the fact that they are favours intended to deter the wayward. 'Abbād al-Daymarī held that pain could be inflicted for the sake of teaching a lesson without compensation. Abū Hāshim [son of al-Jubbā'ī] held, however, that inflicting pain is not suitable for mere compensation while the agent is capable of imparting a favour equal to the compensation, unless God knows that it does not profit the subject except in the form of compensation. Consider, then, whether this agrees with what is said in the book [of al-Āmidī].

7. (The seventh [argument] turns on whether beasts should be compensated for the pains and hardships they incur during their lifetime, as compared with similar beasts which do not suffer similar pains or not?) (If they are to be compensated, is this compensation) to be meted out in this life or the next, and if in the next, should it be done in paradise or somewhere else? Moreover, if in paradise, will they be granted reason so that they can judge that it is a reward,) and that it is a lasting one?

These, then, are their¹ arguments (although some of them have denied that beasts and children² are liable to suffering, purely arbitrarily, and with a view to avoiding the conclusion that they can gain access to paradise and that reason can be created in them.)

1 That is, the Mu'tazilites.

2 The text says 'boys'.

TREATISE ON EXISTENCE

Risālat al-wujūd

Translated for this volume by Akiro Matsumoto from Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī's *Risālat al-wujūd*, ed. Naṣr Allāh Taqawī (Tehran, 1321 Sh./1942), pp. 3–24.¹

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

You, may God help you and us to succeed, should know that masters of discursive philosophy and insight have illustrated the theory of the hierarchy (*marātib*) of existents in their concreteness of existence (*mawjūdiyyat*) and say that it is not concealed that luminous bodies can be divided into three planes according to their luminosity. The first plane is that of things the light of which is originated in others, just as the surface of the earth is brightened by the rays of the sun when facing it. In this plane, three factors are recognized: first, the surface of the earth; second, the ray which is cast upon it; and third, the fact of facing the sun which benefits the ray. There is no doubt that these three elements are different from one another, and undoubtedly it is possible for the ray to vanish from the surface of the earth, but this happens in actuality. The second plane is that of the things the light of which is necessarily originated in their essence (*dhāt*), just like the sun being predestined to effulge its light in the necessary and regular manner. Two things are recognized in this plane. One is the body of the sun, and the other is its light, which is in that body. These two are different from one another. If the body of the sun had been the same as its light in the necessary way as already mentioned, it should not be possible for the light to be separate from the body.

Now, the third plane is that of the things that can shine and become luminous by themselves, not in the manner in which light is added to them, as seen in the case of the sunlight. It is not a secret to any wise man that the light of the sun is not dark, but it shines and illuminates by itself, not by means of another light that is self-subsisting. In this plane, only one thing is recognized in the sight of the people, and it is by means of it that other things become visible in accordance with the degrees of their ability to manifest themselves. No plane is higher than the third plane in its luminosity.

After grasping this introduction on perceptibles, it should be known that existence (*wujūd*) is a spiritual (*ma'nawī*) light, and, according to rational classification, existent beings (*ashyā'-i mawjūdah*), too, have three planes from the viewpoint of the concreteness of existence. The first plane is that of the thing whose existence depends upon matters outside it, as is discerned in the quiddities

1. Naṣr Allāh Taqawī based his edition of *Risālat al-wujūd* on the manuscript preserved in the British Library, Department of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books, which is numbered ADD26297.

of the possible things (*māhiyyāt-i mumkināt*). In this case we can point out three factors. First is the essence (*dhāt*) of the possible quiddities. Second is their existence, which is originated in another source. Third is the other source that provides those quiddities with existence. There is no doubt that the separation of existence from such things is possible from the viewpoint of its essence, and, in fact, it happens.

The second plane is that of the thing whose essence necessitates its own existence so that the separation of existence from it is impossible. For the majority of theologians (*mutakallimūn*), this thing is regarded as the Necessary Existence (*wājib al-wujūd*). Now, in this plane two factors are recognized: first is the essence of the Necessary Existence, and second is the existence originated from that essence. It is obvious that the separation of existence from such a thing is impossible because of its essence. However, the assumption of separation is possible because of the difference between essence and existence.

The third plane is that of the thing whose existence is identical with its essence (*‘ayn-i dhāt-i aū*) and which is not different from its essence, like the reality of existence (*ḥaqīqat-i wujūd*), for no one will make a mistake in understanding the fact that the reality of existence is extremely far from non-existence (*‘adam*) and that nothing is so far from non-existence as the reality of existence. Its remoteness is only comparable with the extreme remoteness of light from darkness, for nothing is as remote from darkness as light. Therefore, just as light in itself is luminous and cannot be dark and tenebrous, the reality of existence is existent (*mawjūd*) by its essence and cannot be nonexistent (*ma‘dūm*) and *nihil* (*nīst*). In this plane, only one thing is recognized that exists by itself and other things become existent by means of it and in accordance with their capability in the same way as light, which, as already known, is luminous by itself, and other things become luminous by means of it. In this case, due to the unity (*ittiḥād*) of essence and existence, there is no reason for the assumption of their separation. Nobody can consider a higher plane in the concreteness of existence than this third plane.

It is this state that is considered to be the Necessary Existence among ancient philosophers (*awā’il*) and in Sufism, the followers of which are called believers in unity (*muwahḥidah*), and for this reason ancient philosophers have stated that the Necessary Existence is a single existence (*wujūd-i baḥt*). In other words, it means that the Necessary Existence is a pure existence (*wujūd-i maḥḍ*) subsisting by its own essence. The Sufi doctrine of unity is well known for its theory of unification (*ittiḥād*) of the essence of the Necessary Existence with its existence. The idea that the Necessary Existence is mere existence is unanimously approved of by both the school of ancient philosophers and the Sufi doctrine of unity, for rational intuition gives a judgment that the Necessary Existence has the highest plane among the planes of the concreteness of existence, so much so that no plane in the concreteness of existence is higher than that plane, nor is it stronger than that because if there

was any plane higher than it, such a plane would be more entitled to be called the Necessary Existence.

Now, it is already known that the highest and strongest plane in the concreteness of existence is the third plane in which the existent (*mawjūd*) is identical with existence (*wujūd*). After agreeing with the aforementioned idea, the philosophers of the first group, who have an inclination for logical argument and whose guide in divine sciences is reason, say that it is evident through the guidance of reason that the essence of the Necessary Existence is the reality of existence. Moreover, reason indicates that the Necessary Existence is unsuitable to be a universal thing (*amr-i kullī*). In other words, it means that the Necessary Existence is not suitable to be a universal thing to which universality (*kullīyyat*) or generality (*‘umūm*) may be attached, for existence of a universal thing will never be realized in the external world but for entification (*ta‘ayyun*). Therefore, [if the Necessary Existence should be a universal thing,] it becomes inevitably a composition of the universal thing and the entification. But the assumption of composition in the Necessary Existence is absurd, and that is a well-known fact; or, rather, [we should say] the Necessary Existence is self-entified (*muta‘ayyin*) in determination of its essence. That is, its entification is identical with its essence just as its existence is identical with its essence so much so that any kind of plurality of complex for it is impossible to actualize. As for the Necessary Existence, it must exist by its own essence, for whatever exists by dependence on something else needs it [for its existence], but the assumption of being in need of something with regard to the Necessary Existence is absurd.

Now that it has been proven that the reality of existence is identical with the Necessary Existence, it follows that the reality of existence is self-entified by its essence as well, and its particular reality (*juz’i haqīqī*) exists by its essence. Here, it is absurd to suppose multiplicity in the reality of existence from the perspective of individuals and accidental adherence (*‘urūd*) of the reality of existence to the possible quiddities.

Now, from the aforementioned remark, it is established that the Necessary Existence is an absolute existence (*wujūd-i muṭlaq*). Here by the word ‘absolute’ it is meant that it is neither accidental to a quiddity but rather self-existing by itself, nor is it restricted by an entification but is being entified in its own essence. Moreover, it has become clear from the aforementioned remarks that the application of the word ‘existent’ (*mawjūd*) to a thing other than the Necessary Existence is a metaphor, for existence is neither accidental to it, nor a part of it, nor identical with it, but its concreteness of existence is due to the fact that it has a connective existence (*wujūd-i ta‘alluqī*) with the Lord of the Reality of Existence. It is from that Lord that light is shed upon things, and thus existence is not accidental to them, nor does it emerge in them.

This is the conclusion that the eminent masters of rational argument have reached by means of their rational inference. However, the followers of the Sufi

doctrine of unity state that there is yet another realm beyond the doctrine of reason, which makes what is unattainable to human reason become revealed and observed by means of intuitive perception (*mushāhadah*) and contemplation (*mukāshafah*). This is somewhat similar to the fact that, while rational objects are attainable by reason, they are not attainable by senses.

In this realm of intuitive perception and contemplation, it has been proven that the reality of existence is identical with the Necessary Existence; it is neither universal nor particular nor general nor specific, but absolutely free from all limitations, so much so that it is even free from the limitation of being absolute (*iṭlāq*) according to analogy from the sayings of the masters of rational sciences about 'natural universals' (*kullī-yi ṭabī'ī*). And that reality manifests itself in everything that is characterized by theophanic existence (*wujūd-i tajallī*). In this sense nothing ever lacks that reality since, if it lacked the reality of existence entirely, it would not be associated with existence at all.

Whenever that reality is considered from the viewpoint of the aforementioned plane of absoluteness, it is called the Lord of Universal Unity (*ḥaḍrat-i aḥadiyyat-i jāmi'ah*). If the fact is taken into account that no limitation, restriction, or entification may be associated with Him, and restriction is defined as negation with Him, it is called the pure unity (*aḥadiyyat-i širf*). Furthermore, once that essence comes down in the plane of the divine Names and Attributes by means of the first theophany (*tajallī-yi awwal*), it is called the Lord of Oneness of the Names and Attributes (*ḥaḍrat-i asmā' wa šifāt*). When it flashes over the surface of things which are manifestations (*mazāhīr*) of the divine Names, Attributes, and reflections of its essence and comes down to manifest in them, it is called the Lord of Creatures (*ḥaḍrat-i šāni'-i makhlūqāt*). Planes of manifestation and reflections are infinite and various; each object or creature is a manifestation of one of the divine Attributes in accordance with its capacity, and to mankind belongs the capacity of manifesting all the Attributes.

The Prophet, grace and peace be upon him, said, 'God created man in His image.' This refers to the aforementioned subject: namely, God created him as a manifestation of all His Attributes. Every beauty that is found in the creature is the beauty and perfection of God's Attributes and His essence. As a poet says:

O thee! Whose beauty has a name on every plane,
It conveys a message from thee to every lover.
There is no one who did not benefit from thee,
Though due to his merit, one has a gulp and one a cup.

Every deficiency that appears in the manifestations is due to their capacity. The Sufi doctrine of unity argues that the unique essence (*dhāt-i waḥdānī*), which is the reality of the absolute existence (*ḥaqīqat-i wujūd-i muṭlaq*), manifests itself in

the cloth of plurality with conceptual limitations and entifications (*bī quyūd wa ta'ayyunāt-i i'tibārī*). For this reason, in its unity there is no multiplicity (*kathrat*) and division, just as number one is the beginning of numerals, and it appears in all the planes of numerals without any kind of division in the reality of its oneness. In spite of the infinite multiplicity that numerals have, there is nothing but oneness in it. So, nothing exists except that unique essence in the multiplicity of all the existents. However, due to its manifestations (*tajalliyāt*) and descending developments (*tanazzullāt*), mental limitations and entifications (*quyūd wa ta'ayyunāt-i i'tibāriyyah*) are associated with that essence, and therefore assumptions would arise concerning its actual plurality and multiplicity. Men with the ability of insight have realized by means of their penetration that multiplicity is a mentally posited thing (*i'tibārī*), and nothing is a real fact (*amr-i haqīqī*) except for that unique essence, and they have definitely realized that due to the exclusive zeal (*ghayrat*) of uniqueness (*waḥdāniyyat*) the existence of rivals is impossible. The assumption of a rival is imaginary, as a learned one said:

An insightful eye, gazing at the primordial nature
constitution, or being black-trimmed to the light of
truth, if observing anything else but you in this world,
it is the secondary image that a squint-eyed would have.

An anecdote:

I, this humble missionary, had a chance to converse with a Sufi master who was always speaking about the theory of unity (*tawḥīd*). I told him, 'When the sun rises, its light overcomes man's eyesight so much so that no stars can be seen even though they are in the sky high above the horizon. Why is it not possible for the divine light to overcome man's insight so much so that no other creature can be seen even though their existence is a reality as well as a representation or imagination?' He replied, 'Such a possibility belongs to the domain of reason, but I have been convinced by means of contemplation and intuitive perception that except for the essence of God, may He be exalted, other things only exist in the imaginative and metaphorical domain. Therefore, that possibility has no validity for me. The poet has referred to our certainty in his poem when he said:

Once I made a journey in the world of knowledge,
An idea occurred in my mind by way of oneness
What a wonderful story, what precious tidings!
Hundred sleeves for a single hand! Two hundred
Collars for a single head!

Then, he said that the mysteries of unity cannot be well expressed in words, and human reason does not have the ability to understand them, and it is not suitable for them to be unveiled. To reveal a little of that mystery is to be clad with the garb of the holy law (*Shari'ah*), so that the adherents of the literal meaning of the holy law may not disapprove and abhor it and that the seekers of real certitude (*yaqīn*) may fully enjoy it. Their aspiration for assiduity and diligence in religious duties and their demeanour on the spiritual path may increase. The tradition (*ḥadīth*) 'speak to people in proportion to their rational capacity' justifies this group [latter group of people]. The remark of the venerable masters to the effect that 'the revelation of the mysteries of the divine (*asrār al-rubūbiyyah*) is a sacrilege when the concealment of the secret of the unity is required' puts an end to argument. And how most appropriate is the poem of the infallible Imam, the beauty of believers, grandson of the Prophet, peace of God be upon him! which has been added to the tradition of the Chief of the Faithful and leader of religion, 'Ali, the authorized guardian:

Verily I did not conceal the jewellery of my knowledge
So that not to see the truth and not to be led from the right course
Once Abū Ḥasan mentioned to al-Ḥusain as regarding this matter,
Giving advice to al-Ḥasan before him:
"If I should divulge many a secret knowledge,
They would say to me that you are one of the idolatrous.
Muslim people will regard shedding my blood as lawful.
And they see the best as the worst undertaking."

What follows is mentioned in the speech of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib: 'there is wisdom in my heart, but if I reveal it openly to you, you will tremble just as a rope hanging down in a well will tremble.' And also, from one of the Prophet's companions, may God be pleased with him; the following story has been conveyed; namely, 'I learned from the Prophet, may God bless him and grant salvation upon him and his family, two sayings included in the tradition (*ḥadīth*). I have told you one of them, but if I should tell you the other one, you would cut my throat and gullet.' The wise man knows that in the aforesaid two stories is included a reference to the unsuitability of divulging it in words. It is for this very reason that one who revealed secrets became the object of reprobation of people's talk.

This is the entire story of the conversation held between that master of the Sufi doctrine of unity and I. At this time, we made a reference to the main points of the assertion of the group who took a rational method and disapproved of the Unitarian Sufis. They state that, since the necessary existent is identical with the reality of existence, and according to your assertion the reality of existence is manifested and contracted to cover all the objects, so much so that none of the existents ever lacks the reality of existence, it is therefore necessary that the reality of the necessary

existent be mixed with the ignoble and impure things, and be intertwined with them. But no wise man would ever approve of such an assertion. Those believing in unity have responded that no division or multiplicity would occur because whenever the light of the sun falls upon the surface of the earth it will not be divided and multiplied from the viewpoint of its own essence, but division and multiplicity belong to the earth in reality because if the essentials (*dhawāt*) of the ray were considered apart from the matter of place without taking the surface of the earth into consideration, no division or multiplicity would ever be conceived by us. The answer to the question of division and multiplicity cannot be conceived, and the answer to this issue is found in the foregoing discussion. It is not concealed that the light of the sun falls upon both a ruby and impurities.

If the light of the sun fell upon impurities (*ḥadath*),
It remains the same light and receives no impurity (*khathath*).

That is, the light that fell upon the impure would not become impure, and due to the impurity of the place no defect was inflicted upon the light. On the other hand, the light that fell upon a ruby never increased its nobility either, but the light in these two places remains in its original state and nobility. Defect and nobility, which appear in our perception, depend on those two places. However, if the sun should not shed light on the ignoble things, its graceful emanation (*fayḍ*) would not have been universal, but rather deficient, just as his eminence, Mawlawī (Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī), may God sanctify his secret, says:

The light of the sun heard [the call] 'Return!'
and came back in haste to its source.
No disgrace remained with it from the ashpits,
No colour remained with it from the rose-gardens.

An Anecdote:¹

Once a scholar from the polemic theology and another scholar from the Sufi school of unity met one another in an assembly, and a debate was held between the two on the subject of divine unity (*tawḥīd*). The first scholar said that he felt disgust for a God who manifested Himself in dogs and cats, but the second scholar said that he was disgusted with a God who did not manifest Himself in dogs and cats. Then, attendants at that assembly were convinced that one of the two scholars must have been an infidel (*kāfir*). However, a certain elder explained their debate in the following way; namely, 'the first scholar believed that dogs and cats were extremely base, and that close relations and associations with them meant a complete defect.

1. This anecdote perhaps refers to the debate between Jurjānī and Taftāzānī, which was held at the court of Timūr.

Therefore, his intention in that speech would have been that he felt disgust for a God who was defective. The second scholar believed that close relations [with mean things] was not a cause of defect because of the reason that was said as regards the sunlight, and that if God should not manifest Himself in dogs and cats, the graceful emanation of existence of God, may His glory be glorified, would not be universal but defective. The intention of the second scholar was therefore that he felt disgust for a God who is defective. No doubt, defectiveness is not suitable to be related to God. Therefore, his disgust was not for God. And infidelity is not to be attributed to either one of them.

Sa'd al-Dīn Taftāzānī

Sa'd al-Dīn Mas'ūd ibn 'Umar Taftāzānī was born in 722/1322 in Taftāzān in Khurāsān. He studied with 'Aḍud al-Dīn Ījī and Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī and like many eminent scholars of his time was patronized by the Mongol sultans. He was first sent to Sarakhs by Timūr and then was asked to transfer to Samarqand. Following the conquest of Shīrāz by Timūr, Jurjānī who had been introduced by Taftāzānī himself to Shāh Shujā', the ruler of Shīrāz, was transferred to Samarqand in 789/1387 and the two men were then asked to hold a debate in Timūr's presence. Their friendship did not survive and rivalry began between these two major figures leading to antagonism and estrangement, as is evident in Jurjānī's criticism of Taftāzānī. Taftāzānī died in Samarqand but was buried in Sarakhs. While the exact date of his death is not known, it must have been between 791–797/1389–1395.

There is disagreement as to his intellectual orientation; some have regarded him as a Shāfi'ī and others as a Ḥanafī. While theologically it is said that he belonged to the school of Ash'arites, his views are closer to the Māturidī school. He was a prolific author who wrote extensively on the much-debated question of free will and determinism, arguing that God and man participate in human action in the literal sense of participation. Taftāzānī wrote his first book, *Sharḥ al-taṣrīf al-'Izzī* (Commentary on al-'Izzī's Application), at the age of sixteen. Later he went on to write on grammar, philology, rhetoric, logic, metaphysics and jurisprudence and also wrote Qur'ānic commentaries. Among his major works are his commentary upon Ījī's *Kitāb al-mawāqif*, a commentary on the *Risālat al-shamsiyyah* (Treatise on the Sun), a commentary on a treatise on logic written by Najm al-Dīn 'Alī Dabīrān-i Kātībī Qazwīnī, and a commentary on the 'Aqā'id (Beliefs) of Abū Ḥafṣ al-Nasafī, which is regarded as the authoritative work on issues of creed and dogma for the *ahl al-sunnah wa'l-jamā'ah* (Sunnis), particularly the Ash'arites. His writings, which are too numerous to mention in full, cover a vast array of subjects and some of them are used in traditional *madrasahs* to this day.

Taftāzānī's writings were propagated by successive Mughal rulers. Perhaps this was begun by Mīr Faṭḥ Allāh Shīrāzī who was invited by 'Ādil Shāh to Bījāpūr, where he introduced Taftāzānī's writings to India. Subsequently Akbar Shāh invited Mīr Faṭḥ Allāh Shīrāzī to his court in 991/1583 where he was put in charge of religious affairs and endowments. Together with Rājah Toder Māl, he organized the revenue system and reformed the educational curriculums, and it was in this context that he made the study of Sa'd al-Din Taftāzānī, Jurjānī and Dawānī part of the educational programme. A few decades later Mullā 'Abd al-Ḥakīm Siyālkutī, a prominent Mughal scholar, wrote a commentary on Taftāzānī entitled *Muṭawwal ḥāshiya-yi sharḥ al-'aqā'id* (Extended Glossary upon the Commentary of The Principles of Belief). Furthermore, Sid Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh, the fifth ruler of the 'Alawīd dynasty of Morocco, sought to revive the curriculums of *madrasahs* by recommending the teaching of *Muṭawwal* (Extended Commentary), a text by Taftāzānī.

In this chapter we have included two treatises by Taftāzānī. The first is a translation of his *Sharḥ al-maqāṣid fī 'ilm al-kalām* (Commentary on the Purposes of the Science of Theology) in which Taftāzānī deals with the foundations of epistemology, sense perception, intellectual judgment and the problem of universals. In the second treatise, a translation of *Fī uṣūl al-Islām* (A Commentary on the Principles of Islam) has been included in which the question of the essence of possible beings, the cause of knowledge and the question concerning the constituent elements of the world, such as substances and accidents, are examined.

M. Aminrazavi

Sharḥ al-maqāṣid fī ‘ilm al-kalām

Translated for this volume by Habibeh Rahim from Taftāzānī’s *Sharḥ al-maqāṣid fī ‘ilm al-kalām* (Lahore, 1988), 2 vols., part 1, pp. 15–30.¹

(He presented the second section on knowledge:) From Imam al-Rāzī it was reported that the conception (*taṣawwur*) of knowledge is axiomatic (*badīhī, a priori*) in two respects. First, it is known without being acquired (*iktisāb*). However the ‘knowingness’ is via intuition (*wijdān*). It is not necessarily acquired because it is known by something ‘other’ than itself because of the impossibility of the acquisition of a thing by itself or its unknown by an ‘other’. And that ‘other’ indeed is known by knowledge. But if the knowledge of that other is again known by something else this would lead to *regressus ad infinitum*. Hence, the course of necessity is identified, and this then is the second extension (*maṭṭ*,² stretching, lengthening), that the knowledge of every person regarding their existence is axiomatic. That is, it occurs (*hāṣil*) without reflection (*naẓar*) and acquisition (*kasb*). Also this individual (*khāṣṣ*) knowledge is preceded by absolute (*muṭlaq*, unrestricted) knowledge because it [*badīhī*] is comprised of this [absolute] and the individual [knowledge]. Prior to axiomatic is axiomatic, and even more axiomatic [*a priori*]. Thus absolute knowledge is axiomatic, and so this is [endlessly] extended (*maṭṭ*). And my reply concerning these two aspects is that they are based on not differentiating between the conception and attainment of knowledge.

First, the conceiving of knowledge based on its acquisition depends on the conception of something other than itself; and the conception of the other does not depend on its conception, which is necessarily circular, but on its occurrence because of the impossibility of the occurrence of the finite (*muqayyad*, limited, restricted) without the absolute [infinite]. Even though he did not state that the existence of the totality within the parts does not depend on its [i.e. totality’s] occurrence as well. The statement in *al-Mawāqif*³ is that what we attempt to know without knowledge is to conceive the essence (*ḥaqīqah*, reality) of knowledge.

1. I would like to acknowledge with much appreciation the kind assistance so generously provided by Mr Kassam Ito and Mrs Rita Ito in the completion of this translation.

2. Arabic: *al-maṭṭ*, translated as extension, in terms of logical definition is the extension of a concept/subject both statically and dynamically, i.e. in relation to its placement with regards to other subjects and/or with regards to its function. The extension also alludes to the concept/subject either as universality itself, or individualized as a part of another singular object merely in which it is realized. The extension of a concept/subject may thus be singular, common, particular, distributive or universal.

3. ‘Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 1355), Taftāzānī’s teacher, was the author of this text.

And he compromised when he sought knowledge with the conception of the essence. Better than that is the [statement] in the *Sharḥ al-mukhtaṣar*¹ that 'the thing that was intended to be realized by the other is the conception of the essence of knowledge'. But he compromised in this as well when he said that 'the dependency of conception on the knowledge of the other is on the realization of the knowledge with it'. I mean a knowledge partially relating to that other, since there is no meaning in the dependency of a thing upon its [own] occurrence (*huṣūl*).

As for the second [aspect], the axiomatic for everyone is not the conception that knowledge exists but the occurrence of the knowledge about that thing; it does not require the conception of the knowledge of it in addition to the axiomatic [understanding]. As for instance, every individual knows that he has a soul but does not know its essence; [yet] it was said there is no meaning for knowledge except with the soul reaching the meaning and its occurrence in it. And knowledge is among the faculties (*ma'ānī*) of the soul; its occurrence in the soul is the knowledge of it and the conception of it. If the acquisition of knowledge on account of its existence is axiomatic then the conception of the knowledge of it is [also] axiomatic. This necessitates that the conception of the absolute knowledge is axiomatic [as well], and this is the intended [meaning]. Likewise, when the conception of the other with which we acquire the conception of knowledge is dependent on the occurrence of absolute knowledge, [which in turn] is dependent on the conception of it, this is a circular [argument] *ad infinitum*.

We stated in the preceding [section] that the occurrence of meaning for the soul in the soul may depend on their substance, which means substantive (*muta'aṣṣil*) existence. These are its [i.e. knowledge's] attributes—not conceptions of it when it could be [known] by its images, and this is meant by non-substantive (*ghayr muta'aṣṣil*) existence. This is the status of the shadow with a tree; there, the conception of it is not an attribute (*ittiṣāf*, qualification, property) of it [the tree]. Is it not seen that the *kāfir* has the property of *kufr*,² the acquisition of rejection, in his soul, although he does not conceive it; and he could conceive *īmān* (faith),³

1. As a genre term in the field of Muslim jurisprudence, literature associated with *mukhtaṣar* designates an epitome or digest of the law. The initial *mukhtaṣar* date from the fourth/tenth century. The designation of basic structures and concepts of the law is the main aim of such compositions. Cf. Norman Calder, 'Law', in S. H. Nasr and O. Leaman, eds., *History of Islamic Philosophy* (London and New York, 1996), Part 11, pp. 986–987. *Sharḥ al-mukhtaṣar* here refers to the text by Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī (701/1301 or 710/1310).

2. From the root *KFR* meaning denier, rejector; one who deliberately denies the signs of God and wilfully refuses to accept the transcendent revelation. *Kufr* is the verbal noun. Cf. Wilfred C. Smith, *Faith and Belief: The Difference Between Them* (Princeton, NJ, 1979), p. 40 ff.

3. *īmān* is frequently translated as belief, but faith is a more accurate designation. In the Qur'ān (49:14), distinction is made between one who has faith, i.e. a *mu'min* and one who is a Muslim, i.e. merely formally accepts the message of Islam presented by Prophet Muḥammad. The Arabs of the desert say: We have faith. You say: You do not have faith, but say: 'we submit', for faith has not entered your hearts. And if you obey Allāh and His Messenger, He will in not in

acquiring its meaning in his soul without the attribute [i.e. property] of it. The occurrence of the quintessential (*'ayn*) knowledge *per se* of a thing in the soul is not by the conception of that knowledge. As when the occurrence of the notion of knowledge of a thing in the soul does not mean having the [the knowledge] of that thing, having such knowledge may require it. Indeed, this would be [like] having knowledge of the notion of knowledge based on the fact that the notion exists in itself.

Then, if one were to say that in the statement of the Imam [Rāzī] there is something which rebuts this above-mentioned answer because he stated first of all that the acquisition of knowledge depends on the occurrence of knowledge by the other, and this means the possibility of knowledge, that he knows of that other thing and presumed that this might happen, it is imperative that the occurrence of the knowledge of individual (*khāṣṣ*) knowledge is before the occurrence of the knowledge of absolute knowledge, and this is impossible. The acquisition of knowledge would be necessary then for the conception of the (not) necessary other and this possibility is not possible.

Second [the Imam states] that the knowledge of every person that he is aware of his existence is axiomatic. And knowledge of his existence is individual (*khāṣṣ*, specific, personal, private) knowledge, and if the knowledge of the individual knowledge is axiomatic, then the knowledge of the absolute is axiomatic [as well]. Since it is so assumed, someone might answer that the knowledge that one is the knower is attestation (*taṣḍīq*, endorsement, certification)¹ and its self-evidence does not necessitate the self-evidence of its conceptions because it is explained by the thing which, after considering it [from] both sides, does not depend on reflection. He therefore referred to the refutation that this attestation is axiomatic, meaning that it does not depend on acquisition and reflection originally—neither in the judgment nor in its two aspects, whether he makes the perception of both aspects (*ṭaraf*) a division of it or a condition of it, and that is because its occurrence is for those who definitely do not [have] any discernment and acquisition, such as fools or children.

We say that the knowledge of the knower of a thing is attestation, and that is what is necessary for the conception of the two aspects. So the conception of knowledge in its essence is not necessary, although the discussion is about it. However, if he means that the knowledge by the other necessitates the possibility of the knowledge of his knowing of it before learning of the substance of the knowledge, then this is

any way withhold from you your reward for what you do. For distinction between the range of meanings for faith and belief see Smith, *Faith and Belief*, p. 33ff.; also see W. C. Smith, *Belief and History* (Charlottesville, VA, 1977).

1. Taftāzānī has defined *taṣḍīq* as a verification so complete that it engages the very core of one's being. This is represented by the French term *s'engager*; Taftāzānī writing in Arabic was compelled to use the Persian term *girawīdan*. For a discussion of the term *taṣḍīq*, see W. C. Smith, 'Faith as *taṣḍīq*' in Parviz Morewedge, ed., *Islamic Philosophical Theology* (Albany, NY, 1979).

not acceptable. In a general way it is not restricted because of the probability that the realization of the possible could be after the acquisition.

As the statement is that the cognizance (*maʿrifah*) of the known as it is, or the comprehension of the known as it is, or the substantiation of the known as it is, or the conviction in a thing such as it is with what is known, or the thing that necessitates the existence of the doer as the knower, and so forth, the course of inconsistencies is obvious. But this, in the view of the Imam Ḥujjat al-Islām,¹ is due to obscurity in the meaning of knowledge and the difficulty of defining it.

He stated in *al-Mustaṣfā*² that perhaps it is difficult to define it in the real form with the generic and the differentia (or particular), in clear comprehensive terms. But this in fact is difficult in most things, even in most of the perceptions by the senses, *a fortiori* in comprehension. We explain its meaning by classification and example. As for the classification, it is the differentiation of what it could be confused with, such as convictions (*iʿtiqād*). It is not hidden that on the other [side] there is doubt and opinion with pronouncement, and there is ignorance with proclivity, which then remains with the exception of the conviction of imitated [opinions] and which differs from it in that the conviction may remain with the change in the object of the conviction, such as the conviction that Zayd is in the house, [but] then Zayd goes out. So then conviction, *per se*, contrary to knowledge, changes with the transformation of its subject. It does not remain in the case of the absence of the related subject, because in fact the disclosure and dissolution in conviction is tied to the heart. Therefore it [conviction] vanishes by the dubiousness posited by the dubious, contrary to knowledge.

As a paradigm, cognizance by the inner eye is similar to cognizance with the eye[s]. Just as there is no significance for sight except with the impression of the image of the object seen according to its likeness in the faculty of sight, like the impression of the image on a mirror, the mind is such, in which is impressed the image of the intelligibles—that is, their realities and their quiddities as they are. And knowledge is tantamount to the mind seizing the images of the intelligible [entities] in itself and their impression and occurrence. The above classification precludes knowledge from the possibility of doubtful [confusion], and this

1. Refers to al-Ghazzālī (d. 1111). Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Tāwūs Aḥmad al-Ṭūsī al-Shāfiʿī, is popularly known by his *nisbah* al-Ghazzālī. His erudition and search for the truth has left an indelible mark not only on subsequent Muslim thought but on the Western intellectual tradition as well. His eloquence and wisdom were acclaimed by the designations Ḥujjat al-Islām (Proof of Islam), Zayn al-Dīn (Ornament of Faith), and Mujaddid al-Dīn (Renewer of Religion). Ref: M. M. Sharif ed., *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, 2 vols. (Lahore, 1963); four articles on al-Ghazzālī, pp. 581–642, vol 1; also the article on al-Ghazzālī in *EI* (new edition).

2. *al-Mustaṣfā* by al-Ghazzālī is a composition on law and jurisprudence. He considered religious law or regulatory injunctions to be included in *ʿilm al-muʿāmalah* (knowledge dealing with practical affairs of life) and not a part of *ʿilm al-mukāshafah* (knowledge or gnosis of ecstasies, i.e. ecstatic contemplation of God).

example makes you understand the real meaning of knowledge, and this is his statement.

It is evident that he intended [to present] the difficulty of its [i.e. knowledge's] definition by its real parameters and not provide its distinction or make you understand its realities, and this is not an implausible [conclusion]. Moreover, he did not intend by this example [to deal with] a single one of its parts, such as our conviction that one is half of two, as some understand it.

Imam al-Rāzī said that the definitions of knowledge are not free of deficiency because its quiddity has reached such a degree [of clarity] that it is not possible to define it by a thing clearer than itself. Many of the scholars (*muḥaqqiqīn*)¹ proceeded in this direction. Some of them even said that the controversy about knowledge occurs because of the intensity of its lucidity, not by its obscurity. The word 'knowledge' as used conventionally [in a variety of meanings] includes the cognizance of the mind, and this could be explained by the occurrence of the image of the thing in the mind and in the discussion of its properties (*kayfiyyāt*). We will come to its verification and refute what was said about it.

Some had the view that knowledge is an attribute of the knower and occurrence is an attribute of the image. Therefore they modified [their view] to the occurrence of the meaning in the self (*nafs*, soul). According to what has been stated by Imam [Rāzī] and others, the first stage of the soul reaching the meaning is consciousness. If the soul attains the complete apprehension (*wuqūf*) of that meaning, then it becomes conception, and if this [conception] stays where it can be retrieved, if desired, after it has departed, we call this memory, and that of yearning as remembering (*tadhakkur*, *anamnesis*), and that of consciousness (*wijdān*) as remembrance (*dhikr*). You know that the occurrence of the image in the mind is also an attribute of the knower and from this is one of the types (*aqsām*) of attestation, which is associated with determination, correspondence, and affirmation. Hence it excludes presumption, compounded ignorance and imitation (*taqlīd*). An elaboration of this will come later.

As [for knowledge] from that which includes the corresponding conception and the definitive assertion according to the [appropriate] practices ('*urf*, consuetude) and terminology, they have two expressions: [First] it is the attribute by which the cited [entity] is clarified for the one who has it. In other words, it is the attribute by which the cited [entity] is unveiled and attracts [attention] towards it [self] and it is completely unveiled for the one who has this attribute, whether it be a human or another. This was modified from the thing to the cited to include the existent and the non-existent, for it may be misconceived that what is meant here is the known because in the citation of knowledge is the citation of the known; and therefore it is modified to avoid a circular [deduction]. In general, presumption and ignorance

1. Oblique plural used as nominative, verifiers of the truth, i.e. philosophers, sages, scholars.

are excluded because there is no clarity in them. Similar is the conviction of the imitator [follower] which is as a knot on the heart, while epiphany (*tajallī*) is the elucidation and the undoing of the knot.

[Second, knowledge is] an attribute that necessitates a distinction in meanings that cannot accept contradiction. In other words, it is an attribute that is the consequence of God's creating in the one who has this [attribute] the discernment in intellectual matters, whether universal or particular, which excludes [attributes] such as omnipotence and volition, and this is evident. [It includes] as well [the discernment] in sensory perceptions because this differentiates between the objects [of perception]. Those who considered it knowledge by sense-perceptions (*'ilm bi'l-mahsūsāt*) did not mention this limitation and here excluded all other cognizance because the possibility of contradiction in presumption, doubt (*shakk*), and delusion (*wahm*, fallacy)¹ is evident. Even more obvious in compounded ignorance and likewise is the conviction of the follower because it ebbs (*yazūl*) with the dubiousity of the dubious, nay, is even possibly associated with definitive contradiction.

One may say that in compounded ignorance there is no differentiation [in attributes or meaning], as also in non-corresponding conception, such as, when in the soul [or self]; from a horse emerges the image of a speaking animal, albeit, the exactitude is incorporated because there is no contradiction in it. Accordingly, the inconsistency is a defect in judgment and categorization (*tartīb*), for what is in it [actually] is not concealed. As for the attachment of the meaning to universality, there is a tendency to define knowledge with universalities and cognizance with particulars.

What was stated in *al-Mawāqif*² does not reject [the idea] that this increase [in meaning], while not necessary, is subject to reflection by extending the definition to all the elements of the defined. According to the statement of Hājib,³ the verbal noun appears as a follow-up to the delineation of the noun and to the present-tense verb in reverse. They say this is the terminology of grammarians. Furthermore, the apparent meaning of our statement, 'a differentiation (*tamyiz*, distinction) that does not allow for contradiction' is that we mean [contradiction is] the antithesis of specification [or distinction], and since this does not make much sense, some

1. Ibn Sinā (d. 428/1037) distinguished between internal and external perception. Internal perception has been further categorized into five faculties and here inclusion of *wahm* was an original contribution. This *wahm* has been described as 'explaining our instinctive and emotional response to the environment' which operates at a 'quasi-empirical' level and may be inaccurate. Ref: Sharif, ed., *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, vol. 1, pp. 492–498.

2. 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī was the author of *al-Mawāqif*; subsequently amongst others, both Taftāzānī and his younger contemporary Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 1413), wrote *sharḥs* or commentaries on Ījī's *al-Mawāqif*.

3. Ibn al-Ḥājib, Jamāl al-Dīn Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān b. Abī Bakr al-Mālīkī, (d. 1249). The son of a chamberlain (*ḥājib*), he was born in Cairo where he received his theological training. He was known as an erudite Mālīkī *faqīh* and as a grammarian. His compendiums of Mālīkī law, such as *al-Mukhtaṣar fi'l uṣūl* and *Mukhtaṣar fi'l furū'*, were the subject of several commentaries.

others thought that what is meant is an attribute that makes distinction a necessity that does not allow for contradiction.

In actuality, [contradiction] should be considered to be connected with specification [or distinction], as per their statement that the conviction that something is such and such, while it cannot be anything except such and such, is knowledge, but when it is more probable that it is not such, [this conviction] would oscillate towards presumption. This means that it is an attribute (*ṣifah*) which necessitates that the soul distinguish the meaning in such a way. The meaning is that an attribute necessitates that the soul specify the meaning in such a way that there is no probability of contradiction in the thing specified. This is indicated with the articulation of their objection by [their] citing customary knowledge, as for example, the knowledge that the mountain is a stone. There is probability of contradiction in it, for it may not be of stone, but may be transmuted to gold with the creation of God Almighty in that place of stone to gold, as is the view of the *muḥaqqiqūn*; or if the elements of stone—the attributes that give the form of stone—are taken away and the attributes that render it gold are created therein, as is the view of some theologians (*mutakallimūn*)¹ regarding the homogeneousness of substance in all bodies.

The answer is: what is meant by the improbability of contradiction in knowledge is that the knower does not accept the possibility [of contradiction] either in fact or in judgment. Whereas, in conception, either contradiction does not exist or there is no significance for the probability of contradiction without damaging judgment. However, in attestation, the certitude of judgment is based on a necessary [factor] which could not disappear in the first place. So also are conventional [practices], because absolute certitude about them is necessitated by customs. If contradiction is probable, meaning that though incumbent its happening is not necessarily from it, conceivably therefore its existence in itself is one of the possibilities that necessarily may or may not happen, and so forth. As when it is reckoned that an object observed is definitely white, that in itself this is possible could or could not be thus. In conclusion, the probability of contradiction means its permissibility by him who judges whether it be actual or circumstantial, as in the case of presumption where the certitude regarding its object is lacking; or [whether it be] a judgment; or [whether it be] a report, as the conviction of the follower [imitator] in which [affirmation] is not necessitated by the senses or the intellect or custom. Hence, it is probable that it may disappear [altogether], and an antithetical conviction may develop definitely. In this appears the answer for those who consider the conviction of the follower [imitator] as knowledge, especially that which corresponds exactly

1. The *kalām* scholars. Though generally translated as theology, *kalām* was distinct from its essentially Christian counterpart. In the Islamic context the realm of *kalām* was more akin to the formation of the defence of the faith associated also with the Western scholastics, who indeed had been influenced by and are even perceived to have emulated the *mutakallimūn*.

to knowledge. It is evident there is [then] in it no possibility of the contradiction occurring, [either in fact or in] the judge's [mind], regardless of the intellectual possibility as in conventional [practices].

(He stated the second topic:) I say that it is widespread that knowledge is divided into conception and attestation, though some of the [scholars] reject [this] on the basis of the necessary association between the two, since there is no attestation without conception. They even state that there is no conception in accordance with reality without attestation by verification. And when [they] speak about conception as per its terminology, they turn the division of [knowledge] into rudimentary conception which is without judgment, and attestation. Others responded to that by stating that necessity regarding existence does not contradict correspondence regarding the truth, as between even and odd (numbers), and the limitation is in the conception that is restricted by lack of judgment. In attestation this [limitation] is not complete because of the exclusion (*khurūj*) of conception of both aspects. Generally speaking, the statement of those people is clear that conception considered in attestation is conception that corresponds to it, and this is conception without judgment. I mean [the conception] in which judgment was not considered, not that [conception] in which the lack of judgment was taken into consideration.

Imam [Rāzī] and al-Kātibī¹ stated that this is what is meant by a rudimentary conception and conception alone. The conclusion of the division is that we either consider knowledge with judgment in it, and this is attestation, or it is [merely] conception. This means that attestation is judgment with what is relevant to it of conceptions. That is, according to the statement of Imam [Rāzī], it [attestation] is not the cognizance restricted by judgment as we might have understood from his previous statement when he said that it [attestation] is cognizance accompanied by judgment or cognizance which is followed by judgment. How [could it be thus as] he mentioned this in the course of reasoning [*istidlāl*] regarding the incidence of conception as a part of it [attestation]? Besides, he frequently elaborated the statement that it [attestation] is judgment [*ḥukm*] itself. So he made judgment sometimes an action and sometimes a quiddity called *al-kalām al-naḥsī* (self locution or mental speech), which is neither from the category of conviction nor volition. For the majority [there is consensus] that it [attestation] is judgment itself and is a type of knowledge which differs from conception in its reality. This is opposed to attestation which concerns the relationship to other aspects, since it pertains to the relationship only, while attestation concerns the relationship [itself as well as] other aspects.

1. Najm al-Din 'Alī al-Kātibī al-Qazwīnī (d. 675/1276), popular by the Arabic appellation, *Kātib* (the writer or clerk) and the Persian equivalent *Dabirān*, was one of the eminent philosophers, astronomers and mathematicians of his time. His *Risālat al-shamsiyyah* and *Kitāb ḥikmat al-'ayn* were frequently quoted compositions which became the subject of several commentaries.

Do you not see that when you doubt the creation (*ḥudūth*) of the universe, you have a conception of the universe, a conception of the creation, and a conception of the relationship between the two without judgment or attestation? When the proof is established, your knowledge of the relation between [these two] becomes another kind of knowledge which is called judgment and attestation, while in fact it is the acceptance by the soul of the occurrence or non-occurrence of it [the relationship]. This is expressed in Persian as *bī-gīrawīdan* as elucidated by Ibn Sīnā. In the *Shifā'* he said that as for conception, when you say that whiteness is an accident, an image occurs in the mind of this composite and what it is comprised of, such as 'whiteness' and 'accident'. As for attestation, an image occurs in the mind that conforms to the things themselves, and [in case of] non-conformation, it is falsified.

So in this statement [of Ibn Sīnā] it is indicated that the meaning of the predicate and the proposition is the truth, but falsehood is a mental probability, and in it attestation is not confined to conformation as he imagined because the occurrence of a thing [in the mind], such as 'conformation', does not necessarily mean its realization in fact. This means that both conception and attestation are of two types—reflective and necessary, since we find for ourselves that some conceptions and attestations need reflection, such as the conceptualization of angels and jinn and the attestation in the creation of the universe. Other [attestations and conceptions] may dispense (*istighnā*) with it [i.e. do not need reflection], such as the conception of existence and of non-existence, or the attestation of the impossibility of the nexus (*ijtimā'*, unity) of two contradictory [elements]. What is meant here is the need and the non-need *per se*, so that in itself judgment is *ipso facto* independent of reflection; even though the terms of the knowledge acquired according to the view of the majority [of scholars] are that the necessary attestation is that which does not depend after the conception of both terms on reflection or acquisition (*kasb*).

The statement in *al-Mawāqif* is that some [attestations and conceptions] are necessary by [virtue of] consciousness and some are reflective by necessity. This statement may give the impression (*wahm*, delusion) that the second [element (i.e. necessity)] is not [reflective] by consciousness, but in fact what is meant is what we said. Qāḍī Abū Bakr² explained that necessary knowledge is what is inherent in the minds of human beings in such a way that you cannot find a way to be rid of it. It is confined to human beings because the necessary (*ḍarūrī*) and the reflective (*naẓarī*) are parts of knowledge that [simply] occur. Thus this was disputed by [the view that] the mind (*nafs*, soul, self) may be detached from the necessary knowledge [in two ways]: 1) when it [the knowledge] disappears after its occurrence because something contrary to the knowledge happens, such as sleep and

1. As already mentioned, 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī was the author of *al-Mawāqif*.

2. Referred to as al-Baqillānī, Qāḍī Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib b. Muḥammad b. Ja'far al-Qāsim was an Ash'arite theologian and Māliki jurist who was a native of Baṣra, (d. 403/1013).

heedlessness; or 2) that it does not occur originally for lack of one of its [essential] requirements such as attentiveness, the conceiving of both terms, the propensity of the soul, sensitivity (*ihsās*), experience and so forth, on which depend some of the necessities (*ḍarūriyyāt*) [of knowledge].

The answer is that what is intended is that there is no ability for disengagement. Disengagement from the conception you mentioned is not within the power of a human being (*makhlūq*). This is what he said in *al-Mawāqif*. Indeed, his expression is suggestive of the ability, meaning we understand from our phrase that someone finds or does not find that he has the ability for it. In summation, in describing knowledge as necessary, [an adjective] derived from necessity, is meant the inability to commit or omit [an action], such as the movement of the trembler. Thus it [necessary knowledge] may be explained as that whose occurrence is not in the power of human beings. The requirement of occurrence is intended here in order to make necessary knowledge one of the parts of knowledge that [just] happens.

It is pronounced in Qāḍī [Abū Bakr]'s statement to exclude from [necessary knowledge] the knowledge of such details as numbers and forms, which a person has neither the ability to procure or to disengage from. If it is said, based on the consistency of both statements, [that this includes] the knowledge that occurs by reflection because it is then not within the power of the person to obtain or to disengage from it, then the answer is that what is considered in necessary [knowledge] is the negation of the ability always, and in reflective [knowledge] the ability is negated only after the obtainment, since before the obtainment it is within the ability [of the person] to acquire or be disengaged [from it] by non-acquisition.

If we accept that the intention of Qāḍī [Abū Bakr] is the negation of the ability to disengage, the question [still] remains because the disengagement, whether [it is] within one's ability or not, is opposite to indispensability (*luzūm*). We say that by indispensability he meant stability and the impossibility of disengagement from it by [one's will-] power, provided that the last statement is an interpretation of the first. He explained reflective [knowledge] by what is implied in correct reflection in the sense that it cannot be separated in the course of habit when the [appropriate] conditions occur. And he did not say what makes it necessary (*wājib*) because of what follows, which is the obtaining of the consequence following reflection [and] not by way of necessity. He did not say what happens after correct reflection, because some [kinds of] necessary knowledge are of this kind, such as the knowledge of what happens in pleasure or pain. And if he had said what the use of the correct reflection is, meaning the normal consequence, it could have been clearer. Acquisition is the opposite of 'necessary' and synonymous with reflection for those who consider that the way of acquisition is reflection and nothing else.

For those who consider acquisition possible through things like self-purification and [divine] inspiration and do not include reflection, then acquisition is broader

than reflection (*naẓarī*) and normally there is no necessary correlation between them according to *al-Mawāqif*, unless he considers self-purification and [divine] inspiration outside of normalcy. Someone may state that acquired [knowledge] is something that is obtained by voluntarily using the agencies, such as the use of the mind or the senses, and necessary [knowledge] is the opposite of it. He designates acquisition through reflection with the term deduction (*istidlāl*, reasoning).

I say that Imam al-Rāzī chose [to state that] all that occurs of conceptions is necessary because acquisition is impossible on the part of the thing acquired. I mean the thing sought (*al-maṭṭ*) and the acquirer, meaning the way of acquiring it. As for the first, *al-maṭṭ* [the acquired object] is either known, and it is not then possible to seek it or to acquire it because of the impossibility of acquiring what is already obtained; or it is unknown, and then to look for it is impossible.

He [Qāḍī Abū Bakr] then objected for two reasons: first, why it is not possible that one side of a thing is known and is turned to, [while] another side is unknown and is sought after? Second the contradiction [inherent] in the acquisition of attestation with proof in it. He answered with regard to the first aspect by stating that either it is sought from its known aspect, and this is impossible to acquire [because it is already known], or [it is sought] from its unknown aspect, and that is impossible to turn to.

About the second [he answered] that what is related to attestation, such as the proposition or the relation, is known according to conception, and therefore it is not impossible to turn to it while it is unknown according to attestation. Therefore, it is not impossible to seek its occurrence, and this is contrary to conception, because what is unknown according to conception is unknown absolutely, since there is no knowledge before conception. The conclusion is that the object of attestation may have related to it before [it related to] attestation a knowledge which is a conception other than the object of the conception. My answer is that we prefer [to state] that it is known in one aspect and therefore it is not an impossibility to seek the unknown aspect of it; it would be impossible without this known aspect that excluded it from being unknown absolutely.

It is as knowledge that we have something which contains life and cognizance, and then we seek [to know] it in its essence or accidents that separate it or distinguish it from everything else, as understood by definitions or descriptions. The unknown extension is not confined to either essence or accidents. What was stated in *al-Mawāqif*, that the unknown is the essence and the known are some considerations is confirmation of what is more important. I mean the possibility of acquiring the conception according to the reality, or [it is] a warning that the unknown-ness of the essence is necessary in that which we want to conceive. Even if the thing is known in its reality, and the intention was to acquire some of its accidents, this would be by proof and not definition. And if what is intended is the acquisition (*iktisāb*) of the accident itself, then it would be unknown in its reality.

It was mentioned in the summary of *al-Muḥaṣṣal*¹ that both the unknown and known aspects belong to a third element which is *al-maṭṭ*, thereby binding the Imam by what he himself recognized—that the known in general is known in one aspect and unknown in another aspect, and the two aspects are contradictory. One is known without comprehensiveness, and the other is not known [at all]. And when both are combined in one thing it was presumed (*ẓann*) that there was comprehensive knowledge. If not, then he himself mentioned in his critique of *The Revelation of Thoughts (Tanzīl al-afkār)*² that [first] the unknown extension/object (*maṭṭ*) is the reality of the known quiddity from the aspect of some of its accidents.

Second, the acquirer (*al-kāsib*), by which I mean, the definer of the quiddity, cannot be the quiddity itself because it is impossible for the thing to be clearer than itself or known before itself. But it can either be the totality of its parts which is itself—and then the same problem arises, or it consists of some of it, and it is out of that which includes the composite from within and without, and the one who specified this meant ‘within and without’ *per se*.

Then according to some, one defines the quiddity if he defines some of its parts, because if all the parts are known or remained unknown the definer would not be definer—i.e. an agency for knowing the quiddity and leading to its conception. If the part that is defined were itself, then the same problem arises. If it were something other than itself, its definition must be necessarily by the external, because every part is separate or external to the other. If we suppose it is overlapping (*tadākhul*) by applying this to his definition of the part that is composite of it and of others, the problem arises again. Or the definition by the external, which is also the *maṭṭ* [the sought object]; since the external would help in knowing the quiddity only if it is known to be specific to it, meaning it is fixed to it and excludes it from everything else. And this is an attestation that depends on the conception of the quiddity, and is circular, [because it depends on] the conception of all other matters which are infinite in their details, and that is impossible.

In the statement in *al-Mawāqif* there is latitude when he said that those who define (*ta'rīf*) quiddity define themselves, and this is false and external, and we will refute [it] because that which will be refuted is the definition by the external and not the external [itself]. And if he meant the omission of ‘by’—i.e. defining by the external or defining the thing that would be the external in relationship to the rest of the parts of which some would be external to the definer and require definition by the external and not the external—he [Rāzī] claimed that the correlation between the two impossibilities (as stated in *al-Muḥaṣṣal*) based on the understanding that the definer of the quiddity is the definer of all its parts, is due

1. The author of *al-Muḥaṣṣal* was Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī.

2. *Tanzīl al-afkār fī ta'dīl al-asrār* by Athīr al-Dīn al-Abharī on the subject of logic, physics and metaphysics.

to the evident impossibility of this. We limited ourselves to one of them according to the statement in *al-Maṭālib al-ʿāliyah*,¹ then it is not unknown that refuting some of the premises of this reasoning is enough to refute it. As they considered it permissible to define by 1) The sum of parts, 2) Some of them, and 3) The external, we had to explore all these three issues.

As for the first, by the totality of the parts, though it constitutes the quiddity itself, it cannot be defined by them if they were not considered different from it. The evidence of this is that the parts may have multiple concepts associated with them, by then observing them one by one in detail and in order (*tartīb*). And acquisition, which is a demarcation, may be linked to one conception by observing the totality as such, and this is the acquired (*muktasab*) which is delineated. This is the meaning of their statement that in the delineated there is collectivity, and in the demarcated there is detail. It is not impossible that the conception of the totality is based on the totality of conceptions and caused by them.

If it were said that if the totality of conceptions led to the conceptions of the totality, if these [conceptions] occur then the [totality] also would occur without reflection and without acquisition. And if [they do not] occur, then [the totality of conceptions] would not be a suitable definer, but it would be sought; the discussion would be about what makes the [conception] occur. Such is the discourse regarding the definition by some parts or by the external, even in the acquisition of attestations. We say that it is possible (*yajūz*) that the parts are known [and] spread in all the known [things]. Then there would be a need for reflection in order to present them combined and sequentially so that they may lead to the conception of the quiddity, and that is the meaning of acquisition (*iktisāb*), and its occurrence results from obtaining the formal part and so proceeding.

He said in *al-Mawāqif*, criticizing [their statement, that] the totality of conceptions occurs by the conception of the totality, the truth is that the parts, when sequentially presented until they are obtained, [constitute] the quiddity, and not that the occurrence of a totality necessitates the occurrence of something else which is the quiddity. That is like the external parts; if they occurred together, they would constitute the same compounded external and not a factor (*amr*) on which the composite depends. This statement is apparently not discrediting [the idea] because they did not claim that for the totality of parts, if they occur, another thing must necessarily occur, which is quiddity; [they mean] it is possible that the conception of the parts is something which, when it occurs, necessitates the occurrence of something else which is the conception of the total (*taṣawwur al-majmūʿah*), by which I mean the conception of the quiddity (*taṣawwur al-māhiyyah*).

And if he [in *al-Mawāqif*] meant to negate that, it would be a false [statement] because it cannot be certified either by necessity or by proof, (even it is denied) by

1. The reference is to Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's *al-Maṭālib al-ʿāliyah*, on the subject of theology.

consciousness. There is no significance in the analogy with the external existence because there are no limits to the acts of the mind, and it can observe a single existent sometimes as a whole and sometimes part by part. He did not add, to solve the problem, more than saying that the demarcation is the totality of the factors of which each one is presented; and in this [statement] there is no benefit because the delineated is like that too. It is unavoidable in explaining the differences and relationships to say that these things, inasmuch as they observed the details, are then the demarcations, and for the totality the delineated, and that is the meaning of their statement.

As for the second [issue] we do not accept that the definer of the quiddity must define some of its parts because it is possible that the parts are known and need to be recalled collectively and systematically and so distinguished from anything else, and this could be by the definer. The conclusion is that while the quiddity is the same as the parts in essence, it is not necessary that the knowledge of it is the knowledge of the parts, which are the conceptions that are connected to it [i.e. the quiddity]. But it [the quiddity] must be observed in totality and distinguished from anything else, and the parts may remain unknown, and then the definer provides the conception of the quiddity in such a way as to separate it from anything else without knowing the reality of any of the parts. If that is recognized, then it may be that the defining part is itself the definer, and the differentiation would be then in terms of totality and detail, as in the definition of the quiddity by its parts or by another [definition]. And then the definition becomes [the definition] by the external as we shall see.

What we said refutes the statement that all the parts of the quiddity are the quiddity itself. Why then cannot the knowledge of the parts be the knowledge of the quiddity itself? The definer of a thing is the agent of its recognition, i.e. its occurrence in the mind. Why then can a thing not occur in the mind from its parts? If the cause for the occurrence of a thing were not a cause for some of its parts, then it would be possible for every part to occur without it [the cause], and possible for the whole [as well to occur] without it, and then there would be no cause. Let us consider the formal assembly [of the thing]. It [the assembly] is the cause for the occurrence of the composite and not the cause for the occurrence of its parts.

As for the third, we do not accept that the definition by the external depends on the knowledge of the specificity but on the specificity itself, because the mind moves from the concept of the necessary to the concept of the intellectually necessary, if there had been no prior knowledge of the necessary. Even if we accept that, then it would be enough to conceive the thing that is necessary for the thing in some aspects and the conception of anything else in general, such as a specific body in a space. This is based on the impossibility of its being in two places and the occupation of one space by two things. This recognition was the view of those

who said that the valid description for the definition of a thing must be necessarily clearly fixed to the thing and clearly excluded from anything else.

It should be known that, although it is necessary according to verity (*ṣidq*), it has to be necessary according to conception. And some scholars (*muḥaqqiqūn*) replied with regard to the first that it is impossible for all the parts of the quiddity to be the quiddity itself. But he even asserted that it is false to maintain that things of which each one is prior to the thing cannot be the posterior thing itself. Then he also said it is possible that these things may become this posterior product after [it is] assembled, and the recognition of it occurs by itself. Similarly the knowledge of genus and difference and restrictive composition exists prior to the knowledge of the genus restricted by the differences which are its [the genus'] elements, and with it the knowledge occurs.

They sometimes rejected the impossibility by claiming its necessity and sometimes by reasoning that all the elements of the thing, if they are not that thing itself, are either external to it, which is evidently false, or in it, and the thing is composed of them and of others. Then they are not all the parts but some of them. Also if the thing were not the totality of [its] parts then it is in reality either that other [thing] alone, and then it cannot be the supposed parts, or with the parts, and then it is not the totality. This assertion is weak because [of the fact that] each part that is prior to the thing does not necessitate that the whole [as well] is prior to it, to prevent it from being [the same as] the product itself, as each part would have by necessity preceded it.

What appears from his words is that what he meant by all the parts of the thing is all the factors entered into it without consideration of composition and assembly. And [he meant] by composite all those matters which are parts of its assembly. This is in accordance with what al-Kāshī¹ said—that merely the parts of a thing are not the thing itself, but it is those parts together with assembly in a unique way that makes it what it is. It is not unknown that this goes back to what was mentioned by some that the complete definition is the definition of all the physical parts because when those [parts] appear in the mind then an image appears that corresponds to the thing.

To this, al-Muḥaqqiq² objected with the statement that he considers physical parts in the complete definition. By this I mean the genus and the difference, so that the formal part is taken into consideration. I mean the systematic assembly because the definition by genus and difference without order (*tartīb*) is not a complete definition. Then he insisted that all the physical and formal parts are not the same composite because they are the causes, and it [the composite] is the result of them.

1. Ibid.

2. Ja'far b Ḥasan al-Ḥillī (d. 676/1277), known as al-Muḥaqqiq, was among the leading jurists and scholars in the school of Ḥillah, which became an important centre of Imāmī scholarship after the destruction of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258 AD.

It is known axiomatically that the occurrence of two by one and one joined to each other is not the sum of the two, but the sum of all its physical and formal parts.

I say since the reflective sciences eventually lead to the necessities, they considered the ascertaining of it and responding to those who deny one of the principles of theology in order to determine whether the conclusion of the premises of analogy, which is claimed to be necessary, is a part of it or not. They did not engage in defining the necessary conceptions as if they belonged to axioms and observations, and they specified the necessary attestation in six categories:

1. *al-badīhiyyāt* (axioms)
2. *al-mushāhadāt* (observations)
3. *al-fiṭriyyāt* (inherent, *a priori* things)
4. *al-mujarrabāt* (data of experiences, course of events, happenings)
5. *al-mutawātirāt* (recurrence [of events])
6. *al-ḥadsīyyāt* (intuitions)

In all propositions the conception of their terms following the understanding, such as attentiveness and soundness of the [mental] mechanism, is either enough for mental acumen or not; if it were enough then it is axiomatic (*al-badīhiyyāt*), and if it is not enough, it will inevitably need another thing to join the mind and help it to make a judgment or join the preposition or both together.

[After *al-badīhiyyāt*] the first is the data of observation (*al-mushāhadāt*) because it requires the senses. The second is either necessary and inherent—the data of the innate understanding (*fiṭriyyāt*)—or not necessary, and then, if they occur easily, they are the data of intuition (*ḥadsīyyāt*), and, if not [easily] then they are not of the necessities but of the reflective data (*naẓariyyāt*). The third, if it [the knowledge] occurs by reports, then it is of the data of recurrent [reports] (*mutawātirāt*), otherwise it is the data of experiences.

As for the axiomatic data, we call it the primary principles which are the propositions or what the mind judges by the mere conceiving of its two terms, such as that one is half of two and that the same body cannot be in two places at the same time. The mind may [altogether] stop because of the inability to conceive both terms, as in the statement that the things that are equal to one and the same thing are equal [among themselves], or because of the deficiency in this faculty, as in the [case of] children and fools, or because of the corruption of the [innate] nature by contrary convictions, such as in the case of some ignorant people, or because God does not create in the person such a creed.

As for the observations or data of the sensory perceptions, they are propositions decided by the mind through the visible senses. And this we call the data of the senses, such as the judgment that the sun is shining and fire is hot, or through the inner senses, and this is called the data of consciousness, such as deciding that we

have fear [or] we have anger, and some of it we find in ourselves not by the bodily organs, such as our feeling of our selves and of our conditions. All judgments by the senses are partial because they only provide [knowledge] that this fire is hot, but the judgment that every fire is hot is a mental judgment that occurs by the help of sensing the parts of that judgment and understanding its causes.

As for the data of *a priori* knowledge, they are propositions the mind judges by a means that does not go away when conceiving both terms, and that is what is meant by an intrinsic element added to the proposition. Therefore they are called propositions that embody their reasoning analogy, as in the case of the judgment that the number four is an even number because it can be derived by two equal numbers.

As for the data of experiences (*mujarrabāt*), they are propositions that the mind judges by the addition of repeated observation to it and by the inner (*al-khafiy*) analogy that produces certainty to observation, and that [analogy is] that the recurrent happening on the same pattern must have a cause even if its quiddity is not known. Whenever we know of the existence of a cause, we know of the existence of the effect definitely, and that is as judging that sigmonia is the healer of gall-bladder.

As for the data of recurrent reports, they are propositions judged by the mind, by means of recurrent testimonies of a thing possibly based on witnessing, in such a way that it would be impossible that they conspired to lie. Then the mind combines the hearing of the reports, and to the proposition is added the subconscious reasoning which is if this judgment were not true, it would not have been reported by so many people.

As for the data of intuition, these are propositions which the mind judges by strong intuition from the soul with which doubt is eliminated, and certainty is obtained by seeing correlation, such as proposing that the light of the moon is derived from the sun because we see the changes of the forms of its light according to its different positions [in relation] to the sun, and we see that the side [of the moon] which is facing the sun is always lighted, and its light changes according to [how it is facing] the sun. The mind concludes that if its light were not from the sun it would not be like that.

This is like the data of experience in terms of recurrent observation and the comparison of subconscious analogies, except that the cause in experience is known to be a cause, but its quiddity is not known, whereas, in intuition both aspects are known. But knowing it [the cause] happens by intuition not by reflection otherwise it would be among the acquired sciences. We will know the meaning of intuition when we discuss the self/soul.

It was stated in *al-Muḥaṣṣal* that the necessities are the data of consciousness, and these are of little benefit in the sciences because they are not common, as are the data of intuition and of axiomatic [knowledge]. The author of *al-Mawāqif* followed him, but he stated elsewhere that the necessities are the six categories mentioned

above; adding to them the fallacy of the senses, such as the judgment that every object is uni-dimensional. And he justified what was in *al-Muḥaṣṣal* in two ways. First, that axiomatic data includes inherent data because the medium is necessary for the conception of both, and [second] the mind needs only to conceive them. The data of intuition includes the data of experience and the data of recurring factors because in both cases the judgment of the mind relies on the senses, but with reoccurrence; [these] are the data of intuition.

Second, the question of including experiences, recurrences and intuitions in the necessities (*daruriyyāt*) is subject to discussion according to the explanation by the Imam in *al-Mulakhkhaṣ*;¹ because each of them includes noticing subconscious analogies and so also the proposition that includes its own analogies. Some people disputed that experience and intuition are among the certainties in addition to being necessary. Many scholars even considered intuitions to be among the presumptions.

The scholars (*muḥaqqiqūn*) said that these four [i.e. experiences, intuition, certitude, and presumptions] are not among the necessities, and they are also not among the reflections, but they are in the middle because they do not need to be acquired by thinking. That is suggested by the statement of al-Imam Ḥujjat al-Islām, when he said, 'knowledge that occurs through repetition is necessary', meaning that it does not need to feel a medium leading to it, although the medium is present in the mind. It [this knowledge] is not necessary in the sense that it occurs without a medium, as in our statement that the existent is not non-existent because there must be two premises in it.

First, it is that those people, since they are of great number in different conditions, cannot collectively agree to lie. Second, they all concurred in reporting the same fact. However it [the knowledge] does not need to have these two premises in any order nor the feeling that they are the medium and that they lead to it. By this [discussion] it becomes evident that the difference is one of semantics based on interpretation of the necessary as [knowledge] that does not need a medium originally, or it is [knowledge] that we find ourselves to be forced to have.

If one said that the data of reoccurrence are a kind of sense associated with hearing, then the knowledge must be indisputably necessary, such as the knowledge that fire is hot. We say the talk here is about the knowledge of the content of news repeatedly reported, such as the existence of Mecca for example. This is reasonable indeed by frequent hearing, even if what is frequently heard is news about attributing a statement to a trustworthy person, the knowledge of the content of that report is acquired and established. If, for example, it has been frequently reported that the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of God be upon him) said: 'the proof [of the case] is on the claimant and the oath [of defence] is on the defendant', the

1. Fakhr al-Din al-Rāzī's *al-Mulakhkhaṣ fi'l-falsafah*, on the subject of philosophy.

knowledge that this is the voice of a reporter is necessarily derived by the senses. The knowledge that the reported [statement] is the words (*kalām*) of the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of God be on him) is the knowledge derived from the proposition which is among the recurrent [reports]; it is disputed whether this is necessary or not necessary. The statement that the proof is on the claimant is acquired [knowledge], derived from the sequence of the two premises. I mean that this is the statement of the Prophet (on him be peace) and all that is from the Prophet (on him be peace). Its content is true because his truthfulness was established by the proof of the miracles. It is stated that this *ḥadīth* is repeatedly transmitted, which means that the report being the words of the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of Allah be on him) is repeated, whether it is in itself the [exact] report or an imaginative (*inshāʾ*) sentence.

It was established that the *ahl-al-ḥaqq* were in consensus that [the knowledge derived from] the senses and the axiomatic data are primary principles for whatever is proof against the other(s). Some groups denied this. Some denied this [characteristic] in the senses and restricted [the primary principal] to axiomatic data; some reversed that, and some denied this [characteristic] in both. For each group there are followers.

The Imam elaborated extensively on this by giving numerous examples and attributing to the prominent philosophers the statement that the senses are not amongst the certainties. He retorted that most of their ascertained sciences are based on these senses, and on them is based the primary necessary principles according to their statement that the principles of experience and reoccurrence and intuition are the sensory conceptions of the particulars, and that the primary principles are acquired by children through a capacity their minds derive from the sensing of particulars. How could one attribute to them the statement that these are not among the certainties? He justified this by saying that what is intended is that the assertion of the mind in the judgments that are derived from the senses may depend on conditions in which he may not know what it is and when it happened and how it happened.

Therefore they created the art of debate to demonstrate the points of error in the senses and which of their judgments are certain and which are not certain. And [further] they created the art of sophistry to demonstrate the same thing in the mental conceptions. It was mentioned in the summary of *al-Muḥaṣṣal* that the senses do not make judgments because it is not their function to make judgments, but only to aid cognizance. However, judgment is for the mind. This statement is not a rejection of the *kalām* of the Imam by arguing that the judge is the sense or it is the intellect through it [the senses], but it is a rejection of the basis on which he made his statement when he said that the [object] sensed, inasmuch as it is sensed, cannot be described as certain or not [certain], but it could be described as such as it conforms with the judgment of the mind. Then the meaning would be that

the judgments of the mind regarding the sensed objects are not certain because of the possibility of errors. This is not limited to the sensed [items] because in pure reason there could also be errors.

It is not appropriate to attribute this statement to the philosophers because they stated otherwise. Indeed, when the Imam stated that, it was confirmed by what was mentioned of dubiousity that the judgment of the senses may be wrong. Therefore there should be another judge over it to distinguish its correctness and errors. And the sense [s] cannot be the primary judge. He refuted this, stating that the sense [s] are not the judge to begin with, but the judge in all [aspects] is the mind [‘s reason].

As for his engagement in showing the causes of error in the images that the Imam mentioned, he admitted that [what he is doing] is a warning to those who rely or admit to relying on the ‘primary axioms’ (*al-awwaliyyāt*) and the sensed objects extensively by showing how to explore the possible places of error and then leaving the decision regarding what is right or wrong to the mind without the need for a proof by relying on the sensed objects.

This is not an answer to any of the doubts, nor of pondering on the cause and its identification or negation and so on. And the conclusion with regard to doubts is that [there is] no reliability in the judgment by the sense[s]. As for the universals, they [the senses] cannot encompass them. How could that be when they are not limited to the verified entities? As for the particulars, they [the senses] cannot encompass them because they [the senses] very often are mistaken in their judgment. The judgment of the senses may be different from reality because we may see the small as big, the one as many, and the stationary as moving and so on. As [for instance], we see the grape in the water as a pear, and from afar the jug as a cup, and the moon in the water as two moons, and the different colours in the lines that go from the centre of a disk to its circumference when it turns as a single colour [or] a mixture of all [the colours]. And [further] those on a ship see the ship as stationary while it is moving and the coastline moving while it is stationary and so on.

The answer is that their [sensory] error in some images does not negate or contradict their exact correspondence in many images such as the judgment that the sun is shining and the fire is hot when the mind is absolutely sure that there is no mistake here without the need for reflection, although this may be by the help of things that are not known in detail. This is what he said in *al-Mawāqif*—that the implication of what was mentioned of the dubiousity is that the mind does not confirm the judgment of the senses simply by sensing, because one cannot rely on the confirmation based on it and because of its being probable, meaning, not everything that the mind confirms as the judgment of the senses is probable based [as it is] on the non-reliability of what was confirmed.

They said that it is part of the [data of] the senses because a human being notices all the axiomatic [verifications] after sensing the particulars and noticing

the similarities and the dissimilarities between them. And [it follows that] it is not necessary that the denial of the branch is the denial of the root, [which] would be necessary if the branch were inherent in it [the root] in accordance with its essence. The implication of this refutation is that the clearest and highest verification of axiomatic convictions is our statement that the negative and positive cannot be combined and cannot be accompanied together, meaning that a thing either is or it is not, and this [the sensory data] cannot be relied on. As for its [the axiomatic data's] clarity, it is clear, but as for it being the highest that is prior, that is because the whole depends on it and is based on it. For example we notice in our statement that the whole is greater than the part; if it were not so, the other part would exist as an entity, and it is not.

Our statement is that the single entity cannot be in two places simultaneously, if it were existent in two places, then the one would be two, and it would be one of the two equals existing and not existing and so on. As for the lack of reliability, it is because the knowledge of the essence of this proposition and its certainty depends on the perception of existence and non-existence, by which I mean being or non-being, and on the verification of the meaning of a thing being the subject or a predicate and on the removal of doubts which may be raised with regards to both aspects. And these are the three things that become clear to us by meticulous examination. When the examination is complete, the intended meanings [or results] are obtained, and this [knowledge by axiomatic data] depends on the truthfulness of this proposition because it is the first of the first, and this is circular.

The being or existing of a thing by reflection is based on the assumption of its being necessary, and that is impossible. And if some of them remained in the sphere of vagueness, then the confirmation of the proposition does not occur, and that is what is intended. The answer is that the axiomatic [data] of the mind confirms it [the proposition] and its veracity without reflection or reasoning in verifying the relationship or in removing the doubts. And the doubts that may be raised would not [be a party to the] invalidation of this confirmation. And [the confirmation] cannot be rejected with regard to those who do not recognize the axiomatic [context]. If we wanted, we could just turn away from these people, and, if we wanted, we could bring it to their attention; hopefully they will either recognize [the axiomatic] or become prepared for reflection and verification of the issues.

One of the obscurities is that this attestation depends on the conception of existence and non-existence and other things, and this requires certainty even if only in the mind, and the certainty of absolute non-existence is contradictory. Then the negation of absolute non-existence must be possible for the realization of existence. In general this negation is part of the absolute non-existence because it is an added non-existence and because it is a removal and a negation of it. The answer is that there is no impossibility that the meaning is without certitude in terms of essence

and concepts and with certitude in terms of its occurrence in the mind, and there is no impossibility in its being part of non-existence in terms of its being an added part of non-existence and part of it [non-existence] in terms of the notion. (There will be more on it in the section on non-existence.)

If existence is taken in this separate proposition as a predicate (*maḥmūl*) in the sense that the object (*jism*) either 'is' or 'is not', the existence of the thing is the same as its quiddity and then the positive (*ijābī*) part would necessarily be non-sense though it is definitely restricted. And the negative part would be necessarily contradictory because absolute negativity is contradictory to the permanence of positivity. But if the existence of the thing is other than [the quiddity], then in the positiveness existence stands necessarily with what does not exist, if the subject is taken as void of existence and the successiveness of existents is taken as existing. (And we will come to an explanation and an answer in the section on existence.)

This also implies that the thing could be other than itself, and in it the two unite, and in the comprehension of the negation is inherent in the negative which is necessary to prove it, and the quiddity is void of existence which is necessary for the maintenance of the existent with the non-existent when it [existence] is confirmed for it [the quiddity]. The answer is that there is no impossibility in the two things being different, considering that they are united, and [considering also] according to what has been established which is that the subject and the predicate are different in notion and united in ipseity (*huwīyyah*).

The meaning is that what is said to be the object is itself said to be the existent, and similarly there is no impossibility in the absolute negation being confirmed in terms of its occurrence in the mind, and no [impossibility] in the existence being confirmed by what is not existent, as shall be [explained] according to what will come, may it be willed by God Most Exalted. And all this [applies] if this existent is taken as predicate, but if it is taken as a connection such as saying that the body is either being black or not being black, then it is necessary that in the positive part the two things unite. We have already answered that. Then the object has describability which is existentiality (*wujūdiyyah*), because the opposite of it is non-describability which is the [quality of] non-existentiality.

The object is necessarily described by it. Then we have a series of describabilities that cannot be rejected for being one of the intellectual considerations because the describability is associative (*nisbatan*) and abides in those associated with it, not in the mind because the judgment of the mind if it does not correspond to the external [properties] would be ignorance. If the positive part is nullified, then the truth has always to be the negative part. And you do not subscribe to this [opinion], but instead you allow for the truthfulness of the positivity in general.

The answer is in the ensuing [statement] that the negative form like the non-describability is not necessarily [the quality of] non-existence. And if we recognized

that the opposite of non-existence is not necessarily existence, and the truthfulness of intellectual judgments are not based on their correspondence with the externals, and the occurrence of relations and correlations in the mind only does not negate their relationship to external matters because it means that when those matters are conceived by intellectual acumen, then their relation and correlation occur in the mind. And therefore I do not recognize the non-existence of the intermediary between existence and non-existence.

His answer will follow that it [the medium] cannot be conceived between existence and non-existence. And as to what was mentioned in *al-Mawāqif*, that those who hold this [opinion] are of such great number that their statement could be presented as proof, this could be a proof when they are talking about the sensory [perceptions], but the negation of the reasonable could be no less than dubious.

A COMMENTARY ON THE PRINCIPLES OF ISLAM

Fī uṣūl al-Islām

Reprinted from Sa'd al-Dīn Taftāzānī's commentary on *Fī uṣūl al-Islām* by Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī, tr. with introduction and notes by Earl Edgar Elder as *A Commentary on the Creed of Islam* (New York, 1950), pp. 5–35.¹

Chapter 1

The Real Essences of Things

The People of Reality say that the real essences of things exist in reality and that the knowledge of them is verifiable as real in contradiction to the Sophists.

Know that of the legal judgments² (*al-aḥkām al-Shar'īyyah*) there are some which

1. In this translation use has been made of the Cairo text of 1335/1916 with supercommentaries by Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Arabshāh al-Isfarā'inī 'Iṣām al-Dīn and Aḥmad b. Mūṣā al-Khayālī. Further references to this work will be designated *I.D.* Use has also been made of the Cairo text of 1329/1911 which is an encyclopaedic work containing a number of supercommentaries including one by Mullā Aḥmad al-Jundī. References to this text will read A.J.

2. *Ḥukm* (a judgment) in Muslim technical use may be either legal (*shar'ī*) or non-legal (*ghayr-shar'ī*) as a logical judgment, an ordinance or decree, or a rule in grammar, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, 1913–1938), II, 332; IV, 320ff. [hereafter *EI*]; A. Sprenger and W. Nassau Lees, ed., *Dictionary of Technical Terms in the Sciences of the Mussalmans* (Calcutta, 1862), I, 372ff [hereafter *DTT*]. The legal judgment referred to here is an expression for the judgment of Allah which is related to legally responsible human beings. Cf. al-Jurjānī, *al-Ta'rīfāt* (Leipzig, 1845), p. 97. The whole branch of law known as *al-Shar'* or *al-Sharī'ah* is the legal system of duties in Islam resting on an absolute basis. This was originally made up from the Qur'an and Tradition but consensus (*ijmā'*) and analogy (*qiyās*) were added later, making four bases for the law. It includes not only, as does our criminal law, what one should not do and the penalties for transgression, but also what is incumbent on the Muslim, what is praiseworthy, and what is allowable, etc. Al-Sanūsī in the commentary on his *Umm al-barāhīn* (Cairo, 1330/1911), pp. 34f. says that a legal judgment is by means of demand or permission or by the laying down of postulates for these two. Four things go to make up demand, (1) obligation (*wujūb*) which is the absolute demand that a thing be done, as for example belief in Allah and His Messengers and the five pillars of Islam, (2) recommendation (*nadb*) which is a demand, though not absolute, that a thing be done, like the prayer at dawn, (3) prohibition (*tahrim*) which is an absolute demand for refraining from an act like ascribing a partner to Allah, adultery, etc., (4) disapproval (*karāhah*) which is a demand, though not absolute, for refraining from an act, like the recitation of the Qur'an during the bowings and prostrations. Between the first two and the last two of these four is permission (*jawāz*) which is the choice between the doing and omitting of a thing, such as marriage or trade. Cf. J. D. Luciani, *Les Prolégomènes théologiques de Senoussi* (Algiers, 1908), pp. 14f. All acts of Muslims come under one of these five headings, so when the term 'The Law' (*al-Shar'*) is used by al-Taftāzānī, this very broad usage must be kept in mind. The rational judgment (*al-ḥukm al-aqli*) may be any one of three categories, necessity (*wujūb*) impossibility (*istihālah*) and possibility (*jawāz* or *imkān*). See A. J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, (Cambridge, 1932), pp. 273ff.; *EI*, III, 260; al-Shahrestānī, *Kitāb nihāyat al-aqdām*, ed. A. Guillaume (Oxford, 1934), p. 15.

are connected with practice and are called derived (*far'iyah*) and practical (*'amaliyyah*); and there are others which are connected with dogma and are called fundamental (*aşliyyah*) and doctrinal (*i'tiqādiyyah*). The science connected with the first is called the science of canon laws and judgments because these things are not comprehended except from the Canon Law (*al-Shar'*), and it is only to these that the understanding turns when the [term] judgment is mentioned without further definition. And the science connected with the second is the science of the unity (*al-tawhīd*) and attributes (*al-şifāt*) of the Deity, since this [subject of unity] is its most noted investigation and its noblest object.

The earliest of the Companions¹ (*al-şahābah*) and their Followers² (*al-tābi'un*)—Allah be pleased with them all³—because the articles of their belief were pure through the blessing of their association with the Prophet—on him be peace; because the period in which they lived was near to his time, because there were few occasions of attack and disagreement and because they were able to go back to absolutely reliable authority, well, because of all these things they dispensed with putting down in writing the material of the two sciences and with dividing it into divisions and sections, and they also dispensed with the statement of their investigations in these two sciences both as to developments and fundamentals.

This condition continued until controversies arose among the Muslims, pride prevailed among the leaders of the faith (*al-dīn*), and there appeared a clashing of opinions and a tendency to innovations (*al-bida'*)⁴ and to personal desires (*al-ahwā'*).⁵ There was a multiplicity of legal rulings (*al-fatāwā*) and of occasions from which cases arose, and much referring to the Learned (*al-'ulamā'*) in important matters. So they busied themselves with speculation and deduction, with attempting to arrive at a correct opinion and to elicit meaning from the texts, with the establishing of rules and fundamentals, with the arrangement of [the material

1. A Companion (*şāhib* or *şahābī*) is one who met the Prophet during his life, believed in him, and died a Muslim. *DTT*, pp. 807f.; *EI*, I, p. 477f.

2. A follower (*tābi'* or *tābi'i*) is one who though he personally did not know the Prophet knew one of his Companions. *DTT*, pp. 166f.; *EI*, IV, p. 583.

3. The *eulogia* throughout the translation are as a rule omitted after the first occurrence. For the significance of these see I. Goldziher, 'Über die Eulogien der Muhammedaner', in *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (Leipzig, 1896), pp. 97ff.

4. *Bid'ah* (pl. *bida'*) is some view or practice which is an innovation and is not according to the established rules of Islam. *EI*, I, p. 712f.; *al-Ta'rifāt*, p. 44; *DTT*, p. 133.

5. There is a technical usage for the phrase *ahl al-ahwā'* (people of personal desires); however, the meaning of this term differs. D. B. Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory* (New York, 1903), pp. 112, 299, calls them 'people of wandering desires'. They are said to be people of erroneous opinions, whose belief is not that of *ahl al-sunnah*, but who nevertheless have the same *qiblah*. Cf. *DTT*, p. 1543; *al-Ta'rifāt*, p. 41; *EI*, I, 183. But al-Shahrastānī in W. Cureton, ed., *al-Milal wa'l-niḥal* (London, 1842), pp. 24 and 201f. seems to think that properly speaking they should be put beyond the pale of the recognized religions. Al-Baghdādī in *al-Farq bayn al-firaq* (Cairo, n.d.), p. 350f. calls them unbelievers and says that it is not permissible to follow their lead in prayer or say prayers over their dead.

related to them in] divisions and sections, with the multiplying of proof to problems and stating matters in which there were ambiguities and their explanations, with determining the conventional usages and the technical terms, and with pointing out the [various] ways of proceeding and their differences. They gave the names of jurisprudence (*al-fiqh*) to that which pertained to the science of the practical judgments derived from their detailed proofs, and ‘the fundamentals of jurisprudence’ (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) to the science of the terms of the proofs taken together as a whole in proving the judgments; and the science of the articles of Belief as they come straight from their proofs they are called *al-kalām*.¹

The reasons for this are (1) because the subject of its investigations was their saying, ‘The discourse (*al-kalām*) about such-and-such’; (2) because the problem of [the meaning of the term] Speech [predicated of Allah] was the most celebrated of its investigations, the most strongly disputed, and the subject of the most controversy, so much so that some of the leaders killed many of these People of Reality (*ahl al-ḥaqq*)² because they failed to admit the createdness of the Qurʾān; (3) because it imparts ability in speech verifying legal matters and in compelling adversaries to submit just as logic (*al-mantiq*) imparts ability in philosophy; (4) because it is the first of the sciences which can be known and learned by speech only, so this term [speech] was applied to this science, and then it was exclusively used for it and not applied to any other science for sake of distinction; (5) because it can be verified only by discussion and interchange of speech from two sides, whereas others are sometimes verified by meditation and the perusal of books; (6) because it is the most disputatious and controversial of the sciences, so speech was greatly needed for conversing with those of opposite views and for refuting them; (7) because of the cogency of its arguments it has become, so to speak, ‘the speech’ (*al-kalām*) to the exclusion of all other sciences, just as is said of the stronger of two discourses, ‘This is “the discourse”’; (8) and because it is based on decisive proofs (*adīllah qaṭʿiyyah*), most of which are supported by proof to be believed on authority (*al-samʿiyyah*),³ it

1. See *EI*, II, pp. 670ff., in which there is reference to these eight explanations of al-Taftāzānī. Cf. also *DTT*, pp. 22ff.; T. J. de Boer in *The History of Philosophy in Islam*, tr. Edward R. Jones (London, 1903), pp. 42f.; Maimonides, *Le Guide des égarés*, tr. S. Munk (Paris, 1856), I, pp. 332ff. and *The Guide for the Perplexed*, tr. M. Friedländer (London, 1928), pp. 107ff.

2. Al-Khayālī (*I.D.*, p. 15) says that the evident meaning of this term throughout the book is the People of the Approved Way and the Community (*ahl al-sunnah waʾl-jamāʿah*). However, from al-Taftāzānī’s explanation the term means not only that they alone were right and therefore orthodox as some translate the term, but also that they are peculiar in that they believe in the reality of things. Lest they be confused with those realists who believe only in the reality of ideas, the term ‘People of Reality’ has been used. See also *EI*, II, p. 223.

3. Theology is said to concern itself with three things, *ilāhiyyāt*, *nubuwwāt*, and *samʿiyyāt*, i.e., things relating to the Deity, to the prophets, and to those things which are only established by hearing. Under this third head there are included the matters concerning the Garden, the fire, and the Resurrection, of which one can only learn from the Qurʾān and Tradition. See al-Bayjūrī in his commentary on al-Faḍālī’s *Kifāyat al-ʿawāmm fi ʿilm al-kalām* (Cairo 1328/1910), p. 75, and

is consequently the strongest in its influence on and penetration into the heart. So it is called *al-kalām* as though derived from *al-kalm*, that is, 'the wound'. This is the [understanding of the term] *kalām* [in the mind] of the ancients (*al-qudamā*).

Most of the controversies about *al-kalām* occurred among the different Islamic sects, especially the Mu'tazilites (*al-Mu'tazilah*),¹ because they were the first sect which laid the foundation for both that which contradicts the plain teaching of the Approved Way (*al-sunnah*)² and that which the Community (*al-jamā'ah*) of the Companions (*al-ṣahābah*)—the approval of Allah on them all—followed in the matter of the articles of Belief. That [beginning of the Mu'tazilites] happened when Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā', their leader, withdrew from the circle of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī—Allah have mercy on him—asserting that one who committed a great sin was neither a Believer nor an Unbeliever and maintaining that he was in an intermediate position. Al-Ḥasan said, 'He has withdrawn from us', so they were called *al-Mu'tazilah* (the Withdrawers). But they called themselves the upholders of Justice and the Divine Unity (*aṣḥāb al-'adl wa'l-tawḥīd*), because they said that the reward of the obedient and the punishment of the disobedient are incumbent on Allah, and they denied that He has eternal attributes. Subsequently they went deep into the science of *al-kalām* and added the fringes of the Philosophers to many of their principles.

al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* with a commentary by Sayyid Murtaḍā (Cairo 1311/1893), II, pp. 213ff.

1. The account which follows is the story told in most Muslim books regarding the origin of the Mu'tazilites. Cf. al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayn al-firaq*, (Cairo, n.d.), p. 98f.; al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, p. 33; *DTT*, p. 1025; *EI*, III, pp. 787ff. The number of the sects of the Mu'tazilites is often given as twenty. Al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, p. 94; al-Ījī, *al-Mawāqif*, (Leipzig, 1848), p. 335. Different writers, however, make different groupings (cf. al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, p. 3) and are not entirely agreed on those who are to be called Mu'tazilites. For example al-Shahrastānī finds many Mu'tazilite doctrines among the followers of al-Najjār (*al-Milal*, p. 61ff.), where al-Baghdādī (*al-Farq*, p. 195) puts him, as does al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, ed. H. Ritter (Stamboul, 1929-1930), pp. 135f. The stress laid by the writers on enumerating these sects is undoubtedly due to a tradition of the Prophet that says people would be divided into seventy-three sects—some say seventy-two—only one of which would be in Paradise. See also al-Ījī, *al-Mawāqif* (Leipzig 1948), p. 332; al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, pp. 4f.; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, (Cairo, 1313/1895), II, p. 332f., III, p. 120, 145.

2. *Sunnah*, a way, course, or manner of conduct, came to have many meanings in Islam: see *al-Ta'rifāt*, pp. 127f.; *DTT*, pp. 703ff.; *Tāj al-arūs*, (Cairo, 1306/1888), IX, 244; *Lisān al-'Arab* (Cairo, 1300/1882–1308/1890), XVII, 89f.; E. W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (London, 1863–1893), p. 1438. It sometimes means one of the four bases of Islam, that is, that which was the usage in speech or deed or the approved manner of conduct of the Prophet; the other three bases being the Qur'ān, the consensus (*ijmā'*) of the Muslim community (*jamā'ah*), and analogy (*qiyās*). The term is also applied in worship and other rites of Islam to those utterances and acts that are praiseworthy but not absolutely prescribed. *Al-sunnah* also came to mean the theory and practice of the majority of Muslim community. See *EI*, IV, p. 555f. The term *ahl al-sunnah wa'l-jamā'ah*, which is implied here in the statement of al-Taftāzānī, means the people of wholly orthodox communities who refrain from innovation and deviation from the beaten path. Al-Khayālī (*I.D.*, p. 14) adds that they are the Ash'arites in Khurāsān, Iraq, Syria, and most countries, but that in the lands beyond the river (Oxus) they are the Māturidites, the followers of Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī. Cf. Sayyid Murtaḍā's commentary on the *Ihyā'* of al-Ghazzālī, II, 6 g., where he quotes this statement of al-Khayālī.

Their school of thought spread among the people until al-Shaykh Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī said to his teacher, Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī, 'What have you to say about three brothers, one of whom died obedient, another disobedient, and the third in infancy?' He answered, 'The first will be rewarded with the Garden (*al-jannah*), the second will be punished with the Fire (*al-nār*), and the third will neither be rewarded nor punished.' Al-Ash'arī answered, 'And what if the third should say, "Lord, why didst Thou make me die in infancy, and not detain me until I grew up and believed on Thee, and obeyed and thus entered the Garden?" What would the Lord—the Exalted—say then?' He answered, 'The Lord would say, "I knew that if thou should'st grow up thou would'st disobey and enter the Fire, so it was better for thee to die in infancy."' Al-Ash'arī said, 'And if the second should say, "Lord, why did'st Thou not cause me to die in infancy so that I should not disobey and enter the Fire?" What would the Lord say then?' Al-Jubbā'ī was confounded and al-Ash'arī abandoned his school of thought. He and his followers worked from that time at refuting the Mu'tazilite view and maintaining that which the Approved Way had handed down and that which the community did. Hence they are called the People of the Approved Way and the Community (*ahl al-sunnah wa'l-jamā'ah*).

Then when philosophy¹ was translated into Arabic and the followers of Islam plunged in it, they attempted to refute the Philosophers on the points in which they differed from the canon law (*al-Sharī'ah*). So they mixed up with *kalām* much of philosophy in order to understand thoroughly the goals of philosophy and so to be put into a position to show the unreality of it. This went on until they included in *kalām* most of physics and metaphysics and plunged² into mathematics until theology was hardly to be distinguished from philosophy had it not been that it included 'things to be believed on authority' (*al-sam'iyāt*). This is the *kalām* of the Later Theologians (*al-muta'akhhirūn*).

In general *kalām* is the most noble of the sciences, first, because it is the foundation of the legal judgments and the chief of the religious sciences; second, because its aim is the attaining of happiness in this life and the next; and finally because its proofs are decisive arguments, most of which are aided by evidences that are based on authority.

As to what has been reported of the Fathers of the first generations (*al-salaf*) of Islam concerning their attack against *kalām* and their prohibition of it, that was only directed against the religious zealot and the one who had failed to attain certainty, and against the one who purposed to destroy the articles of Belief of the Muslims

1. The philosophy (*al-falsafah*) referred to here and throughout the treatise is that system which had for its principal sources Aristotelian natural science and Neoplatonic speculation which taught the eternity of the world, and that what some call creation was an emanation from the Deity. Cf. De Boer, *The History of Philosophy in Islam*, pp. 11–30; *EL*, II, pp. 48ff.; Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology*, pp. 161ff., and al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, pp. 251ff.

2. 'I.D. reads *ba'd* (some) for *khādūfī*.

and the one who plunged needlessly into the obscurities of those who claimed to be philosophers. Otherwise how can one conceive the prohibition of the foundation upon which our obligations rest and the basis of laws regarding practice?

Furthermore the basis of *kalām* is that there is deduced from the existence of originated things (*al-muḥdaththāt*) the existence of the Maker (*al-Ṣāniʿ*), His unity, His attributes and His actions, and from these things all the rest of the things which are to be believed on authority. For this reason it was suitable to begin the treatise by calling attention to the existence of that which is observed of substances and accidents and to verify the knowledge concerning both of them, and that thereby one might attain the understanding of that which is the most important goal of all.

The People of Reality (*ahl al-ḥaqq*) say reality is the judgment which corresponds with the actual fact. It is applied in a general sense to propositions, to articles of Belief, to religions, and to different schools of practice (*al-madhāhib*) with reference to their inclusions of reality. Its opposite is the unreal (*al-bāṭil*). But as for the term truth (*al-ṣidq*), it is especially applied to propositions; its opposite is falsehood (*al-kadhib*). The distinction that may be made between these two pairs of contrast is that in the case of reality (*al-ḥaqq*) the correspondence is seen from the standpoint of the actual fact, and in the case of truth (*al-ṣidq*), from the standpoint of judgment. And the meaning of the expression 'the truth of a judgment' is the agreement of the judgment with the actual fact, and the meaning of the expression 'the reality of a judgment' is the agreement of the actual fact with the judgment.

Therefore al-Nasafī said that the real essence of things exists in reality. The real essence (*al-ḥaqīqah*) of a thing and its quiddity (*al-māhiyyah*) are that which constitutes the identity of a thing (*mā bihi'l-shay' huwa huwa*), as is exemplified by the application of the term 'rational animal' to man in contrast to the application of the terms 'laughing animal' and 'writing animal'; in which case it is possible to conceive of man as not being described by the terms 'laughing' and 'writing', inasmuch as they [laughing and writing] are accidents. And it may be said further that that which constitutes the identify of a thing is, with respect to its being verified as having external reality, a real essence; and with respect to its being individualized, it is a certain particular thing (*huwiyyah*), but without respect to either of these it is a quiddity.

Thus in our opinion the term *shay'*¹ (a thing) is identical with the term *al-mawjūd* (that which exists); and the terms *al-thubūt* (real existence), *al-taḥaqquq*

1. With the Ash'arites the *shay'* was the entity (*mawjūd*) but with the Mu'tazilites it included the non-entity (*ma'dūm*). The Baṣrians and al-Jāhīz from among the Mu'tazilites defined it as that which is known (*ma'lūm*); Abu'l-'Abbās al-Nāshī defined it as the eternal (*qadīm*) and in the case of 'that which is originated' it is used metaphorically; the Jahmiyyah said it is that which is originated; Hishām said it is the body. (*DTT*, p. 729; *I.D.*, p. 17)

(being verified as having real existence), *al-wujūd* (existence) and *al-kawn*¹ (coming-into-existence) are synonymous, and the meaning of them is immediately perceived (*badīhī al-taṣawwur*).

But if it is objected that such a logical statement as that the real essence of things exists in reality is tautological, in the same way as our stating that really existent things exist in reality, to this we answer that what is meant thereby is that what we believe to be the real essence of things and designate by certain terms such as 'man', 'horse', 'sky', and 'earth' is something existing in the things themselves. It is analogous to the statement that the necessarily existent being (*wājib al-wujūd*) is existent. This statement conveys some useful information; in fact it may have to be demonstrated by argument. It is not like the statement that the really existent things exist in reality, nor it is like the statement that I am Abu'l-Najm and my poetry is my poetry, in which case the statement is self-evident [and hence conveys no useful information].

And the verification of this is to be found in the fact that a thing may have different aspects, in consequence of which when something is predicated of it the judgment may be useful when the thing is seen in one aspect, and useless when it is seen in another. In the case of man, for instance, when taken with respect to his being a body of some sort, to predicate of him animality conveys useful information, but, when taken with respect to his being a rational animal, then to predicate animality of him is tautological.

And the knowledge of them [things] is verifiable as real; that is, of the real essence, both of that which they are perceived to be (*tuṣawwira*) and of that which is affirmed of them or of their modes. Some say that this statement undoubtedly refers to the knowledge of the reality of the existence of the essences, for to know the essences themselves as a whole is impossible. In reply to this it may be said that the reference here is to the genus, in refutation of those who say that there is no real existence to any of the essences and also of those who say that there can be no knowledge of the fact whether an essence has real existence or has no real existence.

1. *Kawn*, which is often translated 'being', really has the significance of 'coming into being' or 'state of coming into being'. The *DTT* (p. 1274) quoting the *Commentary of al-Mawāqif* says, 'The *mutakallims*, although they denied the rest of the categories, admitted that of place (*al-ayn*), and called it *al-kawn*. The majority of them said that the *jawhar* [substance: the self-subsistent entity] itself was all that was required for obtaining the boundary (*al-ḥayyiz*) which marked existence, that is there was no quality subsisting in the *jawhar* itself. So there were two things, the *jawhar* itself and the obtaining of a boundary in existence, which they called *kawn*. But those of the *mutakallims* who established the states (*al-aḥwāl*) said that this obtaining a boundary on the part of a *jawhar* was caused by a quality which subsisted in it. So they called obtaining a boundary '*al-kā'inah*' and the cause of this obtaining '*al-kawn*'. There are then three things in the process, *al-jawhar*, *al-kā'inah*, and *al-kawn*. There are four species of *al-kawn*: motion, rest, being separated into parts, and aggregation of the parts.' See al-Taftāzānī, *I.D.*, p. 48; D. B. Macdonald, 'Continuous Re-creation and Atomic Time', *Isis*, IX (1927), 2, p. 329.

In contradiction to the Sophists¹ (*al-sūfastā'iyyah*) some of them deny the real essence of things and maintain that they are fancies (*awhām*) and vain imaginations (*khayālāt*).² These are the Obstinate (*al-'inādiyyah*). Others deny the real existence of essences, maintaining that essences only follow from what one happens to believe, so that if we believe a thing to be a substance (*jawhar*)³ it is a substance, but if we believe it to be an accident it is an accident; or if we believe a thing to be eternal (*qadīm*) it is eternal, but if we believe it to be originated (*hādith*)⁴ it is originated. These are the Opinioners (*al-'indiyyah*). Still others deny that there can be any knowledge of whether a thing has real existence or not. They assert that they are in doubt and that they are in doubt even of their doubt, and so on. These are the Agnostics (*al-lā-adriyyah*).

As for us, however, to prove our point of view we first convince ourselves, either by sense perception or by demonstration, of the necessity of establishing that certain things have real existence. Then from this premise we argue that if the negation of those things is not proven, then the real existence of those things has been established. But if, on the other hand, the negation has been proven, then, inasmuch as that negation by virtue of its being a species of judgment is one of the real essences it necessarily follows, again, that something of real essence has been established and that is not proper to negate it absolutely. It is evident that this argument applies to the Obstinate only.

[As for the Opinioners and the Agnostics], they say, with regard to those types of knowledge described as necessary (*al-ḍarūriyyāt*) that (a) some of them are sense perceptions (*al-hissiyyāt*), but that sense perception may sometimes err, as in the case of the squint-eyed who see one to be two, and of the bilious who find the sweet bitter, and (b) some of them are immediate perceptions (*al-badhiyyāt*) but that these are subject to differences of opinion and are open to ambiguities for the solving of which there is need of subtle speculation. (c) Another type of necessary knowledge [they say] is that arrived at by means of syllogistic speculations (*al-nazariyyāt*) [from major premises which are either sense perceptions or immediate perceptions]; but as for these [they argue], with the unsoundness of these major

1. The origin of this word is plainly the Greek σοφιστεία (sophistry). These three schools are defined in *al-Ta'rīfāt* in almost the same words, pp. 163f., 200. They are more fully explained in the *DTT*, pp. 665f. Cf. Ibn Ḥazm, *Kitāb al-fiṣal* (Cairo, 1320/1902), I, 8f.; Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, pp. 251f.; al-Sa'adya, *Kitāb al-amānāt wa'l-i'tiqādāt* (Leiden, 1881), pp. 65ff.

2. *Wahm* and *khayāl*. See D. B. Macdonald, 'Wahm and Its Cognates', *JRAS* (1922), pp. 506ff., and H. A. Wolfson, 'The Internal Senses in Latin, Arabic and Hebrew Philosophic Texts', *Harvard Theological Review*, XXVIII (1935), pp. 90ff.

3. *Jawhar* is the self-subsistent entity or substance as opposed to the accident (*'araḍ*). The early theologians said it was that of which other things were compounded. But with the atomists it means 'atom', especially when the term *al-jawhar al-fard* is used. See *EI*, I, 1027; *DTT*, pp. 203ff.; Macdonald, 'Atomic Time', p. 328; S. Pines, *Beiträge zur islamischen Atomenlehre* (Berlin, 1936), pp. 3ff.; Maimonides (Munk), *Le Guide des égarés*, I, pp. 385ff.; (Friedländer), pp. 123f.

4. See Ibn Sinā, *al-Najāt* (Cairo, 1331/1912), pp. 355ff.; *al-Ta'rīfāt*, pp. 85, 179.

premises the unsoundness of the conclusions necessarily follows. And it is for this reason [they add] that thinking human beings have many differences of opinion [concerning conclusions arrived at by syllogistic speculations].

To these we reply:

(a) The error that may occur in sense perception by reason of a particular cause in certain instances does not negate the validity of the sense perception in other instances where the particular causes of the error are not present.

(b) The differences of opinion that may occur with respect to immediate perceptions by reason of one's lack of acquaintance with the subject or of one's difficulty in forming a clear notion of the subject on account of its abstruseness do not destroy the possibility of forming immediate perceptions.

(c) The many differences of opinion that may occur in conclusions arrived at by syllogistic speculation as a result of the unsoundness sometimes occurring in the act of speculation do not destroy in other instances the validity of conclusions arrived at by syllogistic speculation.

But the truth is that there is no way to enter into discussion with them, especially the Agnostics, because they do not admit anything known by which an unknown is to be established. Rather the only way is to punish them with fire, that they may either confess or be consumed in the fire.

Sufastā is a name given to falsified wisdom and specious knowledge, because *sufā* means knowledge and wisdom, and *astā* means the specious and false. And from this is derived *al-safsāṭah*, just as *falsafah* is derived from *faylasūf* (philosopher), which means 'the lover of wisdom.'

Chapter 2 The Causes of Knowledge

The causes of knowledge for all creation are three: the sound senses, true narrative, and reason. The senses are five, namely, hearing, seeing, smelling, taste, and touch, and by each of these senses one is informed concerning that for which it was appointed. True narrative is of two kinds: one of them is the mutawātir narrative, and it is the narrative established by the tongues of numerous people of whom it is inconceivable that they would agree together on a falsehood. It brings about necessary knowledge such as the knowledge of former kings in past times and of distant countries. The second kind is the narrative of the Messenger aided by an evidentiary miracle, and it brings about deductive knowledge, and the knowledge established by it resembles the knowledge established by necessity in certainty and in fixity.

As for reason: it is a cause of knowledge also; and whatsoever of it is established by immediate perception is necessary, just as the knowledge that the whole of a thing is greater than a part of it, and whatever is established by deduction is acquired.

Illumination is not one of the causes of the cognition of the soundness of a thing with the People of Reality.

The causes of knowledge¹/Knowledge is an attribute of the knowing subject by means of which any object referred to becomes revealed (*yatajallā*) to him; that is to say, it becomes clear and evident and capable of being described by words, and this regardless of whether that object is something existing (*mawjūd*) or something non-existing (*ma'dūm*). Knowledge includes both comprehension (*al-idrāk*) by the senses and comprehension by reason (*al-'aql*), and this again both of things conceived (*al-taṣawwurāt*) and of things asserted (*al-taṣdiqāt*), the latter of which may be both certainties (*al-yaqīniyyāt*)² and non-certainties (*ghayr al-yaqīniyyāt*).

This is in opposition to the view of the Sophists that knowledge is an attribute [of the knowing subject by means of] which [he] makes an affirmative judgment of which the contradictory (*al-naqīd*) cannot be admitted. This definition of theirs, although it includes the comprehension of the senses, provided only that the thing to be perceived is not inaccessible to the senses; and although it also includes the things conceived [by reason] provided only, as they claim, that the things to be conceived do not have contradictories; yet it does not include the non-certainties of things asserted. So much for their view. Accordingly the revelation of an object to the knower must be taken to mean a complete unveiling (*al-inkishāf al-tāmm*)³ [which has been identified with knowledge] and therefore precludes opinion (*al-zann*)⁴ so that knowledge with them is to be contrasted with opinion.

for all creation (*al-khalq*)⁵/that is, for all created beings, whether angels, men or *jinn*, in contrast to the knowledge of the Creator—who is exalted in and through Himself—for knowledge belongs to His essence and is not due to any cause whatsoever.

1. Cf. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, pp. 248ff., for a discussion of the roots of knowledge.

2. Cf. *al-Risālat al-shamsiyyah*, translated as 'The Logic of the Arabians' in the first appendix to the *Dictionary of Technical Terms*, pp. 33ff.; *DTT*, p. 1537, and Macdonald, 'Wahm and its Cognates', pp. 507ff.; al-Ghazzālī, *Mi'yār al-'ilm*, (Cairo, 1346/1927), pp. 125ff., 149ff.

3. Cf. *El*, II, 787; M. Horten, *Die spekulative und positive Theologie des Islam* (Leipzig, 1912), p. 237; Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology*, pp. 120, 172f.

4. The term *al-zann* refers to the faculty which produces opinion or belief with the admission that the contrary may be the case. See *al-Ta'rīfāt*, p. 149; *DTT*, pp. 939f.; Wolfson, 'Internal Senses', *Harvard Theological Review*, XXVIII (1935), 93ff.; Ibn Sinā, *al-Najāt*, pp. 99f.; al-Ghazzālī, *Mi'yār al-'ilm*, pp. 128ff.

5. This use of the verbal noun *al-khalq* for the passive participle goes back to the Qur'ān. See Qur'ān 31:10 (al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa asrār al-ta'wīl* [Leipzig, 1846–1848] II, 112); Qur'ān 36:79 (*Anwār al-tanzīl*, II, 165f.), etc.

are three: the sound sense (*al-ḥawāss al-salimah*), true narrative (*al-khabar al-ṣādiq*), and reason (*al-ʿaql*)¹/This is by way of enumerating the particulars (*al-istiqrāʾ*).² From the standpoint of classification, if the cause of the knowledge is some other person outside the knower, then it is true narration; [but if the cause of the knowledge is within the knower himself] then, if there is an organ distinct from the perceptive faculty (*al-mudrik*), it is sense perception; otherwise, it is reason.

The objection may be raised that the efficient cause (*al-sabab al-mu'aththir*) in all kinds of knowledge is Allah, since they all exist through His creation and His bringing them into existence without any impression (*ta'thīr*) being made by the sensory faculty, true narration, and reason. Reason only appears to be a cause, as for instance fire in the case of burning; and as for the senses and narration, the former are only instruments and the latter a method of comprehension.

Further objection may be raised that the ultimate cause (*al-sabab al-mufđī*)—taken as a whole wherein Allah creates within us knowledge according to the customary way (*jary al-ʿadah*)³ in order to include the percipient (*al-mudrik*) such as reason, the instrument such as the sensory faculty, and the method such as narration—is not confined to three things, but there are other things such as intuition (*al-wijdān*)⁴ surmise (*al-ḥads*),⁵ experience (*al-tajribah*),⁶ and the speculation (*al-naẓar*) of reason, meaning the arrangement of principles and premises (*muqaddamāt*).

To this we reply that this [threefold division given] is according to the method of the Early Theologians, who limited themselves to the aims pursued and shunned the minute precisions of the Philosophers. When these theologians discerned that some of the things perceived came as the result of the use of the external senses, about which there is no doubt, whether in rational beings or non-rational beings, they, therefore, made the senses one of the causes; and since most of the things known about religion are derived from true narrative, they made it another cause. Since they were not positive about the internal senses (*al-ḥawāss al-bāṭinah*),⁷ which are

1. See al-Sa'adya, *Kitāb al-amānāt wa'l-i'tiqādāt* (Leiden 1881), p. 12ff. This threefold classification of the kinds of knowledge is common to Muslims, Christians, and Jews. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza* (Cambridge, MA, 1934), II, p. 133.

2. *Al-istiqrāʾ* is the judgment concerning a universal based on particulars. See *DTT*, p. 1229; *al-Ta'rīfāt*, p. 18; *al-Risālat al-shamsiyyah*, p. 33; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāt*, p. 90; al-Ghazzālī, *Mi'yār al-ʿilm*, pp. 102ff.

3. *Jary al-ʿadah*. This term is one of the key phrases of the atomistic theologians. Macdonald, 'Atomic Time,' p. 332. Cf. Maimonides (Munk), *Le Guide des égarés*, I, 388ff., (Friedländer), *The Guide for the Perplexed*, pp. 124ff.; Pines, *Beiträge*, pp. 26ff.

4. See *DTT*, p. 1455.

5. See *al-Risālat al-shamsiyyah*, p. 34; *al-Ta'rīfāt*, p. 86; *DTT*, pp. 300f.

6. See *al-Risālat al-shamsiyyah*, p. 34; *DTT*, pp. 189f.; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāt*, pp. 94f.

7. See Wolfson, 'Internal Senses,' 69ff.; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāt*, pp. 264ff.; al-Ghazzālī, *Maqāṣid al-falāsifah* (Cairo, 1355/1936), III, 46ff.

called the common sense (*al-hiss al-mushtarak*)¹ or the estimative faculty (*al-wahm*) or something else, and because they did not attach much importance to the details of surmises (*al-ḥadsīyyāt*), experiences (*al-tajribīyyāt*), immediate perceptions (*al-badīhiyyāt*) and speculations (*al-naẓariyyāt*), and because all these go back to reason, they made reason a third cause which ultimately arrives at knowledge by merely giving attention to or by drawing to itself a surmise or an experience or the arrangement of premises. So they made reason the cause of knowledge (in that we have hunger and thirst,) that the whole is greater than the part, that the light of the moon is derived from the sun, that scammony is a laxative, and that the world is originated, although in some matters reason is aided by sense perception.

The senses (*al-ḥawāss*)/The word is the plural of a sense (*ḥāssah*), meaning the sensory faculty.

are five/meaning that of necessity reason determines their existence. But the proofs for the internal senses, which the philosophers maintain, are incomplete according to the fundamentals of Islam.

namely, hearing (*al-samʿ*)/It is a faculty (*quwwah*) placed in the nerves spread out in the cavity of the ear hole, by which sounds are perceived. This is by way of connecting with the ear hole the air which has assumed the quality of the sounds, meaning that Allah then creates perception in the soul (*al-nafs*).

seeing (*al-baṣar*)/It is a faculty placed in the two hollow nerves which meet each other in the brain, thence they separate and go to the two eyes; by this faculty are perceived rays of light, colours, shapes, measures, motions, the beautiful and the ugly, and other things, the perception of which Allah creates in the soul whenever the creature uses this faculty.

smelling (*al-shamm*)/It is a faculty placed in the two protruding lumps on the front of the brain, which are like the two nipples of the breasts; by this faculty odours are perceived by way of connecting with cartilage of the nose the air which has assumed the quality of the odours.

taste (*al-dhawq*)/It is a faculty spread out in the nerves situated on the organ of the tongue; by this faculty flavours are perceived through the mixing of the saliva which is in the mouth with the thing tasted, and through its reaching to the nerves.

and touch (*al-lams*)/It is a faculty spread out into all the body by which head and

1. See Macdonald, 'Wahm and its Cognates', pp. 512f.; *DTT*, p. 304; Wolfson, 'Internal Senses', 100ff.; al-Ghazzālī, *Maqāṣid al-falāsifah*, III, 46ff.

cold, moisture and dryness, and the like are perceived at the time of touching and contract.

and by each of these senses/that is, the five senses

one is informed/that is, given knowledge

concerning that for which it was appointed/that is, that particular sense. This means that Allah has created each one of these senses to perceive certain things peculiar to it, such as hearing for sounds, taste for that which is flavoured, and smelling for odours. Nothing is perceived by one sense which is perceived by another sense, but as to whether that is possible or not there is a difference of opinion. However, the correct position is that it is possible, because it is by a purely creative act of Allah without any impression on the part of the senses. So it is not impossible that Allah can create after the loss of sight an added perception of sounds, for example. If the question is raised whether the sweetness and heat of a thing are not both together perceived by the tasting faculty, we reply in the negative; rather the sweetness is perceived by taste and the heat by the sense of touch which is present in the mouth and the tongue.

True narrative/that is, that which is in agreement with the facts, for narrative is [a form of] speech in relation to which there is something external with which the relationship agrees, so it is true; or the relationship does not agree with it, and it is then false. So truth and falsehood are descriptions of narrative. They therefore may be used with the sense of giving information about a thing according to what is or what is not. This means [that narration is] the making [of something] known by a complete relationship which agrees or does not agree with the fact, so truth and falsehood are among the attributes applied to the narrator. And for this reason in some books the term 'the true' is used as an attribute of 'narrative' (*al-khabar al-ṣādiq*), and in others it is placed in annexation, 'the narrative of the truthful one' (*khabar al-ṣādiq*).

is of two kinds: one of them is the *mutawātir*¹ narrative/It is so called because it does not occur just once, but in sequence and continuity.

and it is the narrative established by the tongues of people of whom it is inconceivable that they would agree together/that is, reason does not permit their concurring together

1. In the science of Muslim traditions the *mutawātir* (verbal noun, *tawātur*) is the most trustworthy from the standpoint of the number who attest it. For the technical terms used in classifying the content and authorities, etc., of traditions see A. Guillaume, *The Traditions of Islam* (Oxford, 1924), pp. 85ff. and 181f.; S. de Sacy, in *Notices et extraits des manuscrits*, X (Paris, 1818), 481ff.

on a falsehood/The thing that proves it is that knowledge takes place without any doubt.

It/of necessity

brings about necessary knowledge such as the knowledge of former kings in past times and of distant countries/The latter phrase ‘distant countries’ may be joined to ‘the kings’ or to ‘the times’; the former, namely ‘the kings’, is more likely although further away in position in the sentence.

Here then are two matters to be noted; one of them is that the *mutawātir* narrative brings about knowledge and that of necessity, for we come to ourselves to the knowledge of existence of Mecca and Baghdad and that such facts are only gained through narratives. The other matter is that the knowledge derived from such *mutawātir* narrative is necessary, and that is because it may be obtained by one who is capable of making a deduction and by others as well, even by children who have not yet been brought up to the right way, by the method of the acquisition of knowledge and of the arranging the necessary premises. But as for the narrative of the Christians (*al-Naṣārā*) concerning the killing of Jesus,¹ on whom be peace, and that of the Jews (*al-Yahūd*) concerning the perpetuity of the religion of Moses, on whom be peace—well, such *mutawātir* narrative is absurd.

The objection may be raised that the narrative of each individual only gives an opinion (*ẓann*), and accumulation of opinions does not bring about certainty, and also that the possibility of each individual’s falsehood brings about the possibility of the whole group’s falsehood, for it is made up of the same individuals.² To this we reply that it often happens that in the grouping together of individual cases there is something in them collectively that was not in them separately, as for instance in the strength of a rope made of hairs.

It may be objected that in the case of necessary types of knowledge there is no irregularity or contradiction; still, we do find in the case of such knowledge that the knowledge that one is half of two is stronger than the affirmation of the existence of Alexander. Furthermore, some of those people who employ reason in their

1. The denial by the Muslims of the killing of Jesus rests on the interpretation of a verse in the Qur’ān (4:156). Many take it to mean that someone was crucified in his place. The other references (Qur’ān 3:37, 48; 5:117; 19:34) to his departure are often interpreted in such a way as to deny his crucifixion and death. See al-Bayḍāwī, al-Rāzī, and al-Ṭabarī in their commentaries on these verses.

2. Wensinck adds, ‘so the *mutawātir* narrative does not give knowledge.’

investigations, such as al-Sumāniyyah¹ and the Brahmans (*al-Barāhimah*),² deny that *mutawātir* narrative produces knowledge. [31] This argument is inapplicable as an objection, for it is to be admitted that various kinds of necessary knowledge sometimes differ from one another by difference in usage, custom, and practice, and in the occurring to one's mind and conceiving the terms of judgments (*aṭrāf al-aḥkām*). And there may be a contradiction about *mutawātir* narrative because of pride and obstinacy just as the Sophists exhibit in contradicting all types of necessary knowledge.

The second kind is the narrative of the Messenger (*al-rasūl*) aided/that is to say, whose message is established by an evidentiary miracle (*al-mu'jizah*)/A Messenger is a man sent by Allah to creatures in order to convey His judgments; and the bringing of a book may be stipulated of him, in contrast to a prophet (*al-nabī*), for 'prophet' is a more general term.³ An evidentiary miracle⁴ is something that annuls the customary way of things (*khāriq li'l-'ādah*), the purpose of which is to demonstrate the truthfulness of the one making the claim to be the Messenger of Allah.

and it/that is, the narrative of the Messenger

brings about deductive (*istidlālī*) knowledge/that is, that which is arrived at by deduction (*al-istidlāl*), which is by consideration of proof (*dalīl*). Deduction is (1) that thing by the sound consideration of which one is enabled to attain the knowledge of any subject that has been transmitted by narrative. (2) It has also been said to be a [minor] proposition, composed of judgments, which necessarily demands a [major] proposition.

So according to the first definition the proof of the existence of the Maker of the world, and according to the second definition it is our saying that the world

1. The al-Sumāniyyah were responsible for spreading the knowledge of Indian skepticism in Persia. See *EI*, II, 48; Horten, *Die philosophischen Ansichten von Razi und Tusi* (Bonn, 1910), pp. 14ff.; and *Die Philosophischen Systeme der spekulativen Theologen im Islam* (Bonn, 1912), pp. 93ff.; Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, p. 256; *DTT*, pp. 702, 1390; *I.D.*, p. 30; A.J., p. 53.

2. See below, Chap. 14, and also al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, pp. 444ff.; Horten, *Die Philosophischen Systeme der spekulativen Theologen im Islam*, pp. 90ff.; *EI*, I, 653.

3. The Mu'tazilites held that there was no distinction between *rasūl* (messenger) and *nabī* (prophet). *Al-Ta'rifāt*, p. 115. See also *DTT*, p. 584, and al-Khayālī in *I.D.*, p. 31; Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, p. 54, and below, Chap. 14.

4. Seven stipulations have been laid down regarding the evidentiary miracle. It must (1) be from Allah, (2) annul the customary way of things, (3) be impossible for those who contend with Allah's Messenger, (4) appear at the hands of him who claims the prophetic office, (5) be in accordance with that claim, (6) substantiate his veracity, and (7) not happen before the claim to the prophetic office is made. See *DTT*, pp. 975ff. Cf. al-Ījī, *al-Mawāqif*, pp. 169ff. Cf. Lane, *Lexicon*, p. 1961; *al-Ta'rifāt*, p. 234; Wensinck *The Muslim Creed*, pp. 54f.; *I.D.* (see also the gloss of al-Khayālī), p. 32, and below, Chap. 14.

is originated and that everything originated has a maker. But their statement that proof is that thing from the knowledge of which the knowledge of something else follows is more suitable to the second definition. But as for its bringing about knowledge, that is because it is absolute certain that he through whom Allah performs an evidentiary miracle for the purpose of asserting his claim to the office of Messenger is truthful in the judgments which he brings. If he is truthful, then the knowledge concerning the contents of his message absolutely follows. As for being deductive, that is because it depends upon deduction and because it brings to the mind the fact that it is the narrative of the one whose office of Messenger is established by evidentiary miracles. Every narrative of this kind is truthful and its contents are according to fact.

and the knowledge established by it/that is, by the narrative of the Messenger.

resembles/that is, is like.

the knowledge established by necessity/[this means] like the things perceived by the senses, those immediately perceived, and the *mutawātir* narratives.

in certainty/that is, in the impossibility of predicating the contradictory.

and in fixity/that is, in the impossibility of predicating the discontinuance of this knowledge by that which is ambiguous (*tashkik al-mushakkik*).¹ And it is a kind of knowledge that means the absolute established conviction (*i'tiqād*) which agrees with the fact, else otherwise this knowledge would be a matter of ignorance, or of following tradition (*taqlid*).²

If it is objected that this explanation is applicable to the *mutawātir* only, and therefore goes back to the first section [of true narrative], we reply that the statement is about that narrative which is known to be of the Messenger because it has been heard from his mouth or because that or something else possible has been transmitted of him by *tawātur*. The individual narrative is not useful for knowledge because there may be some doubt of its being the narrative of the Messenger.

1. See *DTT*, p. 780; *al-Risālat al-shamsiyyah*, pp. 5f., and Wolfson, 'Amphibolous Terms in Aristotle, Arabic Philosophy and Maimonides,' *Harvard Theological Review*, XXXI (1938), 151ff.

2. Some say that *taqlid*, the acceptance of a religion without argument or proof, is sufficient to make a man a believer, others deny this holding that the *muqallid* is an unbeliever. Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology*, p. 316. Cf. *EI*, IV, 630; *DTT*, p. 1178; *al-Bāb al-hādī 'ashar*, pp. 5ff.; al-Faḍālī, *Kifāyat al-'awāmm* by Ḥasan b. Yūsuf b. 'Alī Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, with commentary by Miqdād Faḍil al-Ḥillī, trans. from the Arabic by W. M. Miller (London, 1928), pp. 15ff.; al-Sanūsī, *Sharḥ Umm al-Barāhīn* (Cairo 1330/1912), pp. 55ff.; Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, pp. 136, 242, 265.

An objection may also be made that since the statement is *mutawātir* or heard from the lips of the Messenger of Allah, the knowledge which results is then necessary and consequently not deductive, just as in the case of the rest of knowledge obtained by *tawātur* and sense perception. To this we reply (1) that the necessary knowledge, in the case of the *mutawātir* narrative which is from the Messenger, is the knowledge that the narrative is the narrative of the Messenger of Allah—may blessing and peace be upon him—because this means ‘that by which the giving of the narrative has become *mutawātir*.’ (2) In regard to that which is heard from the mouth of the Messenger—may Allah bless him and give him peace—the necessary knowledge [in this case] is the perception of the verbal expressions and that they are the speech of the Messenger. (3) But the deductive knowledge [in this case] is the knowledge as to its content and the establishing of that which it proved. For example, the statement of the Messenger, ‘It is incumbent on the claimant to produce proof, and the defendant must take an oath,’¹ is known by *tawātur* to be the statement of the Messenger. This knowledge is necessary. Further it is known from this statement [of the Messenger] that proof devolves on the claimant. [The knowledge of] this [fact] is deductive.

Further objection may be raised that truthful narrative which gives useful knowledge is not confined to these two kinds, but may be narrative coming from Allah or from the Angel or the People of Consensus (*al-ijmāʿ*), or narrative coupled with that which removes the possibility of falsehood, like the news of the arrival of Zayd as indicated by the people rushing to his house. To this we answer that what is meant by narrative is a narrative which is a means of knowledge to all creatures by merely being a kind of narrative without regard at all to the contexts which give certainty by the evidence of reason.

So the narrative coming from Allah or from the Angel is able to impart knowledge in relation to all creation only when it comes to them by way of the Messenger. The same judgment applies to the narrative of the Messenger and to that of the People of Agreement in the case of a *mutawātir* judgment. Answer may be made that it has no meaning by itself alone but rather by consideration of the proofs which indicate that Consensus is an argument. We then say that likewise the narrative of the Messenger is of the same class and for that reason was classified as deductive.

Then as for reason (*al-ʿaql*)²/which is a faculty of the soul (*al-nafs*),³ by which it is

1. See al-Tirmidhī, *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Cairo, 1292/1875), ‘*Aḥkām*’, b. 12; al-Bukhārī, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ed., M. L. Krehl and Th. W. Juynboll (Leiden, 1862–1868), II, 116.

2. The word *al-ʿaql* is the translation by the Arabic writers on philosophy of the Greek *voûç*. See D. B. Macdonald, *The Religious Attitude and Life in Islam* (Chicago, 1909), pp. 230f.; *DTT*, II, 1027ff.; Ibn Sinā, *Rasāʾil fiʾl-ḥikmah waʾl-ṭabīʿiyyāt*, (Cairo, 1326/1908), pp. 79f.; al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyāʾ*, VII, 201ff

3. The term *al-nafs* refers to ‘the animal psyche’ or ‘the appetitive soul.’ See Macdonald,

prepared for the reception of things to be known and perceived. That is the meaning of their saying, 'It is an innate property (*gharīzah*) which, whenever the instruments of perception are sound, is followed by the necessary types of knowledge.' Some people define it as the substance (*al-jawhar*) by which the things not perceived by the senses are perceived through means, and by which sense perceptions are perceived through observation

it is a cause of knowledge also/He made this clear because there is a disagreement about it among the heretics (*al-malāhidah*) and the Sumāniyyah in regard to all types of speculation, and among some philosophers in regard to metaphysical speculations, on the basis of numerous differences and the contradiction of opinions. The reply that this is due to the unsoundness of speculation does not preclude the fact that sound speculation on the part of reason is useful for giving knowledge, although the very thing you mentioned is a deduction by the speculation of reason. Thus it establishes that which you have denied, so it is contradictory to itself. And if they assert that this means the opposing of the unsound with the unsound, we answer that either it means something and therefore is not unsound, or it does not mean anything at all and therefore there is no opposing [of the unsound with the unsound].

Some may say, 'Let us grant that speculation is useful for giving knowledge. Well, then, if this knowledge is necessary there is no contradiction about it, for it is just as though we said, "One is half of two"; and if it is speculative, then it is necessary to establish speculation by speculation and that is circular proof (*al-dawr*).' To this we reply that sometimes there may be a contradiction about necessary knowledge because of obstinacy or the limitation of perception. The people who use reason are agreed that the reasoning faculties of men are distinctly different according to the nature created (*al-fiṭrah*) in them. [This position is reached] by deduction from precedents (*al-athār*) and by the testimony of narratives (*al-akhbār*) [from the Prophet].¹ The speculative type (*al-naẓarī*) of knowledge itself may be established by a special speculation which is not expressed in terms of a [general] speculation. An example of this is our saying, 'The world is changing, and everything changing is originated.' This [necessity] does not rest upon the special character of the speculation, but because it is sound and accompanied by [that which meets] its conditions. So every sound speculation accompanied by that which meets its conditions has a meaning, and in verifying the answer to this objection there is more detail than is fitting to this book

Religious Attitude, pp. 228ff.; and 'Wahm and its Cognates', p. 509; *DTT*, p. 1398; Ibn Sīnā, *Rasā'il*, pp. 81f.; al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, VII, 201ff.; *EI*, III, 827ff.

1. Al-Ghazzālī gives the name *khābar* (pl. *akhbār*) to a tradition that goes back to Muḥammad himself, while he distinguishes those that can only be traced back to the Companions as *āthār*. See *EI*, II, 859, also al-Ghazzālī's use of the terms in *Iḥyā'*. However, this usage is not universal for some use *āthār* also for traditions that go back to Muḥammad. Cf. *DTT*, p. 65; Lane, *Lexicon*, p. 19.

and whatever of it is established/that is, of knowledge established by reason.
by immediate perception (*al-badīhah*)/that is, at the first glance without the necessity of thought.

is necessary, just as the knowledge that the whole of a thing is greater than the part of it/For after conceiving the meaning of 'all' and 'part' and 'greater' it is seen that this [proposition] does not rest on anything; and whoever hesitates about it—so that he asserts that a part of a man, like the hand for example, may sometimes be greater than the whole—does not conceive the meaning of 'whole' and 'part'.

and whatever is established by deduction (*al-istidlāl*)/that is, by consideration of proof, whether by deduction from cause to effect, as whenever one sees fire and so knows that it has smoke; or from effect to cause, as whenever one sees smoke and so knows that fire is there. The first process may be specified as 'assigning the cause' and the second as 'deduction'.

is acquired (*iktisābī*)/that is to say, obtained by acquisition (*al-kasb*). This is [done by] immediate causality (*mubāsharat al-asbāb*) through choice, as in the application of reason and in speculation on the matters which pertain to deduction, and by inclining the ear, turning about the pupil of the eye, and so forth, in matters which pertain to the senses. So we see that 'acquired' is a more general term than 'deductive' because deductive knowledge is that which is obtained by consideration of the proof. Everything deductive then is acquired, but not everything acquired is deductive, as for example the use of the faculty of sight which results from purpose and choice.

As for necessary knowledge, it is sometimes contrasted with acquired knowledge and it is then explained as that the obtaining of that which is not within the power (*maqḍūr*) of [choice apportioned by Allah to] the creature; and sometimes necessary knowledge is contrasted with deductive knowledge and explained as that which results without thought or speculation regarding proof. And so some termed the knowledge resulting from the use of the senses 'acquired,' that is, resulting from immediate causality through choice; and others termed it 'necessary,' that is, resulting without the use of deduction.

There does not seem to be a contradiction in the statement of the author of *al-Bidāyah*¹ when he says that originated (*al-ḥādīth*) knowledge is of two kinds. One is necessary knowledge, which Allah originated in the soul of the creature without his acquisition and choice, like the knowledge of his existence and the change of

1. This is evidently the book by Nūr al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Maḥmūd b. Abi Bakr al-Ṣābūnī al-Bukhārī (d. AD 1184) referred to in Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* (Weimar, 1898), I, 375, and Wilhelm Ahlwardt, *Verzeichniss arabischer Handschriften der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1887–1899), no. 1737.

his states (*aḥwāl*); and the other is acquired knowledge, which Allah originates in the creature by means of his acquisition. And this is by immediate causality in respect to knowledge, its causes being three: sound senses, truthful narrative, and the speculation of reason. Then he went on to say that from the speculation of reason there result two kinds of knowledge: necessary, which comes at the very beginning of speculation without any cogitation (*tafakkur*), such as the knowledge that the whole is greater than the part; and deductive, in which a kind of cogitation is necessary, such as the knowledge of the presence of fire on seeing smoke.

Inspiration (*al-ilhām*)/It is that which is explained as the casting of an idea into the heart (*al-qalb*) by means of effusion (*al-fayḍ*).

is not one of the causes of the cognition (*al-maʿrifah*) of the soundness of a thing with the People of Reality/This statement was made to answer the objection to confining the causes of knowledge to the above-mentioned three things only. It would have been better if al-Nasafi had said, 'One of the causes of the knowledge (*al-ʿilm*) of a thing; unless it was that he tried to call attention to the fact that for us knowledge and cognition are the same, not, as some do, making a technical distinction between them by confining knowledge to compounds (*al-murakkabāt*) or to universals (*al-kullīyyāt*) and cognition to simple things (*al-basāʾit*) or to particulars (*al-juzʾīyyāt*); otherwise there was no use of his particularizing the statement by saying 'the soundness of a thing' [instead of 'a thing'].

Then it is clear that he meant that Inspiration is not a cause by which knowledge results for creatures in general nor by which it is right for one to force knowledge on another; otherwise there is no doubt that knowledge does result from Inspiration. There have been reported statements regarding Inspiration in the tradition of the Prophet such as, 'My Lord inspired me.'¹ And this has been said of many of the predecessors (*al-salaf*) also.

As for the narrative of a single unprejudiced person and the following of the tradition (*taqlīd*) of one who attempts a legal opinion (*al-mujtahid*),² they are sometimes useful for opinion and sometimes for strong conviction which is enduring. It appears that al-Nasafi meant by knowledge (*al-ʿilm*) that which does not include these two things mentioned; otherwise there is no reason for confining the causes of knowledge to the three [causes mentioned].

1. Wensinck, who is careful to mention the sources of traditions, gives no reference to this saying.

2. This is a technical term that applies to the one learned in the Qurʾān and its meaning and the *Sunnah* who exerts himself to the utmost informing an opinion on something connected with legal judgments. *EI*, II, 448f.; *DTT*, p. 198; Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddimah* (Paris, 1858), III, 6.

Chapter 3

The World

Further, the world in the totality of its parts is a thing originated, since it consists of substances and accidents. A substance is that which has self-subsistence, and it is either a thing compounded, that is, a body; or not compounded, like the atoms, which is the part that is not further divided. And the accident is something that does not subsist in itself but is originated in bodies and atoms, such as colours, states of coming into being, tastes, and odours.

Further, the world (*al-ʿālam*)/that is, everything except Allah—of the existent things (*al-mawjūdāt*) by which the Maker is known, is called the world of bodies (*al-aḡsām*), the world of accidents (*al-aʿrāḡ*), the plant world (*al-nabāt*), the animal world (*al-ḡayawān*), and so on. The attributes of Allah are excluded [from the things making up the world] because they are not other than His essence, just as they are not the essence itself.

in the totality of its parts/that is, of the heavens and what is in them and the earth and what is on it.

is a thing originated (*muḡdath*)¹/This means it is something brought from non-existence into existence, meaning that it was once non-existent (*maʿdūm*) and then it existed. This is in opposition to the philosophers, insofar as they hold to the position of the eternity (*qidam*) of the heavens,² including their respective matters (*mawādd*), forms (*ṡuwar*), and shapes (*ashkāl*), and the eternity of the sub-lunar elements (*al-ʿanāṡir*) including their respective matters and forms, but these forms are only specific forms, inasmuch as the elements were never without form. Strictly speaking, the Philosophers, used the term ‘being originated’ with reference to that which is not Allah, but they used it in the sense of being dependent on something else, not in the sense of being preceded by non-existence.

Then al-Nasafī pointed out the proof for the origin (*ḡudūth*) of the world by this statement:

1. At the beginning of Chapter 7 according to our division of the commentary al-Taftāzānī gives a number of synonyms for creating (*al-takwīn*). *Takwīn* is sometimes defined as meaning that a thing comes into temporal existence. See *DTT*, p. 134. *ḡudūth* is the opposite of *qidam* (eternity). In order to express the further distinction in meaning *muḡdath* has been translated ‘originated’ and *muḡdith* as ‘originator’ rather than ‘created’ and ‘creator’ which have been used for other words. See below, Chapter 7, for the contrast between the Philosophers and the Atomistic Theologians in theory as to the composition and working process of the universe see Maimonides (Munk), *Le Guide des égarés*, I, 313ff. and 344ff.; (Friedländer), *The Guide for the Perplexed*, pp. 102ff. and 109ff.; Macdonald, ‘Atomic Time,’ 334.

2. Cf. Plato’s *Timaeus*, *Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Jowett (1874), II, 544, 560.

since it/that is, the world

consists of substances (*a'yān*)¹ and accidents (*a'rāḍ*)/because whatever of it is self-subsistent (*qā'im bi dhātihi*) is a substance, and whatever is not is an accident. Both of them are originated, as we shall show. And the author—Allah have mercy on him—did not deal with this, because the discussion of it would be very long and inappropriate to this brief treatise of his, seeing that it is confined to problems without their proofs.

A substance is that which/that is, any possible thing

has self-subsistence (*qiyām bi dhātihi*). By context this is inferred from their being a part of the world. The meaning of self-subsistence with the *mutakallimūn* is that substance is bounded by itself (*yataḥayyaz bi nafsīhi*). Its being bounded does not follow from the fact that some other thing is bounded, in contrast to the accident, in which case its being bounded follows from the fact that the atom (*al-jawhar*) is bounded, for the atom is the subject (*al-mawḍū'*) or the locus (*al-maḥall*) which gives subsistence to the accident.

The meaning of the existence of the accident in the subject is that its very existence is its existence in the subject, and for that reason it cannot be transferred from the subject. This is in contrast to the existence of a body within a boundary (*al-ḥayyiz*), for its very existence and its existence in a boundary are two different things. For that reason a body may be transferred from a boundary. According to the Philosophers the meaning of the subsistence of a thing in its essence is its being independent of the locus in which it subsists, and the meaning of its subsistence in something else is its being specified by it, so that the first becomes something descriptive (*na't*) and the second something described (*man'ūt*), whether having boundaries, as in the case of the blackness of a body, or not [having boundaries], as in the case of the Attributes (*ṣifāt*) of Allah and the immaterial entities.²

and it/whatever of the world is self-subsistent

is either a thing compounded (*murakkab*)/of two or more parts, according to us.

1. In scholastic theology *'ayn* is the term used for 'substance'. The philosophers used *jawhar* as contrasted with 'accident' (*'araḍ*) and with 'idea' (*ma'nā*). *DTT*, p. 103; Lane, *Lexicon*, pp. 2214ff.; *EI*, Supplement, pp. 13, 16; al-Ghazzālī, *Maqāṣid al-falāsīfah*, II, 7f.

2. Arabic: *al-mujarradāt*, the immaterial souls, i.e. stripped of all materiality. It also refers to non-material entities such as intelligences and angels.

that is, a body (*jism*)¹/Some say that there must be three parts so that the three dimensions, length, breadth, and depth may be realized; and others say eight parts, in order that the intersecting of the dimensions at vertical angles may be realized. This is not a dispute over verbal expressions to be used, referring to some technicality [in the matter] that can be settled by saying that each may explain the term technically as he wishes. It is a dispute as to whether or not the conventional idea thus given to body is sufficient if it is compounded of two parts only. The Preceding Theologians (*al-awwalūn*) argued that if one of two bodies exceeds the other by one part, then it is bulkier [*ajsam*, that is, more of body] than the other. And if the mere compounding [of parts] were not sufficient to constitute corporeality, then the body would not increase in corporeality by the mere addition of a part. This is a matter for consideration, for the form *afʿal* from the noun *al-jasāmah* [that is, *ajsam* as used above] has the meaning of bulk and greatness of amount. It is said that a thing becomes bulky (*jasīm*), that is, it becomes great, so it is said to be bulky (*jasīm*) and corpulent (*jusām*). We speak here of body as a name (*ʿism*) not as an attribute (*ṣifah*).

or not compounded, like the atom (*jawhar*)/that is, the substance which is not divisible, neither actually, nor in fancy, nor by supposition (*fard*).²

which is the part that is not further divided/He did not say, ‘it is the atom’, but ‘like the atom’, guarding against introducing a restriction; for that which is not compounded is not confined according to reason to the atom, meaning ‘the indivisible part’ (*al-juzʿ alladhī lā yatajazzā*) since it would have been necessary to abolish primary matter (*hayūlā*),³ form (*ṣūrah*), Intelligences (*ʿuqūl*), and the immaterial souls (*al-nufūs al-mujarradah*)⁴ in order to complete the restriction of indivisibles to the atom.

According to the Philosophers there is no such thing as the pure atom (*al-jawhar al-fard*), that is, the indivisible atom. As for the compounding together of the body, they say that it is composed of primary matter (*al-hayūlā*) and form (*al-ṣūrah*) only.

The best proof for establishing the [indivisible] part is that were a real sphere to be placed on a real plane it would make a contact at one indivisible point only, since if it should make a contact with it at two points, there would actually be on the sphere a line, so it would not be a real sphere on a real plane.

1. For the different definitions of *jism* see al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt*, pp. 301ff.; *DTT*, p. 258, also al-Ghazzālī, *Maqāṣid al-falāsifah*, II, 10ff.

2. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, p. 72, says ‘rational supposition.’

3. *Hayūlā* (Greek ὑλη), is primary matter, matter as capable of receiving form. For the different meanings applied to the word in Arabic see *DTT*, p. 1534; al-Ghazzālī, *Maqāṣid al-falāsifah*, II, 19ff.; Pines, *Beiträge*, pp. 40ff.

4. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, p. 73, adds *min al-abdān*, ‘of bodies’.

The most noted proof [of the pure atom] according to the Early Theologians has two aspects. The first is that if every substance were infinitely divisible the mustard seed would not be smaller than the mountain, since each is made up of infinite parts. Hugeness and smallness consist only in the multiplicity and paucity of parts, but that fact is only conceivable in the finite. The second proof is that the combination (*al-ijtimā'*) of the parts of the body into a whole is not due to its own essence, for were that the case the body would not be capable of being separated into parts (*al-iftirāq*). It is because of this that Allah has the power to create in that body the possibility of being separated into parts which cannot be further divided. Now with reference to this ultimate part, the indivisibility of which is under discussion, if it is possible for it to be further separated into parts it follows that the power of Allah would have to bring it about in order to eliminate the assumption that Allah is powerless, but if it is impossible [for it to be further separated] then the contention as to the existence of an absolute atom is established.

All [of these three proofs] are weak. The first is weak because it only points to the existence of the geometrical point, and that does not necessitate the existence of the indivisible part, for the fact that a geometrical point is said to have position (*al-ḥulūl fī maḥall*) does not mean that it occupies place (*ḥulūl al-sarayān*)¹ and consequently it does not mean that the indivisibility of the place follows from the indivisibility of the geometrical point.

The second and third are weak because the Philosophers do not say that the body is actually composed of parts that are infinite; but they say that the body admits of an infinite number of divisions and that there is no combination (*ijtimā'*) of the parts in it at all. Greatness and smallness are only according to the quantity which subsists in a body. And it is possible for the parts to be separated (*iftirāq*) to infinity, as to the pure atom, it is not to be postulated.² The proofs for denying this are also somewhat weak. For this reason al-Imam al-Rāzī inclined to be non-committal on the subject.

If the question is raised whether there is any benefit resulting from this position which is different [from that of the Philosophers], we reply that there is. In establishing the pure atom we escape many of the obscurities of the Philosophers, such as the positing of primary matter (*hayūlā*) and form (*ṣūrah*) which leads to the eternity of the world, the denial of the resurrection of the body, and many of the fundamental laws of geometry (*al-handasah*), upon which obscurities rest the continual motion of the heavenly spheres, and also the denial of the rending (*al-kharq*) of them and their being coalesced together again (*al-ilti'ām*).

1. The root *sarā* means 'To travel by night, to creep along, to be contagious', and in modern Arabic 'to circulate' (of the blood). For its technical use see Horten, *Die spekulative und positive Theologie des Islam*, pp. 154, 178; Lane, *Lexicon*, p. 1355; R. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*, (Leiden, 1881), I, 651. *Al-ḥulūl fī maḥall* reflects the expression used by Aristotle in the definition of a point. See *Metaphysics*, V, 6, 1016b, 26.

2. Cf. Maimonides (tr. Friedländer), *The Guide for the Perplexed*, p. 134.

And the accident is something that does not subsist in itself/but it subsists in something else by being incident (*tābi*) to it in having its boundaries (*taḥayyuz*), or by being specialized by it, just as something descriptive is specialized by the thing described, as has already been said. This does not mean that it cannot be thought of apart from the locus as has been fancied by some, but that only applies to some of the accidents.

but is originated in bodies and atoms/Some say that this is added to give an exact definition and to avoid including the attributes of Allah.

such as colours/The original colours are said to be black and white; others have said that they are red, green and yellow, the rest being compounded from them.

states of coming into being (*akwān*)/which are: combination (*al-ijtimā'*), being separated into parts (*al-iftirāq*), motion (*al-ḥarakah*) and rest (*al-sukūn*).

tastes (*al-ṭu'ūm*)/There are nine species of them: bitterness, pungency, saltiness, astringency, acidity, puckeriness, sweetness, greasiness, and insipidity. Through combinations of these there are innumerable species of tastes.

and odours (*al-rawā'ih*)/These are of many species without special names. And it is most evident that all accidents except the states of coming into being occur only in bodies. If it is established that the world is made up of substances and accidents, and the substances are bodies and atoms, we may then say that everything is originated.

Some of the accidents are known by observation, as motion following rest, light following darkness, and blackness following whiteness. And others are known by proof, such as the occurrence (*ṭarayān*)¹ of non-existence because if the eternal is necessarily existent in itself, then it is clear that eternity is inconsistent with non-existence; otherwise eternity must be ascribed to the eternal simply by way of affirmation, since that which proceeds from a thing by purpose and choice is of necessity originated, but an effect which is joined to a necessary eternal cause is itself eternal because it is impossible for a necessary effect to lag behind its cause.²

As for substance (*al-a'yān*), [they are among the originated things] because they are not free (*lā takhlū*) from originated things, and whatever is not free from originated things is itself originated. The first premise [that substances are not free from originated things] is so, because they are not free of motion and rest, which are originated. This not being free of motion and rest is due to the fact that

1. Cf. Horten, *Die spekulative und positive Theologie des Islam*, pp. 198f.

2. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, p. 77, adds *al-tāmmah*, 'complete'.

the body and the atom are not free from residing within some boundary (*ḥayyiz*). If the substance is preceded by another *kawn* (state of coming into being) in that very same boundary, then it is at rest; and if it is not so preceded by another *kawn* in the very same boundary, then it is in motion. This is what they mean when they say, 'Motion is two *kawns* at two times (*fī ānayn*) in two places (*fī makānayn*), and rest is two *kawns* at two times in one place.'

If the objection is made that it is possible that there was not at all another *kawn* preceding this [*kawn* which has been assumed], as for example at the time of its being originated, so [there was a time that] it was neither in motion nor at rest, we reply that this objection does not impair our argument, since it admits the claim that this statement has been made about bodies in which there were a number of *kawns* [one after the other] and in which there was a renewing of seasons and times.

As for our belief that motion and rest are originated, that is based upon the fact that they belong among accidents, which are not continuous. Furthermore, the very quiddity of motion is that there is in it a transition from one state (*ḥāl*) to another, which logically requires that something else preceded motion; this would be inconsistent with eternity of motion. Moreover every motion may come to an end and is without permanency, and every rest may cease to exist, inasmuch as every body is subject of necessity to motion. But as you know, whatever may cease to exist cannot be eternal.

The second premise [that whatever is not free of originated things is itself originated] is true, for if that which is not free of originated things were established to be from eternity, then it would be inseparably connected with the establishment from eternity of that which is originated, and that is impossible.

Here then are the investigations [to be made of the objections concerning substances]. The first objection is that there is no proof for confining the [use of the term] 'substances' to atoms and bodies, and that this [narrow definition] denies the existence of a self-subsistent possible thing which does not have boundaries at all, such as the Intelligences and the absolute souls of which the philosophers speak. And the answer to this is the thing which is established by proof. And this possible thing consists of the substances which have boundaries and accidents. The proofs for the existence of the absolute beings [such as Intelligences and absolute souls] are incomplete, as has been shown in larger treatises.

The second objection is that what has been said does not prove the origin of all accidents, since the origin of some of them is not perceived by observation, nor is the origin of that which is contrary to them such as the accidents which subsist in the heavenly spheres, namely shapes (*ashkāl*), extensions (*imtidādāt*), and lights (*aḍwāʾ*). The answer is that this does not thwart the purpose of the argument, for the origin of the substances demands of necessity the origin of the accidents since they only subsist in these substances.

The third objection is that eternity (*al-azal*) does not express a special state, so that the existence in that state of originated things is inseparably connected with the existence of the body in that state, but eternity is an expression for non-beginning or for the continuance of existence in times which are reckoned as unending in the past. The meaning of the eternity of originated motions is that there is no motion which did not have another motion preceding it, and so on without a beginning. This is the position of the Philosophers, who although they admit that no particular motion is eternal, yet make this statement rather of absolute motion (*al-ḥarakat al-muṭlaqah*). The answer to this is that the absolute does not have existence except in the particular, so, since each particular is originated, the eternity of the absolute is inconceivable.

The fourth objection is that if each body were in a boundary that would necessitate the non-limitation of bodies, inasmuch as the boundary (*al-ḥayyiz*)¹ is the inner surface of a container which touches the outer surface of the thing contained. The answer to this is that the boundary according to the *mutakallimūn* is the imaginary space (*al-farāgh*) which the body occupies and in which it extends to its dimensions. And when the fact is established that the world is originated—it being known that anything originated must have an originator (*muḥdith*)—it is then established that the world has an originator, for of necessity it is impossible that there be a preponderance (*al-tarajjuh*) in favour of one of the two alternatives of something possible without there being ‘a determinant to bring about the preponderance’ (*murajjih*)

1. See Lane, *Lexicon*, p. 668; *al-Taʿrīfāt*, p. 99; *DTT*, pp. 298ff.; al-Rāzī, *al-Muḥaṣṣal*, pp. 65f.; Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, p. 82.

PART III

Shi'i Philosophical Theology

Introduction

It is strange that although Shi'i theology was always more amenable to the use of reason in theological matters than were most schools of Sunni *kalām*, especially the Ash'arites, systematic Twelver-Imam Shi'i philosophical theology developed later than Sunni philosophical theology. In the earlier centuries of Islamic history, while Mu'tazilite *kalām* was gradually eclipsed and finally replaced by Ash'arism in the Sunni world, Twelver-Imam Shi'i *kalām*, associated with such figures as members of the Nawbakhtī family, Shaykh al-Ṭā'ifah Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī and Shaykh-i Mufīd, was mostly concerned with the elaboration of the principles of religion (*uṣūl al-dīn*) and especially the question of the Imamate in its specifically Shi'i meaning. It was not until the seventh/thirteenth century that Twelver-Imam Shi'i theological thought turned to the elaboration of philosophical theology.

Many modern Western scholars have claimed that the early Twelver-Imam Shi'a simply followed Mu'tazilism in *kalām*. Despite certain similarities between the two, however, this statement is not completely true. The Mu'tazilites propagated their teachings in primarily Sunni and not Twelver-Imam Shi'i circles, at least in the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries. Furthermore, their use of reason was very different from what Kulaynī or Ṭūsī understood by '*aql*. The Mu'tazilites were not at all concerned with the Shi'i understanding of the Imamate or with the sayings of the Imams, in sharp contrast to early Twelver-Imam Shi'i theologians, one of whose main concerns was precisely the Imamate and the sayings that the Imams left behind. Also early Shi'ism was deeply immersed in the doctrines of gnosis issuing from the Qur'ānic revelation, while Mu'tazilism showed little affinity for such metaphysical doctrines.

In contrast to these and other differences, there were also similarities which have been the reason why some scholars have identified early Twelver-Imam Shi'i *kalām* with Mu'tazilism. Chief among them is the emphasis of both schools on unity and justice and their insistence on the importance of '*aql*. As far as the doctrine of unity (*tawḥīd*) and justice ('*adl*) are concerned, Twelver-Imam Shi'ism did not

have to rely on Mu'tazilism or be influenced by it in order to make these doctrines the centre of its attention. It is enough to read the *Nahj al-balāghah* (The Path of Eloquence) of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib compiled by Sayyid Sharīf al-Raḍī, to realize the significance of the doctrines of unity and justice in the thought of 'Alī who is not only the first of the Shi'i Imams, but also traditionally considered the founder of *kalām*. Many sermons (*khuṭbah*) and letters of the *Nahj al-balāghah* turn to the subject of unity and justice, themes which therefore became of great significance, not only for the early Twelver-Imam Shi'i theologians, but also for later figures discussed in this book. As for 'aql, it is enough to compare the usage of this term in either the Baṣrian or Baghdadian schools of *kalām* with its treatment in Kulaynī's *Uṣūl al-kāfi*, as interpreted later by such figures as Mullā Ṣadrā, to see how in fact the understanding of this term differs between Shi'i and Mu'tazilite theologians.

This being said, one can state that in general Twelver-Imam Shi'i *kalām* is closer to Mu'tazilism than to Ash'arism, although on some issues such as the relation between the Names of God and His Essence the Shi'i position is closer to the Ash'arites than to the Mu'tazilites. As for the political arena, usually the Ash'arites displayed greater opposition to Shi'ism than did the Mu'tazilites although this rule was not universal. In any case, Twelver-Imam Shi'i theology has had its own long history and must not be confused with Mu'tazilism, although it did have many interactions with it as it did also, to some extent, with Ash'arism.

The centres for the cultivation of Twelver-Imam Shi'i theology were in both Persia and the Arab world, especially Iraq and Syria. But strangely enough not only did Sunni philosophical theology begin its flowering in Khurāsān, but the earliest home of Twelver-Imam Shi'i philosophical theology was also destined to be in Persia. It was here that the remarkable theologian, philosopher and scientist Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī established what might properly be called systematic philosophical theology of Twelver-Imam Shi'ism. His basic works, especially *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* (Catharsis of the Articles of Faith), selections of which appear below, were the foundation stone upon which nearly all later Twelver-Imam Shi'i philosophical *kalām* was built. One can hardly over-emphasize the significance of the *Tajrīd* for the understanding of later Shi'i *kalām*, and in fact for the whole of the later Islamic intellectual tradition in Persia. Few texts in the history of Islamic thought have been witness to so many commentaries, many of which have not been studied even to this day.

Although Ṭūsī's most important immediate students, 'Allāmah al-Ḥillī and Maytham al-Baḥrānī, were of Arab descent, the main tradition of Shi'i philosophical *kalām* remained in Persia, with a branch of this tree growing into Iraq and another into India. Both of these worlds continued, however, to have a close relation with the intellectual activity taking place in Persia itself. After Ṭūsī, works of significance on Twelver-Imam Shi'i theology in the form of commentaries and glosses upon the *Tajrīd*, or independent works, continued to appear, with the centre of Shi'i theological activity shifting to Fārs and especially the city of Shirāz. With

the advent of the Safavids and the declaration of Twelver-Imam Shi'ism as the official *madhhab* or religious school of the country, interest in Shi'i *kalām* increased further. Shi'i *kalām* did not, however, flourish to the extent that one would have expected owing to the rise of new schools of *ḥikmah* associated with the names of Mir Dāmād and especially Mullā Ṣadrā. These schools were rooted deeply in Islamic teachings in general and Shi'ism in particular and their propagators were themselves great religious figures who believed that *kalām* had no right to deal with the science of the Nature of God, His Names and Qualities and similar theological issues, but that such sublime subjects should be treated by those who possessed 'divine wisdom', that is, *ḥikmah* or what came to be known popularly in Persian as *ḥikmat-i ilāhī* (literally, *theo-sophia*). This position is especially true of Mullā Ṣadrā and one might say that figures belonging to his school, such as Mullā 'Alī Nūrī, Āqā 'Alī Mudarris and Ḥajjī Mullā Hādī Sabziwārī, were not only philosophers but also major theologians of the later period without being proponents of *kalām*.

Nevertheless, Shi'i *kalām* did survive as a distinct discipline in Persia during and after the Safavid period. Even Mullā Ṣadrā's own student and son-in-law, 'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhijī, turned more toward *kalām* and less to Ṣadrian *ḥikmah*, perhaps in part because of the religio-political climate that had turned to a large extent against the teachings of Mullā Ṣadrā. Likewise, in the Qajar period, despite the revival of Ṣadrian teachings, Shi'i *kalām* continued, as we see, in such a figure as Mullā Mahdī Narāqī, a selection of whose writings appear below. But Narāqī, like so many Shi'i theologians going back to Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, was also a philosopher and in his as well as many other cases it is difficult to classify a particular figure as solely a theologian or a philosopher since he was both. That is one of the reasons why the history of later Twelver-Imam Shi'i theology has yet to be written in a systematic fashion and why many figures are studied without linking them specifically, not only to the philosophical, but also to the theological traditions to which they belonged.

One of the interesting issues in the development of Islamic theology, especially in Persia, is the very different relation of Sunni and Shi'i *kalām* to philosophy. In Khurāsān, Sunni *kalām* of the *via nova* became itself more philosophical, reaching its peak with figures of the School of Shīrāz such as Jurjānī and Ījī. Yet, even in its philosophical form, Ash'arite *kalām* remained opposed to *falsafah* as a distinct and separate discipline. In contrast Twelver-Imam Shi'i philosophical theology showed a great deal of accommodation to *falsafah*. Its founder, Ṭūsī, was a major Islamic philosopher and his own students, al-Ḥillī and al-Baḥrānī, both major Shi'i religious scholars and authorities in Qur'ānic studies, *Ḥadīth*, *kalām* and jurisprudence, were also philosophers who wrote on specifically philosophical issues and even commented on the philosophical works of such figures as Ibn Sīnā and Suhrawardī. This trait, which one might call 'dual allegiance' to both *falsafah* and *kalām*, is to be seen also in later Shi'i theologians such as Shams al-Dīn Khafri, Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī, and 'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhijī.

The great influence of members of the School of Iṣfahān, and especially Mullā Ṣadrā himself, with their disdain for *kalām*, has had an effect not only in curtailing activity in *kalām per se*, but also in the study of Shi'i *kalām* in the contemporary period. There are many present-day traditional authorities in the intellectual sciences in Persia who even discourage their students from serious study of the subject. Nevertheless, Twelver-Imam Shi'i philosophical theology remains an important intellectual current, knowledge of which is necessary for gaining a full understanding of the growth and development of philosophical thought in Persia and the interactions between various schools of thought that have contributed so much to the richness of philosophical activity in that land during past centuries.

S. H. Nasr

Nasīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī

Ṭūsī was not only a philosopher, theologian and the founder of Twelver-Imam Shi'i philosophical theology, but also a master expositor of Ismaili thought. He is accordingly treated in the second volume of this *Anthology* where the reader will find information about his life and where a bibliography has been provided. Here our concern is with Ṭūsī as an Ithnā 'asharī theologian. We should remind the reader, however, that his father, Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan, was a famous jurist and scholar of the *ḥadīth* of the Imamiyyah, that is, the Twelver-Imam Shi'i school, in Ṭūs. He was also Naṣīr al-Dīn's first teacher before his son set out to study in Nayshapūr just before the devastation of the city by the Mongols.

After he was freed by Hülagü from Alamūt and brought into his service, Ṭūsī continued to frequent the gatherings of Twelver-Imam Shi'a scholars. His intellectual contacts with such well-known Imami authorities as Mu'in al-Dīn al-Miṣrī, Kamāl al-Dīn al-Baḥrānī and Muḥaqqiq-i Ḥillī are also well known. Furthermore, Ṭūsī wrote a number of treatises dealing with the inerrancy (*al-iṣmah*) of the Twelver-Imams, a doctrine of a purely Ithnā 'asharī nature. These treatises include *Risālat al-firqat al-nājiyah* (Treatise on the Party that is Saved), *al-Risālah fi'l-imāmah* (Treatise on the Imamate) and others. He also wrote a treatise on Shi'i jurisprudence, *Jawāhir al-farā'id* (Jewels of Religious Obligations) from the point of view of Ja'fari law, and of course composed the three works on Twelver-Imam Shi'i philosophical theology already cited in the general introduction to this volume.

Of the latter group the *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* (Catharsis of the Articles of Faith), of which selections appear below, is by far the most important, and has been the subject of numerous commentaries of which those of Ḥillī, Qūshchī, Khafrī and 'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhijī are of particular significance. This book is the basis of philosophical *kalām* in Twelver-Imam Shi'ism and is one of the most important texts of not only Shi'i philosophical theology, but also later Islamic philosophy in Persia.

In any case Ṭūsī, this remarkable figure, is a major pillar of Twelve-Imam Shi'i thought while being, at the same time, an important expositor of later Ismaili

thought. Moreover, he is one of the major Persian philosophers, a second Ibn Sīnā, and as such will be treated again in the fourth volume of this *Anthology*.

In what follows, a section of Ṭūsī's *Tajrid al-i'tiqād* has been presented. Its central themes are causality and the problem of existence and non-existence, mental existence and the relationship between emanation, causality and their possible effects.

S. H. Nasr

THE BOOK OF CATHARSIS

Tajrīd al-i'tiqād

Translated for this volume by Majid Fakhry from Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī's *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*, ed. 'Abbās M. H. Sulaymān (Cairo, 1996), pp. 60–125 (selections).

First Intention: On General Issues

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

'Our Lord, do not cause our hearts to vacillate after thou hast guided us rightly.'
(Qur'ān 3:8)

Praise be to God, the Necessary Being for His bounty, and prayer upon the Master of His prophets and the noblest of His beloved. Thus I am responding to what I was asked to do regarding questions of *kalām*, arranging them in the best way and indicating the most precious gems of belief and the rare questions of discretionary judgment (*ijtihād*), to which I have been led by argument, or was able to grasp firmly. I ask God for security from error and for sound judgment and to keep this as a provision for the Day of Resurrection. I have called (this book) the 'Elucidation of Beliefs' and arranged it under six headings or topics.

On General Issues in a Number of Chapters

Chapter One: On existence and non-existence

These may be defined as affirmative identity and negative identity; or that which is an object of report and its opposite or anything else which might involve patent circularity. In fact, what is needed is the definition of the term, since nothing is more knowable than existence. Demonstration by recourse to assent to its contrariety or the thing's dependence on itself, or the lack of composition regarding existence, even if it is assumed, or repudiating the description¹—all this is absurd.

When the mind vacillates in affirming absolute existence and excluding the concept of its opposite or assenting to divisibility, this will result in community; whereby its essence becomes different. Otherwise essences would be reduced to unity, their parts cannot be exhausted or their distinction apprehended. Thereupon, possibility, the advantage of predication and the need for demonstration would be achieved. The absence of contradiction, the composition of the Necessary (Being) and its inherence in (the essence, as it is) entails additional conception. It is divisible into mental and extra-mental; otherwise truth would be impossible.

1. *Rasm* or description is a statement of what a thing is by reference to its accidental, rather than its essential predicates as in definition (*ḥadd*).

Mental existence consists of those forms which are diverse as regards their concomitants. However, existence is not a notion whereby essence is realized in actuality. Rather, actualization involves no increase or added intensity; it is pure good, which has no contrary or analogue. Thus, it differs from intelligibles, although it does not contradict them, but is equivalent to thinghood, which is not realized without it. To dispute this is to contradict the dictates of one's reason. For how could [thinghood] be realized without it, even if we admit the ability and the negation of qualification and the exclusivity of the existent, apart from conceiving the additional conditions? Were distinctness to require actual reality, a number of absurdities would follow.

Possibility is purely mental and is predicated of what the [opponent] has accorded; namely, that it is susceptible of being negated. It is synonymous with actual existence and non-existence or negation, without any intermediary. Existence, however, is not susceptible of division, while the universal may be affirmed in thought. Yet, accidents cannot inhere in accidents; the opponents have been contradicted by the paucity of states which negate them. Appeal to the denial of similarity or difference, as well as regression, is absurd. Thus, inferring from that: 1) the realization of infinite entities in the realm of non-existence, 2) the negation of the effects of the efficient cause and their diversity, as well as 3) their divergence with respect to affirming the generic attribute and what ensues upon it in existence, 4) the difference between location in space and substantiality, 5) predicating the attribute of non-existence of the non-existent, and the possibility of attributing corporeity to it; 6) doubting the existence of the Creator, despite predicating power, knowledge and life of Him and 7) the divisibility of states into caused and not-caused, while differences are referred to it and such like—all this is not worth mentioning.

Moreover, existence may be viewed absolutely, and then it corresponds to a parallel non-existence, or they might be united without reference to their opposition, and then they are apprehended together. Or it might be viewed conditionally, and then it would correspond to a parallel non-existence, and will require a subject just as its habit does. Then it will be viewed as an individual species or genus. However, existence has no genus, and being simple, has no differentia. It is multiplied purely through the multiplication of its subjects and is predicated, by analogy, of their accidents. Thus, it is never a part of something else.

Thinghood is one of the secondary intelligibles and is not grounded in existence, so that nothing is absolutely actual. It only refers to the specific aspects of essence. Non-existents might differ; that is why the negation of the effect depends on the negation of the cause only, the negation of the condition entails the existence of the conditioned, and the truth of the negation of the opposite the existence of the other, unlike the rest of the non-existents. Moreover, non-existence may be predicated of itself and then specificity and opposition may apply to it in two ways. The absence of the effect is not the cause of the absence of the cause outside [the mind]; although

it is possible in thought as a demonstration in the category of *that*, not the contrary demonstration in the category of *why*.¹

Things which are classified as general or particular, in point of existence, are contraries in point of non-existence. The distinction of each with respect to deficiency or sufficiency is real. If existence is predicated or regarded as a copula then three elements, which are three in themselves, are affirmed in reason, denoting the weakness or strength of the copula: necessity, impossibility, or possibility. The same is true of non-existence; the mode of their definition is analogous to that of existence. That causality may be regarded as essential, and then the disjunction is real and inconvertible; or the two may be regarded in relation to something else. Disjunction then precludes uniting them so as to convert one into the other. It also precludes the absence of the three in point of possibility.

Necessity and impossibility share the status of certainty, even though they differ in point of affirmation and negation. Moreover, each of them is true of the other, if they are opposites, with respect to their correlative term. Possibility, however, could be viewed as negating necessity of either of the two terms; and then it would hold of the other term or its particular instance. It could also be viewed in relation to the future; non-existence is not confined to the present, or else the two contraries would co-exist. The three² are conceptual in nature, because they apply to the non-existent, and the infinite regress is impossible. Were necessity a positive reality, the possibility of the necessary would follow; and were impossibility a positive reality, the possibility of the impossible would follow; and finally were the possible a positive reality, then the existence of every possible would precede its possibility. However, the difference between negating possibility and negative possibility does not require its positive reality.

Necessity applies to the essential and other things and so does impossibility. The supervention of what is other than these is also possible, but not of the possible through something else, as was shown in the case of real disjunction. The supervention of possibility, when existence and non-existence are considered in relation to essence or its cause, or in relation to both of them, proves the reality of what is other. There is really no incompatibility between essential and alternative possibility; since every possible supervention is essential, but not the reverse. When the mind perceives the possible as existing, it seeks its cause, even if no other [cause] can be conceived.

The existence of the contingent can be conceived and then the [cause] is not sought; contingency being a mode of existence, not a cause of what has preceded by degrees. Priority is not conceived as belonging to either of the two terms in itself; nor does external [reality] suffice, because supposing it does not exclude the

1. That is with reference to the fact or the reason of the fact. Cf. Aristotle, *An. post.* in *Aristotle's Prior and Posterior Analysis*, W. D. Ross, ed. (Oxford, 1951), I, 78a2of.

2. That is, possibility, impossibility and necessity.

opposite, we could end up with necessity, which is prior and is followed by another necessity, of which no external proposition is free. Moreover, possibility is a definite concept, or else essence would be either necessary or impossible. The necessity of actual entities is attended by the contingency of the non-existent, but is not necessary; whereas the relation of necessity to possibility is similar to the relation of the whole to the part. Disposition, (*isti'dād*) on the other hand, is susceptible of strength or weakness and is perishable. Moreover, it applies to compound entities, but is different from essential possibility.

When existence is conceived as not preceded by something else or by non-existence, it is eternal. Otherwise, it is temporal (*ḥādīth*), as preceding and opposite [to the eternal], either in point of cause, nature, time, sensible or rational rank; by dignity or essence. It is then inductive and its categorical status is one of analogy. Relation is limited to the double relation of its species; but where diversity arises, its generic status is excluded. Priority is always a matter of a temporal, spatial accident or the like.

Real eternity and temporality (*ḥudūth*) do not involve a reference to time; otherwise they would go on to infinity. Real temporality is concrete; whereas eternity and temporality are purely conceptual and will cease upon the cessation of conception. The real division thereof is true, both with respect to the essential and the other. However, the essential variety thereof is not true of the compound, since the essential does not constitute a part of another, nor does its existence exceed it or else it would be possible.

Known existence is said by analogy, but not what is proper to it. Nor is it a specific nature, as was mentioned earlier; thus its particular instances could differ in point of coming to be or its opposite. The impact of essence as such on existence is not conceivable; whereas negating it by reference to its opposite is patently false. Moreover, existence is one of the conceptual predicates, insofar as it can dispense with the substratum or inherence in it. It is one of the secondary intelligibles, just as non-existence, their two modes¹, particularity, essentiality, accidentality, genericity, differentiability and specificity. It belongs to reason to conceive of the two opposites and judge them by reference to contrariety, without absurdity. It belongs to it, too, to conceive of the non-existence of all things, including itself, as well as the non-existence of non-existence, simply by representing it in thought and abstracting it. It is real in one sense, disjoined in another sense. It may not be judged insofar as it is not real, or else contradiction would arise; however, it can be judged insofar as it is conceived, without contradiction.

That is why existence is divided into what is certain in thought or not certain in thought, as the two are judged by distinction. It does not call for an identity of either of the two distinct entities. For were it supposed to have an identity,

1. That is, both existence and non-existence.

it would be equivalent to the really existent. Moreover, when reason judges of external entities by reference to their likes, then correspondence with the real would follow; otherwise it would not. Its real representation would then be due to its correspondence with the other terms due to the possibility of conceiving of false entities.

Moreover, existence and non-existence may be objects of predication, or the predicate might refer to either of them. For predication requires that the two terms exist in one sense, and be different in another. The mode of union between them could be due to one of them or to a third term. Difference does not entail that one of them should subsist in the other; or that the non-subsistence of the subject be taken into account, if it were called for. Affirming the existence of essence does not entail its existence; nor does its negation entail distinctness and certainty, but only its negation and subsistence in the mind—and even if it were necessary, it would not be conditional.

Predication and assertion are secondary intelligibles which are applied to individuals by analogy. Attribution, however, is not one of subsistence; or else infinite regress would follow. Moreover, existence is either essential or accidental; but existence with reference to writing or expression is purely figurative. Non-existence, however, cannot be pointed to. Therefore, it cannot be judged by reference to the possibility of bringing it back; since if it were brought back, non-existence would intervene between the thing and itself, and then there would be no difference between it and its beginning, and the two opposites would be true of it at once, and it would go on to infinity in time. Asserting the impossibility of recurrence is an essential characteristic of essence.

The division of the existent into necessary and possible is necessary. It applies to the existent insofar as it is susceptible of positive determination or its opposite. Judging of the possibility of existence or non-existence amounts to judging of the essence, but not with respect to existence or non-existence. Moreover, possibility may be an object of rational discourse or an object of reason in itself. When reason judges that the possible is possible, it considers its conformity with what is conceived by reason, because possibility is purely conceptual. To judge of possibility as a want is necessary, but the difficulty of assenting to it, due to the difficulty of conception, does not invalidate it.

The act of determining is also a conceptual notion. The determinant affects the object, not insofar as it exists, nor insofar as it does not exist, since the determinant actually affects the essence and is followed by necessary existence. The non-existence of the possible depends on the non-existence of its cause; but the enduring possible lacks a determinant for its cause to come to be. Moreover, determination denotes enduring after the coming to be of the possible; that is why the eternally possible may depend on the necessary determinant, were it possible, but it cannot depend on a willing agent. The only eternal entity is God Almighty, as will appear

later. The contingent entity does not require either a pre-existing matter or time, or else infinite regress would follow. The Eternal Being is not susceptible of non-existence, due to its necessity in itself or its dependence on it.

Chapter Two: Of essence and its attributes

Essence or whatness (*māhiyyah*) is derived from ‘what is’, which is given in answer to the question ‘what’. It is often applied to the conceptual object, the identity or reality, as related to existence. All these terms belong to the class of secondary intelligibles. The reality of everything is different from other aspects of it; or else they would not be true of its opposite. For, essence in relation to any accident is the opposite of what is the opposite [of that accident]; but as such, it is merely itself. If a question is asked about the two opposite terms, the answer would be the negation of everything prior to the qualification, not after.

Essence may be considered in abstraction from everything else, so that if anything is joined to it, it would be extraneous to it and is not applied to that total, which is essence, with the presumption of nothingness. It does not exist except in thought. It may also be considered, without reference to any given thing, which is a natural universal existing in the external world, and is part of individual entities and is true of the sum total resulting from it and of what is added to it. Universality, as predicated of essence, is called logical universality, and is applied to the compound, intelligible [universal], both of which are purely conceptual. These are three aspects which should be considered in relation to every intelligible essence.

Essence is either simple—having no parts, or having parts, but both types exist necessarily. They are described as conceptual and opposite of each other. However, they might be correlative, and then they would be contraries both in particular and general cases, compared to what has preceded; and just as need arises with respect to the compound, it will arise in the case of the simple [essence]. Moreover they might be self-subsistent, or require a substratum.

The compound is compounded of what precedes it in existence or non-existence, as far as the mind or the outside world are concerned, and it is the reason for dispensing with the cause. Thus, in relation to the mind it is clear, and in relation to the outside world it is sufficient; accordingly we have three properties, one involving opposition, and two involving generality. However, some parts should be in need of other parts, so that they cannot be included in one category although they might be distinct in the outside world or in thought. However, if generality and its accretions are considered, they might be either distinct and interpenetrate, or they might be taken as matters or predicates, and then the generic and specific character would apply to them; and they would become one.

Genus, like matter is an effect; whereas species, like form, is a cause. What has no genus has no differentia,¹ and every complete differentia is one. Thus, it is not possible for two genera to be of the same rank or belong to the same essence; and there can be no mental composition except from both of them, and they must also be finite. They could either be mental, natural or logical, just as their own genus. They also consist of high, low or intermediate.

Genus includes the singular, beneath or above which there is no other genus; these two are relational, and could be united despite their opposition. However, genus cannot be viewed in relation to the differentia; if the two are referred to what they are related to, the genus would be more general and the differentia would be equal [to it]. Individuation² is also purely conceptual. If it is considered *qua* rational, it would be found to share with other individuations of it, and yet it cannot go on to infinity, but rather ceases when its consideration ceases. What causes individuation may be the essence, and then it is not multiplied; or it may depend on the matter individuated by means of the specific accidents inhering in it. However, individuation does not arise by means of the conjunction of an intelligible universal to its like.

Distinctiveness is different from individuation, since each of the two things can be distinguished by reference to the other. The individual's community [with another] may not be taken into account; whereas the universal may be relational, and then it is distinct, the individual subsumed under it is also distinct. Individuation is also different from unity, which differs from existence and corresponds to it, insofar as it is true of the many as many—unlike unity. However [unity] cannot be defined except semantically; for both [unity] and plurality, with respect to reason or imagination are equal, insofar as each of them is better known by reference to the parts.

Unity is not a concrete entity, but a secondary intelligible, and this is true of plurality, too. Its counterparts are relation, causality, efficiency, status, measurability, and habituality; but not on account of substantial opposition between them. Moreover, their subject may be one, but has two aspects necessarily. If the aspect of unity does not constitute the aspect of plurality, it will not emerge as an accident, unity being accidental. Should it supervene [on a subject], it would consist of subjects or predicates supervening on a subject or vice versa. Should it constitute [the aspect of plurality], it would then consist of generic, specific or differential [unities]. It may differ, and then it will consist of the subject of indivisibility only, which is an individual unity expressed in absolute terms; or else an individual point, assuming that it has an additional concept, having a position, or individual and separate differentia—and if it does not have a position, and is not divisible. It is, then, simply a magnitude, a simple or compound body. Some of these are more worthy of unity than others.

1. *Faşl*.

2. *Tashakhkhuş*.

Identity is of this kind. Unity in the accidental or essential sense will differ in designation, according to what is related to it. Union is impossible in this case; whereas identity admits of the true aspects of differentiation and union, as already mentioned.

Moreover, unity is not a number, but is rather the principle of enumeration constituted by it only. If its like is added to it, duality arises, which is a species of number. Then an infinite variety [of numbers] will arise by the addition of one plus one, which are different in their realities, but constitute the different kinds of number, each one of these is purely conceptual, by which reason judges the various realities, when they are joined to each other in reason.

Unity may apply to itself and to its opposite, but unities do not go on to infinity, but cease when consideration ceases. It may involve community and then it will pertain to the generally accepted and is added to its subject in two ways, and to its opposite in a third way, and the same is true of opposition. [Its subject] is also liable to what does not apply to it¹ in the form of the fourfold opposition. I mean: 1) the opposition of affirmation and negation, which is reducible to statement and reasoning, and 2) that of non-existence and habit. The first is taken in relation to a certain specificity, together with contrariety—both of which are existential and are opposite in reality. 3) The next is the generally accepted and correlation. 4) Under the latter, genus is subsumed as an accident, its predictability thereof being by analogy—the strongest mode of which is negation.

The first is called contradiction, which is manifested in propositions under eight conditions, in the case of singular proportions. However, in indeterminate propositions, a ninth condition is involved, which is the difference thereof—since universality is the opposite of universality, while the two particular propositions are true. In affirmative propositions, a tenth condition is involved, and this is the difference thereof, insofar as they cannot both be true or false at the same time.²

Now, if privation is determined through habit in certain propositions, they are called indefinite and are the opposites of existential propositions in point of truth or falsity, on account of the possibility of the non-existence of the subject, whereupon both opposites of that proposition would be true. However, the subject may require one of the two opposites in itself or not in itself, or may not require either of them, in the event of vacuity or intermediacy. The one cannot reasonably have two opposites while negated of genus, and is conditioned in the case of species, by union with the genera, and while the genus and differentia are reduced to one.

1. That is, unity.

2. Ṭūsī does not list the ten conditions; but he may be referring to the ten categories of Aristotelian logic.

Chapter Three: Of cause and effect

Anything which gives rise to something else, either independently or in conjunction, is the cause of that thing and that thing is an effect thereof. [Causes] consist of the agent, matter, form and purpose. The agent is the principle of efficacy, and when it exists in all forms of efficacy the effect follows necessarily and non-existence is excluded. It is not possible for the effect to continue alongside [the cause], although it is possible in the preparatory stage, and when it is singular, the effect is singular. Then plurality follows on account of the plurality of relations. This statement is convertible, but in the case of specific unity, there is no conversion.

The two relations are secondary intelligibles and are characterized by the opposition of correlation. They might exist together in the same things with respect to two aspects, but are not convertible therein; and their subject does not extend in a simple series *ad infinitum*. The reason is that neither of them can come to be without a necessary cause; but what is necessary through another is impossible too. Therefore, a necessary cause must exist in itself, as the extremity of the concurrence of a sum in which a finite number of unities have been separated and one in which they were not.

This is due to the fact that concurrence in the case of both relations, whereby each one of them is multiplied with respect to both, necessitates their finitude due to the necessary excess of one of them with reference to the other by virtue of its precedence. It is also due to the fact that, were the cause affecting the sum part of it, the thing would affect both itself and its causes. Finally, the sum has a complete cause, whereas each part is not a complete cause since the sum is not necessitated by it. For, how could the sum be necessitated by a thing which requires an infinite part of that sum?

The two relations are equivalent with respect to the two terms of the contradiction; just as acceptance and action are contradictory, even if their relation is one, due to the contrariety of their corollaries. Divergence of cause and effect is not necessary if the effect itself needs that cause; otherwise it does not. Nor is either relation true of the associate. For the individual element is not an essential cause of another individual element. Otherwise, an individual will not be finite; and that is due to its replacing others and the fact that it does not precede [other individuals] but is rather equal to them, and the fact that one of them will remain, even if the other ceases to exist.

Action, on our part, requires a particular conception, so as to specify the action, as well as desire and will, plus the motion of the muscles whereby the action is carried out. Motion in a particular locus and a will corresponding to it, together with the particularities of that motion follow particular imaginings and willing, in such a way that what precedes is a cause of what is preparatory to what follows. Thus, acts of willing within the soul and motion in space will be continuous until the end.

The efficacy of the action upon its associate requires a given position, finitude of duration, disposition, and that intensity, whereby the particular finitude or its negation applies to the agent. For powers differ with respect to the different patients and where the principle is the same, its opposite differs. Similarly, the natural [patients] differ with respect to different agents, due to the equality of the big and the small in point of receptivity. If they move while the principle is one, finitude follows.

The substratum constituted by the subject is receptive thereof and is a matter for the compound; its receptivity or distance are sometimes due to certain dispositions which [the substratum] acquires by reason of the subject subsisting in it. This subject is the form of the compound and an active part of its substratum and is one with it.

Finality in essence, is a cause of the efficacy of the active cause; but is an effect insofar as it pertains to the effect and is fixed where every seeker is concerned. As for the animal motive faculty, its goal is to attain the final end, which could be the end of the desiderative faculty or not. If it is attained, then motion is futile; otherwise it is a certain good, a habit, a necessary intention or a vain and futile endeavour. [The philosophers] have posited certain goods for natural as well as fortuitous entities.

Cause, absolutely speaking, can be simple or compound, in potentiality or in actuality, universal or particular, essential or accidental, proximate or ultimate. Privation, in the case of the contingent, is one of the accidental principles—the agent in both cases being the same. The subject is the same as matter and the lack of efficacy belongs to either of its two terms. The causes of essence are different from the causes of existence; privation itself must have a cause, and the same is true of motion. Preparatory causes may lead either to the same good, to another, or to its opposite. Preparation is either proximate or ultimate; some of the accidental causes are actually preparatory.

Second Intention

On Substances and Accidents

Chapter 1: Of substances

The possible may either exist in the subject and is called accident, or not, and then it is called the entity. The latter is either separate in itself and its action and is reason, or in itself only, and is soul or their conjunction. In that case, it is either a substratum of matter, subsisting in it, or form—or made up of both, which is body. Subject and substratum are contraries in point of existence and non-existence, both in general and in particular. The same is true of the subsistent and the accident, while between subject and accident there is a certain divergence. Accident and substratum are similar, whereas the subsistent is particular.

Substantiality and accidentality are secondary intelligibles, because the relation of each of them depends on a medium. Species, however, differ in terms of priority; while the intelligibles' community is accidental. However, there is neither contrariety between substances, nor between them and anything else. The intelligible part of extinction is privation; although contrariety may be predicated of some in another respect. However, the unity of the substratum does not entail the unity of the subject, except in conjunction with similarity, as against the opposite. In both cases divisibility is not necessary.

Subject refers to one of the individual entities. The subsistent may require a substratum to inhere in, but there is no existence of what is positioned and is not liable to partition independently due to the absence of the intermediate and the motion of the two subjects on the two sides of the compound of three or four parts by alternation. [The opponents] are forced to admit what sensation proves regarding its falsehood, by observing the disintegration, the rest of the mover and the negation of the circle. The point itself is an accident subsisting in the divisible entity by reference to finitude. However, motion has no existence in the subject, but should not be negated absolutely. Similarly, the 'now' has no reality in the outside world; for were motion to consist of what is indivisible, it would not exist. Whoever asserts the infinity of parts is forced to admit, besides what has preceded, the denial of the existence of what is compounded of what is finite. He will also be forced to admit, in addition to generality, proportion—as well as the ability of the fast mover to overtake the slow mover, and that a finite distance is not covered in a finite time.

Necessity forces us to deny the leap,¹ interpenetration and divisibility of any kind causing a duality wherein the nature of each member is equal to the nature of the whole. The impossibility of cessation for an adventitious factor does not entail essential impossibility. For, it has been shown that body is a simple entity susceptible of divisibility *ad infinitum*; but this does not entail the persistence of any matter other than the body, due to the impossibility of regression and the existence of the infinite.

Every physical body has a natural locus which it will seek once it has left it in the shortest way possible; were it multiple, it would cease to exist. The locus of the compound is that of the predominant [element] in it, or what it happens to exist from, and the same is true of figure. The natural [figure] is the sphere and the intelligible part of place is space, for signposts help to grasp it. You should know that space is either in contact with matter, as in the case of that which subsists in the body and resists its like—or separate, in which bodies subsist, and it is in contact with them collectively and penetrates them in such a way that it coincides with the space of the things placed in it and is united to it. But it is not excluded that it may be exempt from matter. Were place a surface, the rules [of geometry] would

1. Arabic: *tafrah*.

contradict each other and place would not be universal. That place cannot be empty of any occupant, or else the motion of the impediment would be equivalent to the motion of its opposite, on the assumption of an impediment which is smaller in relation to their two periods of time.

Direction is the extremity of the extension which results from the act of pointing. It is not divisible and belongs to those placed objects which motion seeks in order to rest in, and by the act of pointing, too. Natural [directions] are either up or down, anything else is infinite.

Chapter 2: Of bodies

[Bodies] are of two kinds: spherical and elemental. Of the spherical, the universal part thereof consists of nine, one is the non-starry surrounding them all and next to it is the sphere of the fixed stars. Then come the spheres of the seven revolving planets, enclosing the orbital spheres which are eccentric. The sum total consists of twenty-four [spheres], including seven revolving planets and some one thousand and twenty fixed stars. All of these are simple and free of passive qualities and their attendants are transparent.

The simple elements are four: the orbits of fire, air, water and earth, whose number corresponds to the primary qualities, both active and passive. Each of these [elements] changes into the adjacent one, through an intermediate or a series of intermediaries. Fire is hot, dry, transparent, and moved by association and has one layer, as well as the power to transform compounds into itself. Air is hot, moist, transparent, and has four layers; whereas water is cold, moist, and transparent. It surrounds four quarters of the earth and has one layer. Earth is cold, dry, is at rest in the centre, is transparent, and has three layers.

As for compounds, those four are their elemental components. They arise upon their interaction one with the other. Thus the primary quality acts on matter by breaking up the simplicity of its quality, giving rise thereby to an analogous quality at the centre of the whole, which is the humour, while retaining the forms of the simple [elements]. Then the humours differ in number, depending on their proximity or distance from moderation; although they are infinite in individual instances, each kind having an extreme, either of excess or deficiency. They are nine in number.

Chapter 3: The other properties of bodies

All bodies share in the necessary finitude, due to the necessity of what is supposed to have a contrary to possess [that contrary], when compared to its like; although it is supposed to fall short of it. It is also due to retaining the ratio of the two arms of an angle and what lies between them, despite the necessity of the second possessing

that quality and being identified with the limit. The absence of divisibility proves unity. Necessity also stipulates that [bodies] shall endure although they may be free of the qualities of being tasted, seen or smelt, as is the case with air. However, they can be seen on condition colour and light are present, which is necessary.

All bodies are contingent, because they consist necessarily of finite and contingent particles. That is why they are never free of motion or rest, each of which is obviously contingent. As for the finitude of their particles, it is due to the impossibility of the existence of the infinite and the fact that each contingent may be described by reference to two contrary relations. Then, the one which has the one relation will exceed the other which has the other relation, and both the deficient and the excessive will cease also.

Necessity also stipulates that whatever results from finite contingents shall be contingent, and thus bodies are contingent. Moreover, since it is impossible for accidents to subsist in anything other than [bodies], it follows that they are contingent, their contingency being determined by its own time; since there is no time preceding it. He who chooses gives priority to one of his two options, for no reason, according to some people; while matter is inexistent and priority does not entail time, as has already been proved.

Chapter 4: Of immaterial substances

If we consider the intellect,¹ there is no certain proof that it does not exist although the proofs of its existence are tenuous; such is [the Neoplatonists'] claim that out of the one only one emanates. Nor has anything contingent on its influence or existence preceded it, otherwise effectiveness of its influence could not be excluded, since the agent has choice. Their argument is that the circularity of motion stipulates the will which necessitates seeking to imitate the perfect; since seeking what actually or potentially exists, entails cessation. Now, what is not possible is impossible; because it depends on the continuity of what we have stipulated must cease, and on the fact that the parts of inquiry and the impossibility of seeking the impossible. Their denial of the causality of the two correlatives, or else the impossible would be possible, or the stronger could be explained by reference to the weaker, thereby denying essential impossibility.

As for the soul, it is the first perfection of a natural, organic body having life potentially.² It causes a change in what it is a condition of, due to the impossibility of circularity and the denial of consequence, since the one ceases when the other comes to be, and the fact that what is left unnoticed is the subject of community and transformation therein. It is an immaterial substance, because of the immateriality and the indivisibility of its subject and its ability to perform what [material]

1. By *'aql* the author means the Active Intellect of Neoplatonism.

2. This is Aristotle's definition of the soul as given in *De Anima* II, p. 412a26.

compounds cannot do. The existence of its subject is in relation to what is an object of thought and is separate, and the subject in dispensing with a certain condition entails the dispensing of the object too. It is also free from subordination and contrariety and is subsumed under a single definition, which entails its unity; since the difference of accidents does not entail its difference. However, it is contingent, as is obvious in our view.

As the opponent would have it, were [the soul] eternal, then the two contraries would co-exist, what exists would be impossible or what is impossible would exist. It exists in the body in a state of equality; but it does not cease to exist with it or become the principle or form for another [body]; or else that equality and self-thought we have asserted would be wrong. It apprehends through the organs in order to distinguish between two different entities by postulation, without predication.

The soul has certain faculties which are common to other entities: namely, the nutritive, the argumentative, the reproductive, and others more specific, whereby the apprehension of the particular and the universal takes place. The nutritive [faculty] has four subsidiary faculties: the attractive, the congestive, the digestive and the repulsive. These faculties might multiply in the case of some organs, but growth is distinct from obesity. The representative¹ faculty is unacceptable to me, due to the impossibility of those elaborate and composite actions emanating from a single faculty which has essentially no feeling.

As for the faculty of apprehending the particular, it includes: 1) touch which is a faculty diffused in the whole body, (whether it is multiple is open to question), 2) next comes taste, which requires the salivary humidity, free of the like and unlike, as a medium, 3) next comes smell, which requires for its action the reception by the nose of the air affected by the object of smell, 4) there is hearing, which depends in its perception on the arrival of compressed air to the hearing canal, 5) and finally, vision, which depends essentially on light and colour. It is related in us to the action of the retina and it must occur, once its conditions are fulfilled, upon the release of radiation. If it is reflected towards the seeing perceiver, he will perceive his own face; but if the two arrows [of vision] are multiplied, the object of vision will be multiplied.

To these faculties also belongs *phantasia*, which judges the various perceptibles, such as perceiving the drop as a line, the flame as a circle, and the feverish patient perceiving what does not exist. Imagination exists for the sake of distinguishing between what is received and what is retained. Estimation perceives particular notions, while the retentive and imaginative faculties bring together different forms and notions.

1. Arabic: *al-muṣawwirah*.

Chapter 5: Of accidents

Accidents consist only of nine types. (1) First comes quantity, of which the continuous part refers to the fixed body, plane and line, other than time. The discontinuous includes number, which is liable to equality, inequality and division; as well as the possibility of the fixed part inhering in it. That part is both essential and accidental, the second part of these inhering in the first. In the occurrence of the opposite and absence of conditions, there is evidence of the absence of opposition. It is also described as increase, multiplicity or their opposites but without intensity or its opposite.

The parts of the fixed continuous may be mathematical, although they may differ in some respects. Substantiality differs in answer to the question: 'what is', which gives it an accidental quality of alteration while the reality remains the same. The finite's want of demonstrability, the reality of the genuine sphere and the need for an accident to subsist in it—all this leads to the accidentality of the mathematical body, the plane, the line, time and number. The extremes are not negations, although they might be so described in a kind of relation. The genus is liable to finitude and its negation, both of which are conceptual.

(2) The second type is quality, which is described by reference to negative conditions, whose totality pertains to it in unison. Its divisions are four. First the sensibles, which are either affections or actions and which differ from shapes, because they differ in point of predications; and from humours because of their generality. They include the primary tactile qualities, namely, heat and cold, moisture and dryness, to which the rest are attributed. Thus, heat unites similar things and disperses different things, whereas cold is the opposite. Moreover, they are contraries.

Heat is also used in another sense, different from quality in reality. Coldness is a quality which requires easy formation, whereas dryness is the opposite. They are contrary to softness and hardness. Weightiness is a quality which, if absolute, requires the motion of the body to a point wherein its centre coincides with the centre of the world, whereas lightness is the opposite. They are also used relatively in two different respects.

Inclination is natural, compulsory or pertaining to the soul. It is the proximate cause of motion, and with reference to it something changeable emanates from the fixed entity; while its other is its opposite. But for its fixity the object hindered and its opposite would be equal. According to some people, it is a kind which depends on the plurality of directions and it is similar or different according to them. It also includes weight, although some regard it as different. It is either concomitant or separate, and requires a locus only. It is in our power, and it produces certain things, some in itself without condition and some conditionally, and still some not in itself. These include the primary objects of sight: namely, colour and light—each of which has an extreme. The first is real, its extremes being like blackness and whiteness, which are contraries. It also depends on the other [extreme] in point of perception,

but not existence. In addition, they differ sensibly and are capable of intensity or weakness, which differ specifically. Were the second [extreme] a body, it would be contrary to the sensible; it is, instead an accident subsisting in the locus, liable to its like occurring in its opposite. It is either essential or accidental, primary or secondary. Darkness is the absence of a certain state [of colour].

[Qualities] also include objects of hearing. These are sounds caused by the rippling produced by ringing or extraction, provided there is resistance from the outside. It is impossible for it to last, due to the necessity of perceiving the auditory form. Another by-product of [sound] is echo, to which a distinct quality sometimes attaches, whereby it is called a letter, either vocal or silent, similar or different, essential or accidental. From it also results speech with its different parts, other than which is inconceivable.

[Qualities] also include the nine objects of taste, which result from the interaction of the three with their likes. [Qualities] also include objects of smell, but their species have no names, except in point of agreement or disagreement, and the intermediate dispositions lying between the two extremes.

Psychic [accidents] denote a state or a habit, to which belongs knowledge, which consists of conception or assent, affirmative, conformable, fixed and indefinable. They share in necessity and acquisition, but it is necessary for it¹ to be imprinted in the opposite abstract locus; whereas, the inherence of the like is different, nor is union possible. It differs according to the different objects of thought, as in present and future. It cannot be conceived except as a relation; then the forms [of thinking] grow with union. It is an accident because of the existence of its definition in it, and is either active or passive, and the like. Its necessary parts are six² and it is acquired, necessary, or possible, which is subsidiary in the sense of the conformity of coincidence, and the absence of circularity. Readiness or disposition is unavoidable in it.

Necessary [knowledge] is received through the senses, while acquired knowledge is received by the first. In one sense, it differs from apprehension³ as genus differs from species; but in another sense, it differs from it as species from species. Its complete dependence on the cause requires that it also depend on the effect. Its grades are three; that which has a cause is known universally.

Reason is an instinct which is attended by the knowledge of necessary principles, if the organs are sound; but it is applied to other [modes of knowledge] equivocally. Conviction is applied to one of its two divisions,⁴ whereby they oppose each other in point of generality or specificity. It differs from knowledge in the sense that opposition is possible in it.

1. That is, knowledge.

2. The six parts of the necessary knowledge are not given.

3. The word *idrāk* refers to both rational and sensible knowledge.

4. Sound and unsound.

Forgetfulness is the absence of the state of knowledge, but there is a difference between it and oblivion. Doubt denotes the mind's vacillation between two extremes. However, both knowledge and conviction could each bear on itself or the other, and then the mode of consideration would be different, not its forms. Ignorance is in essence the opposite of both, but in another sense is a subsidiary of one of them. Conjecture denotes preferring one of the two [sides], but is other than believing in the preponderance of one side; it is liable to strength and weakness, and its two extremes are knowledge or ignorance.

Acquired knowledge is received through speculation, provided its two parts are sound; if one of them is unsound, its opposite will follow. Knowledge of the true is necessary, without a teacher. However, the formal part must exist already, the condition thereof being the absence or presence of the purpose or its opposite. Because of the necessity of what the objects of reason require and the absence of the opposite of the object—assuming it exists—the obligation [to know] is said to be rational.

The necessary consequence of knowledge is proof, but conjecture is an indication only. Its simple components are either rational or compound, due to the impossibility of circularity. The textual statement may indicate definitive knowledge, but if contradiction arises, it should be interpreted. It is equivalent to a deduction and its two divisions, which are categorical and disjunctive. The first, with respect to the proximate form, is of four types, but with respect to the ultimate is two. With reference to the proximate matter, it is of five types; but with reference to the ultimate it is of four types. The continuous [disjunctive] yields two elements, like the unreal and discontinuous variety. It also includes the two real elements, but the other two yield conjecture only. The detailed discussion of these questions is to be found in another art.¹

Reasoning and abstraction go together, because the division of the substratum entails the division of the subject. If they are similar, the postulate applies to the abstract one, or else it is compounded of what is infinite. For abstractness to ensue, sound intelligibility requires the possibility of accompaniment.

Another accident is capacity, which differs from nature and humour, due to the accompaniment of feeling. The divergence of the consequent corrects the action relatively to the agent, and its dependence on both terms. The priority of action is intended to impose an obligation on the infidel, and because negation and the necessity of either of two impossibilities, it will follow without it. A possible action does not occur jointly with a plurality of capable agents, nor is their similarity too far-fetched. Impotence is the opposite of privation and habit; the two conditions differ on account of the rules governing them and that of the action.

Other accidents are pain and pleasure, which are two kinds of apprehension determined by a relation which differs in each case. Pleasure is not simply a departure

1. Meaning logic, where the above moods of the syllogism or deduction are given.

from the unnatural condition,¹ for pain may result from parting. [Pleasure and Pain] are each sensible and mental, and the latter is the stronger.

Another accident is will and hate, which are a kind of knowledge; the one is a concomitant of the other, despite their opposition and their difference with respect to the agent or something else. They could be reflexive, contrary to desire and aversion. All these qualities depend on life, which is a precondition of sensation. Motion is contingent on the temperate humours in us; thus the body must play a part. However, it presupposes the spirit and is opposed to death, just as privation and habit oppose it.

The psychic qualities include health and sickness, joy and sorrow, anger and fear, anxiety, shame and rancour. Some pertain to continuous qualities, such as straightness, inclination, concavity, convexity, shape and circle. Discontinuous qualities include odd and even. Thus the straight line is the shortest path between two points, and just as it exists, so does the circle. Opposition is excluded in the case of the straight and circular lines, as well as their accidents. Shape is the way in which the limit or limits surround the body, and once colour is added the complexion² arises.

3) The third type of accident is the relative, whether real or conventional. It entails conversion and mutuality, actually or potentiality and it applies to all entities. Its nature is conceptual and cannot go on to infinity. It will not do for relation to depend on itself and to precede itself in actuality, since finitude must be reached in each stage of numbers. The attributes of God Almighty multiply and pertain to every conventional or real relation, whereby it becomes liable to difference or concurrence, either by reference to an external factor or not.

4) The fourth accident is position which consists in relation to place. Its divisions, according to some authors are four: namely, motion, rest, combination and disintegration. Motion is a first perfection of what is in potentiality insofar as it is in potentiality;³ or the transition of the body to another place. Its existence is necessary and depends on two opposites, two causes, their correlative and measure. 'That from which' and 'that to which' might occupy the same place, or oppose each other essentially or accidentally. They are in fact two opposite notions, with respect to what they are predicated of. If the two causes combine, the effect ceases and becomes general, contrary to the different nature, necessary in a certain state.

The correlative [with respect to motion] is fourfold, since the simple substances occur at once and their components cease to exist as a result of the cessation of their parts. The relative is a subsidiary concept, such as 'when' novelty occurs at once. However, motion in the categories of action or passion is inconceivable, whereas in

1. This was Plato's view.

2. Arabic: *al-khilqah*.

3. Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* III, 201a10.

quantity it is conceived in two respects, such as water flowing into a bottle placed on it and the cracking of a utensil due to boiling.

The motion of the parts of the nourished on all sides is proportionate and the same is true of the dense object, due to the perceived transformation, despite the certainty of the impossibility of latency¹ and cooling, which sense-perception denies. However, in the case of time and position, it is obvious; since they are seen to be one due to the unity of the measure, the substratum and the recipient, despite the difference of their opposites. That which is the subject of relation entails difference; whereas the opposition of the first two entails opposition. Neither the two opposites nor the agent have anything to do with divisibility.

Motion may intensify, and then it is described as fast, or weaken and then is classified as slow, without affecting its essence. The cause of slowness is external or internal resistance, not the intervention of moments of rest; otherwise the opposite condition will not be felt. There is no continuity of figures having many angles or inclination, due to the intervention of a period of time between the two moments of inclination.

Rest consists in keeping proportions and is the opposite of two motions, but in other positions it consists in keeping the same pattern. It is the opposite of what exists in it. Rest can be either natural compulsory or voluntary. Natural motion occurs when it approaches a natural² object, to which the body returns recurrently, and then it stops without circularity. Its compulsory variety refers to an acquired force capable of weakening. Natural rest depends on nature absolutely and is attended by simplicity and is the opposite of motion in particular. Neither the genus nor species thereof is explained in terms of circularity.

5) The fifth type of accident is 'when', which is related to time or its extremity [is an accident]. Time is the measure of motion, with respect to priority or posterity supervening on it in another sense.³ That category applies essentially to changeable entities only, but accidentally to their subject matter. However, the existence or non-existence of their subject-matter does not call for it. The extremity is similar to the point and its non-existence takes place in time, but not gradually. The coming to be of the world in time requires its existence in time.

6) The sixth type is position—a condition affecting the body with respect to two relations. It involves opposition, intensity and weakening.

7) The seventh type is possession, which is the relation of ownership.

8) The Eighth and 9) ninth are action and position. In truth, they exist in thought, or else infinite regression would follow.

1. Arabic: *kumūn*.

2. The text reads unnatural (?).

3. Cf. *Physics*, tr. by P. M. Wickens and F. M. Cornford (Cambridge, MA, 1980), IV, 219b2.

Third Intention

Chapter 2: Of the attributes of the Almighty

The existence of the world after its non-existence precludes its necessity, the intermediate alternative being unintelligible. For, necessity and possibility may be predicated of the effect in two ways, since the ability to [effect an action in] the future, while non-existence holds in the present can occur together. The negation of action is not equivalent to effecting the contrary, and the generality of the cause entails the generality of the attribute. Masterful action and dedication, while everything depends on it, are indices of knowledge, which is general.

Differentiation is purely conceptual, so that knowledge does not require forms which are different from the objects of knowledge because the relation of acquiring it is greater than the relation of forms known to us. However, the change of relation is possible, and possibility and necessity may be united in two different respects. Every capable agent is knowing and living necessarily, and the specific existence of some possible effects at a certain time signifies willing, which is not extraneous to the motive; otherwise we would be involved in an infinite regression or the multiplicity of eternal [agents].

Revelation indicates that the Almighty possesses the attribute of apprehension, and reasoning proves the impossibility of His use of instruments. His all-embracing power indicates His possession of speech; but the inner speech of the soul is impossible. Whereas the negation of evil indicates His truthfulness, the necessity of existence indicates His eternity, as well as the negation of the extraneous, the partner, the peer, composition in all senses, contrariety, location, immanence and union, the direction and the inherence of accidents in Him, need, pain and pleasure—all these are negated of Him, and so are the notions, states, extraneous attributes, the impossibility of seeing Him, as well as Moses' question addressing his own people.¹

Looking does not prove seeing [God], even if interpretation is allowed, and referring vision to the stability of the movable object does not prove its possibility. Similarly, the community of effects does not prove the community of causes, although causal explanation and exhaustiveness are excluded—nor the certainty of generosity, sovereignty, perfection, power, truthfulness, goodness, wisdom, spatial location, dominion or self-subsistence. As for the hand, face, foot, mercy, generosity, contentment, being and generation, all these refer to what preceded [of attributes].

1. In Qur'ān 7:143, Moses asks: 'Lord, show me [Thyself] that I might look at you.' He replied: 'You will not see Me, but look at the mountain.'

Chapter 3: Of His actions

Action, qualified as voluntary, is either good or bad; the good consists of four varieties.¹ Two are rational, due to the knowledge of the goodness of beneficence and the badness of injustice, without reference to the Divine Law (*Sharī'ah*), and due to their absolute negation, were they established on scriptural grounds; then their conversion would be possible.

Divergence in point of knowledge is possible due to divergence in the power of conception. To commit the lesser of two evils, where disengagement and compulsion are possible, is false. For, God's self-sufficiency and knowledge prove that evil is not applicable to His actions, although He is capable of it, because of the general relationship, and it does not contradict subsequent impossibility.

To deny purpose entails futility and cannot be referred to [God]. Similarly, to will evil is evil, just as relinquishing the willing of good, command or prohibition. Some actions depend on us; to be overpowered is not necessary. Knowledge is consequent [on the object known] and necessity stipulates that our actions are dependent on us. The necessary motive does not exclude capacity for action, just as the obligation. To bring a thing into being does not presuppose knowledge, unless the intention is present; therefore, brevity is sufficient here, but in the conjunction [of these] God's intent is fulfilled. Temporal existence (*hudūth*) is relative, just as the impossibility of a body belonging to another. Similarly, parallelism of certain actions is impossible, because exhaustiveness is impossible.

There is no proportionality of goodness with respect to our actions and God's. Gratitude for the preliminaries of faith and report² are subject to interpretation, and may be countered by its equivalent [reports]. However, preference, favourable opinion and reproach for the generated action require the knowledge that it is due to us. The necessity of choosing the cause is secondary and reproach for the boy's causing [the damage] rather than fire burning is consequent too.

If by the decree and fore-ordination³ is meant the creation of the action, that would be absurd; but if compulsion is with respect to the obligatory it would be possible, but with respect to information, it would be possible absolutely. The Commander of the Faithful [‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib] has explained this clearly in a tradition narrated by Aṣḡagh ibn Nubātih. Falsehood refers to the opposite of truth; whereas the production of falsehood and destruction is the opposite of good guidance. The first two are negated of God.

Torturing one who is not morally responsible is wrong, and the words of Noah are figurative. Service is not a form of punishment, and subservience in some cases is permissible. Obligation is good, because it involves an advantage which is not at-

1. That is, the obligatory, recommended, permitted and repugnant.

2. Or tradition, *al-sam'*.

3. Arabic: *qaḏā' wa qadar*.

tained without it—contrary to bleeding, then seeking a remedy and its contrarities. Gratitude is useless; for the human species needs mutual support conducive to the tradition, which is useful in exercise and constant gazing on higher things.

Remembering warnings which are necessary for establishing justice, together with added rewards and emoluments is necessary, because it deters one from evil deeds. The conditions of its goodness are the elimination of foul actions and the possibility of its by-products, as well as the addition of a quality to its sheer goodness. The knowledge of the morally responsible of the properties of an action and the power of one worthy of it, while avoiding evil, together with his ability to act, his knowledge of it and its possibility as well as his possession of the instrument [are necessary]. Its basis is either knowledge, rational or traditional, or conjecture and practice. It is discontinuous due to consensus and the need to convey the reward. The cause of its goodness is general and the injury of the infidel is due to his own choosing. It is a cause of corruption, not by virtue of obligation, contrary to what we laid down as a condition, although its advantage is certain.

Divine grace¹ is necessary to attain the good. If it is part of God's work, then it is incumbent on Him. If it is due to the responsible agent, then it is incumbent on God Almighty to draw attention to it and demand it. If it is due to someone other than them, it is required that the responsible agent have knowledge of the action. The aspects of badness are negated but the infidel is not excluded from [God's] grace.

To impart the knowledge of happiness or misery is not a corruptive influence. It is repugnant that God should perpetrate torture, although He has prohibited it, without reproach. It is necessary that there should be a proportion, otherwise [torture] would preponderate without a cause in relation to those concerned; but it will not attain the level of compulsion. The responsible agent knows the divine grace in general and in detail—since grace exceeds in point of goodness—and it involves choice, provided the two alternatives are good.

Some forms of pain caused by us are especially repugnant, whereas some of them are good and are caused by God Almighty and ourselves. Their goodness derives either from being merited, or because they are accompanied by an element of advantage, or repelling some excessive harm, or finally because they are ordinary or capable of being repelled. That which is accompanied by an element of advantage must embody some grace, but what is merited could be a form of punishment. Grace is not sufficient where the suffering of the responsible agent is concerned, on account of the good; and it is not good if pleasure accompanies its gracefulness.

It is not necessary, with respect to the good, to choose the suffering actually; reward being a deserved advantage, free of glorification and high regard, which God could dispense by means of inflicting pains, discounting passing advantages in the interest of others or causing anxiety. This is independent of relying on necessary,

1. Arabic: *lutf*.

acquired knowledge or conjecture, not depending on the action of the human servant. To command His servants to perpetrate injuries or permit them or enable the unreasonable, to escape burning in fire, or kill the one who gives a false testimony, as well as being equitable—all this is obligatory in reason and faith. Thus it is not lawful to allow the oppressor to oppress others, without reward, and on the spot, commensurate with his own oppression. If the oppressed party is one of the people of paradise, God will spread his rewards over a period of time, or will favour him with its equivalent. If it is a matter of punishment, He will cancel part of the due punishment, so that he may perceive the alleviation [of suffering], by spreading the remainder over periods of time.

It is not necessary for that to last, due to the good excess compared to the suffering accompanying it, even if it is intermittent. Nor is it necessary to receive it in this world, due to the probability of profitable deferment. Pain, in the absolute sense, is prohibited; although it is not a subject of controversy, nor should its subject be informed that it is inflicted as a reward, nor can it be described as an advantage, or be dropped lawfully.

Reward is incumbent on God Almighty in excess, up to the point of satisfying the subject, according to every rational person; but we hold that it should only be equalled. The life span of the living is the time in which God knew that his life has reached its term. The killed person is liable to both without it; but his life span may be a grace where others are concerned, not himself as a responsible agent. Provision¹ is what man may draw benefit from, and no one is allowed to bar him from reaping it. The effort expended in seeking it may be obligatory, desirable or permissible—but it may also be unlawful.

Price is a measure of the estimated equivalent of what a thing may be sold for. It is either low or high, but it is necessary to take custom into account in conjunction with time and place, both of which depend on God Almighty, although they might depend on us also. Welfare² may be incumbent on God Almighty, due to the necessity of the motive and the absence of the deterrent.

1. Arabic: *rizq*.

2. Arabic: *al-aṣṣlah* as the Mu'tazilites stipulated.

‘Allāmah Ḥillī

Jamāl al-Dīn Abū Maṣṣūr Ḥasan ibn Yūsuf ibn Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, known in Persia as ‘Allāmah-yi Ḥillī was born in Ḥillah in Iraq in 648/1250 and died there in 726/1325, but was buried in Najaf. He studied with several masters among whom Sa‘īd al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, Najm al-Dīn Abū Qāsim Ja‘far ibn Ḥasan al-Ḥillī, ‘Umar Kātibī Qazwīnī and the most famous among them, Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, can be mentioned. It is said that Ḥillī learned philosophy from Ṭūsī who, in turn, learned *fiqh* and religious sciences from Ḥillī. This is, however, highly doubtful since Ḥillī at the time was in his early twenties and it is unlikely that Ṭūsī towards the end of his life would have wanted to learn jurisprudence from a young—though talented—student. According to different reports, the number of Ḥillī’s works range from ninety to as many as one thousand, which is an exaggeration.

Ḥillī was an undisputed master in *fiqh*, *kalām*, logic, jurisprudence and Arabic grammar, but he also knew philosophy and had commented on Suhrawardī’s *al-Talwihāt* and *al-Muqāwamāt*, among other works. Based on his treatises it does not appear that he had much appreciation for Sufism, although there are numerous accounts regarding his ascetic practices. While philosophically Ḥillī was under the influence of his teacher Ṭūsī, he maintained some degree of intellectual independence and criticized Ṭūsī on numerous occasions. Ḥillī’s differences with his teacher are elaborated upon in his *Sharḥ al-tajrīd* (Commentary on the Catharsis) and *Kashf al-fawā’id* (Unveiling of Benefits). He has also written an independent work devoted entirely to his differences with Ṭūsī entitled *al-Mabāḥith al-sanniyah fi’l-mu‘āraḍāt al-naṣīriyyah* (Brilliant Discourses on Opposition to Naṣīrian Thought). Ḥillī can be seen as a link between Ṭūsī and later *kalām*; in fact his commentary upon the *Tajrīd* enabled later commentators on Ṭūsī such as Qūshchī, Lāhījī and Dawānī to have a better grasp of this major work.

Ḥillī lived at a time when the Mongols had destroyed much of Islamic civilization, but there was also a renewal of intellectual thought. He was instrumental in this revival and in particular in the spread of Shi‘ism in Iraq and many other parts

of the Islamic world. In 707/1307, in a series of discussions at the court of Sultan Muḥammad Khudābandah Uljaytū, Ḥillī prevailed over Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh Marāghī and Sayyid Rukn al-Dīn al-Mawṣilī, as the result of which the sultan and his army announced their conversion to Shi‘ism.¹

In this chapter, we have included a section from Ḥillī’s *Sharḥ al-tajrīd*, also known as *Kashf al-murād*. This work, which is a commentary upon Ṭūsī’s *al-Tajrīd*, is one of the most important works of philosophical theology. The chapter begins with a discussion concerning causality, its relationship with emanation, the necessity of such a relationship with the absence or presence of a cause and its possible and actual effect. Ḥillī proceeds to discuss such issues as how actions emanate from us, the finitude of corporeal faculties, the immateriality of the soul and its created nature. Most such topics are discussed within the context of causality and closely follow the topical arrangement of Ṭūsī’s *al-Tajrīd*.

M. Aminrazavi

1. For more information on Ḥillī see *Safīnat al-baḥār*, v.1, pp. 734–735; Shaykh ‘Abd ‘Allāh Na‘mah, *Falāsafa-yi Shi‘ah*, tr. S. J. Ghaḍbān (Tehran, 1367Sh./1988).

COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF CATHARSIS

Sharḥ al-tajrīd or *Kashf al-murād*¹

Translated for this volume by Majid Fakhry from Ḥilli's *Kashf al-murād* (Qumm, n.d.), pp. 82–144 (selections)

Chapter Three **Of Cause and Effect**

He² said: Anything, from which something emanates, either independently or by conjunction, is the cause of that thing and that thing is its effect.

I³ say: Having concluded the discussion of the concomitants of essence, he proceeded to discuss cause and effect, since they are concomitants or attributes of essence. They are, in addition, general notions, the consideration of cause and effect belonging to that of secondary intelligibles and to the class of relative terms. This chapter deals with a number of questions.

The First Question: Of the definition of cause and effect

Although these are definite concepts, they may involve some ambiguity. Thus, he mentioned by way of admonition and distinction the means of removing that ambiguity. For, if we suppose that something has emanated from something else, that which emanates is the effect, and that from which it emanates is the cause, regardless of whether the emanation is by way of independence, as in the case of the whole cause, or by way of conjunction, as in the case of part of the cause. For, the part of the cause is something from which something else emanates, but not by way of independence, since it enters into its definition.

The Second Question: Of the divisions of causes

He says: It is either efficient, material, formal or final.

I say: The cause is what a thing depends on. It is either a part of the effect or external to it. In the first case, it is either a part whereby the thing arises in actuality or in potentiality, the first being the form and the second being the matter. If [the cause] is external, it is either effective or effectiveness depends on it, the first being the efficient cause,⁴ the second the final.

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1. 'Unveiling of the Desired'
 2. That is, Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī.
 3. That is, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ḥilli.
 4. Or agent.

The Third Question:

He says: The agent is the principle of efficacy, which once it exists in all the aspects of efficiency, the existence of the effect will follow necessarily.

I say: The agent is the determining factor, the end is that for the sake of which the effect exists, matter and form being its two parts. If the efficient principle exists in all respects, the effect must exist necessarily. For, if it is not necessary, the existence of the effect upon the existence of all its aspects or its non-existence would be possible. The determination of the time of existence through it is either due to an extraneous matter or not. In the first case, the supposed, original factor would not be perfect, which is absurd. In the second case, it would be necessary to allow for one side of the possible to predominate, for no determining factor, which is equally absurd.

He says: Non-existence cannot conjoin.

I say: Some people have held that determination applies only to what is preceded by non-existence. This is absolutely wrong. For, if the determinant is free, that would follow necessarily because the free agent acts for the sake of an end, as it is directed towards something inexistent. If determined, that would not hold.

He says: The effect cannot continue to exist after [the cause], although that is possible in the case of the preparatory factor.

I say: Some unlearned people have held that the effect requires the cause only at the moment of its coming to be. Thus, once the agent brings the action forth, it dispenses with it, so that it can continue to exist after it. They have illustrated this by reference to the building remaining after the builder is gone, and similar cases. This, however, is wrong; because the cause of the need, which is possibility, continues to exist after the action, so that the need [for the agent] remains. The builder is not the cause determining the existence of the building which continues to exist, but his motion is the cause of the motion of the stones and their arrangement in a given way. Moreover, the continuity of the shape is due to something else, in the case of the efficient causes; whereas preparatory causes cease to exist, even if their effects are in existence, such as motion leading to covering a distance or causing heat.

He says: And with its unity, the unity of the effect is assured.

I say: If the determinant is free, it is possible for its effects to multiply, while it remains one. If it is necessary, most [scholars] have held that the multiplicity of its effects is impossible in one sense. Their strongest argument is that the relation of the determinant to one of the two effects is different from its relation to the other. If the two relations are particular, it would be compound; otherwise it would go on to infinity. For me, [this argument] is weak because the relation of determination and emanation cannot possibly be one of existence, or else infinite regress would follow. If [the relation] is conceptual, then that distinction cannot apply to it.

He says: Then multiplicity would arise, by virtue of the multiplicity of relations.

I say: Having shown that from one cause, only one effect will follow, it follows that all existing entities must form a simple chain; so that any entity you may imagine to be the cause of any existing entity you imagine, or an effect thereof, whether proximate or ultimate, will entail that of two existing entities, none of them can dispense with the other. Now, actual reality belies this. That is why they stipulated the existence of multiplicity in the first effect, which is not real, but relational; whereby the efficacy of [the cause] can be multiplied. For, as they said, the First Effect is possible in itself, but necessary in relation to its cause, and it has an essence and an existence which it derives from its cause. It thinks of itself, due to its immateriality, and thinks of its First Principle, as well—all these being relational respects whereby it is multiplied.¹ Thus, its unity is not disturbed and nothing emanates from it by virtue of each aspect. This reasoning is downright false; because the different aspects [of the cause] cannot serve as determinants, since they are purely conceptual and equal to other aspects and do not constitute conditions of it.

He says: This statement is convertible.

I say: He means by this that the unity of the effect goes with the unity of the cause, which is the converse of the first statement. Thus two independent determinants cannot converge on the same effect, since it is necessary by virtue of each one of the two and can dispense with the other. In its need for them both it can then dispense with the other, which is absurd.

He says: In specific units, there is no conversion.

I say: If the cause is one in species, the effect will be one in species too; but it does not follow from the effect being one in species, that the cause is one in species also. For, different things share in one necessary concomitant only, such as motion, and such as the sun and fire, sharing in being hot. This is due to the fact that the effect requires the cause absolutely and what determines the cause is the cause, not the effect.

He says: The two relations are secondary intelligibles and are in a state of juxtaposition.

I say: He means that the relation of cause and effect belongs to the class of secondary intelligibles, due to the impossibility of the existence of a concrete entity which has a mere causal and effectual status. If their subject exists, and between them there is a relation of juxtaposition, then the cause is a cause of the effect and the effect the effect of the cause. By saying 'and between them there is a relation of juxtaposition,' he² means to draw attention to the impossibility of the same thing

1. This is a reference to Ibn Sīnā's view of the duality which characterizes the first effect, or the First Intellect, in relation to the first principle, or the One.

2. The author.

being both cause and effect in relation to the same thing. For, this is an impossible vicious circle, since being a cause denotes self-sufficiency and priority; whereas being an effect denotes need and posteriority, and then the same thing would dispense with the same thing prior to it and posterior to it—which is absurd.

He says: They may be conjoined in the same thing, in relation to two things, without being at odds in it.

I say: The relation of cause and effect could be conjoined in the same thing in two respects, so that one of them would be a cause of the one and the effect of the other, as in the case of the intermediate cause. For, it is an effect of the first cause and a cause of the last effect, provided those two things are not at odds with respect to the two relations, in such a way that the first cause is the effect of the last effect and that last effect a cause of it, or else we would be involved in a vicious circle.

The Fourth Question: The impossibility of infinite regress

He says: Nor does their subject¹ extend in a simple series *ad infinitum*. For, each of the two cannot occur without a necessary cause, although the necessary through another is impossible too. Therefore, there must exist a cause in itself which is an ultimate term.

I say: Having disproved the infinite regress or the existence of causes and effects forming an infinite series, and drawing attention to that claim, saying that their subjects cannot extend, (meaning the subject of cause and effect) in a single series *ad infinitum*, he proceeded to support it in various ways. One way is that each member of that series is possible and no possible can come to be without its necessary cause. It follows that each of those members cannot come to be without the necessary cause and that necessary cause, in turn, is (1) either necessary in itself, so that the regress will cease, as the argument proves; or (2) is necessary through something else, and accordingly is possible in itself. In that case it will share with other possibles in the property of its existence being impossible without the necessary cause. Therefore, a cause necessary in itself, which is the ultimate member of the series, must exist and then the series will terminate. This point, for me, is open to question.

He says: The superposition of one series from which finite units have been separated and another not ...

I say: This is the other form of the arguments which prove the impossibility of regression. It is called the proof of superposition, which is well known. It states that if we take the infinite sum of causes and effects and put them together, then cut from it a finite sum and superpose the one on the other, so that the beginnings of each one would be the same as the other, and then continue *ad infinitum*, then the longer series would be similar to the shorter, which is absurd. However, if the

1. That is, the subject of the cause and effect.

shorter series stopped it would be finite, and then the longer series would be finite too—since what exceeds the finite by a certain finite measure is finite.

He says: And because superposition, with respect to the two relations in such a way that each one of them will be multiple with respect to each, would entail their finitude, due to the necessary increase of one relation compared to the other, due to its priority.

I say: This is a third form which is related to the second, or proof of superposition, but is another proof formulated by the author in a way different from the way the ancients formulated it. It states that if we consider the causes and effects as forming a single infinite series, then each of the two series would be a cause in one sense and an effect in another. Then, the two relations would apply to it in two ways, and multiplicity would apply to it with respect to the two relations. For, each of the two series, insofar as it is a cause, would be different from it insofar as it is an effect. If we superpose all that was regarded as effect on what was regarded as cause, and the series is considered insofar as each one of its members is sometimes a cause, and sometimes an effect, it would follow that causes and effects, which are different in conception, are identical in reality and we will not need, for conceiving of their compatibility, to imagine any superposition. However, the causes could be more than the effects, insofar as the causes precede the effects at the start. Therefore, the effects will have terminated before the causes, and the remaining causes in excess thereof would be larger by a finite amount, and then the two sums will be finite.

He says: If what affects the sum is some part of it, then the thing would affect itself and its causes, since the sum total has one complete cause; whereas each part is not a complete cause. The sum is not determined necessarily by it; for how can the sum total be determined by something which depends on an infinite [part] of that sum?

I say: This is a fourth form of the rebuttal of infinite regress. It states that if we posit a series consisting of causes and effects extending to infinity, then for that series—insofar as it is a possible series, being made up of possible units, each possible having a determinant—it would follow that that series will have a determinant, which is: (1) either that series itself, and this is absurd, because it is impossible that the thing should determine itself; or (2) is something external to the series, and, being external to the series of possibles, is necessary, whereupon the regression would cease; or (3) it may be part of that series, and this is absurd too. Otherwise the thing will be a determinant of itself and its infinite causes—which is the worst form of absurdity. Moreover, the sum total must have a complete cause; but each part is not a complete cause, since the sum is not necessitated by it. No part in fact, can constitute a complete cause of the totality. For, how can the series be necessitated by one of its parts, when that part depends on the infinite parts of that series?

The Fifth Question: The concordance of the effect and the cause with respect to existence and non-existence.

He says: The two relations are equivalent in the two terms of the contradiction.

I say: What may be understood from these words is that the relation of the cause is equivalent to the relation of the effect with respect to the two terms of existence and non-existence pertaining to their subject in the sense that, if the causal relation is true of a positive subject, then the relation of the effect will also be true of a positive subject, and vice versa. Similarly, if the causal relation is true of a negative¹ subject, the relation of the effect would be true of a negative subject, and vice versa. This will be confirmed if we posit as a premise that the privation of the effect depends on the privation of the cause only. The proof of this [premise] is that the privation of the effect does not depend on itself, or else it would be impossible in itself. This is absurd; therefore it must have a cause which is either positive or negative.² The first alternative is absurd, because once that positive cause exists, [assuming that no part of that cause determining the existence of that effect or any of its conditions is removed,] the effect must exist necessarily, insofar as its complete cause has been fulfilled. If any of these conditions is not fulfilled, then the non-existence of the effect will follow, so that the non-existence of the effect will depend on that privation only. If this premise is granted, then the effect of the positive cause must be a positive effect. For, if it were privative, it would then depend on the privation of its cause, as we stated, rather than its existence. However, the positive effect depends on a positive, rather than a privative cause; since the determination of the existent by the non-existent is inconceivable.

The Sixth Question: That the patient cannot be an agent

He says: Action and passion are contraries, despite the unity of their relation, due to the contrariety of their concomitants.

I say: The ancients have maintained that it is impossible for the same thing to be a patient and an agent of the same thing. The author has expressed this by saying that action and passion are contraries, in the sense that they cannot exist together, but rather oppose each other, while their relation is the same. He means that the patient who is the subject of the relation of action is identical with the patient who receives the relation of affection, due to the opposition of their concomitants, which are possibility and necessity. For, the relation of the patient to the action it receives is one of possibility, while the relation of the agent to what is acted upon is one of necessity. Were the same thing both the patient and effect of the same

1. The Arabic *'adamī* could also be translated as privative, or pertaining to non-existence.
 2. Or existential (*wujūdī*).

thing, it would follow that the relation of that thing to its agent is one of necessity¹ and possibility, which is absurd.

The Seventh Question: The relation of the cause to the effect

He says: The distinctness of the cause from the effect is necessary, where the effect requires that cause essentially, or else it is not.

I say: If the effect requires the cause essentially, then it is necessarily distinct from it, due to the impossibility of the things determining itself. If it is a cause by reason of its individuation, such as the one fire causing the other, then the effect need not be distinct from the cause essentially; nor would it be stronger than it or equivalent to it, if a condition is lacking or an impediment arises, but it would be equivalent to it otherwise. For the heat of melting bodies is stronger than the heat of the fire, because it is difficult to relinquish it quickly, due to its stickiness and the slow motion of the hand holding it, due to its thickness.

The Eighth Question: That the concomitant of the cause is not a cause nor the concomitant of the effect an effect

He says: It is not necessary that either of the two relations should be true of the concomitant.

I say: He means that the causal relation does not apply to what accompanies it or clings to it. For, the cause is attended by numerous conditions and corollaries, which are not relevant to its causal action, such as the redness of fire, which has nothing to do with burning. Similarly, what accompanies the effect or clings to it does not apply to the status of the effect. Al-Shaykh Abū 'Alī ibn Sīnā says that the encompassing sphere accompanies the cause of what it encompasses, but does not have to be prior to what it encompasses by way of causal action, due to its accompaniment of the cause of the encompassed. Thus, he has regarded what is prior as not prior and then added that the existence of the void and the privation of the encompassed are concurrent. Were the encompassing [sphere] the cause of the encompassed, it would be prior to it, and then it would be prior to what accompanies it—I mean, the privation of the void. Then the privation of the void would be posterior to it, insofar as it accompanies the posterior, and this proves that together with the posterior there must exist another posterior. Some have imagined that al-Shaykh [Ibn Sīnā] had asserted that the posterior should be posterior, with respect to concurrence and posteriority, but not that what is prior should be accompanied by priority. This, however, is wrong; since there is no difference between what accompanies what is before and what is after, in point of posteriority, togetherness or priority. Al-Shaykh

1. I read *bi'l-wujūb* for *bi'l-wujūd*.

has asserted that, in this particular case or its equivalents, what accompanies the posterior must be posterior, due to the natural concomitance of the absence of the void and the existence of the encompassed [world], contrary to the relation of the intellect and the sphere which are different in essence and in thought.

The Ninth Question: That the elements are not essential causes of each other

He says: The individual element is not an essential cause of another individual element, or else such individuals would be infinite, and since it can dispense with one element in favour of another.

I say: The individual element, such as this fire, is not an essential cause of another individual element; that is, it cannot be the cause thereof, or else an infinite number of individuals would exist at once. For, essential causes accompany their effect and the individual element can dispense with the other individual in favour of another since no individual element, of fire for instance, is more likely to be the cause of another of the remaining individual fires. Rather, the individual fire which is the effect is analogous to other individual fires, in the sense that the individual which is the cause is not more likely to be a cause than the one which is its effect. Moreover, what it can dispense with in favour of another cannot be an essential cause. It is rather an accidental cause, in the sense that it is only preparatory thereof.

He says: And because it is not prior.

I say: This is a third reason for denying that one of the two individual elements is the cause of the other. The proof of this is that the cause is prior to the effect in essence, and if the two individuals happened to be of the same kind, it would be impossible for one of them to be prior to the other in essence. For, essential priority consists in what remains of the cause upon the occurrence of the effect, of which it is constitutive. As for priority in time, it ceases when the effect comes to be, insofar as, were they to exist together at the same time, the priority of what is supposed to be the cause would cease.

He says: And due to their equivalence.

I say: This is a fourth argument. The proof of it is that water and fire, for instance, are equivalent, insofar as fire is not more likely to be the cause of water than the reverse. Moreover, in the case of two equivalent entities, one cannot be said to be prior to the other.

He says: And due to the persistence of one of them, while the other vanishes.

I say: This is a fifth argument, the proof of which is that what is predicated of individual fires as a cause may cease, while what is predicated as an effect may continue to exist after it. However, it is impossible for the effect to continue to exist once its essential cause has ceased to exist. Contrariwise, what is supposed to be an effect may cease to exist, while what is supposed to be a cause continues to exist. Similarly, it is impossible for the cause to exist in disjunction with the effect.

The Tenth Question: How actions emanate from us

He says: Action, on our part, requires a particular conception, so that the action might be specified thereby, followed by desire, will, and then the motion of the muscles, whereby the action comes to be.

I say: Human capacity causes its effect, upon feeling and apprehension in a profitable way, either by way of certain knowledge or conjecture. That is why action emanating from us requires four factors: a) A conception of that particular action; since universal conception cannot be the cause of a particular action, the relation of the universal to its particulars being the same. Thus, either they all arise from it, which is absurd, or none of them will arise, which is the point. Therefore, it is necessary that a particular conception should specify that action and then it is particular. b) If that conception leads to the utility resulting from the effect, the soul desires its occurrence. c) Then the decisive will, ensuing upon hesitation, will operate and finally, d) the muscles will move towards the action and it comes to be.

He says: Voluntary motion towards a particular place follows the will according to the particulars of that motion, which follows particular imaginings and wills, in such a way that what is prior to these imaginings will be the cause of what is prior to those factors disposing to the occurrence of other imaginings and wills. The various acts of will thus will be continuous in the soul, and the motions continuous in the distance, until the end.

I say: The initiator of a motion in our case [humans] initiates by means of that intention and will pertaining to that [intended] distance. Thus, that motion follows a will intending it—I mean the motion towards a desired place—by following a will pertaining to the motion towards that specific place. Now every motion along a divisible distance will constitute, along each part of that distance, a part of the original motion; and every one of those parts will follow a specific act of imagining and a particular will pertaining to it. Thus, if the will attached to bringing about the first part of the motion, and then this first part came to be, then the body in attaining that part, together with the universal will attaching to the fulfilment of the motion, would be the cause of the renewal of another will attaching to another part. If that will arises and attaches to that part, the body will move. In this way acts of imagining and willing in the soul, together with external motion, will be continuous; and then each particular motion will be a cause of a specific will, and each specific will the cause of a particular motion without circularity.

The Eleventh Question: That corporeal faculties act in conjunction with the position

He says: Position is a pre-condition of the effective determination.

I say: It means, for a thing to be the cause of what accompanies it—that is, forms and accidents—it should have a sensible designation, whereby it is such that

it could be pointed to as here or there. For corporeal power, I mean effective forms and accidents determine by means of the position, in the sense that they determine the objects in their own locus at first, then what is contiguous to this locus through the effect of its locus, then what is contiguous to the contiguous through the contiguous. Thus, they determine the distant object through their effect on the near object—such as fire, which does not heat everything, but first its own substance and then what adjoins it. This statement does not require proof.

The Twelfth Question: Of the finitude of corporeal faculties

He says: Finitude, in point of duration, disposition and intensity, whereby specific finitude or its opposite applies to the effective agent.

I say: His statement ‘and finitude’ is conjoined to the position; I mean finitude is presupposed in the case of real determination of the adjoining object—that is, the forms and accidents. For, it is not possible for an existing corporeal faculty to be capable of what is infinite. Before giving a proof, he proposed a rule regarding the way in which specific finitude or its opposite applies to different faculties.

You should know that finitude and its specific negation—I mean, the negation of the property which consists in negating finitude of what is essentially finite—apply essentially to quantity, whether continuous, such as the finitude of magnitude or its infinity, or discontinuous, such as the finitude of number or its infinity. They also apply to other things through it,¹ such as the body which has a certain magnitude. As for the causes which are susceptible of number, finitude or infinity applies to them in an obvious manner. But finitude or infinity in regard to that which is susceptible of magnitude or number, such as the powers which cause a certain continuous action or certain successive actions depends on the measure of that action or those actions. That which depends on the measure of that action occurs together with its unity or the continuity of its duration, on the assumption of continuity in the action itself, without regard to its unity or multiplicity. Such powers are of three types: a) First, powers from which one action will emanate in various periods of time, such as archers, whose arrows cover a definite distance at different times. Here the intensity depends on the brevity of the period of time, so that what is infinite in intensity does not take place in time; otherwise what takes place in half that time would be stronger than what is infinitely intense. b) Secondly, powers from which continuous action emanates continuously, throughout different periods of time. As with archers, the periods of the motion of their arrows in the air are different. There, those whose time-spell is longer will be stronger than those whose time-spell is shorter. Thus, the action of the infinite [motions] will take place in an infinite time. This kind of power is relative to the time-spell. c) Thirdly,

1. That is, number.

powers, from which certain successive actions which are numerically different are supposed to emanate. With archers whose number of shots is different, those who shoot a larger number will be stronger than those from whom a smaller number emanates. Here, the infinite would give rise to infinite action, and this is a power which depends on number. It is clear, then, that finitude and its specific negation apply to the determining factor in one of these three respects.

He says: The compulsory differs with respect to the recipients, and where the principle is one its opposite will differ.

I say: Having laid down as a rule with respect to the supervention of finitude or its negation, as regards power, he proceeded to prove the first point: namely, the necessary finitude of the effect of corporeal power. Its proof is that corporeal faculties are either compulsory or natural, neither of which can give rise to something infinite. In the first case, because the emanation of motion which is finite in intensity from either of these two powers is impossible, as was mentioned above. In the case of time or number, because if we suppose that a finite body is moving another finite body from a supposed starting point an infinite number of motions in time, and then causes a smaller body than that one to move from that starting point, its movement of the smaller body would be greater than moving the larger body, due to the lesser impediment here, although the starting point is the same, and therefore the difference will emerge at the other end. Hence, the lesser will be finite, although it was supposed to be infinite, which is absurd.

Here a difficult question arises: namely, that the difference, in the two instances of moving, is due to intensity. However, the author, may his name be revered, has answered this question in his commentary on the *Indications*,¹ by stating that power here refers to infinite power with respect to duration or number, not intensity. This raises a question, since considering power in both respects does not contradict the possibility of difference in the third respect. Some of Abū ‘Alī (Ibn Sīnā)’s students have commented that there is no such thing as instant motion, and therefore, it cannot be said to be liable to increase; let alone the fact that increase would entail its finitude, as the Shaykh (Ibn Sīnā) has argued in response to the *mutakallimūn*, who asserted the finitude of temporal events, on the ground that they increase daily. Al-Shaykh has answered them by pointing to this difference: that temporal events do not have an existence *in toto*, so as to be liable to being described as finite or its opposite, increase or its opposite, contrary to the power in question. For, it exists and may be described as capable of moving the whole or the part. Moreover, there is no doubt that a power’s capacity to move the whole is greater than its capacity to move the part. Thus, it may be described as finite, since the object so described and its realization are different from temporal events. However, the skeptic may still argue that the difference in power is due to the difference of the objects of power;

1. Or the *Ishārāt* of Ibn Sīnā, on which Ṭūsī has written a well-known commentary.

that is, motions. If motions cannot be described as liable to increase or decrease, power cannot be described as liable to differentiation.

He says: Natural [power] differs according to the difference of the agent, due to the equality of small and large with respect to receptivity. Thus, if a thing moves, while the starting point remains the same, finitude will ensue.

I say: This is the explanation of the impossibility of the second alternative: namely, that the power affecting the infinite may be natural. The proof of this is that the large body's receptivity of motion due to it must be equal to that of the small body. Otherwise, the difference would be due to an impediment, such as corporeality, its concomitants, or some natural object. However, all this is absurd or strange, since we have supposed its opposite. Therefore, if differentiation arises, it would be due to the agent, since the power of the large is greater than the power of the small, due to the divisibility of natural power proportionately to the divisibility of their substrata. Thus, if the power of the whole and that of the part were to move their respective bodies from the same imaginary starting point in such a way that the motions of the smaller power were infinite, then the motions of the larger power would be more numerous, since it is greater and accordingly stronger. Otherwise, the same thing would have the same relation to something else as it has with nothing else, which is absurd. Differentiation would then be predicated of that part which has been described as infinite, and this is also absurd. If, on the other hand, the motions of the smaller body were finite, the motions of the larger would be finite, too. For, the proportion of one effect to another effect is similar to that of the efficient agent to another efficient agent and this is equivalent to the proportion of the finite to the finite. The same is true of the first [motion].

The Thirteenth Question: Of the material cause

He says: The substratum which is constituted by the subject is the recipient thereof and is the matter of the compound.

I say: The substratum is either constituted by the subject, or the subject inheres in it; otherwise one of them would have to dispense with the other and thus there will be no inherence. The substratum constituted by the subject is matter¹; the constituent of that inherent is the subject.² *Hayūlā* with respect to the subject is called recipient, but with respect to the compound is called matter.

He says: Its receptivity is essential.

I say: That receptivity of matter is something essential thereto and is not something alien attaching to it by means of something else. But for this, the supervention of that receptivity at the time it comes to be would require another receptivity and

1. Arabic: *hayūlā*.

2. Or rather the form.

so on *ad infinitum*. This, however, is impossible; it is therefore essential to matter in itself.

He says: Proximity or distance may arise due to certain dispositions it acquires by virtue of the status thereof.

I say: Having mentioned that matter's receptivity of what inheres in it is essential, he felt that he might be confronted by what might be thought to contradict it: namely, that the matter might receive one thing but reject the other, then might receive the other and thus be stripped of the first receptivity. This will entail that receptivity is one of those accidental features which are due to external factors, rather than certain features attaching to it essentially.

The crux of the answer is that receptivity is certain in both cases, but receptivity is either proximate or distant. Thus, the receptivity of the human form by the sperm is distant, whereas the receptivity of the foetus is proximate. If proximity is due to a certain accident, receptivity is attributed to it, and its opposite to something else. However, the truth is that the proximity of receptivity follows its distance, the cause of proximity and distance being the accidents and forms inhering in the matter. Thus, if heat inheres in matter and becomes intense, it will dispose the latter to receive the fiery form and reject other forms.

The Fourteenth Question: Of the formal cause

He says: This inherent [factor] is the form of the compound and a part which causes its substratum.

I say: By this inherent factor he means what inheres in the matter and is the form of the compound, rather than the matter. For, in relation to matter it is an active part, this being the principle of emanation by means of the Absolute Form.

He says: And it is one.

I say: The ancients have stated that the form constitutive of matter cannot be more than one. For, were the one to constitute the object alone, matter would dispense with the other; but if it did not act alone, the sum would be the form, which is one, and thus the form would be one.

The Fifteenth Question: Of the final cause

He says: The end¹ essentially is a cause of the causality of the efficient cause, but an effect insofar as it pertains to the effect.

I say: The end admits of two aspects whereby it is reckoned as prior or posterior in relation to the effect. For, the agent, upon conceiving of the action, will perform it, and then the end is realized upon the realization of the action. Therefore, the

1. Or purpose.

essence of the end consists in being the cause of the causal action of the agent. For, but for that essence and its conception by the agent, it would not cause anything or perform any action. Thus, the builder of the house visualizes habitation at first, then moves to bring the house into being; habitation will be realized upon the realization of the house. The essence of habitation then, is the causes of the causality of the agent; whereas its existence is the effect of the house. It is not excluded, however, that the same thing might be prior and posterior in two different respects.

He says: It is fixed as far as every intending agent is concerned.

I say: Every agent who acts by way of intention and will merely act for the sake of some purpose or goal, otherwise he would be engaged in sport. Sport, however, is not without purpose, but the elemental motions have been shown by the ancients to have their own purposes. Thus, if a grain of wheat is cast into a fertile soil and is attended by access to water and the heat of the sun, it will grow into an ear of wheat. This development is permanent or frequent, so that it can be described as a natural goal. However, some people have denied this, because there is no feeling in nature, and therefore it cannot be supposed to have a purpose. They argue that the feeling is what determines purpose.

He says: As for motive animal power, its purpose is to reach the goal; but this could be the goal of the desiderative power or not. If not, then motion is impossible, or else it is either some good, habit, necessary intention or futility and vanity.

I say: Animal power has certain principles, as already mentioned, such as the motor power diffused in the muscles. The second is the desiderative power, and the third is the imagination or reason. The aim of the motive power is to reach the goal, but it could itself be the goal of the desiderative, such as one who leaves his place and seeks to settle in another, out of boredom. Or, it could be something else, such as one who seeks a debtor in a certain place. In this case, if the goal of the desiderative power is not attained, the motion is called futile in relation to it. If the principle is the imagination only, it is vanity and sport. If it is accompanied by a nature, such as respiration, then it is a necessary intention. If accompanied by character and habit in the soul, then it is habit; if the principle is reason, then it is the known or imagined good.

He says: They have posited certain aims for natural and fortuitous entities.

I say: As for positing certain aims for natural motions, it has already been discussed; but as for fortuitous causes, they have been denied by some people; because if the cause has acquired all the aspects of effectiveness, its effect must follow absolutely, or else it would be impossible. Thus, chance has nothing to do with it. The answer is that the effect of the determinant may depend on certain external factors, which do not always occur with it. Then that cause, free of conditions, is said to be fortuitous, when its release is equal or preponderant. If it is taken jointly with these conditions, it would be an essential cause.

The Sixteenth Question: Of the divisions of causes

He says: The cause, absolutely speaking, is either simple or compound.

I say: By 'absolutely' he means what includes the four causes: that is, the material, the formal, the efficient and the final. Each one of these four is divisible into aforementioned kinds. Thus, the efficient cause, according to the learned, is either simple—such as one of us moving a body, or compound, such as a group of people moving a larger body. Some people have denied composition of causes or else they should be denied [according to them]. For, if any compound ceases to exist, then each of its parts is an independent cause of its cessation. Thus, if a part of the compound cause ceases, then that cause will cease. If a second part ceases, it will have no effect at all, because cessation has affected the first part, and because what is described as cause is: (1) either each of its parts, and then the causes would be multiplied and composition excluded, which is the point; or (2) only some of its parts, which is also the point, without priority; or (3) the whole, which is absurd. For if every part is not a cause, then upon the union [of parts], unless something else happens, the sum total will not be a cause. If something else happens, then the question will arise with respect to the cause of its happening. Those two alternatives are tenuous, because they entail the negation of the compound, regardless of whether it is a cause or not; and this is necessarily absurd. Instances of compound matters include paste and pigment in ink; compound forms include humanity, which is made up of different shapes. Instances of compound purposes include motion for the sake of purchasing certain goods or meeting the beloved.

He says: Also in potentiality or in actuality.

I say: These four principles may be in potentiality, such as wine in the vat being a cause of intoxication in potentiality; or they may be in actuality, such as the wine upon being drunk. Similarly, matter may be in actuality, such as the embryo in relation to humanity, or it may be in potentiality, such as the sperm. Form in potentiality is like the aquatic form inherent in the air potentially; or it could be in actuality, such as the aquatic form inherent in its matter.¹ The final cause in potentiality is what can cause a thing to be such, and in actuality that which has already caused it to be such.

He says: And universal or particular.

I say: These causes may be universal—such as building absolutely, or particular, such as this building and so on in the other cases.

He says: And essential or accidental.

I say: The cause could be essential, as in the case of what the effect depends on in reality, such as fiery nature in relation to burning; or it could be accidental, as in the case of the cause entailing something, which is followed by something else,

1. That is, water.

as in the statement ‘scammony’ is the cause of cooling bile’. Similarly, because it entails essentially the abating of fever, which is then followed by cooling, and so on in the other cases. For, essential matter is the substratum of form essentially, but accidental [matter] is that which is taken in conjunction with external accidents. The essential form is the constitutive principle, such as humanity; whereas accidental [form] is what attaches to it in the form of necessary or separate accidents. The essential end is what is desired for its own sake, whereas the accidental is what follows the desired object. However, accidental causes can be applied to what accompanies the cause.

He says: And general or special.

I say: General cause refers to what is the genus of the real cause, such as the artisan in relation to the building; whereas special cause refers to the builder in that example, but there is no distinction of general and special in the case of forms.

He says: And proximate or ultimate.

I say: The proximate cause is that which has no intermediary separating it from the effect, such as inclination in relation to motion; whereas the ultimate is the cause of the cause, such as the desideration faculty and so on in the other cases.

He says: And common or particular.

I say: The common [cause] is like the carpenter in relation to numerous doors, and the particular is like the carpenter in relation to this [particular] door.

He says: Privation in relation to the temporal entity² is one of the accidental principles.

I say: The temporal entity is that which comes to be after it was not. It comes to be only in the wake of the privation of its cause; but since its coming to be depends on the preceding privation, they³ have applied to privation the name of principle by accident, its essential principle being the agent only.

He says: The agent in both cases is the same.

I say: The agent with respect to being is the same as the agent with respect to privation, as we have shown earlier to the effect that the cause of privation is the privation of the cause only. The determining factor in both states of the effect is the cause only, but in such a way that when it is present, existence follows, but when it is absent, privation follows.

He says: The subject is equivalent to the matter.

I say: The subject is also one of the causes upon which the existence of the inherent factor depends and its relation to that inherent factor is similar to that of matter to form. Therefore, it is one of the causes.

1. An Asian purgative.

2. That is, *al-hādīth*.

3. That is, the philosophers.

The Seventeenth Question: That the need of the effect is either in point of existence or privation

He says: The effect's need refers to one of its two extreme states.

I say: The effect has an essence, an existence and a privation. Its need for a determining principle consists in causing it to exist or not to exist. For, determination is conceivable in each of the two extreme states, whereas essence cannot be conceived as determining anything—since blackness is not blackness due to the agent, but rather its existence or non-existence is due to the agent.

He says: The causes of essence are different from the causes of existence.

I say: The causes of essence, with respect to conceptual existence, are the genus and the differentia, but with respect to the outside world, are matter and form; whereas the causes of existence are the agent and the purpose.

He says: It is necessary for privation to have a cause and this is true of motion too.

I say: We have shown that the relation of the two states of existence and non-existence to the possible is the same. Therefore, it cannot conceivably be qualified by either one of them without a cause; so that just as the possible requires a cause of its existence, it requires a cause of its non-existence, or else it would be impossible in itself. We do not speak of existence as being stationary or not stationary, as we speak of motions and sounds. The first category requires a cause for it not to exist, the second ceases to exist by itself. For, we hold that it is impossible for privation to be essential to anything, or else it would not exist; whereas motion has a cause of existence, so that if it ceases to exist or any of its conditions cease to exist, it will cease to exist. This is also true of sounds, for there is no difference between motions and their likes.

He says: Some disposing causes may lead to their likes, their counterparts or their opposites.

I say: Causes are divisible into the disposing or the determinant. By disposing we mean that which brings the cause closer to its effect after it was distant, and is similar to the pre-condition. The disposing cause may lead to what resembles it, such as motion towards the middle, since it disposes motion to lead to the terminal point. However, it is the cause thereof, since the cause of motion is either nature or the soul. The action of either of these with respect to motion towards the end is distant, and when it reaches the middle point, its impact on the effect—which is motion towards the end—is nearer. However, it could also lead to its counterpart, such as motion which disposes to heating; or it could lead to its opposite, such as motion which disposes to rest upon attaining the terminal point.

He says: Disposition is both proximate and distant.

I say: Disposition is either proximate, as in the case of the embryo, disposed to receive the human form; or distant as in the case of the sperm which is receptive thereof. Similarly, the disposing cause may be proximate, after which the effect

arises; or it may be distant, which is different. Causes differ in point of proximity and distance, according to the degree of disposition, which is liable to intensity or weakness.

He says: The accidental cause could also be disposing.

I say: We have shown that the accidental cause is used in two senses. The first is when the cause determines something which is followed by something else, as in the case of heat which determines the union of two like entities. For, in itself, it determines lightness. Thus, what is lighter in the compound is receptive of greater heat, and then it separates from its counterpart seeking to rise upwards, and thus it unites with its like. The second sense is when the cause has a concomitant attribute, and then it is said to have an accidental cause, the first being a disposing cause only.

The Second Intention On Substances and Accidents

This consists of a number of chapters, the first being that of substances.

He says: The possible either inheres in the subject, and is called accident, or not, and is called substance.

I say: Having concluded the discussion of universal and intelligible entities, he starts discussing possible entities, which are substances and accidents. Here are a number of questions:

The First Question: The division of possibles in a general way

Every possible existent either exists in no subject, which is substance; or exists in a subject, which is accident. By subject we mean the substratum which is constituted in itself and constitutes that which subsists in it. For, the substratum is either constituted by what subsists in it or constitutes it, since each one of them needs the other. The first is called matter and the second, subject. What subsists in the first one is called form, and in the other is called accident. Thus, the subject and the matter share in two characteristics subsumed under a simple name, which is the substratum; whereas the form and the accident share in two properties subsumed under a single name, which is that which subsists. However, the subject is more specific than the substratum and the privation of the specific is more general than the privation of the general. For, whatever does not subsist in a substratum does not subsist in a subject; and this is not convertible. That is why it is possible for some substances to subsist in other substances, and since the definition of the accident implies the positive condition, he¹ considered it prior, in point of divisibility, to substance.

1. The author.

He says: It is either separate in itself and in its action, which is reason, or in itself only, which is the soul—or it is conjoined. Then, it is either the substratum, which is matter, or subsists in it, which is the form, or is compounded of the two, which is the body.

I say: This refers to the division of substance into its various species. For, substance is either separate in itself and its action from matter, and this is reason—or separate in itself, but not in its action, and is called the rational soul, which is separate from matter in itself and its nature, but not in its action. For it requires an instrument to be able to, and yet it cannot be separate in its action, rather than in itself. For dispensing with the ability to affect its object requires the ability to dispense with itself.

Chapter Four Of Immaterial Substances

He says: As for the intellect, there is no proof regarding its impossibility.

I say: Having concluded the discussion about conjoined substances, he begins the discussion about immaterial substances, for it is far from the grasp of sensual perception.

The First Question: Of immaterial intellects

You should know that some *mutakallimūn* have denied these substances, arguing that, were there an entity, which was neither a body nor a corporeal entity, it would share this attribute with the Necessary Being, and thus would share with Him in His essence. This is a silly argument, because sharing in negative attributes does not entail sharing in the essence. For with respect to two simple entities, sharing in the negation of what is other than themselves, while not sharing in the essences, but rather in the positive attributes, does not entail sharing in the essences because different entities might have a single concomitant. If this is granted, it will not follow from the fact that these immaterial substances share with the Necessary Being in the attribute of immateriality, which is negative, that they share with Him in reality. That is why the author does not affirm the negation of these immaterial substances.

He says: The proofs of its existence are questionable, such as their claim that from the One it is not possible for two things to emanate, or for the conditioned to precede the consequent in its effect or its existence. Otherwise, the fact of its determination will not be negated of it, since the determinant here is free.

I say: Having proved the negation of affirming the inexistence of an immaterial substance, which is the intellect, he proceeded to prove the negation of affirming its positive existence, by showing the weakness of the arguments of those who

affirm it. You should know that most philosophers hold that the first effect is the First Intellect, which is an entity independent of bodies and materials, both in its being and its effect. Moreover, from that Intellect emanates another intellect and a sphere, on account of its multiplicity, by reason of the multiplicity of the different aspects resulting from it or its agent.

Moreover, from the Second Intellect a Third Intellect and a second sphere emanate and so on until we reach the last intellect called the Active Intellect and the last or ninth sphere, which is the sphere of the moon. They have demonstrated the reality of immaterial substances, or intellects, in many ways. One is that God Almighty is one, therefore He cannot be the cause of multiplicity; thus what emanates from Him must be one, whether it be a body, matter, form, soul, accident, or intellect. All these alternatives are false, except the last. First, because each body is made up of matter and form, and we have shown that the first effect must be one; to this he referred by saying that from the One cannot emanate two entities. Secondly matter, being the receptive substance, cannot serve as active. For, the relation of receptivity is one of possibility and that of the agent one of necessity; and it is impossible that the relation of the same thing to the one be a relation of possibility and necessity. Thus, if matter is not suited for activity, it will not be the first effect preceding all others. For, the first effect must be a cause of what comes after it. It is to this alternative that he has referred in his statement 'when the validity of its determination has ceased', that is, there is nothing to precede matter which is suited to be an agent. If it does not precede then it is not the first effect, due to what we have shown: namely, that the First Intellect is prior to all other effects. Thirdly, form, in acting or determining anything, requires matter. For, it can only act if it exists in individualized form, and it can only exist in that way if it is conjoined to matter. Now, were the form the first effect prior to anything else, it would dispense with matter in its causal function, which is absurd. It follows that the form requires matter for its individual existence, and therefore is not prior to it or to other possible entities, due to the fact that prior presupposes posterior. It is to this that he refers in saying 'nor is it prior', meaning to the form in relation to its consequent in point of existence.

Fourthly, the soul acts by means of the body. Thus, were it the first effect, it would be a cause of what follows as body, and then it could dispense with the body in its action. It would not be a soul, but rather an intellect, which is absurd. Therefore, its determination is conditioned by association with the body, and were it prior to it, the prior would be contingent on the posterior with respect to what depends on it, which is absurd. To this he has referred by saying 'the contingent, i.e. the soul, cannot be prior to its successor, i.e. the body, in point of determination'.

Fifthly, accident requires substance in order to exist. Were the first effect an accident, it would then be the cause of all substances, and then the prior would be contingent on the posterior in its existence, which is absurd too. It is to this that

he has referred in saying 'the prior is not contingent on the successor in point of existence.' The conclusion is that form and accident are contingent on matter and substance, and therefore cannot be prior to them. The soul can only affect its subjects by means of the body, and therefore cannot be prior to it, as the cause is prior to the effect. Otherwise, it could dispense with it in its actions. If you understand this proof, we can say, once its premises are granted, that it would only follow if the determinant is necessary. If it is were voluntary, then no. For the voluntary agent can cause multiple actions and effects. The proof that he is voluntary will come later.

He says: Their claim that the circularity of motion necessitates necessary volition, is due to the analogy with the perfect [agent] which, if it seeks the result in actuality or potentiality, cessation will follow necessarily. But the impossible is unattainable because it depends on the permanence of what we stipulate must cease, and also due to the limitation of the possible alternatives in a dispute where the impossible is concerned.

I say: This is the second form of the argument whereby they have sought to demonstrate the immaterial intellects, offering to counter it. The proof of the fact that the motions of the heavens are voluntary is that they are circular, and every circular motion is voluntary. For, motion is either natural or compulsory, but the circular motion cannot be natural, because what is desired by nature cannot be relinquished by nature. Moreover, with respect to every part of the distance covered by circular motion, relinquishing it is identical with seeking it. Now, if the natural character [of circular motion] is denied too, the compulsory character must be denied; for compulsion is the opposite of nature, and where there is no nature, there is no compulsion. It follows that it is voluntary, and every voluntary motion requires a desired object, since vanity cannot last. That desired object is that whereby the desirer is fulfilled, or else it would not turn towards it in its searching. Thus it must be a perfection in itself or not. The second alternative is absurd, otherwise motion could cease; and because the desirer must recognize that the desired object is not a perfection in itself, he must relinquish the quest. If, on the other hand, it is a real perfection, then it would either result fully, which is absurd, or motion would cease. Therefore, it must take place by succession; otherwise the perfections of the sphere would not be present in their entirety except for position. For it is perfect in its essence, whereas its other intelligibles are other than position. For, its possible positions are not all co-present, since there can be no position but such as is accompanied by infinite positions negated of it, and cannot occur at once. They recur only in succession, and the sphere, having conceived the perfection of intellect in which there is no potentiality, since it has been fully actualized, will yearn to be assimilated to it in that respect, so as to educe what is in it from a state of potentiality to a state of actuality. When this proves to be impossible instantly, it educes its perfection in its different positions in succession.

From this it appears that there exists an Intellect which the sphere emulates in its motion. If it is one, it must resemble the spherical motions in point of direction, speed or slowness. But this is not the case; therefore there must exist a multiplicity of intellects, corresponding to the multiplicity of motions, with respect to direction, speed, or slowness.

It cannot be queried: ‘Why does it not move for the sake of the lower’s advantage, or why did it not differ with respect to speed, slowness or direction for that reason?’ For, we hold that spherical entities are nobler than this world and it is impossible that the higher should do something for the sake of the lower. Otherwise, it would be perfected by it, and then the perfect would be perfected by the imperfect, which is absurd. Accordingly, motion cannot exist, in its origin or shape, for the sake of its inferior. This is the gist of the proof.

We answer that this conclusion depends on the permanence of motion; but we have proved the beginning of the world in time, therefore [motion] must cease, and then that proof would fall to the ground. Moreover, this proof depends on exhausting the divisions of the question, and the alternatives they have given are not exhaustive. Now, we grant this; but why cannot seeking what cannot possibly exist or what actually exists while the seeker is not aware of it be granted? For we deny the necessity of such awareness. Moreover, we do not grant that the spherical motion must be circular; for why can it not be rectilinear? And if we grant that it is circular, why can it not be compulsory? As for his saying that the negation of nature entails the negation of compulsion, our answer is that this is not true. For, the motion of what is contained within the container¹ is a compulsory motion, and if it happens to be accidentally circular, we would agree. However, motion is not intended *per se*, but is intended for the sake of something else. Why, then, have you confined that something else to crossing different positions, and why cannot the sphere have other perfections than crossing such positions, such as ever-renewed acts of intellections?

Moreover, since it is of specific magnitude, then the other kinds of quantity are inapplicable to it, as well as many varieties of quality. Why, then, have you necessitated locomotion, so as to exhaust all positions, but not other accidents of quantity and quality, when the categories of position are also negated of it, although they are not applicable to it, according to you? Why then can the like of these not occur in positions? If we grant that, why have you stipulated the existence of an Intellect which the sphere emulates, and why cannot it be said, instead, that crossing different positions is a perfection intended for it, towards which it moves without needing to emulate it?

In fact, we grant this, but we would ask: ‘Why have you denied the possibility of profiting the inferior and the concept of perfecting it, although it is rhetorical and

1. The container here refers to place which Aristotle defines as ‘the boundary of the containing body at which it is in contact with the contained’, that is the body. Cf. *Physics* IV, pp. 212b–5.

is not necessary?' In general, this argument is very weak once you recognize this, let us then pursue the words of the book. Thus, his words 'and their statement should be understood in the genitive', corresponding to his statement 'such as their words'; and, his statement 'the circularity of motion entails will necessarily', is an allusion to what we reported them¹ as saying, that circular motion can only be voluntary.

As for his statement 'entailing the emulation of the perfect', it is a reference to the fact that the final cause of motion is not a perfection which occurs at once or cannot possibly occur, but rather is a type of emulation which takes place in succession.

His statement that: 'seeking realization actually or potentially entails cessation' is a reference to the fact that that perfection does not occur in actuality, or else motion would cease; nor in that potentiality which could occur at once, for that reason also. His statement, 'what cannot be is impossible' is a reference to the fact that if perfection cannot possibly occur, seeking it would be impossible. His statement 'because it depends on the permanence of what we asserted must cease' is a reference to the weakness of this proof, which rests on the permanence of motion, and we have already shown its necessary cessation.

His statement 'and on exhausting the alternatives of the question' refers to another objection: namely, that we reject confining the divisions of the question to its being either an actual, impossible perfection or one which occurs in succession.

His saying 'while disputing the impossibility of seeking the impossible' refers to another objection still: namely, that we reject the impossibility of seeking the impossible, due to the possibility of the seeker's ignorance.

He says: They claim that there is no causal action between correlatives; otherwise the impossible would be possible or the stronger would be explained by reference to the weaker, so as to exclude essential impossibility.

I say: This is the third part of the arguments which they advance in demonstrating the reality of intellects. It consists in saying that the spheres are possible and therefore they must have a cause. For, if they are not bodies or corporeal, the point would have been made. If the cause is corporeal, we would be involved in circularity, and if it is a body, then either the container is the cause of the contained or vice versa. The second alternative is absurd, because the contained is weaker than the container. Thus, were the contained the cause, it would be necessary to refer the cause of the stronger, which is the container, to the weaker which is the contained, and this is absurd.

The first alternative, namely, that the container is the cause of the contained is also absurd. Its proof rests on a number of premises. First, that body cannot be a cause except after it becomes a specific individual entity. This is obvious, because it can only affect its object when it exists actually, and nothing exists actually except the individual. Secondly, the effect, once the existence of the cause is assured, is

1. The Peripatetic philosophers.

possible. It becomes necessary only once the cause has come to be or is necessary. Thirdly, correlative objects do not differ with respect to necessity or possibility. If you understand this, we could then say, were the container the cause of the contained, it would be prior, by reason of its specific individuality, to the contained. Then, the contained would be possible and the impossibility of the void would be possible, because it is a correlative of the existence of the contained. However, the void is impossible in itself. The answer, once the impossibility of the void is granted, is that we do not grant that the impossibility in question is essential. If you understand this, we would then proceed to pursue the words of the author of the book.

We say that his statement ‘that there is no causal relation between two correlatives’ means that there is no causal relation between the container and the contained, which he has called correlatives, because one of them, insofar as it is relative to the other, and the other insofar as it is contained, will be relative to it—these two terms being part of the category of relation.

As for his statement, ‘otherwise the impossible would be possible’, it refers to what we have mentioned with respect to the possibility of the void, which is impossible in itself, on the assumption that the container is a cause. His statement, ‘or explaining the stronger by recourse to the weaker’ refers to what we have shown, to the effect that the weak is a cause of the strong, on the assumption that the contained is a cause of the container. His statement, ‘to obviate essential impossibility’ refers to what we explained in our answer regarding the obviation of the fact that the void is impossible in itself. That is what we understood in this connection.

The Second Question: Of the rational soul

He says: The soul is the first perfection of a natural organic body potentially alive.

I say: This is a discussion of one kind of substance, namely the rational soul. It has been claimed that this is a discussion of its characteristics. He began by defining it himself, the philosophers¹ having defined it as the first perfection of an organic body potentially alive. For, if the body is understood in the sense of matter, then the soul united to it, whereby a plant, animal, or human arises, is the form. If it is understood in the sense of genus, it would be a perfection thereof; because the genus, prior to being added to the differentia, is imperfect. They have defined the soul as a perfection rather than a form, because the human soul does not subsist in the body. Therefore, it is not a form thereof, but a perfection.

1. That is, the Peripatetics. The above definition is Aristotle’s and is given in *De Anima* II, pp. 412a–30, tr. by A. L. Peck (Cambridge, MA, 1980).

You should also know that perfection is either first, which is that which specifies the thing, such as the differentia; or second, which supervenes on the species after its perfection in the form of its essential or accidental attributes. The soul belongs to the first category and is the perfection of a natural, rather than an artificial body, such as a bed or the like. However, it is not a perfection of every natural [body], including the elements, but rather an organic body, whose actions are produced by means of organs. This means that it has certain organs, by whose intermediary or without it, the activities of life arise. These are nutrition, growth, reproduction, apprehension, voluntary motion and thought.

The Third Question: That the rational soul is not equivalent to the humour

He says: And it is different from what it exists in, due to the impossibility of circularity.

I say: Some authorities have held that the rational soul is different from the humour,¹ which they have demonstrated in three ways. First, by reference to what the ancients have mentioned, to the effect that the rational soul is a pre-condition of the emergence of the humour; since the humour arises as a result of the union of contrary elements. The cause of that union, then, must be prior to it. Similarly, the pre-condition of that union, being the rational soul, cannot then be identical with the humour, which is posterior to that union, due to the impossibility of the vicious circle.

Now, this proof is open to question. For, they² have explained the emergence of the soul as a disposition resulting from the humour. How could they, then, refer the occurrence of the union to the soul? Al-Shaykh (Ibn Sīnā) has a long discourse on this question, which is not suited to our purpose.

He says: And due to the contrariety of what is required.

I say: This is the second aspect of the [answer]. It consists in that the humour is at loggerheads with the soul in its requirements, as in the case of convulsion. For, the soul stipulates motion in one direction, while the humour stipulates motion in another direction. Thus, the contrariety of effects entails the contrariety of causes. Here, the contrariety of soul and humour with respect to motion is manifested. Moreover, contrariety between them is manifested with respect to motion itself, in such a way that the motion of the soul is not required by the humour, as in the case of man's motion on the surface of the earth. For his humour may call for resting upon it, while his soul calls for motion; or that motion may be natural and not stipulated by the soul, as in falling down.

He says: And due to the cessation of one while the other persists.

I say: This is the third aspect [of the answer] which shows that the soul is different from the humour. It consists in the fact that apprehension occurs by means

1. Or temperament, *al-mizāj*.
2. The Peripatetics.

of affection. Thus, if the agent of touch apprehends something, he will be affected by the object of touch necessarily. Were the humour the agent of touch, it would cease upon affection and be followed by another type of humour. The object of touch is not the first primary quality, since it has ceased while the necessity of this object has continued upon apprehension; nor the second, because the object of apprehension must be affected by the agent of apprehension, and a thing cannot be affected by itself.

The Fourth Question: That the soul is other than the body

He says: And of what is forgotten.

I say: Some unlearned people have held that the rational soul is identical with the body. The author has refuted this position in three ways. First a man may be oblivious of his body, his organs and his inner and outer parts, while he is always conscious of himself and his soul. Therefore, it must be different from the former. His saying ‘and of what is forgotten’ is a sequel to his statement ‘of that of which, it is a condition thereof’; namely, the soul is different from that of which it is a condition and what it may be oblivious of, I mean, the body.

He says: And associating with it.

I say: This is the second aspect [of the answer] indicating that the soul is other than the body. It consists in showing that the body is corporeal and everything corporeal shares absolutely with other bodies in corporeality. Thus, man shares with other bodies in corporeality, but differs from them in human or psychic character. Therefore, what he shares in must be other than what he differs in, since the soul is not the body. His saying ‘sharing in’ is conjoined to his saying ‘oblivious of’; that is, it is different with respect to that of which it is oblivious or shares in.

He says: And changing in it.

I say: This is the third aspect [of the answer]. It consists in holding that the organs and parts of the body change all the time, and what disappears is replaced by something else. Thus natural heat entails the dissolution of bodily humidity; therefore, the body is always in a state of dissolution or substitution, while its identity remains the same from the beginning to the end of one’s life; and the changing part is always other than the constant part. The soul is, then, other than the body. His saying changing is conjoined to his saying and sharing in it; that is, it is different with respect to what involves participation and alteration.

The Fifth Question: Of the immateriality of the soul

He says: And it is an immaterial substance, due to the immateriality of its concomitant [activity].

I say: People have differed regarding the essence of the soul and whether it is a

substance or not. Those who hold that it is a substance have disagreed as to whether it is immaterial or not. The generally received view, according to the ancients, some *mutakallimūn*, like the Shi'ī Banū Nawbakht, Mufid and the Ash'arite Ghazzālī, is that it is an immaterial substance and is neither a body nor corporeal entity and this is what the author has opted for.

He has based its immateriality on a number of arguments. The first is the immateriality of its concomitant activity, which is knowledge. This is shown by the fact that we have cognitions independent of matter; therefore, the knowledge pertaining to them must correspond to them and be immaterial, due to their immateriality. Their locus, which is the soul, must also be immaterial, due to the impossibility of the immaterial inhering in the material.

He says: And its indivisibility.

I say: This is the second aspect [of the argument]; namely, that the concomitant of the soul, I mean knowledge, is indivisible. Therefore, its locus, I mean, the subject, must also be indivisible. This proof depends on a series of premises, one of which is that we have certain cognitions which are indivisible—which is obvious. For, the Necessary Being is indivisible, as well as simple truths. Secondly, knowledge of such truths is indivisible; for, were it divisible, each of its parts would be either knowledge or not. The second alternative is absurd because when united, either an additional cognition arises or it does not. If the latter, then what was supposed to be knowledge is not knowledge, and this is absurd. If the former, then that additional cognition is either divisible, and then the question would recur; or is not, and then knowledge would be indivisible, which is the point at issue.

Now, if every part is a cognition, it would either be firstly, knowledge of that object known, and then the part would be equivalent to the whole, and this is absurd; or secondly, equivalent to its part, and then what we supposed to be indivisible becomes actually divisible, which is also absurd. Thirdly, the locus of knowledge must be indivisible; for if it were divisible, knowledge would be divisible. If it did not inhere in one of its parts it could not inhere in that locus. If, on the other hand, it inhaled, that would be in an indivisible part, which is the point, or in more than one part. To say that that which inheres in one of the two is the same as the one inhering in the other is necessarily absurd; if in the other, it would entail indivisibility. Fourthly, each body or corporeal entity is divisible, because we have shown that there is no local entity which is indivisible. If these premises are granted, the immateriality of the soul would follow. (This is open to question, because absolute equality is excluded where equality refers to the dependence of the part on the whole object of knowledge, as a whole.)

He says: And its ability to do what associates [of matter] are unable to do.

I say: This is the third aspect [of the argument]. It consists in holding that human souls are able to do what associates of matter cannot do. Then, it will not be material; since it is capable of the infinite and is able to conceive infinite numbers. We have already shown that corporeal power is not capable of the infinite, so as to

be immaterial. (This is open to question, because intellection is a form of receptivity, not activity, and receptivity of the infinite is possible in the case of corporeal entities).

He says: And due to the presence of its concomitant action in relation to what is conceived as a discontinuous substratum.

I say: This is the fourth aspect [of the argument]. It consists in the fact that, were the soul to subsist in a body consisting of a heart and brain, it would either think of it constantly or not at all. The latter alternative is absurd in both its parts, and the same is true of the former. The proof of this conditional proposition is that, if the rational faculty subsists in a heart or brain, then either the form of that substratum will suffice in the act of thinking or not. If it suffices, then thinking will always arise necessarily, due to the persistence of that form of the substratum. If it does not suffice, it will not think it at all, due to the impossibility of its thinking being contingent on the emergence of another form of its substratum in it. Otherwise, the two likes would coalesce. As for the absurdity of the consequent, it is obvious because the soul thinks of the heart and the brain at some times rather than at others.

Let us return to the words of the book. [The author’s] statement: ‘and due to the presence of this concomitant action,’ means that by concomitant action should be understood thinking, and his saying ‘in relation to what is conceived as a substratum,’ should be understood as a heart or brain, in a discontinuous, rather than a continuous manner.

He says: And due to the necessity of dispensing with the concomitant entailing dispensing with the subject.

I say: This is a fifth aspect [of the argument], which shows that the rational soul is immaterial. It consists in the fact that the soul can dispense in its concomitant activity, which is thinking, with the substratum and then it could dispense by itself of that concomitant. For dispensing with the concomitant entails dispensing with the subject, since the concomitant needs the subject; and if the subject needed something, the concomitant would be in greater need of it. Thus, if the concomitant can dispense, the subject must dispense too.

The proof of the possibility of dispensing with the substratum in the act of thinking is that the soul apprehends itself by itself without any organ, and similarly apprehends its organ.¹ It apprehends that its act of apprehension of itself, as well as its organ, is without reference to any organ intermediate between it and these objects of apprehension. Accordingly, it can dispense, in the act of apprehending itself, its organ and its apprehension with the organ and, then, it is able to dispense by itself with the organ too. By his statement, ‘and due to the necessity of the concomitant action dispensing,’ he means by the concomitant

1. That is, the brain.

here thinking as such; and by 'the subject's dispensing,' he means the soul which is the subject of thinking.

He says: And due to the negation of dependence.

I say: What we understand by these words is that it is another aspect [of the argument] showing the immateriality of the soul. It consists in the fact that the power implanted in the body weakens with the weakening of that body, which is a condition thereof. The soul's case is the opposite of this, because, upon the weakening of the body in the course of old age, it grows stronger and its thinking activities increase. Were it corporeal, it would have weakened as a result of that weakening of its substratum, but this is not the case. Hence, since the dependence of the soul on the body as it weakens has been denied, it follows that it is not corporeal in nature.

He says: And due to the occurrence of the opposite.

I say: This is a seventh aspect of the argument that the soul is immaterial. It consists in the fact that a corporeal faculty weakens, as its actions succeed each other and multiply, because it is affected by them. Thus whoever looks, for an extended period, at the face of the sun will not apprehend fully, in that instant, anything else. The faculties of the soul are the opposite of this; because as its apprehensions multiply, it grows stronger and increases. Therefore what happens to it, as a result of the multiplicity of its activities, is the opposite of what happens to corporeal faculties, as a result of the multiplicity of their actions.

This is what has occurred to us in commenting on the meaning of his words 'due to the occurrence of the opposite'.

The Sixth Question: That the human soul is one in kind

He says: Its subsumption under a single definition entails its unity.

I say: Scholars have been divided on this point. Most of them have held that human souls are specifically one, but are individually multiple. This is the view of Aristotle, but some of the ancients have maintained that it is specifically different. The author has argued, in support of its unity, that it is subsumed under a single definition, and different entities cannot fall under a single definition. (For me, this is open to question; since definition has nothing to do with the particularities of the soul, so that what they say might follow. Rather it bears on the concept of the soul, which is the universal notion. That notion might be a species as well as a genus. If he says that the definition of the universal amounts to the definition of every soul, since nothing can be conceived in the case of each soul, except what we have included in the definition, we would reject that and involve him in circularity. For, numerous things may be joined under a single definition only if they are one in essence. If we derive their unity from their falling under a single definition, then circularity will follow. Now, definition does not refer to the concept of the soul, but

rather to its reality in itself; otherwise, the definition would be a nominal, rather than a real definition.)

He says: The difference of concomitant properties does not entail its diversity.

I say: This is the solution of the doubt raised by those who have sought to prove their diversity. Their proof consists in their claim that they have found that human souls differ in modesty or immodesty, and in intelligence or dullness of wit. However, this is not a corollary of [differences] of humour because humour could be one, while its concomitant activities are different. One who is of frigid humour could be extremely bright and the same is true of one of tepid humour¹ who could be extremely dull. Similarly, humour might change, while the psychic property remains unchanged, not even due to external factors, because these could be such as to cause a certain character, while the result is the opposite.

From this, we may infer that [humours] are corollaries of essence and when the corollary changes, that of which it is the corollary will change too. To which we may respond by saying that the subject of the concomitants may be different, but they are not equivalent to the soul only, but the different concomitants as well. Hence, if both soul and all its concomitants are different, it does not follow that each part will also be different. This argument is sophisticated, and this is how the author responded to it in some of his works; but this is open to question. What he has mentioned in this book is more likely: namely, that these concomitants are immaterial, but not necessary. Therefore, their change does not entail a change in the subject.²

The Seventh Question: That human souls are created

He says: It is created in time. This is obvious, both on our view and that of the opponent. For, were it eternal, then the two contraries would both be true, the negation of what is certain and the certainty of what is impossible.

I say: Opinion is divided on this point. The religionists hold that it is created, which is obvious on their premises; since they have established that the world is created and [the soul] is part of the world. It is for this reason that the author states that ‘this is obvious on our view’. However, the philosophers are in disagreement on this point: Aristotle asserting that it is created in time, while Plato asserting that it is eternal. The author has given here the argument of Aristotle in support of the thesis of creation in time (*hudūth*). This argument states that were [the soul] eternal, it would be either one or many. Now, both alternatives are false, so that asserting its eternity is false. As for concomitance, it is obvious; but as for the falsity of its unity, it follows from the fact that, were it one eternally, it would either be multiple with respect to what is eternal or does not multiply. The second alternative is false, or else

1. According to classified physiology, the humours are four: frigid, tepid, phlegmatic and melancholic.

2. That is, the soul.

what Zayd knows will be known by everybody else; and the same is true of other psychic properties. However, the truth is the opposite of this, since Zayd might know something of which 'Amr is ignorant; hence were their respective souls one, each of them would be susceptible of both contraries. The first alternative is false also, because were the two [souls] multiple, then the two souls existing now would have existed prior to their separation, since multiplicity existed prior to supposing it. This is absurd. Alternatively, they may be said to have come to be following the separation, which is also absurd; otherwise the creation of the two souls and the cessation of the one which existed previously would follow. I believe his statement, 'or else the two contraries would both be true' refers to these corollaries resulting from that part of the disjunctive proposition. For, to predicate unity of that which is eternal entails that the soul is susceptible of both contraries; whereas predicating multiplicity of the eternal, while it exists, entails the multiplicity of what we posited as one; and this is an instance of both contraries being true. Similarly, to assert multiplicity together with its renewal entails the negation of the one soul and the temporality of those two souls, although they were supposed to be eternal. This is also an instance of both contraries being true.

As for the impossibility of [the soul's] multiplicity eternally, it follows from the fact that multiplicity is either a matter of essentials, corollaries or accidents being multiple. Now, all these alternatives are false; the first due to what we affirmed concerning its generic unity, and the second because the multiplicity of corollaries entails the multiplicity of the subjects thereof. I believe that his words 'or the negation of what was certain' refer to that, because asserting essential multiplicity entails the negation of its generic unity, which we have already proved.

The third alternative is also false, because the diversity of concomitants of specifically equal entities arises only when their matter is different, because the relation of the concomitant to two likes is the same; the matter of the soul is the body, due to the impossibility of [the soul] itself becoming imprinted. For prior to the body there is no matter [of the soul] or else transmigration would follow, and this is absurd. I think his words 'and the certainty of what is impossible' are a reference to that also.

The Eighth Question: That each soul has one body and vice-versa

He says: And it is equivalent to body.

I say: This is a necessary or near necessary proposition. For, every person perceives himself as a single entity. Now, if the same body had two souls, then that entity would be equivalent to two entities, which is absurd. Therefore, it is impossible that many souls should attach to a single body, or vice versa. For, were a single soul to attach to two bodies, it would follow that the object known by the one would be known by the other, and vice versa. The same is true of other psychic properties, but this is necessarily absurd.

The Ninth Question: That the soul does not perish with the destruction of the body

He says: And it does not perish with it.

I say: Opinion has been divided on this score. Those who have held that the in-existent can be brought back have allowed for the destruction of the soul with the body. Those who denied this have denied that. The ancients have also been in disagreement, the generally accepted view being that it does not cease to exist. Our partisans have inferred the impossibility of its destruction from the fact that resuscitation is incumbent on God, as will be shown later.

The ancients have argued that were it destroyed, the possibility of its destruction would require a substratum different from it. For, the recipient must co-exist with what it receives and the coexistence of the soul with the nothing is impossible. That substratum is matter; thus the soul will be material, and therefore compound. This is absurd. Matter cannot cease due to the impossibility of the infinite regress.

However, this argument is weak because it is based on the affirmation of possibility and its requiring an existing substratum—which is absurd. We grant this, but it is disproved by the existence of simple substances, which are possible. This possibility means that it is susceptible of cessation, so that it would be material. We grant this, but would ask: 'Why may the souls not be said to consist of two immaterial substances, one of which is equivalent to matter and the other to form?' For, the persistence of the material substance is not enough to ensure the persistence of the soul. All this will then be repudiated by the possibility of temporal existence, in which possibility is realized without reference to a recipient matter; and the same is true of the possibility of destruction.

The Tenth Question: The refutation of transmigration

He says: Nor will it become the principle of form for another [body], or else what we laid down concerning equivalence would not hold.

I say: Opinion has been divided on this question. Some learned scholars have held that the transmigration of souls is possible; whereby the soul, which was the principle of form for Zayd, for instance, is transferred to the body of 'Amr, and then it becomes the principle of form for it. Then there will be between the two the same proportions as existed between the first body and [that soul]. Most scholars, however, have held that this view is untenable, the reason being that we have shown that the souls are temporal, whereas the cause of their temporality (*ḥudūth*) is eternal. Therefore, there must arise, upon its coming to be, a disposition for that time becoming appropriate for its coming to be.

Now, disposition is relative to the recipient. Once disposition arises and is fulfilled, the soul related to it must emerge. Then, if a body arises, a soul emanating from its own principles must attach to it. If another, transmigratory soul moves into

it, then two souls would have converged on a single body. We have already shown the impossibility of this conclusion, as well as the necessary correspondence of bodies and souls, so that no two souls can exist in a single body, or vice versa.

The Eleventh Question: The manner of the soul's intellection and apprehension

He says: And it intellects by itself and apprehends by means of organs due to the distinction of the two different entities by postulation, without any basis.

I say: You should know that intellection is the act of apprehending¹ universals; whereas apprehension is the perception of particulars. Some ancient [philosophers] have held that the soul intellects universal entities by itself, without needing an organ, but apprehends particulars by means of certain corporeal faculties, which are the substrata of apprehensions. The first proposition is clear; for we know with certainty that we apprehend universal matters, despite the disruption of every organ imagined to be our instrument of intellection. We have already established that.

As for the second proposition, namely, that in particular apprehensions, we are in need of organs, it rests on the fact that we distinguish matters which are similar in essence, but different by position only, just as we distinguish between the right and the left eye, on the basis of the form which we imagine. We also distinguish between them, although they are one in reality, but different in position. The distinction between them is not essential, then, nor is it due to what attaches to the essence—assuming they are equal—but rather due to external factors. Moreover, the appropriation of each one of its own concomitants is not part of the external world, since the object of the imagination may not exist in the outside world. Distinction, then, does not refer to what is taken from, but rather to what takes. If the locus of one of them is the same as the locus of the other, then it is impossible that one of them should be specifically right or the other left. For, the relation of the concomitant to them both is the same. It remains that the locus is different, so that the part in which one of the two inheres is other than the part in which the other inheres, if you know that. His statement, ‘and if it intellects by itself’ refers to what we have already mentioned, to the effect that the intellection of universals is due to the soul itself, without any organs.

As for his statement ‘and it apprehends by means of organs’, it refers to the fact that the apprehension of particulars is possible by means of corporeal faculties. And as for his words, ‘due to the distinction of the two different entities by postulation’, they refer to the example we have given with respect to the distinction of the two eyes. His words, ‘without any basis’, mean without any basis in the external world.

1. *Idrāk*, which is equivocal, since it could refer to sensuous or intellectual apprehension, as in the above statement.

Muḥammad Mahdī Narāqī

Muḥammad Mahdī ibn Abi Ḍarr Narāqī Kāshānī was born in Narāq near Kāshān around 1128/1715 and died in Najaf in 1209/1794. He has been given the titles of *Muḥaqqiq-i Narāqī* and *Khātām al-Ḥukamā'* and is one of the greatest among later Shi'i authorities not only in philosophy and theology but also in mathematics, astronomy and literature.

Following the completion of his studies in Kāshān with some of the traditional masters such as Muḥammad Ja'far Bīdgulī, Narāqī moved to Iṣfahān. It was in Iṣfahān that he immersed himself in studying a wide array of Islamic sciences, in particular philosophy, reading especially the *Shifā'* and the *Ishārāt* of Ibn Sīnā with such traditional masters as Ḥakīm Khwājū'i with whom he studied for over thirty years, Muḥammad Mahdī Harandī and Muḥammad ibn Ḥakīm Muḥammad Zamān. He even learned Hebrew and Latin from the Jewish rabbis and Christian priests in the area and commented on modern European theories of astronomy. Narāqī then went to Najaf where he studied with such masters as Shaykh Yūsuf Baḥrānī, Waḥīd Bihbahānī and Shaykh Muḥammad Mahdī Futūnī Āmulī.

His fame and mastery in the intellectual sciences became so great that the people of his native land of Kāshān asked him to return to his home and teach there. Upon his return to Kāshān he established a *madrasah* which became a major centre of learning, and which continued even after his death. Following a period of teaching and as imam of a mosque in Kāshān, Narāqī went back to Najaf where he found himself in the middle of an intense debate between the two schools of Akhbāris and Uṣūlīs on the one hand and between some of the '*ulamā'*' and popular Sufism on the other. He participated in their debates even though he supported the Uṣūlīs, but his mastery of the subject-matter highly influenced the most ardent supporters of the Akhbārī school such as Shaykh Yūsuf Baḥrānī and Muḥammad Mahdī Futūnī. In this regard, he composed the *Risālat al-ijmā'* (Treatise of Consensus) in which he presents his view on the debate based on both intellectual sources and sources from the Shi'i Imams. The influence of the school of Akhbāris was substantially

curtailed at the hands of Narāqī and some of his students such as Mahdī Baḥr al-‘Ulūm, Ja‘far Kāshif al-Ghiṭā’ and Muḥaqqiq-i Qummī.

Narāqī composed numerous treatises which include a wide range of subjects from jurisprudence to *kalām*. His philosophical acumen is most evident in his commentary upon the *Shifā’* and his work on ethics and the mind-body relationship entitled *Jāmi‘ al-sa‘ādah* (Sum of Happiness).

In this chapter, we have included a section of Narāqī’s *Qurrat al-‘uyūn* (The Delight of the Eyes) in which the Divine Essence, the reality of existence and the relationship of existents with Absolute Existence are discussed. In the following section, a critique of certain theologians who allude to what he calls the ‘sixth school’, namely those who regard existent beings as having two existences, general and particular, has been explained. The rest of this section is devoted to a discussion between theologians (*mutakallimūn*) and theosophers (*muta’allihūn*) and their respected differences, particularly regarding the notion of necessity.

M. Aminrazavi

THE DELIGHT OF THE EYES

Qurrat al-‘uyūn

Translated for this volume by Joseph E. Lumbard from Mullā Muḥammad Mahdī Narāqī’s *Qurrat al-‘uyūn*, edited by Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī (Tehran, 1978), pp. 128–160.

The Tenth Investigation

Regarding the explanation that the Most Holy Divine Essence—transcendent is His status—is actually existent beyond everything and positive in real external world, regardless of every manifestation, disclosure and reflection.

I claim that, according to reason and demonstration (*burhān*), this is extremely clear and evident, and that religions and revealed laws are in agreement with it. The lords of unveiling and eye-witnessing do not deny it; rather, it is apparent to insight and experience (*wijdān*). How could it not be? If not for that, the rulings of the revealed laws and the prophetic missions would be naught, obedience and servitude would be frivolous, and prayers and supplications would be futile. Because, if supposedly the existents in their totality and the created beings in their entirety, cry out for succour and rescue, there would be no one to aid them; for it has been supposed that no principle exists in the concrete external world, and that is manifest unbelief and clear deviation.

The gnostic verifier [Ṣadr al-Dīn] al-Shīrāzī (d. 1050/1640)—may he rest in peace—said that some ignorant pseudo-Sufis who have not travelled the path of the gnostics and have not arrived at the degree of gnosis, due to the debility of their rational faculty and the frailty of their belief and the predominance of illusion over their souls, imagine that there is no actual reality for the Divine Essence, which is characterized in the tongues of the gnostics as the Degree of Unitude (*maqām-i aḥadiyyat*), the Unseen of Ipseity, and the Unseen of Unseen, beyond manifestations and disclosures. They imagine that which is realized is the world of form and its spiritual and sensorial faculties and God is the total manifestation of them—not without them—and He is the reality of the greater man (*homo maximus*) and the clear book of which this small human (*microcosm*) is a model and a condensed copy.

This claim is repugnant unbelief and pure atheism. Even one with the lowest level of knowledge would not utter this. The attribution of this disgusting idea to the great Sufis and their masters is a sheer fabrication and a great falsehood which their inmost beings and their inner minds would shun.

I say the evidence that such a view is a fabrication regarding the great Sufis is that they in their explanation about the universal hierarchy of existents maintain

that the reality of existence, when considered with the condition of the negation of all qualities and unlimited to any particularity and unconfined to any determination, even free from the quality of absoluteness (*iṭlāq*), is called the Unitude of Essence (*dhāt-i aḥadiyyat*), Absolute Unseen (*ghayb-i muṭlaq*), Unseen of the Unseen (*ghayb al-ghuyūb*), Unseen of Ipseity (*ghayb-i huwiyyat*), Reality of Realities (*ḥaqīqat al-ḥaqā'iq*), Inclusive Inclusivity (*jam' al-jam'*), Ipseity of Reality (*huwiyyat al-'ayniyyah*) and the Thin Cloud (*al-'amā'*). In regards to its relation to the divine names in the intellect and to the things in the external world, it is called the Degree of Unicity (*al-wāḥidiyyah*) and the Presence of the Divinity. On this level, all the divine names and attributes perish, and there is no name, quality or character. This level is beyond every perception and knowledge, because it is the Pure Existent to which nothing at all pertains other than It, and to which there is no connection for what is other than It. This is because the perception of a thing requires prior relation between the one who perceives and that which is perceived, while we know that that which is other than the Pure Existent has no relation with it, for it is prior to every thing. Further to this, whatever is known to us is known through its effects and concomitants but here there are no effects or concomitants, therefore it is unknown in every respect and absolutely free of all bonds, even from the absoluteness which is the opposite of particularity. The absoluteness which is applicable to this stage is a negative feature that represents the negating of all attributes, qualities, names and effects from Its essence. Rather, this necessitates the negation of every intellectual characterization, even these negations, from Its essence. It is to this level that the gnostic verifier [Ṣadr al-Dīn] al-Qūnawī (d. 673/1274), alluded when he said, 'It is an intelligible entity, we see its effect and do not witness its reality.' As our Shaykh¹ reported regarding this in a verse:

The inclusivity is a state whose identity has no existence.
It possesses the arbitration which belongs to no one.

If the reality of existence is taken as non-conditioned by being something (*lā bi shart shay'*) or as non-conditioned with nothing (*lā bi shart lā shay'*), it is the Expanded Existence, which is called by them the Pervading Ipseity (*al-huwiyyat al-sāriyyah*), the Throne of the Merciful, the Degree of the Inclusivity (*martibat al-jam'*), the Reality of Realities, the Unitude of Inclusivity, the Presence of Unicity, the Sphere of Life, the Real by which things are created (*al-ḥaqq al-makhlūq bihi*), and the Source of the Universe (*aṣl al-'ālam*). The absoluteness of this Absolute Existence does not mean universality, because it is sheer realization (*al-taḥaṣṣul*) and actuality (*al-fi'liyyah*), whereas the universal, because of its universality, is an

1. That is, al-Shaykh al-Akbar, Muḥyi al-Dīn ibn al-'Arabī (d. 638/1240).

ambiguous concept that does not exist in the external world. Moreover, the Absolute Existence is one, but its oneness is not numerical. In Itself It is not confined in a particular attribute or a particular characteristic such as substantiality and accidentality, eternity and temporal origination, anteriority and posteriority, immateriality and materiality, causality and being caused and perfection and deficiency. Rather, It is determinate with every form of determination and is realized in every sort of realization. Thus, It is eternal (*qadīm*) with the eternal and temporally originated with temporally originated beings, and so on.

The reality of this level of existence is also unknown, like the first. Likewise, the explanation of how it is expanded over the templates of quiddities and its diffusion upon the tablets of possible beings is unknown, except that analogy (*tashbīh*) and likening (*tamthīl*) are possible at this level, as opposed to the first level. Therefore, they sometimes liken it to the *materia prima* (*al-māddat al-ūlā*), in relation to form, and sometimes to the *summum genus*, in relation to what is below it. It is said that this expanded existence is a oneness which justifies all onenesses and determinations, and its oneness is not numerical, nor of quality or genus. It is also said that the Real Necessary Existence, which in respect to the name Allāh that implies other divine names, is the first level of existence and therefore includes other divine attributes and qualities. The Real Necessary Existence, on account of its comprehensive nature, is the origin of the expanded existence and on account of the specification of its Beautiful Names that are contained in the name Allāh—also known among them as the Leader of the Leaders (*imām al-a’immah*) and the Comprehensive Foremost (*al-muqaddim al-jāmi’*)—is the source of all particular beings. It must be noted that the existence of these particular beings is not something additional to the absolute expanded existence. It is on this account that the relationship between the cause and effect is established.

They also claim just as the Necessary Real Existence, with regard to the unitude of Its essence, transcends all attributes, modes and qualities, and in regard to the level of Its unicity and the level of the name Allāh, is accompanied by all the names and attributes which are not external to Its essence, rather His essence by virtue of its existential unitude comprises them all. So too, this expanded existence, in its reality is other than the particular existences and the possible quiddities, except that, at every level it is concomitant with a quiddity which is particular to that level and inherent within it. The quiddities are identical with modes of Absolute Existence and its grades, without instauration (*ja’l*) or influence (*ta’thīr*). Every level of absolute existence, i.e. the particular existence in itself, is an instaured reality. Thus the level of necessary unitude is the source of Absolute Existence and the unicity of the divine names is lord of the universe. These are the rules of this level of existence, according to what the gnostic verifier, Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, has mentioned in his *al-Asfār al-arba’ah* (The Four Journeys). But there are other issues left to be discussed, such as the reality of the actuality of this level of existence, that Allāh

is totally other than any abstract concept of existence, and whether this concept is applicable to Him or not. These are the issues which we will deal with, God willing, in our discussion about the unity of existence.

The reality of existence, if regarded as conditioned with something, is considered along with things that are concomitant with it (i.e. attributes and manifestations), which in this case is called the level of the [divine] names, for in their vocabulary name is applied to the divine essence as characterized by a certain attribute or a certain manifestation. This level is sometimes called the level of unicity and the degree of inclusivity and sometimes called the level of lordship (*al-martabat al-rubūbiyyah*), for it makes the objective realities that are the locus of the manifestation of divine names, attain their proper perfections. Or it is considered with external determinations and concrete particularizations, and in general the reality of existence relates to what is other than it—then it is the limited existence particularized by extrinsic qualities and external features. This level is itself divided into three domains as follows:

First: The domain of Intellects and Spirits (*al-‘uqūl wa’l-arwāḥ*)

Second: The domain of Imagination and Image (*al-khayāl wa’l-mithāl*)

Third: The domain of Sense and Witnessing (*al-ḥiss wa’l-mushāhadah*)

There is another famous classification of the general levels of beings which is called *the Five Presences* and it is as follows:

First: The presence of the Essential Unitude (*ḥaḍrat al-dhāt al-aḥadiyyah*)

Second: The presence of the Divine Names (*ḥaḍrat al-asmā’ al-ilāhiyyah*)

Third: The presence of the Spirits and Archetypes (*ḥaḍrat al-arwāḥ wa’l-arbāb al-anwā’*)

Fourth: The presence of the Image and Imagination (*ḥaḍrat al-mithāl wa’l-khayāl*)

Fifth: The presence of the Sense and Witnessing (*ḥaḍrat al-ḥiss wa’l-mushāhadah*)

In this division the expanded existence is not excluded. The aim of bringing this division into our discussion is to suggest that the Sufis maintain that the Necessary Existence, regardless¹ of the loci of manifestation and disclosure, has a unique actuality and realization which we will discuss in what follows shortly—God willing.

1. Read *ma’a qat’ al-nazar ‘an* for *ma’a al-nazar ‘an*.

The Eleventh Investigation

Remarks on the falsity of the doctrine of the theologians, the sixth doctrine,¹ and the repudiation of what has been brought as an argument against the philosophers (*al-ḥukamāʾ*).

As for the falsity of the doctrine of the theologians, it has become apparent from what we have said that there is a genuine reality for existence in concrete terms and in the extra-mental world and it is impossible that the universal abstract concept of existence be the source of the existence of beings.² As for the falsity of the sixth doctrine we say: if the instances of the particular existence (*afrād al-wujūdāt al-khāṣṣah*) do not differ from each other in their nature, then that means that they are participating in a common essence—and if that essence differs from another essence it results in its compositeness, which is false. But if they do not differ in their nature this necessitates the unity of existence. Therefore the truth is that the Absolute Existence, as the philosophers have maintained, applies to its instances by gradation (*tashkīk*) and this does not contradict the variety of the nature of its instances. Thus far, according to what has been said, the falsity of the aforementioned doctrines, as well as the doctrine of the Sufis, and in the meantime the truthfulness of the ideas of the philosophers becomes evident.

If it is said: It is not possible that these individual instances be divers and contradictory realities and the universal existence be its common accident, for the common accidental feature should necessarily follow the common essential feature. Furthermore the diverse contradictory realities cannot be the cause of a single effect, for there must be pertinence between cause and effect and we have no doubt that there is no pertinence between one as one and many as many. Therefore, the one as one cannot be the cause of two things, as they are two. In the same way the one cannot be the effect of two different things, for if one modality insofar as it is one, corresponds to two different things insofar as they are different, that would imply that the same modality is different from itself and thereupon it becomes necessary that the common accident and concomitant

1. In the first investigation, 'Regarding an account of the difference which has occurred regarding the reality of existence (*ḥaqīqat al-wujūd*) and through what occurs in the existentness of things, Narāqī divides the views about the existence into six views (*madhāhib/s. madhhab*). 'The sixth view is the view of the majority who maintain that things have two existences. One of them is general existence (*al-wujūd al-ʾamm*) in which all things participate. The second is particular existence (*al-wujūd al-khāṣṣ*) which is particular to each thing. General existence is attributed to particular existences through gradation (*tashkīk*), so their variation is through gradation and not through themselves, as the philosophers (*ḥukamāʾ*) claim, and is not surplus (*zāʾid*) to the quiddities (*māhiyyāt*) in the external world. One of them is above the entirety and the cause of them all: it is the Necessary Existence. What is other than It is caused by It.' pp. 62–63.

2. This is a reference to the sixth investigation: 'Regarding the affirmation that existence is a reality pertaining to identity (*ḥaqīqah ʾayniyyah*) and that it is the origin (*al-aṣl*) of every realization, not the quiddity.' pp. 81–95.

accident both rely on that which is essentially common between them rather than on that on which they differ. Thus, it is impossible that two things which are entirely different in their reality participate in one common feature or one common accident, otherwise the pertinence between cause and effect would be eliminated.

We maintain that subordination of what is common accidentally to what is common essentially is impermissible—hence, the majority of the intelligent people have not upheld this view and have rejected the idea of the issuance of the single effect from multiple causes, where the effect is individually unique and the cause is an agent cause. However, this does not preclude abstracting a rational universal concept from multiple things.

Arguing against the philosophers, an acclaimed scholar has said:

If the instances of existence differ in their reality then that which makes them different is what constitutes their reality and their proper efficiencies and qualities, not the concept itself. Or, it is simply the concept without the former, or both of them. If it is the first case, then it would be the existence in its reality and not the concept. Hence, instead of a single inclusive reality, there would be instances of existence that are essentially at variance with each other, and we have already demonstrated the falsity of this idea. As for the second case, the application of the concept of existence to its instances is not like the application of essentials to their individual instances in a univocal way, because complete predication of two different concepts to a single essence is not possible. On the other hand if it is predicated partially then they will not be instances of existence rather, they are existents like other quiddities. And if it is the third case, then the meaning of that which constitutes their reality and their proper proficiencies would be common between the concept of existence and the reality of existence—and that itself is the existence, not the former or the latter—while again we can argue about the essential or accidental predication of this third reality. Now it has become clear from this that the conclusion of this view contradicts its premises, because if these realities were, by their own essence the source of the proficiency, just as their being existences requires, then this concept would be predicated to their essence and a definitive of their substantial, not accidental, quality. But, if it applies to them accidentally, then they would not be existences but rather existents. In this way the philosopher's view is proved to be invalid.

In reply to this we say: We choose the first alternative, that is the variety of the instances of existence, and as we stated earlier the variation of the instances of existence does result in variation in the Absolute Existence.

The Twelfth Investigation

Regarding the invalidity of the doctrine of the ‘theosopher’s spiritual taste’ (*dhawq al-mutaʿallihīn*)¹

You have come to know that what is intended by this [doctrine] is that things have no real existence, but that the real existence (*al-wujūd al-ḥaqīqī*) has only one instance and the existence of everything else is nothing but the relationship (*intisāb*) to it. So the application of ‘existence’ to the existences of all things is a metaphorical application. This doctrine has no basis; for no one has any doubt that all things are existent through Absolute Existence, and the denial of this is pure haughtiness. For, by Absolute Existence we do not mean anything except this self-evident being (*kawn*) which is abstracted from all things and which is truly² realized in every external existent.

In refuting the doctrine of the ‘theosopher’s spiritual taste’, the eminent professor Khwānsārī (d. 1099/1688),³ has said in his marginalia on the *Sharḥ al-ishārāt*:

One of the clearest self-evident ideas is the idea (*taṣawwur*) of existence. It is obvious that this self-evident idea is a descriptive quality (*ṣifahiyyun nāʿitiyyun*) for the reality of existence. Negating this description is nothing but the negation of other qualities which we have no doubt in its being a quality, like aboveness and belowness, fatherhood and sonhood and such like qualities. If it is said that there is an ultimate reality in the external world which corresponds to this self-evident concept and it is different from what is represented in our minds and unknown to us, we submit to it. But what is required here is that the ultimate reality be unknown, not that it be a quality. This ultimate reality should be self-subsisting, for if it were the case then this aspect would not be an aspect of it, since the aspect would not concede [and would not necessitate]⁴ its being attributed to the one who possesses the aspect. Otherwise, it would be an entity foreign to it. Then the outcome of what they mention and what they claim would not attain to anything, except that there is something whose reality is not known; and this self-evident entity which everyone knows⁵ and calls by existence and suchlike terms in other languages is not

1. ‘The perception of the theosophers’ is listed by Narāqī as the third school, after the philosophers and the theologians. They are a division of the philosophers, including such figures as Jalāl al-Dīn al-Dawānī (d. 906/1501), Suhrawardī and Mir Dāmād (d. 1040/1631). Narāqī defines their position as the belief ‘...that possible things are not characterized by existence. Rather, existence is an individual subsisting through its essence, and its existence is from its essence, while the existence of the possible things is due to a relationship and connection between them and the Presence of the Holy Existence (*al-wujūd al-muqaddas*), which becomes confirmed through the application of the term “existent” to them...’, p. 61.

2. Read *ḥaqīqī* for *ḥaqīqah*.

3. Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn al-Khwānsārī, a famous jurist and theologian of the Safavid period.

4. Brackets added by the editor.

5. Read *yaʿlamuhu* for *yaʿlamu*.

the reality of the Necessary—transcendent is He—and this self-evident entity does not apply to it, which is true. But the claim that it is an existence whose reality is not known is something different from saying: ‘They agreed to call that real entity by the term existence.’ Then, after agreeing on that technical term, do they claim that the possible beings are characterized by this self-evident entity which everyone knows by its being characterized by all the other characteristics, or not? If they claim this, then there remains no difference between them and others, except that they agree to call the essence of the Necessary [Being] by the term Existence. This is a linguistic matter, and if there were a dispute regarding it, it would be a religious dispute regarding whether God’s names—transcendent is He—are conditional upon having come from Him or not.

What they claim regarding the relation (*‘alāqah*) of possible beings to the Existence is not denied by anyone. They also never claimed attachment of possible beings to that self-evident concept, for that is contrary to rational and logical necessity. Now, what issue could be more clear to them than this, and what knowledge can they attain which is more certain? Tell me, is there any difference between what they regard as the basic principle of logic, i.e. that negation and affirmation do not agree ... the denial of which is sophistry and whose deniers are sophists, and the existent things we witness that are characterized by a self-evident quality which we understand by the term existence and its synonyms?

I do not think that you hesitate in accepting that there is no difference between these two, and if you possibly have any hesitation in this regard do not delay in treating your doubt. It is incumbent upon you to review the prescription in which there is treatment for sophists and remedy for those who are bewildered ...

This is the state of Absolute Existence and as for particular existences, you have come to know that when they are realized in the external world they are real, their essence is instaurated and they differ in reality. Moreover they are various and numerous in the external world. Thus, to say that they are non-existent and unreal as the theosopher’s spiritual taste would require is meaningless.

He also argued against it and said:

The existence of relation requires the existence of the related sides. According to them quiddities are non-existent so how can there be a relation between them and Necessary Existence?

The gnostic theosopher, Ṣadr-i Shīrāzī says: ‘what some eminent scholars have said about the existence of quiddities through relation with the Real Being, calling it the theosopher’s spiritual taste, has nothing to do with the specific unity of existence because they believe that what is issued by the instaurer is the quiddity not the existence, and we have proved that this is wrong. If this is the meaning of the unity of existence then every one who maintains that the particular existence of possible beings is an abstract unreal entity and that which is real in the external world is the quiddity, is a theo-monist in the manner of divine gnostics and can claim the same

thing which this eminent scholar (?) has claimed. According to such persons there is no difference between these two except that they attribute the alleged reality of the quiddity to the instaurer and thus the existence of “Zayd” would mean “God of Zayd”. Such a claim is easy but there are serious questions about it...’

In his commentary on *Hayākil al-nūr*,¹ the scholar Dawānī (d. 908/1502)² has expounded a vindication of the theosopher’s spiritual taste. We will, therefore, mention his argument and indicate what is brought against it, so that no doubt will remain for one who seeks verification. He said:

We will establish two premises. The first of them is that philosophical truths cannot be derived from customary usage³ of words because a word in its conventional usage may denote a meaning which is contrary to what rational demonstration supports. An example of this is the word knowledge (*ilm*) which lexically means cognition, perception, knowledge and the like. Now philosophical reflection implies that the reality of abstract form can sometimes be a substance, as in the case of knowledge of substance, sometimes self-subsistent, like the knowledge spiritual entities have of their essence, and sometimes essentially necessary, like the knowledge the Necessary Being has of His own Essence. It also must be noted that the substantial differences which are expressed by words and added to that substance, like ‘rational’ for man and ‘sensitive’ and ‘moving by will’ for animals, are not of the kind of relations and additions, for that which is part of substance is nothing but substance.

The second premise is that the attribution of a derivative noun to something does not require the subsistence of the source of derivation in that thing, although conventionally it is understood in this way. That is because the attribution of ‘ironsmith’ to Zayd and of ‘sunny’ to a body of water is not correct except that iron is the thing with which Zayd works and the water related to the sun is warmed by facing it.

After establishing these we say: It is possible that the existence which is the source of the derivation (*mabda’ al-ishtiqaq*) of the existent be subsistent by its own essence, and that is the reality of Necessary Being—transcendent is He—and the existence of whatever is other than Him is through relation with Him. Thus the concept of existent includes both the divine reality and that which is related to it. This general concept is a relative concept which must be considered as a secondary intelligible and a primary self-evident notion.

1. *Shawākil al-hūr fi sharḥ hayākil al-nūr* (written 872/1468), a commentary on the *Hayākil al-nūr* of Shihāb al-Dīn Yaḥyā al-Suhrawardī (d. 578/1191).

2. Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. As‘ad al-Dawānī, a leading theologian, philosopher and jurist, many of whose positions are disputed, as some believe he transitioned from a Sunni perspective to an Imāmī perspective over the course of his life. He was highly criticized by both Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Dashtakī (d. 903/1498) and his son, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Manṣūr al-Dashtakī (d. 948/1541). See *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. 7, pp. 132–133.

3. Read ‘urfiyyah for farfiyyah.

Were you to argue, ‘How could it be perceivable that this reality be at the same time existent and the identity of the existence, and how it is justifiable that the concept of existent be a general concept and apply simultaneously to the reality of existence and that which is other than it?’

I would reply, ‘The meaning of existent is not what comes immediately to one’s mind and not, as imagined in customary understanding, something which differs from existence. Rather, its meaning is what is expressed in Persian by *hast* (that which is) and its synonyms. So, if we assume existence detached (*mujarrad*) from every thing, as something which subsists through its essence, then it is existence for itself, and therefore it would be both the existence and the existent which subsists through itself. Just as when a separated form subsists through itself, it is knowledge in itself, and therefore it is the knowledge, the knower and the known. Just as when heat is detached from fire, it will be hot and heat together. Bahmanyār (d. 458/1066)¹ has explained this idea in his book, *al-Bahjah wa’l-sa’adah* (The Joy and the Prosperity), by saying, “If sensual forms were detached from senses and subsisting through themselves, they would be sensor and sensed at the same time.”

It is also said: ‘The idea that the existence is surplus to the existent cannot be explained except through elucidation. For example, we know that certain things are sometimes existent and sometimes non-existent. From this we learn that existent is not identical with existence because we know that that which is the identity of the existence is necessary by its essence, whereas there are existents which are not necessary, therefore existence is surplus to them.’

Now if you ask, how can this broad meaning be conceivable? I would reply that this broad meaning is conceivable in two ways. The first possibility is that this broad meaning is either existence itself, or that which is related to it in a particular way; and the criterion for that is that it is the source of effectiveness and proficiency. Or, it is possible that this broad meaning in regard to both of them is that which the existence is founded on; whether be it the existence which subsists through itself, (which in that case means the subsistence of existence through it is the subsistence of a thing through itself), or be it like the subsistence of an abstract rational concept through its objects, such as universality and particularity and the like. Although the quality of subsistence is applied metaphorically to this broad meaning, nevertheless it does not imply that the application of the term existent is also metaphorical. Therefore, it becomes clear that the existence (*wujūd*) which is the source of the derivation of the existent (*mawjūd*), is a singular entity that exists by itself and is a concrete reality. Thus the concept of existent is a general notion which applies both to this self-subsisting reality and that which is related to it. In order to understand the view of the philosophers (*ḥukamā’*) in this regard we have to note that the rational concept of existence is a subjective meaning which is the first of all

1. Abu’l-Ḥasan Bahmanyār b. Marzbān, the most famous student of Ibn Sīnā. See *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia*, vol. 1.

primary representations. Thus, its application to that self-subsisting reality is either metaphorical or through other kinds of application. Hence, it is not the ipseity of the Necessary [Being]—exalted is He. By taking this into consideration one can avoid the confusion which embroils the intellect and renders the mind obtuse.

If you say, ‘What you have mentioned in regard to the possibility of applying their argument on that is not sufficient; rather, it is necessary that there be evidence that the matter is such in reality,’ I would argue, ‘It has been demonstrated that the existence of Necessary Being and His essence are one and the same, and it is clear that the self-evident universal concept of existence is not correct for that.’

If you say, ‘Why is it not possible that they both be necessary in their essence and that the concept of necessary existence be applicable to them accidentally?’ I would argue, ‘Recalling the aforementioned premises and comprehending the subsequent propositions suffices for repudiating this illusion, because you came to know that if it were as you have just stated, then the application (*‘urūd*) of this concept to them is either a cause by its essence, which in that case would result in the priority of its existence to itself, or it would be something caused by other than itself which is worse! It has been verified and established that that to which necessity or existence occurs accidentally is a possible entity. Thus, the Necessary Existence is the existence itself which subsists through itself. Therefore, when we say Necessary Existence is existent, we mean what we mentioned earlier and not that to which existence occurs. Regarding this, the Second Teacher¹ and the Shaykh² have specified that the application of ‘existent’ to the Necessary Being, as understood literally, is metaphorical.’

When this [the above argument] has been established, it becomes clear that there cannot be two independent entities that are both self-subsisting and necessary, because in that case the necessity of existence would be accidental and common between them. Rather, we claim that if we examine the reality of existence we realize that it is necessary and self-subsisting. Briefly speaking, when we consider the existence which is common between existents we find that their participation in existence is not in terms of sharing in it, rather it is in terms of relationship to it. So it becomes clear that the existence with which all quiddities have relationship is a necessary self-subsisting entity which is not shared among them. Just as if we examine the concept of ironsmith and of being sunny, at first glance it may seem that the iron and the sun are shared in by their respective individual instances, but after a closer examination we realize that they are not sharing in the iron and the

1. Abū Naṣr Muḥammad b. Tarkhān b. Uzluḡ al-Fārābī (d. 339/950). One of the first Peripatetic philosophers of the Islamic philosophical tradition, and the first to coin many of the distinctions which are central to the discussion of existence. See *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia*, vol 1.

2. Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) (d. 428/1037). He is the most famous of the early Islamic philosophers. See *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia*, vol 1.

sun, rather they have a relationship with those. It is therefore apparent that the accidental occurrence is erroneous and that which we counted as commonly accidental is not accidental in actuality; it is rather a self-subsisting entity with which those instances have a relationship.

One of the eminent scholars has posed many arguments against him, most of which are right. One of those arguments is that we do not admit that iron (*ḥadīd*) is the source of the derivation of ironsmith (*ḥaddād*). How could that be when iron is an inflexible noun from which it is not appropriate to derive anything—and likewise for being sunny?

Although predicating a derivative to a thing does not require the subsistence of the source of the derivation through that thing, as he has established, it does require the realization of the source of the derivation in that thing at least. What he mentioned regarding the example of the ironsmith and being sunny is an unreliable argument because metaphorical application through extension is permissible, for some metaphorical sources of the derivation such as *al-taḥaddud* (to assume the quality of iron) and *al-tashammus* (to assume the quality of sun), or iron-ness (*al-ḥadīdiyyah*) and sun-ness (*al-shamsiyyah*) are permissible, but the mere relation to the iron and the sun cannot be the source of derivation. Rather, they stem from presuming that iron has a sort of presence in the one who crafts it, as if persistent working with iron and being constantly occupied with it makes the man come to have a portion from the iron—and why not so, because the form of the iron subsists in the mind of the ironsmith.

Although iron in its real existence is impossible to subsist through other than itself, its form subsists in the mind of the perceiver. In the same way it is permissible to say that the application of ‘sun-like’ to the warm water is, through extension, by imagining the existence of the quality of the sun in water. In summary, realities do not originate from these applications as he has maintained. How could he claim that?

Also, just as what is derived is a universal concept, regarding which no one has any doubt, likewise, the source of derivation, whether it be part of the derived or its ipseity, must be a universal concept; for a part of the universal concept cannot itself be a particular individual. So his claim regarding the self-subsistence of the source of the derivation of the existent is not correct.

Also, how can the people of the language and its customary usage arrive at the subjective and objective form and other things from a word if they do not know the meaning of the source of derivation? There is no doubt that the truth (*kunh*) of the Necessary Being—transcendent is He—is not known at all to the scholars or other people, though common people apply the term ‘existent’ and its synonyms in other languages, (like *ḥast* in Persian for example), whilst they know its meaning without representing the Holy Truth of the Divine in their mind, or perceiving the meaning of relation to Him. His statement regarding the fact that in customary usage a term can be applied to a meaning—which the intellect will rightly oppose—does

not prove that what we are discussing here is of the same type. How could that be when the concept of existence and of existent are of the most apparent of self-evident concepts and better known than all ideas conceived, as it is agreed upon? But according to what he said, it must be one of the most obscure things known; for His Essence—transcendent is He—is not known to anyone. Likewise, any relation to an unknown entity is obviously an unknown relation.

Also, the source of the derivation (*ishtiqāq*) of every derived term must be one single meaning. Deriving a term from two different sources, once from one source and once from another source, is not permissible. This has never been subscribed to by linguists or others. Therefore, the concept of existent when applied to the essence of the Creator (*al-bārī'*) signifies existence, but when applied to what is other than Him signifies that which is related to Him. Of course this is not justifiable, for we know that the concept of existence refers to a genuine reality in all its instances (*mushtarak ma'nawī*), and it is not like the concept of 'black' which applies sometimes to abstract black (i.e. blackness), and sometimes to a black thing; because its meaning is the same in all instances, i.e. that for which blackness is true, although its instance in the first case is blackness itself and in the second case is blackness along with something else. Thus the criterion of being black is the absolute realization of blackness, whether being detached from what is other than it or being along with something else. Moreover, what he has understood by the concept of existent is not correct.

Also, how did he know that the essence of God—transcendent is He—is pure¹ existence, after he denied the view of the philosophers that existence is a reality in the external world and he imagined that they believe that existence is only a secondary intelligible which has no instance in the external world? If it is so then from where did it occur to him that the reality of Necessary [Being]—transcendent is He—is an individual instance of existence (*fard li'l-wujūd*)? If he has learnt this because philosophers apply the term existent to the Necessary [Being], it is not permissible to acquire knowledge and identity by the application of a term, and we know that he avoids that, for he has said: 'Realities are not derived from customary applications.' It is amazing that he went to great lengths to affirm something which is not very important, i.e. applying the derived term and intending the source of derivation, while disregarding what is important here, which is that the essence of Creator is the pure truth of existence as well as existent. Because there is no way to prove theo-monism (*tawhīd*) except by proving that the concept of existence, which is common between all essences, is a simple reality.

To accept this principle is very unlikely from him for he denies that there is a reality for existence in the external world. The argument which he posed to himself and which he answered by saying: 'If you said, "how is it possible to

1. Read *baḥt* for *baḥth*.

perceive that that reality is existent” up to the point where he says ‘It is an existent subsisting through itself’ is like jumping straight to the conclusion. What he is saying in his answer would only be sound if the following criticism could be posed to his view. That is, if the essence of God—transcendent is He—is equal to pure existence, then how could He be an existent? But because he expressed his criticism and said: ‘how can you say that the reality of God exists in the external world when existence is of the secondary intelligibles’, therefore that answer is not allowed. In the meantime what is possible to say is this: although existence is mental representation (*i’tibārī*), this does not contradict the predication of ‘existent’ to God—transcendent is He—and therefore the Creator is the identity of existent, not the identity of existence. And that is the opposite of his school, as the master who is his contemporary maintained; i.e., that God’s Essence—transcendent is He—is identical to the concept of existent. You already know what lies in that position. For saying that the essence of God is identical to the reality of pure existent means that the essence of God by itself is an instance for the predication of that derived term.

Also, his statement, ‘If existence is considered detached from what is other than it, then it is an existence in itself’ up to the point where he says, ‘same as the heat if considered in this way’, proves that existence is a common reality, and that some of its individuals subsist through itself and some through something else. This, according to the view¹ of scholars, is true and only conceivable when the participated reality between the two is something other than the verbal noun and the abstract concept of existence, because the intellect will not recognize a verbal noun or a representational concept as a self-subsisting reality.

Also his statement: ‘the existence which is the source of the derivation of existent is a single entity’, is not deductible from what he said, for, after admitting that the existent is more general than the two types—a reality subsisting through itself, and things related to it—it did not become clear that the first type is a single entity, for its being self-subsistent does not mean that there is a real individual for that infinitive concept. For, according to his view, there is no real individual for this general concept, nor does it have an instance in the external world. All he can say is to claim: ‘because the reality of the Necessary Being exists positively in the extra-mental world by virtue of His essence, then the term “existent” (*mawjūd*) is applicable to Him without being made by an agent or being made actual by a receptive subject. Therefore no one should imagine that there are two realities with the said quality...’

We have brought in the objections of this scholar here at length only to support our claim and to strengthen that which we are concerned with. I say: we also oppose him by saying how is it possible to interpret the view of the philosophers in your way?

1. Read *ḥasbamā* for *jismā*.

Because they maintain that every existent has a particular existence and there is an absolute existence abstracted from it. Indeed the best statement is the statement of philosophers who maintain that the Necessary is pure existence and the reality of existence subsists through itself, so there is no need to interpret their view in that way.

As for the claim that the existence of possible beings is through relationship (*al-intisāb*), it is not possible to attribute that to the argument of the philosophers. In concisely formulating the idea of the spiritual taste of the theosopher one commentator has said: ‘when the possible realities, which are the intelligible forms in the knowledge of God—transcendent is He—become qualified for existence, there occurs a particular relationship between them and Real Existence. Through this relationship they become existent. Just as when a particular relationship occurs between an object and a mirror, its reflection occurs in the mirror. There is no difference between these two except that the quality of this relationship is known in the later and unknown in the former.’

A clarification of the argument would be to say that existence is applied to two meanings. The first meaning is be-ing (*kawn*) and actualization (*ḥuṣūl*), which is a subjective quality extracted from existents. The second meaning is the truth of existence which is a real existent and an actualized essence. In this second sense, existence is not an accidental quality (*‘arīḍ*) for something or a subject for an accident (*ma‘rūd*); rather, it subsists through itself and transcends from being accidental or the subject of accident. It is in fact the ipseity of the Necessary Being—transcendent is His mode—while existence in the first sense (i.e. the self-evident be-ing (*kawn*)), is one of the effects of this existence. Therefore applying [the term] ‘existent’ to the Necessary Being—transcendent is His mode—is in consideration of its being the ipseity of existence. As for applying existence to other things, that is in consideration of them being illuminated by the rays of Real Existence and Its manifestation (*zuhūr*) in them—just as when water is warmed by the rays of the sun it is said of it that it is made sunny or sun-like (*mushammas*), that it is heated by the rays of the sun. So, the Necessary Being is a real existent but possible beings are dependant (*i‘tibārī*) existents. With regard to the verification of the manner of illumination of things by Real Existence, though they are non-existent by themselves, I have to say that the reality of possible beings consists of their intelligible forms in the knowledge of God as the modes of His essence. Because God’s knowledge of His Holy essence, when considered from the point of view of His attributes, is His essential modes i.e. the relations included in His Holy essence—but not like the inclusion of water in a jug or the inclusion of two and three in four. Rather, it is like the inclusion of what is inherent in that which is inhered (*indirāj al-lāzim fi’l-malzūm*) such as the inclusion of half, third and fourth in the numeral one before it becomes part of the digit two, three and four. For the intellect can find¹ endless relations in the number one before it becomes part of a

1. Read *mawjūdah* for *mawjūdahu*.

particular number, such as the halfness of the two or the thirdness of the three and so on. So the inclusion which is proper to the divine essential modes is similar to this. The essential modes are relationships and these relationships are the realities of possible beings, and the existence of these realities is nothing but the manifestation of Real Existence in them. Thus, when a possible being becomes qualified for existence a particular inapprehensible relationship will occur between it and the Real Existence, and this relationship is the cause of the manifestation of possible things.

They have maintained several concrete examples to help one understand this relationship. One of them is that the relation of the reality of possible things to Real Existence is like the relation of forms to the mirror, for it appears to our senses that the reflected forms are the accidents of the mirror. But after referring to the intellect, one knows that they are not the accidents of the mirror, not upon its surface, nor inside it. Rather, there occurred a particular relationship between the object and the mirror through which it was displayed by the mirror, and this display does not bring about any change in the mirror itself. Likewise, when a particular relationship occurs between the Necessary Being—transcendent is He—and the realities of possible beings, it becomes an occasion for their emergence. Just as the appearance of the form in the mirror and its disappearance from it does not change or transform the mirror, so too, the manifestation of the realities of possible things and their non-manifestation does not become an occasion for the transformation or alteration of the Most Holy Essence. The Real Existence dominates over all bits of the universe. And just as the reflection of the light of the sun upon the pure things does not make it perfect, or its reflection upon the impure things make it defective, so too, its domination over all things does not bring perfection or deficiency for the Real Existence.

Another of the examples they use is that the relationship of the effusion of the Most Holy Existence to the intelligible forms, which are the realities of possible things, is like the relationship of the spirit to the body. So is the relationship of these intelligible realities to concrete existents. There is no doubt that the relationship of the spirit to the body is not of the kind of within-ness and without-ness, nor of the kind of connection and disconnection, but of the kind of administration (*tadbīr*) only.

Now let it be known that when it is said that the emergence of the realities of possible beings is from the existence of the Necessary Being—transcendent is He—no one should imagine that this means the existence of possible beings is the Real Existence, for this cannot be attributed to the school of the spiritual taste of theosophers rather it pertains to the school of Sufism.

In repudiating this supposition, they have said that the light of the moon is derived from the sun, and the moon has no light itself; rather, through a particular relationship between the sun and the moon the light of the sun is effused to the moon. There is no doubt that the light of the sun is not conveyed to the moon and not divided such that some of it comes to be in the moon and some in the sun. Rather, the state of the

sun and its light does not change or transform,¹ and it is illuminated by its own light, but the moon becomes luminous from the rays of the sun's light. There is no doubt that the light of the sun is not same as the light of the moon, but the light of the moon, in a particular sense is identical to the light of the sun because its luminosity is from the rays of the sun. This is also true about the existence of possible things, since the existence of the Necessary [Being]—transcendent is His mode—is the identity of His Essence, and the existence of possible beings is nothing but the manifestation of the Real Existence in their realities upon a particular relationship. Therefore, possible beings² are necessarily devoid of real independent existence and their existence is not identical to the existence of the Necessary—transcendent is He. Rather, their existence consists of the manifestation of Real Existence in them, and through this they become existent. The Necessary Being is the identity of the reality of existence, just as things are illuminated by the rays of light falling upon them and the light is illuminated by itself. This is the extent of what can be said regarding the explanation (*tawjīh*) of these schools. It should be noted that he criticized this explanation more than he criticized the statements of Dawānī.

Needless to say, most of the criticisms which are levelled against the idea of the spiritual taste of theosophers are true about this orientation, and they are as follows. The occurrence of any relationship is secondary to the existence of the sides of relationship and we know that the quiddities have no concrete reality. On the basis of this explanation there are two sides for such a relationship. The first is the Real Existence and the second is the intelligible forms, which are the realities of possible things. Here we question: if these intelligible forms are real entities and differ from the Real Existence that is manifested in them, then this entails multiplicity and combination in the Divine Essence, and that is erroneous. And if they are purely subjective and nonexistent, then they are not qualified for being a side of relationship.³

In addition we claim that there are two positions in regard to this clear and concrete manifestation of the realities of possible beings which are based on the particular relationship being discussed. The first is that they are not a real thing, rather they are purely non-existent, which is mere sophistry because the quiddity is purely subjective (*i'tibārī*) and if its manifestation be also subjective then nothing⁴ would ever exist in the real world—which is exactly what the sophists claim. As for the second position, if the existences of possible beings are subjective and at the same time the quiddities are also subjective, then the aforementioned constraint would occur again. And if the quiddities, after their annexation to existence, are

1. There appears to be an addition to the text or an incomplete word added to the text. The text is unclear and cannot be resolved without reference to manuscripts.

2. Read *mumkināt* for *makānāt*.

3. Read *mansūbīn* for *manūsibīn*.

4. Āshtiyānī chooses *shay'un* in the nominative, but notes in parenthesis that one MS reads *shay'an* in the accusative. The reading in the accusative fits the context better than that in the nominative.

real entities, this would follow the position of the theologians regarding the existences of possible beings.

If there is between the two schools, [that of the theologians and that of the theosophers] a difference regarding the existence of the Necessary Being, that is because according to the theologians, the reality of the Necessary Being is also one of the quiddities, and the existence which is also a subjective entity, is identical with it. But according to the spiritual taste of theosophers, the reality of Necessary Being is pure existence and the reality¹ of possible beings is nothing but quiddities that are realized in the external world; their existence is inauthentic and derived from the particular relationship discussed earlier. So the objection raised against the school of the theologians is also applicable to the school of the theosophers, as you already knew.

Further to this we can raise another objection and say that the existence of relationship at this juncture is meaningless because relationship is secondary to the existence of the related sides, and if the aforementioned alternatives are invalid then the so-called school of the spiritual taste of theosophers would become invalid because no other alternative remains.

One of the accomplished scholars has argued with a rational demonstration in favour of the spiritual taste of theosophers which we quote here and will then proceed to refute. He said—may he rest in peace: ‘Know that the Real Necessary is unique by virtue of the Real Existence which is His identity. All that is other than Him among possible things are existent through a special relationship and a particular affiliation with Him, not by the occurrence of existence, as is normally understood.’

The verification of that calls for us to set down two premises. The first is that the concept of existence is sometimes meant and applied to being in a concrete mode, but there is no doubt that this meaning of existence is an abstract and fictitious concept. And sometimes it is applied to that which is the source of abstracting the notion of being in a concrete sense and the criterion for its application and predication. This latter meaning of existence is the identity of Necessary [Being], because if it were not by its essence the source of the derivation of the notion of existence and an instance of its predication, then it could not be existent by itself, and would necessarily need an agent to instaur it as an existent. But we know that the mediation of the instauration between a thing and its self is impossible and the change of that thing to another thing, after it becomes an existent² by its essence, would also require an instaurer and an agent.

The second principle we must set down is that the criterion of essential necessity is nothing except that the Necessary [Being] by itself is the origin of the abstraction of the existence and the existent-ness. Because, when we investigate about the Necessary [Being’s] needlessness of efficient cause and instaurer for His existence, we realize that

1. Text reads *ḥaqīqah* but *ḥaqā’iq* is probably a better reading, as this would be consistent with the text.

2. Read *yakun* for *yumkin*.

it is only the Necessary which, essentially and by itself, is the origin of the abstraction of the concept of existence and the instance of the predication of the concept of existent. Thus we necessarily learn that when something by its essence is the source of the derivation of the concept of existent, it is needless of any agent or instaurer to make it an existent and it is originally free from it. Therefore, when the existence of a thing is such that it is by virtue of its essence the source of derivation of the concept of existence and the criterion of its necessity, then a possible thing by itself would never be the source of derivation of the notion of existence, for otherwise it would be necessary by its essence and this is impossible. Thus necessarily no possible being can ever be the source of derivation of the concept of existence.

The criterion for the essential necessity is that the reality of the Necessary [Being] as such is the source of the abstraction of the concept of existence and an instance for applying the concept of existent. On the other hand the criterion for the essential possibility is that the reality of the possible existent is not like what we said about the Necessary existent. If you accept these two premises, I will go on to say that for every possible being, be it called existence or quiddity, its own essence as such does not serve as the basis for the abstraction of existence and the abstraction of existent from it. Otherwise, according to what has preceded, it would be necessary. That would be the destruction of existence, either because there would not obtain from the existent agent a suitable basis (*haythiyyah*) for the abstraction of existence from it, or because the basis would obtain from it. If it did not obtain, it would remain as it is in itself, due to the fact that it has no suitability for the existence to be abstracted from it. So it would necessarily not become an existent afterwards. This is a contradiction. If this basis [for the abstraction of existence] is not gained from the agent, then we would say that this basis is not itself in its own essence. Otherwise it would be necessary, according to what preceded in the premises [we laid down]. The scholar al-Dawānī has expounded upon this in his commentary on *al-Tajrīd*¹ and says:

The source of the abstraction of existence in the possible being is its essence with respect to the situation it acquires from the agent, and in the Necessary [Being] is itself by Its Essence. Therefore, the source of the existence of the possible being is from something other than its own essence, and that thing cannot be an abstract entity. Otherwise, it would need an existent principle suitable for its abstraction, for an intelligible entity cannot be original (*nafs amrī*) unless it has an external real source. Rather, according to what they have expressed, an intelligible thing has no meaning except that which has an existing source, and that source as such is different from the intelligible thing, otherwise the possible being, by itself, would be the source for the abstraction of that which by itself is the source of the abstraction of the existence and

1. Dawānī's discussion of 'Alī b. Muḥammad Qūshchī's (d. 879/1474) commentary on the Shi'i-oriented treatise of Naṣir al-Dīn Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274), *al-Tajrīd f'il-i'tiqād*. This text of Dawānī's became a central text in some circles of Shi'i-Sunni debate and was criticized extensively by both Dashtakīs.

the existent. That would necessitate its being the source of the abstraction of existence and existent by itself. For, it itself would be a source of abstraction for that which is a source of the abstraction of existent. It would thus be a necessary being by itself and so contrary to the original assumption. If they say that the intelligible thing is identical to that which is the source of the abstraction of existence according to another aspect, then we repeat the same argument about that aspect, and in this way it would lead to infinite succession. This proves that the supposedly acquired aspect is not an original thing because it doesn't lead to an existent source qualified for the abstraction of its existence, while every authentic intelligible thing should have a real source.

And if that other—I mean the gained aspect from the agent—were a possible existent entity, its own essence as such could not be the source for the abstraction of existence because otherwise it would be necessary, in accordance with what has preceded. So we will move the discussion to that, which also leads to infinite succession. Therefore we move the discussion to the whole of those other infinite entities and say this whole by its essence and in itself also cannot be the source of the abstraction of the existent because it is a possible thing and needs another source. Thus it is a contradiction.

Also it is not possible that the gained aspect be the same as the essence of the Necessary in conjunction with the possible thing. Otherwise, it would be immanent in the possible or a locus for it, and both of these are an absurd impossibility, as it was explained in its place. So the only possible alternative is to say that it has a special kind of relationship with the Necessary without being immanent in it or being a locus for it. This special relationship can justify the abstraction of existence as there is no other possible explanation. It is through this relationship that the existence occurs to possible beings and they become existent, and this is what we meant.

So know that this relationship, as explained before, is neither an immanent nor a locus of it. Rather, it is a particular relationship and a specific connection which resembles the relation of accidental to accident from a certain aspect, but not exactly identical, as is imagined. The truth is that the reality of this relationship and its quality is unknown. How wonderful is what one of the scholars has said: 'Whatever has been said or will be said of approximating this relationship, makes it somehow ungraspable.' This particular relationship is exactly what is meant by God's togetherness, or literally 'witness' (*ma'iyyah*)—transcendent is He—to possible beings. God, the Exalted, refers to this where He says: 'He is with you wherever you are.'¹ Rather, it is exactly the causation and existentiation relationship. Therefore, it is said: 'that God's witness to possible beings is not like the witness of substance to substance, or accident to accident or substance to accident. It is not even like the witness of existent to existent, rather, it is nothing but the witness of existence.'²

1. Qur'ān 57:4.

2. It seems that the sentence is not completed.

From what we have said it becomes clear that the Necessary [Being] has a particular relationship and a specific connection with what is other than It and caused by It. This relationship, from one respect, is the relationship of ipseity and existence, and from the second respect the relationship of causation and existention, and from the third respect the relationship of witness and proximity. These three relationships are different in respect, not in essence.

The scholar Nayshāpūrī has referred to this point in his commentary where he said: ‘There is no mote in the world that is not encompassed and overpowered by the light of lights. The light of lights is nearer to everything than its existence, but not merely in terms of its knowledge of them or in terms of originating and creating them, rather in a way that is not graspable except through imagination.’ But his comment is questionable because the notion of proximity and nearness to which he is referring is nothing but the relationship of causation and existention. The truth which deserves to be accepted is that the nature of the relationship of the Real Necessary to Its caused things is indeterminable.

The eminent scholar Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, in his commentary on the *Hikmat al-ishrāq* [of Suhrawardī] has quoted from him who said: ‘ascribing different relationships to the Necessary is not permissible because it means that there are different aspects in Him, while He has only one aspect and that is the origin of all relationships.’ So understand!

What is closest to approximating this relationship, (i.e. Its encompassing and Its witness to the existents,) is what a certain scholar has said regarding whoever knows the witness of the spirit and its domination over the body—despite its immateriality, cleanness from entering or exiting the body, attachment to and separation from it—knows, in a certain way, the manner of His domination over and His witness to the existents without incarnation (*ḥulūl*), unification (*ittiḥād*), entry, union, exit and separation. But we have to bear in mind that the relationship of the body and soul is enormously and rather infinitely different from God’s relationship to existents. Thus it is said, ‘He who knows himself, knows his Lord.’¹

The following was posited against him: Why is it not permissible that the source of the abstraction of general self-evident existence be the particular existence belonging to the possible thing that is realized in the external world, as you already know? This particular existence is something caused by the Necessary, yet despite that, it is the source of the abstraction of the general concept of existence. How can we admit that that from which the abstraction of existence arises must be necessary in its essence? Whereas, Necessary is that which is the source of the abstraction of existence by virtue of the purity and the simplicity of Its essence without needing a cause,² the particular existence, to be the source of the abstraction needs the

1. This famous saying, usually quoted as a *ḥadīth*, is not accepted as canonical by the specialists (cf. *Mu’jam*, 1261). It is frequently cited in Sufi texts.

2. Read literally, the text would mean ‘pure from not needing a cause’. This would contradict

other—meaning it needs the other to proceed from it and when it proceeds from it, it becomes the source of the abstraction of existence. So what the author mentioned, that if a possible existent were the source of the abstraction of existence it would be Necessary, is incorrect, because that which is the source¹ of abstraction, despite its needlessness of being proceeded and realized, is still in need of the other and thus it will not change to Necessary. This is very clear.

What he mentioned regarding the account of withness, and that it is the relationship of creation and existentiation, is admitted. But this does not require the affirmation of his doctrine, for it is based upon the unreality of the existence of possible things. However, God's withness to things does not contradict the realness of the existence of possible things. You have already come to know the corruption of this doctrine.

The gnostic theosopher Şadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī has also argued against it by saying:

There are several points regarding this. The first, saying that the essence of the Necessary being in itself is the existence of all the quiddities, of substances and accidents is incorrect, as is known through reflection. For, there is no differentiation in the quiddities of some of the individual instances of existents, though some of them precede others in existence. The precedence of the existence of some existents before the others will not be intelligible if their existence is genuinely one and equal to the whole. If one makes the excuse that the differentiation in regards to preceding and following is not in real existence, but in their relation and connection to it, the relation of some of them to real existence would precede some of the others.

In this case we would say: the relationship, insofar as it is a relationship, is an intelligible entity that has no concrete reality or differentiation in itself but through an aspect of the sides of relationship. For, if the side of the relationship were the essence of the [Divine] Unicity and that which is related to it were a quiddity—which because of its being essentially inauthentic and non-existent requires no priority and posteriority, causation and being caused, and the priority of some of its individual instances in comparison to others—then from whence comes the distinction of some of the individuals of quiddity by priority or posteriority in relation to the Necessary?

The second point is, if its relation to the Creator pertains to unification, it requires that the Necessary—transcendent is He—possess a quiddity other than pure existence or rather, that He possess numerous different quiddities. And we will demonstrate in what follows that He has no quiddity other than 'Being-ness' (*al-anniyyah*). And if the relationship between them and the Necessary pertained to dependence (*ta'alluq*) then we have to bear in mind that the dependence of one thing on another thing is secondary to their existence and actuality, and this in turn implies that there be for

the argument Narāqī is making. Therefore, we have read *min ghayr ihtiyāj* as *min ghayr ahtāj* in order to fit the context.

1. Read *mabda'* for *mada*.

every quiddity a particular existence preceding its relation and dependence, since there would be no doubt that their realities are not comprised of dependence on what is other than them. For, very often we conceive a quiddity and doubt about its relation to the Real and its dependence upon Him—transcendent is He—contrary to the existences, for we may say that their identities are nothing but their dependence and relationship to the Real. For it is not possible to understand their realities except through understanding the reality of their cause and their instaurer, as is clear in the science of demonstration. God willing, we will clarify that in this book.

The third point is that the existences of things are also multiple like the existents, except that the existents are real entities but the existences are either authentic—like the existence of the Necessary [Being]—or inauthentic, like the existence of possible things. So there is no difference between this doctrine and the well-known doctrine of the majority of later scholars who maintain that the existence of possible things is inauthentic and the existence of the Necessary [Being] is authentic, because contrary to possible beings, He by His Essence is the instance for predicating the existent. Except that in their view the abstracted entity known as the existence of possible things is interpreted as relationship, dependence, rapport, or other terms. Thus, the claim that, according to this doctrine, existence is an individual real one and the existent is a universal manifold is not correct. Rather, we believe that there is no difference between the two doctrines insofar as both consider the existent-ness of things and their existence as an intelligible meaning which in its universal concept comprises all existents, whether that which constitutes their existence is their own essence or something else, and whether it is through relationship or not...

I claim that what he has mentioned is good, except his second remark where he says ‘contrary to the existences’ since it can be claimed that their identities do not differ from their dependence upon Him and their connection to Him, until where he said: ‘This has been explained in the science of demonstration.’ God willing, we will come to know what is contained in his statement.

If you said: It can also be argued against this view that there is no doubt that general self-evident existence is abstracted from existent possible beings. So, if the source of the abstraction were Real Existence and there has not been any other source except that, then the general concept of existence would be inherently equal to Real Existence. Thus, the possible existences are all united with general existence in the external world, and they look different from it only in the observation of the intellect, and this is something which none who possess intellect doubt. Moreover, if the possible existences are united with general existence in the external world, it would be necessary that they be united with the Real Existence as well, because everything that is united with that which is inherently equal, would be united with that in which it inheres as well. Therefore, since the possible existences are united with absolute existence, which itself is inherently equal to Real Existence, it must be also united with Real Existence. Therefore, it would be necessary that the existence

and the existent both be one and the same, while the foundation of this doctrine is based on the idea that the existence is one and the existent is manifold though the source of the abstraction of the absolute existence is the possible existences. However, there is no doubt that the possible existences are various and different in themselves, but what they claim means that a single concept be abstracted from entities which have different essences and realities. This is not permissible, for it has been proved that that which is accidentally common is subject to that which is essentially common. Further to this, abstracting the concept of existence from quiddities of the possible things is not intelligible.

I would say: The truth is that such an argument cannot be brought to bear against this doctrine, because its adherents would reply as follows. Just as absolute existence can be abstracted from Real Existence which is Necessary by its essence, so too, it can also be abstracted from the possible existences with respect to their relationship with the Real Existence. Furthermore, absolute existence has analogical gradation (*tashkik*), and it has variegated portions differing in perfection and deficiency, and intensity and weakness. Every portion is abstracted from a particular existent. The most perfect of portions is that whose source of abstraction is Real Existence, followed by the portion which has a connection with real existence without the intermediary of another existent, and so forth. And the predicable absolute existence is abstracted from these portions which differ in perfection and deficiency. This is not impossible, because what is impossible is that a single concept be abstracted from realities differing in their essences, from all perspectives, not coinciding, and not comprising entities which coincide or the entity which coincides. Nor could it be derived from a single entity. Its differing is also not in the manner of realization, i.e. perfection and deficiency. But if the variegated entities were one of the aforementioned kinds then it is permissible to abstract a single concept from them. If it is only the absolute existence which has portions differing in perfection and deficiency then it is possible to abstract a single concept from it, just as the concept of blackness is abstracted from individual instances differing in intensity and weakness, even though it is a single concept. Likewise for light and other quiddities which have analogical gradation. It is even possible to say that all possible existences as far as they are related to and dependant upon a single entity—namely the Real Existence—become sources for the abstraction of a single concept, because of this relationship which is a single entity.

If you said: According to this doctrine, the existence of possible things is purely inauthentic and unreal, so how can it have portions from which absolute existence is abstracted?

I would say: They have to respond that even these portions are inauthentic and unreal, and they maintain it according to their doctrine, except that this is not true in fact. So after proving the falsity of this doctrine, according to what we have already established, this would be declared false as well.

Select Bibliography

Abbreviations

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| EI2 | <i>The Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , New edition |
| EIR | <i>Encyclopaedia Iranica</i> |
| IJMES | <i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i> |
| JAOS | <i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i> |

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