PAPERS ON ISLAMIC

PHILOSOPHY, THEOLOGY AND MYSTICISM

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2009

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PREFACE

This volume contains a number of unpublished papers and lectures given on various occasions over the years. With one exception none of them was ever submitted for publication. The exception is the translation of a section of al-Maybudī's commentary on al-Abharī's *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah*, which was accepted in 1993 for publication in the third volume of *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia*, edited by Mehdi Amin Razavi. Only the first two volumes of that work were published.

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A LECTURE ON ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY

I. Arabic Translations of Greek Works.

As is well known, the Islamic state, which the prophet Muḥammad had founded in Madīnah in the 7th century A.D., expanded very rapidly in the following years, so that by the middle of the 8th century we find Muslims in control of the lands stretching all the way from Spain in the West to the borders of India in the East.

Less well known perhaps is that the Christian scholars of those conquered areas, particularly in Syria and Iraq, had for some time been students of Greek philosophy and science and had translated many Greek works into Syriac, which was the language they were using at the time of the Muslim conquests. Later during the ninth century, at the command of the Muslim caliphs, they translated these Greek works from Syriac into Arabic and often directly from Greek into Arabic. Among the Greek works which they translated during this period were all the works of Aristotle with the exception of his Politics, Plato's Timaeus, Republic, and Laws, and various works of such Neoplatonists as Proclus, Porphyry, Plotinus, and others. It is through these translations from Greek into Arabic that Muslims became acquainted with Greek philosophical thought.[1]

II. Some Famous Muslim Philosophers.

What we call Islamic or Arabic philosophy is then a continuation and revival of the late Greek philosophical tradition undertaken by people who considered themselves Muslims and who wrote in Arabic instead of Greek and Syriac. Let me mention a few of the most famous of these Muslim philosophers.

The first Muslim philosopher of note was al-Kindī. He was of Arab descent and died sometime before 870 A.D. Next was al-Rāzī (Rhazes), who died about 925 or 935 A.D. and was known for his rejection of revealed religion. Al-Fārābī, who died in 950 A.D. was of Turkish descent and was known among Muslims as the "second teacher," Aristotle being the first. He was most famous for his works on political theory. Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), who died in 1037 A.D., was without doubt the most influential of all the Muslim philosophers on the later development of Islamic philosophy and theology. Ibn Rushd (Averroes), a Spaniard who died in 1198 A.D., was known mainly for his commentaries on Aristotle. Finally, al-Ṭūsī, who died in 1273 A.D., although not as well known in the West as the previous philosophers mentioned, was nevertheless very influential in the later development of Islamic philosophy and theology.[2]

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[1] For more information on the translations of Greek works into Arabic see Moritz Steinschneider, *Die arabischen Übersetzungen aus dem Griechischen*, Graz, 1960; ʿAbdurraḥmān Badawi, *La Transmission de la philosophie grecque au monde arabe*, Paris, 1968; and Richard Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, Oxford, 1962.

[2] Further information on each of these philosophers may be found in the *Ency-*

Perhaps I should point out here that many of the works of these Muslim philosophers were later translated into Latin and Hebrew and had a profound influence on the development of philosophy among Christians and Jews.[3]

Let me now turn to the basic ideas and doctrines which were common to most of the Muslim philosophers without, however, going into any of the differences of opinion which may have existed between individual philosophers.

III. The Divisions of Philosophy.

It should be noted, first of all, that Islamic philosophy covered a much wider range of subjects than we would consider to be included within philosophy today. According to al-Khuwārizmī, a tenth century encyclopaedist, philosophy was divided into two major branches: theoretical and practical. Each of these branches in turn consisted of three subdivisions. Thus theoretical philosophy was made up of (1) metaphysics or theology, which dealt with non-material things, (2) mathematics, which had to do with both non-material and material things, and included arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music, and mechanics, and (3) physics, which dealt with material things, and included such sciences as medicine, meteorology, mineralogy, botany, zoology, chemistry, and finally psychology or the science of the soul. The three subdivisions of practical philosophy were (1) ethics, that is, individual or personal ethics, (2) economics, which in those days meant household or family ethics, and (3) politics, which could be said to be the ethics of the city or the state. Logic, which was the basis for all of these sciences, both theoretical and practical, was sometimes considered a third major branch of philosophy.[4]

A much simpler division of philosophy into six main categories is given by al-Ghazālī, an eleventh century theologian who studied philosophy and later wrote a book attacking many of its doctrines. In *al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl*, or *Deliverance from Error*, al-Ghazālī divides philosophy into mathematics, logic, physics, theology or metaphysics, politics, and ethics.[5]

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clopaedia of Islam, new edition, Leiden, 1960-2004. See the following articles: "Al-Kindī, Abū Yūsuf Yaʿḳūb B. Isḥāḳ" by J. Jolivet and R. Rashed, vol. V, pp. 122-123; "Al-Rāzī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad B. Zakariyyāʾ" by L.E. Goodman, vol. VIII, pp. 474-477; "Al-Fārābī, Abū Naṣr Muḥammad B. Muḥammad B. Tarkhān B. Awzalagh" by R. Walzer, vol. II, pp. 778-781; "Ibn Sīnā, Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥusayn B. ʿAbd Allāh B. Sīnā" by A.-M. Goichon, vol. III, pp. 941-947; "Ibn Rushd, Abu ʾl-Walīd Muḥammad B. Aḥmad B. Muḥammad B. Rushd, al-Ḥafīd" by R. Arnaldez, vol. III, pp. 909-920; "Al-Ṭūsī, Naṣīr al-Dīn, Abū Djaʿfar Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan" by H. Daiber and F.J. Ragep, vol. X, pp. 746-752.

[3] See Moritz Steinschneider, *Die europäischen Übersetzungen aus dem Arabischen bis Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Graz, 1956.

[4] See Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Kātib al-Khuwārizmī, *Mafātīḥ al-ʿUlūm*, Cairo, 1342, pp. 79-80.

[5] See the translation by W. Montgomery Watt in *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazālī*, London, 1953, pp. 33-38. See also al-Fārābī's divisions of philosophy as presented in his *Iḥṣāʾ al-ʿUlūm*, edited by ʿUthmān Amīn, Cairo, 1949.

In this lecture I shall be speaking mainly about the metaphysics of Islamic philosophy since metaphysics is usually considered its most important subject as well as the subject which comes most into conflict with the Islamic religion. I shall also have something to say about physics and especially psychology, which, as I have mentioned, was considered a subdivision of physics.

IV. The Proof for the Existence of a First Cause.

Works on metaphysics usually begin with a proof for the existence of a First Cause or Necessarily Existent Being. To prove the existence of this First Cause, the philosophers divided existence into three categories: (1) necessary existence, which is predicated of that which does not need a cause for its existence, (2) possible or contingent existence, which is predicated of things which can conceivably either exist or not exist, but which must have a cause if they are to exist, and (3) impossible existence, which is predicated of things whose existence would involve a logical contradiction.

The philosophers then argued that since some possible or contingent things are known to exist, these must have causes which have brought them into existence. If these causes are also possible or contingent, they in turn must have causes. However, since both an endless chain of causes and a circular string of causes were considered by the philosphers to be impossible, any series of causes and effects must end with a first cause that itself does not have a cause for its existence. This first cause, then, must exist necessarily, that is, it must be a necessary existent since it exists but does not have a cause for its existence. It is, as it were, its own cause. They further said that this first cause could not have any of the attributes of things that had causes for their existence, such as the attribute of composition. It must be absolutely simple and not composed of parts, for if it were composed of parts then it would need a cause to bring the parts together.[6]

V. The Proof That There Is Only One Necessarily Existent Being.

Having proven that a First Cause or Necessarily Existent Being exists, the philosophers then proceeded to show that there can be only one such Necessarily Existent Being. They did this by supposing the existence of two necessarily existent beings. These two beings would be either exactly alike in every respect, or else they would differ from each other. If they were exactly alike in every respect, then there would be no way of distinguishing one of them from the other, and one would have to conclude that they were in fact one and the same being, not two distinct beings.

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[6]   Concerning the proof for the existence of the First Cause see A.J. Arberry, *Avicenna on Theology*, London, 1951, pp. 25-32; al-Fārābī, *Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*, edited by Albert Naṣrī Nādir, Beirut, 1951, pp. 23-24; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Risālah al-'Arshīyah*, printed in *Majmū' Rasā'il al-Shaykh al-Ra'īs*, Hyderabad, 1354, pp. 2-7; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāh fī al-Ḥikmah al-Manṭiqīyah wa-al-Ṭabī'īyah wa-al-Ilāhīyah*, Cairo, 1357/1938, pp. 227-228, 235-240; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā', al-Ilāhīyāt*, edited by al-Ab Qanawātī, Sa'īd Zāyid, Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā and Sulaymān Dunyā, Cairo 1380/1960, pp. 327-343.

If, however, one of them was distinguished from the other by the possession of an extra attribute that was not possessed by the other, then the one possessing the extra attribute would be compounded of two parts. One part would be that aspect in which it was the same as the other necessarily existent being, namely its being necessarily existent, and the other part would be that aspect in which it was distinguished from the other necessarily existent being. However, if it were thus compounded of two parts, it could not be necessarily existent, since, as we have seen, anything compounded must have a cause for its composition and anything which has a cause cannot exist necessarily. Thus only the other necessarily existent being which was not compounded would be necessarily existent. Moreover, if both necessarily existent beings were distinguished from each other by an extra attribute then each would be compounded of two parts and each would need a cause for its composition. Consequently neither one of them would be necessarily existent.[7]

Having shown that there was only one first cause or necessarily existent being, the philosophers went on to show that this First Cause, which they now equated with God, was not subject to change, that He was not subject to extinction, that He was not a body, that He was not located in time or space, and so on. These properties they called negative or privative attributes.[8]

VI. The Positive Attributes of God.

The philosophers also ascribed seven positive attributes to the First Cause or God, maintaining that He was knowing, powerful, living, willing, speaking, seeing and hearing. These were the same attributes that the Islamic theologians also ascribed to God. The philosophers, however, gave these attributes an interpretation quite different from that of the theologians. In the first place, these attributes do not affect the essential unity and simplicity of the First Cause since they are not superadded to or an augmentation of His essence. On the contrary, they are actually identical with His essence.[9]

How, then, did the philosophers explain these attributes in order to show that in actuality they were all identical with God's essence? I cannot now go into all the details of their explanation, but in effect what the philosophers said was that each one of these seven attributes was in reality just one aspect of the attribute of knowledge. And they then went on to show that God's knowledge was identical with His essence.

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[7] On the proof that there can be only one First Cause see Arberry, *Avicenna on Theology*, pp. 25-26; al-Fārābī, *Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*, pp. 25-26; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Risālah al-'Arshīyah*, p. 3; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāh*, pp. 230-234; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā', al-Ilāhīyāt*, pp. 349-354.

[8] On these negative attributes see Arberry, *Avicenna on Theology*, pp. 26-32; al-Fārābī, *Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*, pp. 27-30; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Risālah al-'Arshīyah*, pp. 3-7; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā', al-Ilāhīyāt*, pp. 343-349, 367-368.

[9] See Arberry, *Avicenna on Theology*, pp. 32-33; al-Fārābī, *Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*, pp. 31-37; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Risālah al-'Arshīyah*, pp. 7-15; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāh*, pp. 249-251; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā', al-Ilāhīyāt*, pp. 366-367.

Their explanation was as follows: First of all, they defined knowledge of a thing as the immaterial form or image of that thing as it exists in the mind. Knowledge of a concrete or material object requires that a mental form or image of that object be abstracted from it. It is only through this mental form or image that a material thing can be known and it is this immaterial or mental image that is called knowledge by the philosophers.

Knowledge of an immaterial object, however, does not require that a mental image be abstracted from it, since immaterial or intellectual things can enter the mind directly without first having to be abstracted from matter. Thus, anything which is immaterial, such as God or the human rational soul, automatically knows itself, and, moreover, knows itself through itself rather than through a mental image of itself as is the case with material objects. In the case of immaterial beings, therefore, knower, known and knowledge are all reduced to one single entity. Thus, God, being an immaterial being, knows Himself through a knowledge which is Himself, and His knowledge cannot, therefore, be said to be superadded or additional to His essence, and thus God's absolute oneness is not in any way compromised.

The philosophers also asserted that God knows the universe as well as Himself. This is so, they said, because God knows Himself and he also knows Himself to be the cause of the universe. Then, on the basis of their doctrine that knowledge of a cause yields knowledge of all of its effects, they claimed that God knows the whole universe and everything in it since He is the cause of it all. Thus, even God's knowledge of what is other than Himself is reduced to His knowledge of Himself.

Nevertheless, since God does not know the universe directly but only by means of His knowledge of His own essence, which is the cause of the universe, and because His essence is not subject to change, it is impossible for Him to know particular things insofar as they are related to time. For example, He cannot know whether a particular thing exists now, or whether it no longer exists, or whether it is yet to come into existence, for if He possessed this type of knowledge about something, His knowledge of it would change with the passing of time. This, however, is impossible, since God's knowledge is identical with His essence and His essence is not subject to change. As I shall point out later, this question of God's knowledge of particular things in time was one of the principal areas of conflict between philosophy and religion.[10]

As I mentioned previously the philosophers reduced the other six attributes of God to the attribute of knowledge. And so from their point of view all seven of God's attributes were the same as His essence.

VII. The Universe as an Emanation from the First Cause.

Having shown that the First Cause, or God, exists, and that He is qualified by these attributes without his unity being in any way impaired, the philosophers went on to explain how the universe came into being as the effect of the First Cause.

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[10] On God's knowledge see Arberry, *Avicenna on Theology*, pp. 33-35; al-Fārābī, *Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*, pp. 30-31; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Risālah al-'Arshīyah*, pp. 8-9; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāh*, pp. 246-249; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā', al-Ilāhīyāt*, pp. 356-362.

They said, first of all, that the universe as a whole must be eternal, that is, that it did not come into existence at some point in the past because God wished to create it at that time as was the position of the Islamic theologians. The philosophers asserted that since an effect or result cannot temporally lag behind its cause, if that cause is complete in every respect, then the universe as a whole, being the effect of the First Cause, could not temporally lag behind the First Cause and since the First Cause is eternal and has always existed, its effect, the universe, must also be eternal.

The philosophers then went on to say that since the First Cause is absolutely one, it can only be the cause of a single and indivisible effect, since any duality or multiplicity in the effect would imply duality or multiplicity in the cause, and this is impossible with respect to the First Cause. Consequently, this first effect cannot be a body, because bodies are compounded of matter and form, but must on the contrary be an immaterial substance. This first effect the philosophers called the First Intelligence or Intellect. Now this first intelligence, even though it is one, has, nevertheless, three aspects. First, it has knowledge of its cause, that is, of God. Second, it knows itself, and third, it knows itself as the effect of the First Cause. They then went on to say that from each one of these three aspects there results an effect. From the first aspect there results a second intelligence, from the second aspect is produced a soul, and from the third aspect a body, and this body is identified with the ninth, or outermost, of the concentric spheres of the Ptolemaic universe.[11]

The second intelligence in turn has three aspects from which result a third intelligence, a second soul, and a second body, which is the body of the eighth sphere, or that of the fixed stars. This series of effects continues on to the tenth intelligence, the ninth soul, and the ninth body, which corresponds to the sphere of the Moon. The tenth intelligence is known as the Active Intellect, and has an important role to play in the human perception of universals and first principles. Each of these nine bodies corresponds to one of the Ptolemaic concentric spheres, so that starting from the Earth at the center of the universe we have first the sphere of the Moon, corresponding to the ninth body, then the sphere of Mercury, then that of Venus, then the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, the fixed stars and finally the outermost sphere surrounding the entire universe. Because they are made of ether, which is transparent, these nine spheres are invisible. Only the planets and stars contained within the spheres can be seen.

Below the sphere of the moon is the world of matter, which is made up of the four elements, fire, air, water and earth, and at the very center of this world of matter is, of course, the Earth. The four elements of the material world are all subject to the process of generation and corruption, which is brought about by the influence of the seven planets. As a result of this process of generation and corruption three classes of compound bodies are produced, namely, minerals, vegetables, and animals. The class of animals, of course, reaches its culmination in human beings.[12]

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[11] On Ptolemy and the influence of his works on Islamic philosophy and science see the article "Baṭlamiyūs" by M. Plessner in the *Enclyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. I, pp. 1100-1102.

[12] On the philosophers' theory of emanation see Arberry, *Avicenna on Theology*,

VIII. The Human Soul and its Perfection.

Now the mention of human beings brings us to the subject of psychology, that is, the science of the human soul. According to the philosophers, human beings are made up of body and soul. The human soul consists of three degrees or levels. The first is the vegetable or plant soul which is responsible for nourishment, growth, and reproduction, and which is common to both plants and animals. The second is the animal soul, which is the cause of movement and the perception of particular objects through the five senses; and the third is the rational soul, by which human beings are able to perceive universal concepts and to think logically by using those concepts in statements and propositions. The rational soul is possessed only by human beings, and it is this rational soul which distinguishes humans from other animals. Moreover, the rational soul, unlike the plant and animal souls, is immaterial as well as simple and indivisible. As such it is not subject to corruption, and is therefore immortal. One of the principal functions of the rational soul is the abstraction of universal concepts from particular concrete objects. It does this with the help of a kind of spiritual light which emanates from the Active Intellect, which you will recall is the tenth intelligence in the series of intelligences emanating from the First Cause. This spiritual light enables the rational soul to perceive correctly the universal concepts embedded within particular concrete objects.

Because he possesses this rational soul, a human being stands, as it were, half-way between the sublunary world of matter and the elements, on the one hand, and the world of intelligences and God, on the other. His body links him to the world of matter, but by means of his rational soul or intellect he is capable of coming into contact with the Active Intellect and the other intelligences. The goal of a human being is to develop and perfect his rational soul through reasoning and the contemplation of the intelligences and God, so that he gradually becomes less and less dependent on his body and the world of matter, and increasingly involved and absorbed in the contemplation of God and the intelligible world. The desires and pleasures of the body are thus gradually left behind, and enjoyment and happiness are more and more derived from intellectual and spiritual pursuits. Accordingly, the perfect man is the one who has completely freed his soul from attachment to the body and its desires, and who is totally absorbed in the contemplation of God. Such a man has attained true happiness, and at the time of death will not be adversely affected by the loss of his body, since pain and misery after death are suffered only by those who still retain some attachment to the body.[13]

The philosophers are somewhat vague when it comes to describing just what this state of perfection is, and just how far towards perfection a soul must have

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pp. 35-37; al-Fārābī, *Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*, pp. 44-46; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Risālah al-'Arshīyah*, pp. 15-16; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāh*, pp. 251-256, 273-284; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā', al-Ilāhīyāt*, pp. 373-414.

[13] On the human soul and its perfection see Arberry, *Avicenna on Theology*, pp. 64-76; al-Fārābī, *Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*, pp. 85-87; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāh*, pp. 291-308; Ibn Sīnā, *Risālah fī al-Sa'ādah*, printed in *Majmū' Rasā'il al-Shaykh al-Ra'īs*, Hyderabad, 1354, pp. 15-21; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā', al-Ilāhīyāt*, pp. 423-432.

progressed in order to attain happiness and avoid misery after death. Ibn Sīnā in his *Kitāb al-Najāh*, or *Book of Salvation*, has the following to say on this point:

> As for the question how far the human soul needs to be capable of conceiving intelligible abstractions, so that it may pass beyond the point where this misery is bound to befall, and in transgressing which that happiness may be justly hoped for; this is a matter upon which I can only pronounce approximately. I suppose this position is reached when a man achieves a true mental picture of the incorporeal principles, and believes in them implicitly because he is aware of their existence through logical demonstration. He is acquainted with the final causes of events happening in universal (not partial), infinite movements; he has a firm grasp of the disposition of the All, the mutual proportions of its parts, and the order pervading the Cosmos from the First Principle down to the remotest beings, all duly arranged. He can apprehend Providence in action, and realizes what kind of being belongs exclusively to the Essence Preceding All, what sort of Unity that Essence possesses, how that Essence achieves cognition without any consequent multiplicity or change of any kind, in what manner other beings are related in due order to that Essence. The clearer the inward vision of the speculative becomes, the more fully qualified he is to attain supreme happiness. A man will hardly free himself from this world and its entanglements, except he be more firmly attached to the other world, so that his yearning to be gone thither and his love for what awaits him there block him from turning back to gaze at what lies behind him.[14]

The practical branches of philosophy, that is, ethics, economics, and politics, deal with the means by which all human beings in a society can achieve this perfection, free themselves from the world of matter, and thus attain to supreme happiness after death.

These then, in a very brief and summary form, are the basic beliefs of the Islamic philosophers. Theoretically, at least, their beliefs are based entirely on reason and the information gained from sense perception. There is no need in their system for divine revelation and prophecy, since the attainment of perfection and supreme happiness is possible for anyone who is willing to use his own reason and develop his own intellect to that end.

IX. The Place of Prophecy and Religion in Islamic Philosophy

One of the Islamic philosophers, al-Rāzī, who, as I mentioned before, died in 923 A.D., was outspoken in his rejection of revealed religion and prophecy. Al-Rāzī defended his rejection of revealed religions as follows. In the first place, he said, all revealed religions, such as Christianity, Judaism and Islam, are based on their own sacred scriptures. Now if these scriptures have all come from God, then they should not contradict each other, since it is inconceivable that God would contradict himself. Nevertheless, when we examine these scriptures and compare them we find

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[14] The translation is that of A.J. Arberry in *Avicenna on Theology*, pp. 71-72.

that they do, in fact, contradict each other. From this we can conclude either that all these scriptures and the religions based on them are false, or that one of them is true and the others are false. He then goes on to ask, if one of them is, in fact, true, how can we tell which one it is? And he answers by saying that, since God cannot contradict himself, then a true religion, based on a scripture actually revealed by God, must be a religion which contains no contradictions in its scripture. However, he goes on to say, if we examine all of these revealed scriptures, we find that each one contains contradictions. Therefore, all of these sacred scriptures along with the religions based on them must be false.

Al-Rāzī had other arguments as well against revealed religions, and one of these concerned the need for revelation and prophecy in the first place. Al-Rāzī had a firm belief that human reason was sufficient to tell us how to behave and what to believe in. What a prophet says, then, can either agree with what reason has already told us or can tell us, and in this case we do not need a prophet to tell us what we already know, or else what a prophet says does not agree with reason, and we must, in that case, as rational beings, reject it, otherwise we lower ourselves to the level of non-rational beings or animals.[15]

Some of the other Muslim philosophers, like al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā, however, faced with the fact that religions did exist, tried to find some sort of rational explanation for them. Ibn Sīnā, in fact, even argues that prophecy and revelation are necessary for the proper functioning of society. His argument, as given in his *Kitāb al-Najāh*, is as follows.

He says, first of all, that a man cannot live in isolation from his fellow men, but must, for his own welfare and happiness, live in a society in which he co-operates with others. Now a society cannot function properly unless it is regulated by a code of laws, and it is therefore necessary that there be a lawgiver to communicate these laws to society. And this lawgiver must be a human being, since only a human being can communicate with other humans. On the other hand, this lawgiver cannot himself formulate these laws, because, since men differ in their opinions, there would be no reason why people should accept his laws rather than the laws of some other lawgiver. Therefore, the lawgiver must be divinely inspired, that is, he must be a prophet, and in addition, he must have some distinguishing feature so that people will know for sure that he is, in fact, divinely inspired. This distinguishing feature is his power to perform miracles.

Then, in order to get people to obey this divinely inspired law, the prophet must present the law in conjunction with a simple religious system. He must, for example, establish a belief in one God, who is the creator of the universe, as well as a belief in an afterlife in which human beings will be rewarded or punished by God depending on whether or not they have obeyed or broken the law which the prophet has given them. He must also establish a religious ritual which people are

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[15] See Muḥammad ibn Zakarīyā' al-Rāzī, *Rasā'il Falsafīyah*, edited by P. Kraus, Cairo, 1939, vol. I, pp. 291-316; 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī, *Min Tārīkh al-Ilḥād fī al-Islām*, Cairo, 1945, pp. 198-228.

required to perform repeatedly and at short intervals in order to keep them from forgetting the law and the religious beliefs supporting it.[16]

Moreover, these religious beliefs must be stated in very simple terms, and with much use of symbols and parables, so that they can be easily understood by anyone. Let me quote to you what Ibn Sīnā had to say in this respect. He says:

> It is not necessary for him (that is, the lawgiver) to trouble their minds with any part of the knowledge of God, save the knowledge that He is One, True, and has no like; as for going beyond this doctrine, so as to charge them to believe in God's existence as not to be defined spatially or verbally divisible, as being neither without the world nor within it, or anything of that sort—to do this would impose a great strain upon them and would confuse the religious system which they follow already, bringing them to a pass wherefrom only those rare souls can escape who enjoy especial favour, and they exceedingly uncommon. The generality of mankind cannot imagine these things as they really are except by hard toil; few indeed are they who can conceive the truth of the Divine Unity and Sublimity. The rest are soon apt to disbelieve in this sort of Being, or they fall down upon the road and go off into discussions and speculations which prevent them from attending to their bodily acts, and often enough cause them to fall into opinions contrary to the good of society and inconsistent with the requirements of truth. In such circumstances their doubts and difficulties would multiply, and it would be hard indeed by words to control them; not every man is ready to understand metaphysics, and in any case it would not be proper for any man to disclose that he is in possession of a truth which he conceals from the masses; indeed, he must not allow himself so much as to hint at any such thing. His duty is to teach men to know the Majesty and Might of God by means of symbols and parables drawn from things which they regard as mighty and majestic, importing to them simply this much, that God has no equal, no like and no partner.[17]

Now this gives us a philosophical justification for the existence of prophets and revealed religion. It does not, however, tell us anything about the relationship between religious doctrines as revealed in sacred scriptures on the one hand, and philosophical doctrines arrived at through rational demonstration on the other. If philosophical beliefs and religious beliefs conflict and contradict each other, which beliefs can be accepted as true? If we accept as true philosophical beliefs which have been proven rationally, can we also accept religious beliefs as true, especially if they contradict our philosophical beliefs?

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[16] See Arberry, *Avicenna on Theology*, pp. 42-49; al-Fārābī, *Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah*, pp. 93-95; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāh*, pp. 303-308; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā' al-Ilāhiyāt*, pp. 441-446; Ibn Sīnā, *Risālah fī Ithbāt al-Nubūwāt*, edited by Michael Marmura, Beirut, 1968. Further information on the philosophers' doctrine of prophecy may be found in F. Rahman, *Prophecy in Islam*, London, 1958.
[17] See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāh*, p. 305. The translation is that of A.J. Arberry in *Avicenna on Theology*, p. 44.

What answers did the Islamic philosophers have for these questions? As I mentioned previously, al-Rāzī rejected all religious beliefs as false, and so was not interested in reconciling them with philosophical beliefs. Other Islamic philosophers, such as al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Rushd and Ibn Ṭufayl,[18] however, sought to reconcile religious doctrines with their philosophical beliefs. They did this through the use of allegorical interpretation. That is, they interpreted all religious beliefs which contradicted their philosophical beliefs in such a way as to make the religious beliefs agree with their philosophical beliefs. Those of you who are familiar with the writings of the Islamic theologians will recall that they also made use of allegorical interpretation to deal with the contradictory doctrines that they found within Islamic scripture.[19]

Let me read a passage on allegorical interpretation from a work by Ibn Rushd called *Faṣl al-Maqāl* or the *Decisive Treatise*:

> Now since this religion (that is, Islam) is true and summons to the study which leads to knowledge of the Truth, we the Muslim community know definitely that demonstrative study does not lead to conclusions conflicting with what Scripture has given us; for truth does not oppose truth but accords with it and bears witness to it.
>
> This being so, whenever demonstrative study leads to any manner of knowledge about any being, that being is inevitably either unmentioned or mentioned in Scripture. If it is unmentioned there is no contradiction, and it is in the same case as an act whose category is unmentioned, so that the lawyer has to infer it by reasoning from Scripture. If Scripture speaks about it, the apparent meaning of the words inevitably either accords or conflicts with the conclusions of demonstration about it. If this apparent meaning accords there is no argument. If it conflicts there is a call for allegorical interpretation of it. The meaning of allegorical interpretation is: Extension of the significance of an expression from real to metaphorical significance, without forsaking therein the standard metaphorical practices of Arabic, such as calling a thing by the name of something resembling it or a cause or consequence or accompaniment of it, or other things such as are enumerated in accounts of the kinds of metaphorical speech.[20]

For philosophers like Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Rushd, religious doctrines were true and did not, at least when interpreted correctly, contradict philosophical truths. The apparent contradictions between revealed truth and philosophical truth were due

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[18] See the article "Ibn Ṭufayl" by B. Carra de Vaux in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. III, p. 957.

[19] On the use of allegorical interpretation by the philosophers see especially Ibn Rushd's *Faṣl al-Maqāl*, translated by George F. Hourani under the title *Averroes on the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy*, London, 1961, and Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*, translated by Lenn Evan Goodman, New York, 1972.

[20] The translation is that of George F. Hourani in *Averroes on the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy*, p. 50.

to the necessity of presenting truth to the masses in a simplified and symbolic form that they could easily understand. The Qur'ān, then, can be understood, as it were, on two levels. It can be accepted as true because it was revealed by God to the Prophet Muḥammad, and this is the way the ordinary man without philosophical training is expected to accept it, and it can also be accepted as true in an allegorical or metaphorical sense and therefore in complete harmony with philosophical truth.

X. The Reaction Against Philosophy: Al-Ghazālī and other Theologians.

As might be expected many Muslims were not willing to accept this idea of the philosophers that revealed religion was merely an allegorical or metaphorical version of philosophy and that any passage in scripture that did not agree with philosophy could be interpreted allegorically to agree with philosophy.

Al-Ghazālī,[21] a Muslim theologian who died in 1111 A.D., wrote a work called *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, or *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah* in Arabic,[22] in which he attacked their beliefs and doctrines. In it he listed 20 philosophical doctrines which he asserted contradicted the tenets of the Islamic faith and which must therefore be considered erroneous. On account of 17 of these doctrines he claimed that the philosophers must be considered heretics, and on account of three of them that they must be considered infidels, since these three points are in complete disagreement with the beliefs of all Muslims regardless of their sect.

These three philosophical doctrines were the following: (1) the philosophers' claim that the universe is eternal rather than originated in time, (2) their assertion that Divine knowledge does not encompass knowledge of individual objects or particulars in time, and (3) their denial of the resurrection of bodies. Concerning these three doctrines al-Ghazālī says:

> These three doctrines are in no way in harmony with Islam. To believe in them is to believe that the prophets lied, and that what they taught was [a form of metaphorical] representation (*tamthīl*) and indoctrination (*tafhīm*) for the benefit of the masses. And this is clear unbelief to which no Muslim sect has subscribed.[23]

The controversy between philosophy and Islamic theological beliefs did not end with al-Ghazālī's attack on philosophy in his *Incoherence*. Ibn Rushd, who died in 1198 A.D., wrote a reply to al-Ghazālī's work which he called *The Incoherence of*

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[21] See the article "al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad B. Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī" by W. Montgomery Watt in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. II, pp. 1038-1041.
[22] See the English translation of this work by Samih Ahmad Kamali, *Al-Ghazali's Tahafut al-Falasifah*, Lahore, 1958. For the Arabic text see Maurice Bouyges, S.J., *Algazel Tahafot al-Falasifat*, Beyrouth, 1927.
[23] The translation is based on that of Samih Ahmad Kamali, *Tahafut*, p. 249. See also Bouyges' Arabic text, p. 376.

the Incoherence, or in Arabic *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*.[24] Later Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī,[25] a famous Muslim theologian who died in 1209 A.D., wrote a commentary on Ibn Sīnā's *al-Ishārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt*, or *Indications and Admonitions*, in which he argued against the doctrines of the philosophers. His arguments against philosophy were in turn answered by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, a philosopher who, as previously mentioned, died in 1273 A.D., in his own commentary on Ibn Sīnā's *al-Ishārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt*.[26] Later Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī, [27] who died in 1364 A.D., wrote a supercommentary on al-Ṭūsī's commentary in which he dealt with the disagreements between al-Ṭūsī and al-Rāzī. This commentary is known as *al-Muḥākamāt* or *Arbitrations*.[28] Much later Mīrzā Jān,[29] who died in 1586 A.D. wrote a commentary on Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī's *Arbitrations*.[30] Thus, although many of its metaphysical doctrines were rejected by Muslim theologians, philosophy continued to exert a great influence on Muslim thinkers in later generations. In fact, it may be said that the Muslim theologians who lived after al-Ghazālī were so influenced by philosophy that they incorporated the methodology of philosophy, especially its logic and epistemology, into their own theological works.[31]

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[24] See the English translation of this work by Simon van den Bergh, *Averroes' Tahafut al-Tahafut*, London, 1954. For the Arabic text see Maurice Bouyges, *Averroès, Tahafot al-Tahafot*, Beyrouth, 1930.

[25] See the article "Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī" by G.C. Anawati in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. II, pp. 752-755.

[26] Both the commentaries of al-Rāzī and al-Ṭūsī have been printed together a number of times. See, for example, the Cairo edition of 1325 and the Istanbul edition of 1290.

[27] See Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, Leiden, vol. II, p. 271, Supplement, vol. II, pp. 293-294.

[28] The work was printed in Istanbul in 1290 and in Tehran in 1377-1379.

[29] See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, vol. II, pp. 545-546, Supplement, vol. II, p. 594.

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[31] On this point see Ibn Khaldūn, 'Abd al-Raḥmān, *al-Muqaddimah*, translated by Franz Rosenthal under the title *The Muqaddimah*, New York 1958, vol. III, pp. 52-54.

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IBN SĪNĀ'S JUSTIFICATION OF THE USE OF INDUCTION IN DEMONSTRATION

(A paper read at the 1990 annual meeting of the Western Branch of the American Oriental Society in Seattle, Washington, and updated in January 2007)

Abstract

In his works on demonstration (*burhān*) Ibn Sīnā lists five varieties of propositions which can be known for certain to be true and which may consequently be used as premises in demonstrative arguments. These are: (1) first principles or axioms (*awwalīyāt*), (2) propositions containing their own syllogisms (*qadāyā qiyāsātuhā ma'ahā*), (3) sense perceptions (*maḥsūsāt*), (4) historical and geographical propositions based on the reports of eyewitnesses (*mutawātirāt*), and (5) propositions derived from experience (*mujarrabāt*). The first two varieties comprise propositions based purely on reason, whereas the last three include propositions based on information gained through the senses. The fifth variety, moreover, involves propositions based not only on the senses but on induction (*istiqrā'*) as well. Since Ibn Sīnā elsewhere argues that induction must be rejected as a basis for propositions known for certain to be true, he must here justify his acceptance of induction in the case of propositions derived from experience. He does this by distinguishing between induction in general and the type of induction involved in experience. This paper attempts to clarify and explain Ibn Sīnā's distinction between these two types of induction.

The purpose of demonstration, according to Ibn Sīnā, is the attainment of truth. Demonstration, therefore, must be restricted to syllogistic or deductive arguments (*qiyās*) whose premises consist solely of indubitable propositions (*yaqīnīyāt*), that is, propositions which are known for certain to be true. Only such arguments, he claims, can result in conclusions that can be known for certain to be true. Arguments based on induction (*istiqrā'*), unless the induction is complete, or on analogy (*tamthīl*) cannot be used in demonstration, because such arguments do not lead to conclusions which can be known for certain to be true. Demonstration is thus defined by Ibn Sīnā as a syllogism composed of indubitable premises for the purpose of producing an indubitable conclusion (*qiyās mu'allaf min yaqīnīyāt li-intāj yaqīnī*).[1]

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[1] On the definition of demonstration see his *Kitāb al-Najāh*, p. 66, as well as *al-Ishārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt, al-Manṭiq*, pp. 287-288 (Tehran edition); *al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq, al-Burhān*, pp. 51-53; *Dānishnāmah-i 'Alā'ī, Manṭiq*, p. 128; *Le Livre de Science*, I, 74.

The purpose of dialectic (*jadal*) and rhetoric (*khaṭābah*), on the other hand, is not the attainment of truth, but rather to achieve victory over an opponent in a debate or to persuade someone to accept a certain belief regardless of whether the belief is true or not. Since the attainment of truth is not their purpose, dialectic and rhetoric are not restricted to syllogistic or deductive arguments, nor must their premisses be indubitable. Both dialectic and rhetoric may include arguments based on induction (*istiqrā'*) or analogy (*tamthīl*) and may contain premisses which are well-known or widely accepted but which may not necessarily be true. Rhetoric may even contain premisses which are only probably true.[2]

In the sections on demonstration in his logical works, Ibn Sīnā lists five, and sometimes six, varieties of propositions which can be known for certain to be true and which may consequently be used as premisses in demonstrative arguments. These are: (1) first principles or axioms (*awwalīyāt*), such as the statement that the whole is greater than any of its parts; (2) propositions containing their own syllogisms (*qaḍāyā qiyāsātuhā ma'ahā*), such as the statement that four is an even number; (3) particular propositions based on sense perception (*maḥsūsāt, mushāhadāt*), such as the statement that this fire is hot; (4) propositions based on the reports of a sufficient number of eye-witnesses to preclude the possibility of their having agreed on a lie (*mutawātirāt, qaḍāyā tawāturīyah*), such as the statement that Mecca exists, for one believes this statement to be true regardless of whether one has actually been to Mecca or not; and, finally, (5) propositions based on experience (*mujarrabāt, tajribīyāt*), such as the statement that scammony is a laxative, or that wine is intoxicating, or that fire burns. In one of his works, *al-Ishārāt*, Ibn Sīna mentions a sixth variety of proposition which may also be used in demonstration. This variety comprises propositions based on intuition (*ḥadsīyāt*), that is, what one might call bright ideas or brilliant hypotheses supported by experience, such as the statement that the light of the moon is derived from that of the sun. In his other works Ibn Sīna apparently considered this sixth variety to be a subcategory of the fifth variety comprising propositions based on experience.[3]

These five varieties of demonstrative premiss may, of course, also be used in dialectic and rhetoric. However, since the purpose of dialectical and rhetorical arguments is not primarily the attainment of truth, such arguments may also contain premisses which are not indubitable.

Ibn Sīnā lists two varieties of premiss which can be used in dialectic but not in demonstration. These are: (1) well-known propositions (*mashhūrāt, dhā'i'āt*), that is, propositions which the great majority of people hold to be true, such as the statement that lying is evil, or justice is obligatory; and (2) admitted propositions (*musallamāt*), that is, propositions admitted as true by one's opponent in a debate,

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[2] For the purpose of dialectic and rhetoric see *al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq, al-Jadal*, pp. 24-25; *Dānish-nāmah-i 'Alā'ī, Manṭiq*, pp. 128-134; *Le Livre de Science*, I, 74-76.

[3] See, for example, *al-Ishārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt, Manṭiq* pp. 213-219 (Tehran edition); *al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq, al-Burhān*, pp. 63-64; *al-Najāh*, pp. 61-66; and *Dānish-nāmah-i 'Alā'ī, Manṭiq*, p. 128 ; *Le Livre de Science*, I, 74-76.

such as the statement that God is one. He also lists two varieties of premiss that can be used in rhetoric but not in dialectic or demonstration. They are: (1) accepted propositions (*maqbūlāt*), that is, propositions accepted on the authority of someone else, such as the statements of scholars and other eminent or esteemed persons; and (2) opinions or probable propositions (*maẓnūnāt*), that is, propositions which are only probably true and might very well be false.[4]

If we return now to the five varieties of premiss that can be used in demonstrative arguments, it is evident that the first two varieties, namely, first principles and propositions containing their own syllogisms, comprise propositions based purely on reason, whereas the last three varieties include propositions based on information gained through the senses. The fifth variety, moreover, which consists of propositions based on experience, involves not only the senses but incomplete induction (*istiqrā' nāqiṣ*) as well.

As mentioned previously, however, incomplete induction, according to Ibn Sīnā, does not result in certain knowledge, and, therefore, no proposition based on incomplete induction can be known for certain to be true, and consequently no such proposition ought to be used as a premiss in demonstration. Ibn Sīnā cites two examples of incomplete induction which result in false conclusions. The first example is the case of a man who lives his entire life among black people in Africa and comes to the conclusion that all men are black. The second is the case of a man who examines all species of animals except the crocodile and comes to the conclusion that all animals move their lower jaws when chewing. Had he examined the crocodile he would have discovered that crocodiles move their upper jaws.[5]

Since Ibn Sīnā himself holds that incomplete induction can sometimes result in a false conclusion, how can he then justify the use of propositions based on induction as premisses in demonstration? He clearly does not want to exclude such propositions from demonstration, because to do so would exclude from demonstration all of the natural and physical sciences, including his own field of medicine, since they are all sciences derived from induction based on experience. Demonstration would then remain a valid method only for such subjects as mathematics and logic. Ibn Sīnā's problem is clear. On the one hand he wishes to retain demonstration as a method of attaining certain knowledge, but on the other hand he wishes to avoid having to come to the conclusion that demonstration is a method which cannot be applied to the physical sciences because they are based on induction and experience.

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[4] See *al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq, al-Jadal*, pp. 34, 39, 43, 72; *al-Ishārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt, al-Manṭiq*, pp. 219-228; *Dānishnāmah-i 'Alā'ī, Manṭiq*, pp. 128-129; *Le Livre de Science*, I, 74-76; *Kitāb al-Najāh*, pp. 61-66. For a table of the various types of arguments and premisses that Ibn Sīnā asserts may be used in demonstration as compared to dialectic and rhetoric see the appendix at the end of the paper.

[5] See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq, al-Qiyās*, pp. 557-567; *al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq, al-Burhān*, pp. 95-96; *al-Ishārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt, al-Manṭiq*, p. 231 (Tehran edition), I, 203-206 (Sulaymān Dunyā edition); *Dānishnāmah-i 'Alā'ī, Manṭiq*, pp. 92-93; *Le Livre de Science*, I, 61;

Ibn Sīnā is, of course, well aware of this problem and discusses it at length in several chapters of his *Kitāb al-Shifā'*.[6] His solution is to make a distinction between induction on the one hand, and experience on the other. He asserts that experience is a special kind of induction which, unlike induction in general, results in certain knowledge. The reason experience results in certain knowledge, he claims, is because the events or phenomena experienced involve causal relations. Thus a universal proposition based on experience involves a causal connection between subject and predicate, but a proposition based only on induction does not. For example, in the proposition "all fires burn," there is a causal connection between the fire and its act of burning. Similarly, in the propositions "wine is intoxicating" and "scammony is a laxative" there is a causal connection between the wine and its intoxicating effect and between the scammony and its action as a laxative.

How can one know, however, whether or not there exists a causal connection between a subject and predicate? One can know that such a causal connection exists, Ibn Sīnā says, through repeated observation of a certain phenomenon. For example, if two things, such as fire and burning, are repeatedly observed together, one can conclude that the burning does not occur accidentally or randomly, but as a result of the action of the fire, and that the fire is the cause of the burning. If there were no causal connection between the fire and the burning, then one would have observed instances of fire coming in contact with paper, for example, in which burning did not occur. One can therefore conclude that it is in the nature of fire to burn, and, since the natures of things do not change, that fire will continue to burn in the future. We can thus know for certain that all fires burn and always will.

Having presented his solution to the problem of how induction can be used in demonstration, Ibn Sīnā then takes up the objection of someone who brings up the proposition mentioned earlier that all men are black. How can one know that there is not something in the nature of men that causes them to be black? Ibn Sīnā's answer is that any universal statement about something must be restricted to the varieties and types of that thing that have actually been observed. Since in the proposition mentioned here only men in a limited area have been observed, one may safely say that all men in that area are black and that it is in the nature of such men to be black. Ibn Sīnā admits, moreover, the possibility that there may exist a variety of scammony somewhere that does not act as a laxative. He is not saying here that induction must be complete, that is, that every single man in the area has to be observed before one can say that they are all black or that one must have observed every instance of scammony acting as a laxative before one can make a universal statement about scammony. What he is saying is simply that one must restrict such statements to the type of scammony or the race of men one is familiar with. In other words, one can be completely truthful in saying that the scammony that one is familiar with always acts as a laxative or that all the men of the race one is familiar with are black.

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[6] See *al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq, al-Burhān*, pp. 93-98, 223-224, and *al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq, al-Qiyās*, pp. 557-567.

In conclusion, and in order to situate Ibn Sīnā's thought on this question historically, I should like to compare briefly his position with that of al-Fārābī, who died in 339/950, or some 87 years before Ibn Sīnā's death in 428/1037, and with the position of al-Ghazālī, who died in 505/1111, or 74 years after Ibn Sīnā.

Al-Fārābī, in discussing the premisses upon which demonstrative arguments can be based, mentions only two varieties of premiss rather than the five or six varieties mentioned by Ibn Sīnā. These are: (1) premisses based on innate reason, or intuition (al-ṭibāʿ), and (2) premisses based on experience (al-tajribah). Al-Fārābī calls the first variety first premisses (muqaddimāt uwal) or first principles (mabādi' uwal); the second variety he calls principles of certainty (awā'il al-yaqīn). Like Ibn Sīnā he makes a distinction between experience and induction. Although the two concepts are similar and are often used interchangeably, he says, they are nevertheless distinct in that induction does not lead to certain knowledge, whereas experience does lead to certain knowledge. Unlike Ibn Sīnā, however, he does not find it necessary to explain why experience leads to certain knowledge and induction does not. What is important, al-Fārābī says, is that, as a result of experience, one has an awareness of knowing with certainty, whereas with induction one does not gain any sense of certainty. It is not important to understand why experience results in certainty and induction does not.[7]

It is clear that Ibn Sīnā's treatment of these questions represents a substantial advance over al-Fārābī's treatment. It is perhaps for this reason that al-Ghazālī adopts in its entirety Ibn Sīnā's enumeration of the varieties of premiss that can be used in demonstration and also adopts, but not without a major modification, Ibn Sīnā's explanation of the distinction between induction and experience. Al-Ghazālī admits that through experience one can know which events are random or accidental, and which events follow a regular pattern or law and can therefore be the basis for indubitable universal propositions. He disagrees with Ibn Sīnā, however, in ascribing such regular patterns to causal connections. He does not, for example, doubt the truth of the proposition that all fires burn. What he rejects is Ibn Sīnā's belief that fire is the cause of the burning because of something in the nature of fire which has this effect on combustible materials. The reason he rejects Ibn Sīnā's position is because he wishes to uphold the doctrine of the Ashʿarite theologians that God is the direct and immediate cause of everything that exists or occurs in the universe. In al-Ghazālī's view it is God who is the cause of the fire and God who is also the cause of the burning. There is no need, in his opinion, to assume the existence of a causal connection between the fire and the burning, nor, indeed, is there any empirical evidence to support the belief in such a connection. The fact that God acts according to certain patterns and customs is all one needs to know in order to accept the truth of universal propositions based on experience. There is no need at all for Ibn Sīnā's causal explanation.[8]

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[7] See al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al-Burhān*, pp. 24-25.

[8] See al-Ghazālī, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*, pp. 185-196 (Kamali translation), pp. 277-296 (Bouyges edition), pp. 225-237 (Sulaymān Dunyā edition). Al-Ghazālī 's pre-

COMPARISON OF DEMONSTRATION WITH DIALECTIC AND RHETORIC

DEMONSTRATION (*burhān*)	DIALECTIC (*jadal*)	RHETORIC (*khaṭābah*)
Arguments restricted to:	Arguments may include:	Arguments may include:
Syllogism (*qiyās*)	Incomplete induction (*istiqrā' nāqiṣ*)	Incomplete induction (*istiqrā' nāqiṣ*)
Complete induction (*istiqrā' tāmm*)	Analogy (*tamthīl*)	Analogy (*tamthīl*)
Premisses restricted to:	Premisses may include:	Premisses may include:
First principles (*awwalīyāt*)	Well-known propositions (*mashhūrāt*)	Opinions (*maẓnūnāt*)
Propositions containing their own syllogisms (*qaḍāyā qiyāsātuhā ma'ahā*)	Admitted propositions (*musallamāt*)	Accepted propositions (*maqbūlāt*)
Propositions based on sense perception (*maḥsūsāt*)		
Propositions based on the reports of eye-witnesses (*mutawātirāt*)		
Propositions based on experience (*tajribīyāt*)		
Propositions based on intuition (*ḥadsīyāt*)		

misses of demonstration may be found in his *Miḥakk al-Naẓar fī al-Manṭiq*, pp. 48-55, and his *Mi'yār al-'Ilm fī Fann al-Manṭiq*, pp. 108-111.

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AL-ABHARĪ AND AL-MAYBUDĪ ON GOD'S EXISTENCE

A Translation of a part of al-Maybudī's commentary
on al-Abharī's *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah*

INTRODUCTION

Athīr al-Dīn al-Mufaḍḍal ibn ʿUmar al-Abharī, the author of *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah*, was an astronomer and philosopher of the seventh Islamic century. Information on his life is meagre. Ibn Khallikān (died 681/1282) in his *Wafayāt al-Aʿyān* mentions that he himself studied legal disputation (*ʿilm al-khilāf*) with al-Abharī when the latter moved from Mosul to Irbil in the year 625/1228. He also tells of the high regard in which al-Abharī held his teacher, Kamāl al-Dīn ibn Yūnus (died 639/1242), one of the foremost mathematicians and astronomers of the period.[1] In his geographical work, *Āthār al-Bilād wa-Akhbār al-ʿIbād*, Zakariyāʾ ibn Muḥammad al-Qazwīnī (died 682/1283), who like Ibn Khallikān was one of al-Abharī's students, relates that al-Abharī was presented with one of the many questions on medical, mathematical and philosophical topics which had been sent by the Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen to the Ayyūbid sultan al-Kāmil Muḥammad with the request that they be forwarded to Muslim scholars for their answers. The particular question asked of al-Abharī had to do with how one could construct a square whose area would be equal to that of a segment of a circle. The problem proved difficult for al-Abharī, however, and he passed it on to his teacher, Kamāl al-Dīn, who was able to provide an answer.[2] In his *Tārīkh Mukhtaṣar al-Duwal* Ibn al-ʿIbrī (died 685/1286)[3] mentions al-Abharī as being among a group of scholars all of whom had been students of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (died 606/1209)[4] and who were now prominent in the fields of philosophy and logic.[5] The modern scholar, Aydın Sayılı, includes al-Abharī among the astronomers employed at the observatory in Marāghah, which the Īl-Khānid ruler Hūlāgū had founded in 657/1259 and placed under the direction of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (died 672/1274), another of the students of Kamāl al-Dīn ibn Yūnus.[6] The date of al-Abharī's death is uncertain. Ḥājjī Khalīfah, in three

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[1] See *Wafayāt al-Aʿyān*, II, 174 (in the biography of Kamāl al-Dīn ibn Yūnus). On Kamāl al-Dīn ibn Yūnus see Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, Supplement I, 859, and Rescher, *The Development of Arabic Logic*, pp. 186-188.

[2] See *Āthār al-Bilād*, p. 310. Further information on the questions posed by Frederick II may be found in Suter, "Beiträge zu den Beziehungen Kaiser Friedrichs II. zu zeitgenössischen Gelehrten."

[3] See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, I, 427, Supplement I, 591.

[4] See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, I, 666, Supplement I, 920.

[5] See *Tārīkh Mukhtaṣar al-Duwal*, p. 254.

[6] See *The Observatory in Islam*, pp. 212, 215. Sayılı cites as his source a manu-

separate citations, mentions three different dates: around 660/1262, after 660/1262 and around 700/1301,[7] but makes no attempt to reconcile them.[8] However, if Ibn al-ʿIbrī is correct in placing al-Abharī among the students of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, he could hardly have lived until the year 700.

Although al-Abharī wrote a number of works on astronomical subjects, he is best known for his *Īsāghūjī*, on logic, and his *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah*, on philosophy.[9] Both of these works are short abridgements or handbooks written for students. Such abridgements were popular at the time, but, as Ibn Khaldūn later observed, "the texts of such brief handbooks are found to be difficult and complicated (to understand). A good deal of time must be spent (on the attempt to) understand them."[10] It is not surprising, therefore, that such works received the attention of numerous commentators and glossators. Moreover, since most handbooks were restricted to the barest outlines of a subject, it was not unusual for these commentaries and glosses to contain more significant and original material than the handbooks on which they were written. This is certainly the case with the commentaries on al-Abharī's *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah*.

Among the numerous commentaries written on *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah* are some which, if one can judge by the number of manuscript copies still extant and by the number of glosses and supercommentaries written on them, seem to have been held in high esteem. One of these was the commentary of Mīr Ḥusayn ibn Muʿīn al-Dīn al-Maybudī, often referred to as Qāḍī Mīr.[11] As his *nisbah* indicates, he was a native of Maybud, a town to the northwest of Yazd in the province of Fars. In his youth

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script copy of Rukn al-Dīn ibn Sharaf al-Dīn al-Āmulī's *Zīj-i Jāmiʿ-i Saʿīdī* in the Masjid-i Shūrā-yi Millī Library in Tehran.

[7] See *Kashf al-Ẓunūn*, I, 174, II, 6, 646; and Suter, *Die Mathematiker*, p. 219, note 75.

[8] Brockelmann (*Geschichte*, Supplement I, 839) gives 19 Rabīʿ al-Thānī 663/1265 as the date of al-Abharī's death. According to Suter (*Die Mathematiker*, p. 219, note 75) this date was evidently taken from Casiri (*Bibliotheca*, I, 188) who says that he found the date in the *Bibliotheca Philosophorum*. This latter work is attributed by Casiri (*Bibliotheca*, II, 151) to a certain Abu Ali Algassan (Abū ʿAlī al-Ghassān?). Steinschneider (*Die arabischen Übersetzungen*, p. (25)) believes this latter work to have been an invention of Casiri's.

[9] A list of his works may be found in Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, I, 608-611; Supplement I, 839-844. See also Suter, *Die Mathematiker*, p. 145; al-Baghdādī, *Hadīyat al-ʿĀrifīn*, II, 469; and Rescher, *The Development of Arabic Logic*, pp. 196-197. An English translation of al-Abharī's *Īsāghūjī* was done by Edwin E. Calverley and published in 1933 in *The Macdonald Presentation Volume*, pp. 75-85.

[10] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, III, 291.

[11] Other highly esteemed commentaries were those of Mīrak Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Mubārak Shāh al-Bukhārī (died circa 740/1339), Mawlānāzādah Aḥmad ibn Maḥmūd al-Harawī al-Kharaziyānī (eighth/fourteenth century), and Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Shīrāzī (died 1050/1640). See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, I, 608, Supplement I, 839.

he traveled to Shīrāz, where he studied under the noted philosopher and theologian, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Dawwānī (died 907/1501).[12] He subsequently became a *qāḍī* in Yazd where he wrote a number of works in both Arabic and Persian.[13] Among his Arabic works was a commentary on al-Kātibī's *al-Risālah al-Shamsīyah*,[14] a handbook on logic, as well as a commentary on his *Ḥikmat al-ʿAyn*,[15] a well-known handbook on philosophy similar to al-Abharī's *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah*. Among his Persian works were *Jām-i Gītī-numā*,[16] a work on philosophy which was translated into both Arabic and Latin,[17] and *Sharḥ Dīwān Amīr al-Muʾminīn*,[18] a commentary on the poetry attributed to ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib. He also wrote a commentary on a *hadīth* of al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī al-ʿAskarī, the eleventh Shīʿite *imam*.[19] Although the latter two works are an indication of his esteem for ʿAlī and his descendents, al-Maybudī seems nonetheless to have been a firm believer in Sunnī doctrine. For this reason, apparently, he incurred the wrath of the Ṣafavid ruler Shāh Ismāʿīl, who was then in the process of converting his subjects to Shīʿism, and in 909/1503, according to *Aḥsan al-Tawārīkh*, he was arrested and subsequently executed by order of the Shāh.[20]

As a handbook al-Abharī's *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah* covers the entire field of philosophy as it was known in the medieval Islamic world. The work is divided into three main parts (*aqsām*)—logic (*manṭiq*),[21] physics (*ṭabīʿīyāt*), and metaphysics (*ilāhīyāt*)—and concludes with a short epilogue (*khātimah*) on the after-life (*al-*

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[12] See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, II, 281, Supplement II, 306.

[13] Lists of his works may be found in al-Baghdādī, *Hadīyat al-ʿĀrifīn*, I, 316; Ḥasan Rūmlū, *Aḥsan al-Tawārīkh*, pp. 110, 670; *Jahāngushā-yi Khāqān*, p. 218; Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, II, 272, Supplement II, 294.

[14] See Āghā Buzurg, *al-Dharīʿah*, XIII, 337; Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, I, 613.

[15] See Ḥasan Rūmlū, *Aḥsan al-Tawārīkh*, p. 110, and *Jahāngushā-yi Khāqān*, p. 218. However, neither Ḥājjī Khalīfah nor Brockelmann mention the work.

[16] See Āghā Buzurg, *al-Dharīʿah*, V, 25; Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, II, 272; and Sarkīs, *Muʿjam al-Maṭbūʿāt*, II, 1487.

[17] See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, II, 272, Supplement II, 294; and Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts*, II, 812.

[18] See Āghā Buzurg, *al-Dharīʿah*, XIII, 266-267; and Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, Supplement II, 294.

[19] See Āghā Buzurg, *al-Dharīʿah*, XIII, 200-201.

[20] See Ḥasan Rūmlū, *Aḥsan al-Tawārīkh*, p. 110 (also pp. 669-671 of the editor's notes). In the anonymous history of the reign of Shāh Ismāʿīl, *Jahāngushā-yi Khāqān* (p. 218), his execution is reported among the events of the year 910. See also Browne, *Literary History*, IV, 57; and Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts*, III, 1077. Additional references to al-Maybudī may be found in Sām Mīrzā, *Tadhkirah-i Tuḥfah-i Sāmī*, p. 76; ʿAbd Allāh Afandī, *Riyāḍ al-ʿUlamāʾ*, II, 181; Muḥammad Mufīd, *Jāmiʿ-i Mufīdī*, III, 353-356; Khādiʿ, *Tadhkirah-i Sukhan-warān-i Yazd*, pp. 287-288; and Futūḥī, *Tadhkirah-i Shuʿarā-yi Yazd*, pp. 32-33.

[21] The popularity of Al-Abharī's *Īsāghūjī* seems to have eclipsed the logical part of his *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah*. Most commentaries, including that of al-Maybudī, deal

nash'ah al-ākhirah). The part on metaphysics comprises three chapters (*funūn*). The first deals with the divisions of existence (*taqāsīm al-wujūd*), the second, some sections of which are translated here with al-Maybudī's commentary, deals with the Creator and His attributes (*al-Ṣāni' wa-ṣifātuhu*), and the third takes up the subject of angels (*al-malā'ikah*) or abstracted intelligences (*al-'uqūl al-mujarradah*) as they were called by the philosophers. Each of these chapters is further divided into sections (*fuṣūl*) as follows:

Chapter One on the Divisions of Existence

1. Universals and particulars (*al-kullī wa-al-juz'ī*).
2. The one and the many (*al-wāḥid wa-al-kathīr*).
3. The prior and the posterior (*al-mutaqaddim wa-al-muta'akhkhir*).
4. The eternal and the temporal (*al-qadīm wa-al-ḥādith*).
5. Potentiality and actuality (*al-qūwah wa-al-fi'l*).
6. Cause and effect (*al-'illah wa-al-ma'lūl*).
7. Substance and accident (*al-jawhar wa-al-'araḍ*).

Chapter Two on Knowledge of the Creator and His Attributes

1. The proof for the existence of the Necessarily [Existent] by virtue of Its essence (*al-wājib li-dhātihi*).
2. The Necessary Existent's (*wājib al-wujūd*) existence (*wujūd*) is the same as Its reality (*ḥaqīqah*).
3. [Its] necessity of existence (*wujūb al-wujūd*) as well as Its individuation (*ta'ayyun*) are identical with Its essence (*dhāt*).
4. The oneness (*tawḥīd*) of the Necessary Existent.
5. The Necessarily [Existent] by virtue of Its essence is necessary in all of Its aspects (*jihāt*).
6. The Necessarily [Existent] by virtue of Its essence does not share Its existence with contingents.
7. The Necessarily [Existent] by virtue of Its essence knows Its essence.
8. The Necessarily [Existent] by virtue of Its essence knows universals (*al-kullīyāt*).
9. The Necessarily [Existent] by virtue of Its essence knows particulars (*al-juz'īyāt*).
10. The Necessary Existent is a willer (*murīd*) of things and is magnanimous (*jawād*).

Chapter Three on the Angels (*al-malā'ikah*) or Abstracted Intelligences (*al-'uqūl al-mujarradah*)

1. The proof for the [existence of] the intelligences.
2. The multiplicity (*kathrah*) of the intelligences.

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only with the second and third parts of the work.

3. The pre-eternity (*azalīyah*) and everlastingness (*abadīyah*) of the intelligences.

4. How the intellegences serve as an intermediary between the Creator (*al-Bārī*) and the corporeal world (*al-ʻālam al-jismānī*).

To the best of my knowledge no scholarly edition of *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah* or of al-Maybudī's commentary on it has been published. Commercial printings of al-Abharī's text with al-Maybudī's commentary are, however, plentiful, and the translation which follows has been based on three of them. These are: 1) the Istanbul printing of 1321, which contains only al-Abharī's text and al-Maybudī's commentary, 2) the Istanbul printing of 1325, which contains, in addition to al-Abharī's text and al-Maybudī's commentary, selections from various other glosses and commentaries printed in the margins, and 3) the Tehran lithograph of 1331, which also contains selections from various glosses and commentaries in the margins. No significant variations were found between any of the texts, although obvious misprints were common. For al-Abharī's text the 1313 Tehran lithograph of the commentary on it of Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī was also consulted.

The translation which follows comprises the first six sections of Chapter Two of al-Maybudī's commentary on *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah*. These sections all have to do with issues pertaining to the Necessary Existent's existence. The first section presents a proof for the existence of the Necessary Existent. The second and third sections deal with the question of whether the Necessary Existent's existence (*wujūd*), necessity (*wujūb*) and individuation (*taʻayyun*) are identical with Its essence or additional to it. The fourth section takes up the question of whether there can be more than one necessary existent. The fifth section deals with the question of whether it is possible for a necessary being to change. And finally the sixth and last of the translated sections discusses the question of whether the existence of the Necessary Existent is of the same nature as the existence of contingent beings.

In the translation of the text, a boldface font has been used to distinguish al-Abharī's original text from al-Maybudī's commentary. A translation of al-Abharī's original text without the commentary is given in an appendix. Square brackets have been used to indicate words and phrases which do not correspond to anything in the original Arabic text but which were considered necessary for the clarity of the English translation. For readers who have some knowledge of Arabic certain philosophical and logical terms have been given in transliterated Arabic after the corresponding English translation of the term. These are printed in italics and placed within parentheses.

Chapter Two on Knowledge of the Creator (*al-Ṣāni‘*) and His Attributes: This chapter contains ten sections.

Section [One] On the Proof (*ithbāt*) for the Necessarily [Existent] by Virtue of Its Essence (*al-wājib li-dhātihi*).[22]

[1] **The Necessarily [Existent] by virtue of Its essence, if considered as It is in Itself (*min ḥayth huwa huwa*), is that which does not accept non-existence (*al-‘adam*). In proof of this (*burhānuhu*)**[23] **one may say that if there were not in existence an existent which was necessary by virtue of its essence, then an impossibility would result. This is because all existents would then constitute a totality (*jumlah*) made up of individuals (*āḥād*) each one of which would be contingent by virtue of its essence (*mumkin li-dhātihi*).** It follows that the totality would also be contingent because of its need for each of its contingent parts, since what is in need of what is contingent has all the more reason to be contingent. **Therefore it**, that is, the totality, **would need an external cause to bring it into existence (*‘illah mūjidah khārijīyah*)**, that is, a cause external to the totality. **And the knowledge of this is self-evident (*badīhī*)**, that is, necessary (*ḍarūrī*) and intuitively inferred (*fiṭrī al-qiyās*).

[2] In confirmation of this (*taqrīruhu*)[24] it may be said that the cause cannot be the totality itself, which is apparent, nor one of its parts, since the cause of the totality is also the cause of each one of its parts. The reason for this[25] is that each part is contingent and in need of a cause. If the cause of the totality (*al-majmū‘*) were not also the cause of each of the parts, then some of them would be caused by another cause, and the first cause would not be the cause of the totality, but,

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[22] That is, that being which exists necessarily by virtue of its own essence rather than by virtue of some cause external to its essence. The adjectival phrase *wājib al-wujūd li-dhātihi* has been translated throughout as *necessarily existent by virtue of its essence*. Similarly, the nominal phrase *al-wājib li-dhātihi* has been translated as *the Necessarily [Existent] by virtue of Its essence*, and the noun *al-wājib* has been translated as *the Necessary [Existent]*. There are a number of words in Arabic which have the general meaning of *essence*. To avoid confusion *dhāt* has been translated as *essence*, *māhīyah* as *quiddity*, *ḥaqīqah* as *reality*, and *ṭabī‘ah* as *nature*.

[23] The proof which follows is essentially the same as the one given by Ibn Sīnā in both *al-Najāh* and *al-Ishārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt*. See p. 235 of *al-Najāh*, and Vol. III, pp. 20-28 of *al-Ishārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt*. An analysis of Ibn Sīnā's proof is given by Herbert Davidson in his *Proofs for Eternity, Creation and the Existence of God in Medieval Islamic and Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 281-310.

[24] That is, that the cause must be external to the totality.

[25] That is, the reason the cause of the totality cannot be one of the parts of the totality.

on the contrary, of some it only. From this it follows that any part which was the cause of the totality would have to be the cause of itself.[26]

[3] Here there is room for further discussion (*wa-hāhunā baḥth*), however, because the contingency of the totality does not imply its being in need of a cause which is individually one (*wāḥidah bi-al-shakhṣ*). On the contrary, it is possible for the totality to be dependent on many causes which bring the individual parts (*āḥād*) of the totality into existence, all of which causes together are the cause of the existence of the totality. It is also possible that the contingent [parts] constitute an infinite chain in which the second is the cause of the first, the third the cause of the second, and so on. Thus, the cause of the totality is that part of it which consists of all of those parts which are both causes and effects. The only [part] excluded is the [last part which is] purely an effect (*al-maʿlūl al-maḥḍ*).[27]

[4] The commentator on *al-Mawāqif*[28] said: The discussion concerns the cause which brings something into existence (*al-ʿillah al-mūjidah*) and which is independent in effectiveness (*al-taʾthīr*) and in bringing-into-existence (*al-ījād*). If what is before the last effect is a cause which brings the whole chain into existence and is truly independent in its effectiveness with respect to it, such a cause would definitely be a cause of itself.[29]

[5] It can be said in refutation of this remark (*al-kalām*)[30] that each one of the parts would then be in need of a cause external to the chain of contingents, for if it were not external then either a vicious circle (*al-dawr*) or an endless chain (*al-tasalsul*)[31] would result. Moreover, to acknowledge the need for a cause after observing that something is contingent is [an inference that is] intuitive. It should be apparent to you that this [refutation] is not pertinent to the argument.[32]

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[26] In other words, if one part of the totality were the cause of the remaining parts of the totality, that part would not be the cause of the totality but only of the remaining parts. For that part to be the cause of the totality it would also have to be the cause of itself in addition to being the cause of the other parts. But if it were the cause of itself it would be necessarily existent rather than contingent. Since all the parts of the totality are by definition contingent, the cause of the totality, being necessarily existent, could not be one of its parts but, on the contrary, would have to be external to it.

[27] Since, unlike all the other parts, it is not also a cause.

[28] That is, al-Sayyid al-Sharīf ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-Jurjānī (died 816/1413), the author of a commentary on the *Kitāb al-Mawāqif* of ʿAḍud al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad al-Ījī. See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, II, 269, Supplement II, 289. His son, Muḥammad, wrote a commentary on *Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah* entitled *Ḥall al-Hidāyah*. See Āghā Buzurg, *al-Dharīʿah*, VII, 77.

[29] And therefore necessarily existent contrary to what had been assumed.

[30] That is, that it is possible for the totality to be dependent on many causes as proposed in paragraph 3.

[31] That is, infinite regress.

[32] According to ʿAbd al-Ḥakīm, one of the glossators of al-Maybudī's text, the

[6] **Moreover, an existent which was external to all contingents would be necessary by virtue of its essence. Thus, the existence of what is necessarily existent (wājib al-wujūd) follows from the assumption of its non-existence,[33] and that is impossible.** Therefore, its non-existence is impossible, and its existence is necessary.

Section [Two] On [the Proof] that the Necesary Existent's Existence is the Same as Its Reality (ḥaqīqah).

[1] The grades of existents in existence (marātib al-mawjūdāt fī al-mawjūdīyah) are, according to logical division (al-taqsīm al-ʿaqlī), three: The lowest grade is what exists by virtue of another (al-mawjūd bi-al-ghayr), that is, what is brought into existence by something other than itself. Such an existent has an essence (dhāt) and an existence which is different from its essence, as well as a bringer-into-existence (mūjid) which is different from both. If the essence of such an existent is considered without consideration of its bringer-into-existence, it is possible in fact (fī nafs al-amr)[34] for its existence to be separated from its essence, and without doubt it is also possible to conceive (al-taṣawwur) of its existence as being separated from

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reason it is not pertinent is because it requires proofs for the impossibility of both the vicious circle and the endless chain, and al-Abharī's intent was to prove the existence of the Necessary Existent without relying on such proofs. See the margin of p. 167 of the Tehran lithograph of 1331.

[33] As stated in paragraph 1 above.

[34] The literal meaning of fī nafs al-amr is *in the matter itself* or *in the thing itself*. Things can be said to exist in the external world of time and space (fī al-khārij), in the mind (fī al-dhihn), or in the thing itself (fī nafs al-amr), that is, in fact. In the introduction to his commentary al-Maybudī makes the following statement: "The meaning of a thing's being existent in the matter itself is that it is existent in itself. Matter (al-amr) is the same as thing (al-shay'). The upshot of this is that its existence is not dependent on anyone's supposition (farḍ) or consideration (iʿtibār). For example, the connection between the rising of the sun and the existence of daylight is [something that is] realized in itself regardless of whether or not anyone exists to suppose it, and regardless of whether or not anyone does suppose it. [Existence in] the thing itself (nafs al-amr) is more inclusive (aʿamm) than [existence in] the external world (al-khārij), for every existent in the external world exists in the thing itself, with no universal converse being possible (bilā ʿaks kullī). Existence in the thing itself is also more inclusive than [existence in] the mind, but in only a certain respect, for it is possible to conceive of false propositions (kawādhib), such as the evenness of the number five, which can exist in the mind but not in the thing itself. Such propostions are called hypothetical mental [propositions] (dhihnī farḍī). The evenness of the number four, on the other hand, exists both in the thing itself as well as in the mind, and such propositions are called real mental [propositions] (dhihnī ḥaqīqī)." (See p. 5 of the Istanbul printing of 1321, p. 5 also in the Istanbul printing of 1325, and p. 10 in the Tehran lithograph of 1331.) In summary one may say that all things that exist in the

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its essence, for both the conceiving and the thing conceived (*al-mutaṣawwar*) are possible. Such is the status of contingent quiddities (*al-māhīyāt al-mumkinah*), as is well known.

[2] The middle grade is what exists by virtue of its essence (*al-mawjūd bi-al-dhāt*) with an existence which is other than its essence, that is, an existent whose essence completely necessitates its existence, such that it is impossible for its existence to be separated from its essence. Such an existent has an essence, and an existence which is different from its essence. Moreover, in view of its essence, it is impossible for its existence to be separated from its essence. Nevertheless, it is possible to conceive of this separation and, although the thing conceived is impossible, its conception is possible. This is the status of the Necessary Existent according to the position of the vast majority of the theologians (*jumhūr al-mutakallimīn*).[35]

[3] The highest grade is what exists by virtue of its essence with an existence that is identical with it, that is, an existent whose existence is identical with its essence. Such an existent does not have an existence that differs from its essence, nor is it possible to conceive of the separation of its existence from it. Indeed, the separation and the conception of separation are both impossible. Such is the status of the Necessary Existent according to the position of the philosophers (*al-ḥukamā'*).

[4] If you desire further elucidation of what we have set forth, you may seek clarification of this matter in the following example. The grades of a luminous object (*al-muḍī'*) insofar as it is luminous are also three. The first is what is luminous by virtue of another (*al-muḍī' bi-al-ghayr*), that is, what receives its luminosity (*ḍaw'*) from something else, like the surface of the earth which is illumined when it faces the sun. In this case there is a luminous object, a luminosity which is different from that object, and a third thing which produces the luminosity.

[5] The second grade is what is luminous by virtue of its essence (*al-muḍī' bi-al-dhāt*) through a luminosity that is other than it, that is, something whose essence necessitates its luminosity in such a way that it cannot fail to appear. This is like the body of the sun on the assumption that it necessitates its luminosity, for this luminous object has an essence and a luminosity that is different from it.

[6] The third grade is what is luminous by virtue of its essence through a luminosity that is identical with it, like the luminosity of the sun, for it is luminous by virtue of its essence, rather than by virtue of a luminosity additional to its essence. This is the most exalted and most potent luminous object conceivable.

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external world also exist in the thing itself, that is, in fact. Some things that exist in the mind, such as real concepts and true propositions and theories, also exist in fact as well as in the mind. Imaginary concepts and false propositons, however, exist only in the mind and never in fact. Further discussion of this subject may be found in al-Aḥmadnagarī, *Dustūr al-'Ulamā'*, III, 370-372 (under *al-mawjūd*), and al-Tahānawī, *Kashshāf*, pp. 1403-1404 (under *nafs al-amr*), and pp. 1456-1461 (under *al-wujūd*).

[35] For the position of the theologians see, for example, al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, I, 48-50, and al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, II, 156-169.

[7] Should it be asked: How can luminosity be described as being luminous, since the meaning of what is luminous, as initially understood, is something in which luminosity subsists? We should answer: That is the meaning with which the common people are familiar and for which the word *luminous* was coined in the [Arabic] language. Our discussion is not concerned with that meaning, however. When we say that luminosity is luminous by virtue of its essence (*al-ḍaw' muḍī' bi-dhātihi*) we do not mean by that that another luminosity subsists in it and that it becomes luminous by virtue of that luminosity. On the contrary what we mean by that is that what can be attributed both to something which is luminous by virtue of another and to something which is luminous by virtue of its own essence, although by means of a luminosity that is other than its essence, namely, visibility (*al-ẓuhūr*) to the eyes due to the luminosity, can also be attributed to luminosity [as it is] in itself in accordance with its own essence rather than through something additional to its essence. Indeed, visibility in the case of luminosity is stronger and closer to perfection, for luminosity is visible in its essence with no [trace of] invisibility (*khafā'*) at all. Luminosity, moreover, also makes visible what is other than itself in accordance with the capacity of that other [to become visible].

[8] **This is because if Its existence were additional to Its reality (*ḥaqī-qah*), it would be inherent (*'āriḍ*) in it.**[36] It has been said that this is because of the impossibility of Its division (*al-juz'īyah*) since such division would imply composition (*tarkīb*) in the essence of the Necessary Existent.[37] This calls for further discussion, however, for the composition which is impossible in the Necessary Existent is external composition, since it implies being in need in the external world, and that, in turn, implies contingency. As for mental composition with respect to the Necessary Existent, we do not admit its impossibility, because such composition does not imply being in need in the external world, but only in the mind, and being in need in the mind does not imply contingency, since the contingent is what is in need of what is other than itself for its external existence.

[9] **And if it were inherent in it, [Its] existence, as it is in itself (*min ḥayth huwa huwa*), would be in need of something other than itself,** that is, in need of what it inheres in (*al-ma'rūḍ*).[38] **It would then be contingent by virtue of its essence and dependent upon a cause (*'illah*). It would therefore require an effector (*mu'aththir*), and if that effector were identical with the reality [of the Necessary Existent], that effector would have to exist before [its own] existence, since the cause which brings a thing into existence must precede its effect in existence.** Indeed, as long as the intellect

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[36] Al-Abharī's argument in this and the following paragraph is similar to the argument given by Ibn Sīnā in several of his works. See *al-Shifā', al-Ilāhīyat*, pp. 344-347; *al-Ishārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt*, III, 30-40; *Dānishnāmah, Ilāhīyāt*, pp. 76-77 (Morewedge trans. pp. 55-56); and *al-Risālah al-'Arshīyah*, p. 4 (Arberry trans. pp. 27-28).

[37] That is, the essence of the Necessary Existent would be composed of a reality and of a separate existence which inhered in the reality as an accident.

[38] Namely, the reality of the Necessary Existent.

(*al-'aql*) is not cognizant that a thing exists, it is impossible for it to be cognizant of it as a source (*mabda'*) and bestower (*mufīd*) of existence. **And thus that thing would have to exist before itself, and that is impossible. If, on the other hand, the effector were something other than the quiddity (*māhīyah*) [of the Necessary Existent], then the Necessary Existent by virtue of Its essence would be in need of what is other than Itself for Its existence, and that is impossible.**

[10] The verifiers (*al-muḥaqqiqūn*)[39] said: "Existence, while identical with the Necessary Existent, nevertheless has expanded over the forms (*hayākil*) of existents and has become manifest in them. Thus there is nothing at all that is without it. Indeed, it is their reality (*ḥaqīqah*) and identity (*'ayn*), for they have been distinguished from each other and made multiple through qualifications and individuations that exist only in the mind (*taqayyudāt wa-ta'ayyunāt i'tibārīyah*)."

Section [Three] On [the Proof] that [Its] Necessity of Existence (*wujūb al-wujūd*)[40] as well as Its Individuation (*ta'ayyun*) are Identical with Its Essence.

[1] Should it be asked:[41] "How can the attribute of a thing be conceived as being identical with its reality when both the attribute (*al-ṣifah*) and what it qualifies (*al-mawṣūf*) testify to their being different from each other?" I should answer: The meaning of their saying that the attributes of the Necessary Existent are identical with Its essence is that "what results from the essence of the Necessary Existent [alone] is what [in other cases] results from an essence and an attribute combined."

[2] To explain how the Necessary Existent can be identical with [Its] knowledge (*'ilm*) and power (*qudrah*) they said: "Your own essence [for example] is not sufficient to reveal (*inkishāf*) things and make them apparent (*ẓuhūr*) to you, for in order for things to be revealed and made apparent to you, you must have the attribute of knowledge subsisting in you. It is different in the case of the essence of the Necessary Existent, however, for It is not in need of an attribute subsisting in It in order for things to be revealed and made apparent to It. On the contrary all concepts (*mafhūmāt*) are revealed to It by reason of Its essence [alone], and in this regard Its essence is the reality of knowledge (*ḥaqīqat al-'ilm*). Such is also the case with respect to the power [of the Necessary Existent], for Its essence is effective in

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[39] According to Mīr Hāshim, one of the glossators of al-Maybudī's commentary, these are the Ṣūfīs. See the Tehran lithograph of 1331, p. 169. The passage which follows is quoted from al-Jurjānī's *Ḥāshiyat Sharḥ al-Tajrīd*, fol. 63b, and represents the doctrine of the *waḥdat al-wujūd*, or unity of existence, school of Ṣūfism founded by Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn 'Arabī (died 638/1240). See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, I, 571, Supplement I, 790. Another passage from the same work is quoted in section 6, paragraphs 5-6.

[40] That is, the necessity of the existence of the Necessary Existent.

[41] Most of this paragraph and the next are quoted from al-Jurjānī's *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, VIII, 47.

itself (*mu'aththirah bi-dhātihā*) rather than by means of an attribute additional to it, as is the case with our own essences. When regarded in this way the essence of the Necessary Existent is the reality of power (*ḥaqīqat al-qudrah*), and accordingly the essence and attributes of the Necessary Existent are really (*fī al-ḥaqīqah*) united, although they differ from each other in accordance with the manner in which they are regarded and understood (*bi-al-i'tibār wa-al-mafhūm*). Upon investigation, this [unity of essence and attributes] is based on (*marji'uhu*) the denial of the Necessary Existent's attributes along with [the affirmation of] the occurence (*ḥuṣūl*) of their effects and fruits by virtue of Its essence alone."

[3] **As for the first**[42] **it is because the necessity of existence, if it were additional to Its reality, would be an effect of Its essence (*ma'lūl li-dhātihi*),** in accordance with what was said above.[43] **As long as the existence of a cause is not necessary,** its existence is not possible, and consequently **it is impossible for its effect to exist. And since that necessity [which is under consideration] is necessity by virtue of the essence (*al-wujūb bi-al-dhāt*), that necessity of existence by virtue of the essence would exist,** necessarily, **before itself, and that is impossible.**

[4] **As for the second it is because Its individuation, if it were additional to Its reality, would be an effect of Its essence, and as long as a cause is not individuated it does not exist and so cannot bring into existence its effect. Therefore Its individuation would be existent (*ḥāṣil*) before itself, and that is impossible.**

Section [Four] On [the Proof] for the Oneness (*tawḥīd*) of the Necessary Existent.[45]

[1] **If we suppose two necessarily existent beings (*mawjūdayn wājibay al-wujūd*), both would have necessity of existence (*wujūb al-wujūd*) in common but would differ with respect to something else. That which served to distinguish them from each other would either be the entire reality (*ḥaqīqah*) or not be [the entire reality]. The first [alternative] is impossible because if the distinction were with respect to the entire reality, then necessity of existence,** because it is common to both, **would have to be external to the reality of both. That is impossible because, as we have explained,**[46] **necessity of existence is identical to the reality of the Necessary Existent.**

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[42] That is, the necessity of Its existence.

[43] In paragraphs 8 and 9 of section 2, which deal with the question of whether existence is additional to the essence of the Necessary Existent.

[45] The argument that follows is similar to the argument of Ibn Sīnā in *al-Shifā'*, *al-Ilāhīyāt*, pp. 43, 349-354; *Dānishnāmah, Ilāhīyāt*, pp. 75-76 (Morewedge trans. pp. 54-55); and *al-Risālah al-'Arshīyah*, p. 3 (Arberry trans. pp. 25-26); and *al-Najāh*, pp. 230-231.

[46] In section 3, paragraph 2 above.

[2] I say: Further discussion is called for here, because the meaning of their assertion that necessity of existence is identical with the reality of the Necessary Existent is that the effect of the attribute of necessity of existence (*athar ṣifat wujūb al-wujūd*) becomes manifest from that very reality, not that that reality is identical with that attribute.[47] Therefore, what is meant by two necessarily existent beings having necessity of existence in common is merely that the effect of the attribute of necessity [of existence] becomes manifest from each of them. Thus there is no inconsistency (*munāfāh*) between their having necessity of existence in common and their being distinguished from each other with respect to the entire reality.

[3] **The second [alternative] is also impossible, because each one of them would then be composed of what they had in common and what served to distinguish them from one another, and, since everything that is composed is in need of something other than itself,** that is, its two parts, **each would therefore be contingent by virtue of its essence, and that is contrary (*hādhā khulf*) [to what was assumed].** Here there is also room for discussion, since it was previously mentioned[48] that the composition which implies contingency is external composition (*al-tarkīb al-khārijī*) not mental (*al-dhihnī*) [composition]. It has been objected: Why is it not possible for the distinction [between the two] to be made by means of an accidental entity (*amr ʿāriḍ*) rather than by a constituent (*muqawwim*) [of the essence], so that composition would not be implied [in the essence]? The reply has been that that requires that the individuation [of the Necessary Existent] be accidental, and that is contrary to what has been established by demonstration.[49] I say: It is possible to amend (*tawjīh*) the author's argument[50] so that that [objection] cannot be directed against it by saying: If what served to distinguish them from one another were not the entire reality, then it would either be a part of the reality or an accident of it. In either case each of the two [necessary existents] would have to be composed. In the first case they would be composed of genus (*jins*) and difference (*faṣl*), and in the second of reality (*ḥaqīqah*) and individuation (*taʿayyun*).

[4] One might argue that what we have shown to the effect that the individuation of the Necessary Existent is identical with Its reality[51] is sufficient to prove Its unity, because whenever individuation is identical with a quiddity (*māhīyah*), the species (*nawʿ*) of that quiddity is necessarily restricted to a [single] individual (*shakhṣ*). I should reply: This calls for further discussion (*fīhi naẓar*), because what is intended by this proof is to show that the Necessary Existent is a single reality (*ḥaqīqah wāḥidah*) whose individuation is identical with it. From what has been mentioned previously, however, that proof is not conclusive (*thābit*) [for this purpose] because

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[47] See the quotation from al-Jurjānī in section 3, paragraphs 1 and 2.
[48] In section 2, paragraph 8.
[49] Namely, that the individuation of the Necessary Existent is identical with Its essence. See section 3, paragraph 4 above.
[50] As given at the beginning of this paragraph.
[51] In section 3, paragraph 4.

of the possibility of there being [a number of] different necessarily existent realities each one of which has an individuation identical with it. It is therefore necessary to provide a [separate] proof for the unity [of the Necessary Existent].

Section [Five] On [the Proof] that the Necessarily [Existent] by Virtue of Its Essence is Necessary in All of Its Aspects (*jihāt*), that is, It has no anticipated state not yet actualized (*ḥālah muntaẓarah ghayr ḥāṣilah*).[52]

[1] **This is because Its essence (*dhāt*) is sufficient with respect to the attributes it possesses, and It is therefore necessary in all of Its aspects. We say that Its essence is sufficient with respect to the attributes It possesses only because, were it not sufficient, then some of Its attributes would be [derived] from another [being] and the presence,** that is, existence, **of that other [being] would be a cause (*'illah*) in general (*fī al-jumlah*) of that attribute's existence, and its absence,** that is, its non-existence, **would be a cause of the attribute's non-existence. If such were the case, Its essence, considered as it is in itself (*min ḥayth hiya hiya*),** and unconditioned by the presence or absence of that other [being], **would not be necessarily existent.**

[2] **This is because [if It were] necessarily existent, it would be so either with the existence (*wujūd*) of that attribute or with its non-existence (*'adam*). If It were necessarily existent with the existence of that attribute, its existence,** that is, the existence of the attribute, **would not be because of the presence of another [being],**[53] because the attribute's existence would [already] be established in the essence of the Necessary [Existent] as it is in itself without consideration of the presence of another [being]. **If, on the other hand, It were necessarily existent with the non-existence of that attribute, the non-existence of the attribute would not be because of the absence of another [being],**[54] because the attribute's non-existence would [already] be established in the essence of the Necessary [Existent] as it is in itself without consideration of the absence of another [being]. Here there is room for further discussion (*hāhunā baḥth*), however, since the non-existence of something does not follow simply from its not being taken into consideration.

[3] **Thus if it,** that is, the essence of the Necessary [Existent], **were not necessarily existent unconditionally (*bilā sharṭ*),**[55] **then the Necessarily [Existent] by virtue of Its essence would not be necessarily [existent] by virtue of Its essence, and that is absurd (*hādhā khulf*).** This [argument] can be refuted, however, by [applying it to] the relations [of the Necessary Existent], since it is applicable to such relations also, even though the essence of the Necessary

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[52] Ibn Sīnā's arguments for this proposition may be found in *Dānishnāmah, Ilāhīyāt*, p. 76 (Morewedge trans. pp. 55-56); *al-Najāh*, pp. 228-229; and *al-Risālah al-'Arshīyah*, p. 5 (Arberry trans. pp. 28-29).

[53] Contrary to what was stated in paragraph 1 above.

[54] Again, contrary to what was stated in paragraph 1 above.

[55] As stated in the last sentence in paragraph 1 above.

[Existent] is not sufficient to bring them into existence, for they depend necessarily on matters which are separate and distinct from Its essence.

[4] It has been said that the best way of proving this point is to say: Everything which is possible (*mumkin*) for the Necessary [Existent] in the way of attributes is necessitated by Its essence (*yūjibuhu dhātuhu*). Everything which is necessitated by Its essence is necessarily actualized (*wājib al-ḥuṣūl*).[56] As for the major premiss, it is obvious. As for the minor premiss, it is true because if it were not, then the necessity of existence of some of the attributes would be by virtue of something other than the essence. And if that other were necessary by virtue of its essence, what is necessarily existent would be more than one.

[5] On the other hand, if that other were contingent, either it would be necessitated by the essence, in which case the essence would be the necessitator of those attributes we had assumed it did not necessitate, since the necessitator of a necessitator is also a necessitator, or that other would not be [necessitated by the essence], in which case it would be necessitated by some second necessitator (*mūjib thānī*), and the argument would be transferred to it. Either the chain of necessitators would regress to infinity, or else it would end with a necessitator necessitated by the essence, and that would be in contradiction to what had been assumed. The gist of this (*al-ḥāṣil*) is that if the essence did not necessitate all of the attributes, then one of these impossibilities would result: either the multiplicity of the Necessary [Existent] (*ta'addud al-wājib*),[57] or an infinite regress (*al-tasalsul*), or the contradiction of what had been assumed (*khilāf al-mafrūḍ*).[58] Therefore the essence [of the Necessary Existent] is the necessitator of all Its attributes, and the question is proven. I say: There is room here for further discussion, for if this were the case, then every contingent would exist from eternity (*qadīman*) regardless of whether it was an attribute of the Necessary [Existent] or not.

Section [Six] on [the Proof] that the Necessarily [Existent] by Virtue of Its Essence does not Share Its Existence with Contingents. That is, absolute existence (*al-wujūd al-muṭlaq*) is not a specific nature (*ṭabī'ah naw'īyah*) both for an existence which is identical with the Necessary [Existent] as well as for the existences of contingent beings (*wujūdāt al-mumkināt*).[59] On the contrary absolute existence is predicated accidentally (*qawlan 'araḍīyan*) of contingents by analogy (*bi-al-tashkīk*).[60]

[1] **This is because if It shared Its existence with contingents** in the way mentioned, **then absolute existence as it is in itself would be either**

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[56] And therefore, everything which is possible for the Necessary [Existent] is necessarily actualized.

[57] As shown above in paragraph 4.

[58] As shown above in the previous sentence.

[59] That is, absolute existence is not a class which includes both the existence of the Necessary Existent as well as the individual existences of contingent beings.

[60] Rather than univocally.

necessarily independent (**al-tajarrud**) of quiddities,[61] or necessarily not independent (**al-lā-tajarrud**) [of quiddities],[62] or neither the one nor the other, and all three are impossible.

[2] **If it were necessarily independent, then the existence[s] of all contingents would have to be independent of, rather than inherent in, quiddities,** because what is required by a specific nature (*muqtaḍā al-ṭabīʿah al-nawʿīyah*) does not differ [from one instance of the species to another]. **This**[63] **is impossible because we can conceive of a seven-sided figure (*al-musabbaʿ*)[64] while doubting its external existence.**[65] It would be appropriate to drop this restriction [to external existence] since the discussion is concerned with absolute existence, which includes both mental (*dhihnī*) and external (*khārijī*) existence. **Thus if its existence were the same as its reality (*ḥaqīqah*) or a part of it,[66] then a single thing would at the same time (*fī ḥālah wāḥidah*) be both known and unknown,[67] and that is impossible.**

[3] It would be more appropriate to say: because we can conceive of a seven-sided figure and be unaware of its existence. Thus if its existence were the same as its reality or a part of it, then a single thing would at the same time be both known and unknown. Or one could say: because we can conceive of a seven-sided figure while doubting its existence. Thus if its existence were the same as its reality, doubt would not be possible, since it is evident (*bayyin*) that a thing can [always] be predicated of itself. The case would be similar if existence were an essential attribute (*dhātī*) of its reality, because it is evident that an essential attribute can [always] be predicated of that [reality] of which it is an essential attribute. You are aware, of course, that all of this can only be the case if the quiddity is conceived in its true essence (*bi-al-kunh*).

[4] **If, on the other hand, absolute existence were necessarily not independent [of quiddities], then the existence of the Creator (*wujūd al-Bārī*) would not be independent (*mujarrad*) [of a quiddity], which is absurd (*hādhā khulf*). If it were neither necessarily independent nor necessar-**

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[61] Like the existence of the Necessary Existent, whose existence does not inhere in Its reality or quiddity but is the same as Its reality.

[62] Like the existences of contingent beings, whose existences inhere in quiddities.

[63] That is, that the existences of all contingents would have to be independent of quiddities.

[64] According to the commentary of Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī what is meant is a solid figure enclosed by seven equal plane surfaces (*al-jism al-muḥāṭ bi-sabʿat suṭūḥ mutasāwiyah*), i.e., a heptahedron. See p. 300 of his *Sharḥ Hidāyat al-Ḥikmah*.

[65] And we can therefore infer that its existence inheres in its quiddity and is not independent of it.

[66] That is, independent rather than inherent in its reality.

[67] That is, if the quiddity of the seven-sided figure were the same as its existence, and the quiddity were known, but its existence were unknown, then a single thing (the quiddity and its existence) would be both known and unknown.

ily not independent, then it would be possible for it to be either one or the other, but by virtue of a cause. In that case the Necessary Existent would be in need of what is other than Itself for Its independence, and Its essence (*dhāt*) would not be sufficient [in causing] what It has in the way of attributes. That is absurd (*hādhā khulf*). This is what people are currently saying on this topic.

[5] One of the verifiers (*baʿḍ al-muḥaqqiqīn*) has said:[68] "Every concept (*mafhūm*) which is other than existence, as, for example, the concept *humanity*, does not exist at all in fact (*fī nafs al-amr*)[69] as long as existence has not been conjoined with it in some way. Moreover, as long as the mind has not observed that existence has been conjoined with it, it cannot make the judgement that it exists. Thus every concept other than existence is in need of what is other than itself, namely, existence, in order to exist in fact. And everything which is in need of what is other than itself in order to exist is contingent, for there is no meaning to *contingent* except that which is in need of what is other than itself in order to exist. Thus, every concept which is other than existence is contingent, and nothing that is contingent is necessary. It follows that no concepts which are other than existence are necessary.

[6] "It has been demonstrated, moreover, that the Necessary [Existent] exists. It cannot but be identical with that existence that exists by virtue of its own essence rather than by virtue of something that is other than its essence. Moreover, since it is necessary that the Necessary [Existent] be a real and self-subsistent particular (*juzʾī ḥaqīqī qāʾim bi-dhātihi*) and that Its individuation (*taʿayyun*) be by virtue of Its essence not by virtue of something additional to Its essence, it is necessary that existence also be like that, since existence is identical with the Necessary Existent. Therefore, existence is not a universal concept (*mafhūm kullī*) comprising individuals (*afrād*). On the contrary, it is in itself (*fī ḥadd dhātihi*) a real particular with no possibility of becoming multiple or of being divided. It is self-subsistent and free (*munazzah*) from being inherent in what is other than it. Therefore, the Necessary [Existent] is Absolute Existence (*al-wujūd al-muṭlaq*), that is, existence free (*muʿarrā*) of any limitation (*taqyīd*) by, or conjuction (*inḍimām*) with, what is other than It.

[7] "On the basis of the foregoing, one cannot conceive of existence as inhering in contingent quiddities (*al-māhīyah al-mumkinah*). What is meant by a contingent quiddity's being existent is merely that it has a special relation (*nisbah makhṣūṣah*) to the Presence of the Self-Subsistent Existence (*ḥaḍrat al-wujūd al-*

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[68] This and the following two paragraphs are quoted from al-Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī's *Ḥāshiyat Sharḥ al-Tajrīd*, fols. 62b-63a. Like the passage quoted previously from al-Jurjānī in section 2, paragraph 10, this passage represents the doctrine of the *waḥdat al-wujūd* school of Ṣūfism. The passage is quoted in a number of other works as well. See, for example, al-Qūshjī, *Sharḥ al-Tajrīd*, p. 61; Rāghib Bāshā, *al-Lumʿah*, pp. 11-12; al-Aḥmadnagarī, *Dustūr al-ʿUlamāʾ*, III, 443-444 (under *al-wujūd*).

[69] See note 34 above.

qā'im bi-dhātihi). This relation has different aspects and various modes whose quiddities are difficult to detect. Thus what exists (*al-mawjūd*) is universal (*kullī*) even though existence (*al-wujūd*) is particular and real (*juz'ī ḥaqīqī*)." A certain learned man said: We used to hear him say that this was the doctrine of the verifying philosophers (*al-ḥukamā' al-muḥaqqiqīn*), the earlier ones as well as the later.

APPENDIX

TRANSLATION OF AL-ABHARĪ'S ORIGINAL TEXT

Chapter Two on Knowledge of the Creator (*al-Ṣāni'*) and His Attributes: This chapter contains ten sections.

Section [One] On the Proof (*ithbāt*) for the Necessarily [Existent] by Virtue of Its Essence (*al-wājib li-dhātihi*).

The Necessarily [Existent] by virtue of Its essence, if considered as It is in Itself (*min ḥayth huwa huwa*), is that which does not accept non-existence (*al-'adam*). In proof of this (*burhānuhu*) one may say that if there were not in existence an existent which was necessary by virtue of its essence, then an impossibility would result. This is because all existents would then constitute a totality (*jumlah*) made up of individuals (*āḥād*) each one of which would be contingent by virtue of its essence (*mumkin li-dhātihi*). Therefore it would need an external cause to bring it into existence (*'illah mūjidah khārijīyah*). And the knowledge of this is self-evident (*badīhī*). Moreover, an existent which was external to all contingents would be necessary by virtue of its essence. Thus, the existence of what is necessarily existent (*wājib al-wujūd*) follows from the assumption of its non-existence, and that is impossible.

Section [Two] On [the Proof] that the Necessary Existent's Existence is the Same as Its Reality (*ḥaqīqah*).

This is because if Its existence were additional to Its reality (*ḥaqīqah*), it would be inherent (*'āriḍ*) in it. And if it were inherent in it, [Its] existence, as it is in itself (*min ḥayth huwa huwa*), would be in need of something other than itself. It would then be contingent by virtue of its essence and dependent upon a cause (*'illah*). It would therefore require an effector (*mu'aththir*), and if that effector were identical with the reality [of the Necessary Existent], that effector would have to exist before [its own] existence, since the cause which brings a thing into existence must precede its effect in existence. And thus that thing would have to exist before itself, and that is impossible. If, on the other hand, the effector were something other than the quiddity (*māhīyah*) [of the Necessary Existent], then the Necessary Existent by virtue of Its essence would be in need of what is other than Itself for Its existence, and that is impossible.

Section [Three] On [the Proof] that [Its] Necessity of Existence (*wujūb al-wujūd*) as well as Its Individuation (*ta'ayyun*) are Identical with Its Essence.

As for the first it is because the necessity of existence, if it were additional to Its reality, would be an effect of Its essence (*ma'lūl li-dhātihi*). As long as the existence

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of a cause is not necessary, it is impossible for its effect to exist. And since that necessity [which is under consideration] is necessity by virtue of the essence (*al-wujūb bi-al-dhāt*), that necessity of existence by virtue of the essence would exist before itself, and that is impossible. As for the second it is because Its individuation, if it were additional to Its reality, would be an effect of Its essence, and as long as a cause is not individuated it does not exist and so cannot bring into existence its effect. Therefore Its individuation would be existent (*ḥāṣil*) before itself, and that is impossible.

Section [Four] On [the Proof] for the Oneness (*tawḥīd*) of the Necessary Existent.

If we suppose two necessarily existent beings (*mawjūdayn wājibay al-wujūd*), both would have necessity of existence (*wujūb al-wujūd*) in common but would differ with respect to something else. That which served to distinguish them from each other would either be the entire reality (*ḥaqīqah*) or not be [the entire reality]. The first [alternative] is impossible because if the distinction were with respect to the entire reality, then necessity of existence would have to be external to the reality of both. That is impossible because, as we have explained, necessity of existence is identical to the reality of the Necessary Existent. The second [alternative] is also impossible, because each one of them would then be composed of what they had in common and what served to distinguish them from one another, and, since everything that is composed is in need of something other than itself, each would therefore be contingent by virtue of its essence, and that is contrary (*hādhā khulf*) [to what was assumed].

Section [Five] On [the Proof] that the Necessarily [Existent] by Virtue of Its Essence is Necessary in All of Its Aspects (*jihāt*).

This is because Its essence (*dhāt*) is sufficient with respect to the attributes it possesses, and It is therefore necessary in all of Its aspects. We say that Its essence is sufficient with respect to the attributes It possesses only because, were it not sufficient, then some of Its attributes would be [derived] from another [being] and the presence of that other [being] would be a cause (*'illah*) in general (*fī al-jumlah*) of that attribute's existence, and its absence would be a cause of the attribute's non-existence. If such were the case, Its essence, considered as it is in itself (*min ḥayth hiya hiya*) would not be necessarily existent.

This is because [if It were] necessarily existent, it would be so either with the existence (*wujūd*) of that attribute or with its non-existence (*'adam*). If It were necessarily existent with the existence of that attribute, its existence would not be because of the presence of another [being]. If, on the other hand, It were necessarily existent with the non-existence of that attribute, the non-existence of the attribute would not be because of the absence of another [being]. Thus, if it were not necessarily existent unconditionally (*bilā shart*), then the Necessarily [Existent] by virtue of Its essence would not be necessarily [existent] by virtue of Its essence, and that is absurd (*hādhā khulf*).

Section [Six] on [the Proof] that the Necessarily [Existent] by Virtue of Its Essence does not Share Its Existence with Contingents.

This is because if It shared Its existence with contingents, then existence as it is in itself would be either necessarily independent (*al-tajarrud*) or necessarily not independent (*al-lā-tajarrud*) [of quiddities], or neither the one nor the other, and all three are impossible. If it were necessarily independent, then the existence[s] of all contingents would have to be independent of, rather than inherent in, quiddities. This is impossible because we can conceive of a seven-sided figure (*al-musabbaʿ*) while doubting its external existence. Thus if its existence were the same as its reality (*ḥaqīqah*) or a part of it, then a single thing would at the same time (*fī ḥālah wāḥidah*) be both known and unknown, and that is impossible.

If, on the other hand, absolute existence were necessarily not independent [of quiddities], then the existence of the Creator (*wujūd al-Bārī*) would not be independent (*mujarrad*) [of a quiddity], which is absurd (*hādhā khulf*). If it were neither necessarily independent nor necessarily not independent, then it would be possible for it to be either one or the other, but by virtue of a cause. In that case the Necessary Existent would be in need of what is other than Itself for Its independence, and Its essence (*dhāt*) would not be sufficient [in causing] what It has in the way of attributes. That is absurd (*hādhā khulf*).

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A LECTURE ON ISLAMIC THEOLOGY

I. Basic Beliefs of Islam.

Before taking up the subject of Islamic theology proper I should like, by way of introduction, to outline the basic religious beliefs which are common to all Muslims. As you may know, Islam was founded by the Prophet Muḥammad in the Arabian Peninsula in the first quarter of the seventh century. At the age of forty the Prophet began to receive certain revelations which he believed came from God. He was commanded by God to recite these revelations publicly and was told that God had chosen him to be His messenger and prophet. The revelations which he received were collected and preserved as sacred scripture by his companions and followers and this collection of revelations is known as the Qur'ān. I should like to stress here that the Qur'ān is considered by Muslims to be the speech or word of God himself, rather than something composed or written by the Prophet.

What the Prophet Muḥammad himself said, as opposed to what God revealed to him, was also preserved by his followers and later collected into books, and these sayings, which are known as traditions, or *ḥadīth*, are as authoritative in religious matters as the Qur'ān itself. Islam thus possesses two sources of revealed truth, the first being the Qur'ān, which is the record of God's message to mankind through the Prophet, and the second being the *ḥadīth*, or collected sayings and acts of the Prophet. It is from these two sources that the basic religious beliefs of Muslims are derived.

What, then, are these basic beliefs? First of all, Muslims believe that God is absolutely one and that Muḥammad is His messenger or prophet. In fact, to become a Muslim it is sufficient to bear witness to the fact that there is no god but God and that Muḥammad is His messenger. Muslims further believe that God created the universe, and that He has periodically revealed His word to a number of prophets and messengers, among whom are included Jesus and Moses and the other prophets of the Hebrew Bible. Muslims believe in angels, in the resurrection of the body, in a final Day of Judgment, and in a Heaven and a Hell where humans will be rewarded or punished in accordance with their acts and beliefs in this world.

These basic beliefs are summed up in two very short creeds found in two separate verses of the Qur'ān, which I should like to read to you. The first verse is:

> The messenger believeth in that which hath been revealed unto him from his Lord and (so do) the believers. Each one believeth in Allah and his angels and His scriptures and His messengers—We make no distinction between any of His messengers—and they say: We hear and we obey. (Grant us) Thy forgiveness, our Lord. Unto thee is the journeying. (Qur'ān, II:285)[1]

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[1] The translations of Qur'ānic verses are those of Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall in his *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*.

The second is:

> O ye who believe! Believe in Allah and His messenger and the Scripture which He hath revealed unto His messenger, and the Scripture which He revealed aforetime. Whoso disbelieveth in Allah and His angels and His scriptures and His messengers and the Last Day, he verily hath wandered far astray. (Qur'ān, IV:136)

Then, of course, in addition to being the source for religious beliefs, the Qur'ān and the ḥadīth are also the primary sources for Islamic moral and ethical precepts as well as for Islamic law.[2]

II. The Early Theologians.

Let me now turn to Islamic theology. The early Islamic theologians[3] were primarily interested in dealing with what appeared to them to be problems or even in some cases contradictions in the text of Qur'ān and the ḥadīth. What were some of these problems?

One area of scripture in which there appeared to be problems had to do with God's unity and His attributes. God is described in the Qur'ān as being the only God and as a God who has no partners. We find in the Qur'ān, for example, such verses as the following:

> Lo! I, even I, am Allah. There is no God save Me. So serve Me and establish worship for My remembrance. (Qur'ān, XX:14)

> Lo! Allah pardoneth not that partners should be ascribed unto Him. He pardoneth all save that to whom He will. Whoso ascribeth partners unto Allah hath wandered far astray. (Qur'ān, IV:116)

> They surely disbelieve who say: Lo! Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary. The Messiah (himself) said: O Children of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. Lo! whoso ascribeth partners unto Allah, for him Allah hath forbidden paradise. His abode is the Fire. For evil-doers there will be no helpers. (Qur'ān, V:72)

> They surely disbelieve who say: Lo! Allah is the third of three; when there is no God save the One God. If they desist not from so saying a painful doom will fall on those of them who disbelieve. (Qur'ān, V:73)

In addition to stressing God's oneness the Qur'ān also ascribes certain attributes to God. He is described as being Living, Knowing, Willing, Powerful, Seeing and Speaking. These attributes are usually ascribed to God in the form of verbs or adjectives, but sometimes these attributes are ascribed to God in the form of nouns. For example, the Qur'ān describes God as having knowledge in the following verses:

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[2] On the basic beliefs of Islam see A.J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, Cambridge, 1932.

[3] These were the theologians who were active from the 2nd/8th century through the 5th/11th century. See the brief history of Islamic theology to be found in Ibn Khaldūn's *The Muqaddimah*, vol. III, pp. 34-68.

He knoweth that which is in front of them and that which is behind them, while they encompass nothing of His knowledge save what He will. (Qur'ān, II:255)

But Allah (Himself) testifieth concerning that which He hath revealed unto thee; in His knowledge hath He revealed it; and the angels also testify. And Allah is sufficient Witness. (Qur'ān, IV:166)

Now the ascription of these seven attributes to God led the early theologians to ask what precisely is the relationship of these attributes to God Himself, that is, to God's essence. If the attributes are eternal, that is, if God has always had the attributes of knowledge, will, power, and so on, then are these attributes in some way distinct from God's essence or are they in reality the same as His essence? If they are distinct from His essence then God's unity is impaired because we then have more than one eternal being, namely, God's essence plus each one of His attributes. If this is the case could these attributes then be considered partners of God? On the other hard, if the attributes are really the same as His essence, then the attributes do not really exist in themselves and the Qur'ān is ascribing to God non-existent attributes. If, however, God's attributes are not eternal then God must have created them, but if He created them, then they are part of His creation and cannot be attributes of Himself.

Not only does the Qur'ān ascribe these seven attributes to God, it also describes God in many places in very anthropomorphic terms. God is described as having a face or countenance, hands and eyes, and as seating Himself on His throne. Let me quote some verses containing anthropomorphic descriptions of God. In the following verse God is described as having a hand:

Therefor Glory be to Him in Whose hand is the dominion over all things! Unto Him ye will be brought back. (Qur'ān, XXXVI:82)

He is also described as having eyes:

Build the ship under Our eyes and by Our inspiration, and speak not unto Me on behalf of those who do wrong. Lo! they will be drowned. (Qur'ān, XI:37)

He has a face or countenance:

And cry not unto any other god along with Allah. There is no God save Him. Everything will perish save His countenance. His is the command, and unto Him ye will be brought back. (Qur'ān, XXVIII:88)

He sits on a throne:

The Beneficent One, Who is established on the Throne. (Qur'ān, XX:5)

Who created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in six Days, then He mounted the Throne. The Beneficent! Ask anyone informed concerning Him! (Qur'ān, XXV:59)

If this description of God is literally true, then He must be a corporeal being—a body in time and space. And since all bodies are divisible into parts, God's unity is again impaired.

On the other hand, there is one verse in the Qur'ān that states that there is nothing at all similar to Him or that there is nothing anything like Him:

The Creator of the heavens and the earth. He hath made for you pairs of yourselves, and of the cattle also pairs, whereby He multiplieth you. Naught is as His likeness; and He is the Hearer, the Seer. (Qur'an, XLII:11)

Thus, although God is frequently described in anthropomorphic terms, the Qur'ān seems to be saying in this verse that we are not to understand any anthropomorphic description of God in the same way we would if we applied such a description to humans. God is not in any way similar to His creation.[4]

Now the other example of two doctrines that appear to be contradictory in the Qur'ān and which concerned the speculative theologians was the problem of free will and determinism or predestination, that is, the relationship of human power and capability to Divine power.

The Qur'ān describes God as having complete power over His creation. To what extent, then, do humans have the freedom or power to act themselves? Do they, for example, have the power to obey God's commandments or even the power to believe in Islam? Certain verses of the Qur'ān seem to indicate that they do not have this power. For example one verse states:

And whomsoever it is God's will to guide, He expandeth his bosom unto Islam, and whomsoever it is His will to send astray, He maketh his bosom close and narrow . . . . (Qur'ān, VI:126)

Another verse says:

And though We should send down the angels unto them, and the dead should speak unto them, and We should gather against them all things in array, they would not believe unless Allah so willed. Howbeit, most of them are ignorant. (Qur'ān, VI:112)

And still another verse:

Had Allah willed, they had not been idolatrous. (Qur'ān, VI:108)

And another:

And if thy Lord willed, all who are in the earth would have believed together. Wouldst thou (Muhammad) compel men until they are believers? It is not for any soul to believe save by the permission of Allah. He hath set uncleanness upon those who have no sense. (Qur'ān, X:100-101)

On the other hand, other verses indicate that man is free to believe or disbelieve as he wishes, and that God will reward him for his belief and good deeds, and punish him for disbelief and evil deeds. For example:

Say: (It is) the truth from the Lord of you (all). Then whosoever will, let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve. Lo! We have prepared for disbelievers Fire. (Qur'ān, XVIII:30)

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[4] For a discussion of the problems related to God's attributes see Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, vol. III, pp. 55-75.

Other verses imply that humans have power over their own acts and will be rewarded and punished accordingly:

This day no soul is wronged in aught; nor are ye requited aught save what ye used to do. (Qur'ān, XXXVI:53)

And whoso doeth good works, whether of male or female, and he (or she) is a believer, such will enter paradise and they will not be wronged the dint in a date-stone. (Qur'ān, IV:124)

And We set a just balance for the Day of Resurrection so that no soul is wronged in aught. Though it be of the weight of a grain of mustard seed, We bring it. And We suffice for reckoners. (Qur'ān, XXI:47)

So here we have two apparently contradictory doctrines: one that says that human actions and beliefs are determined by God's power and will, and the other that says that humans have the power to do whatever they wish, and that they will be rewarded if they believe and obey God and punished if they don't.

How, then, did Muslims try to explain these apparently contradictory doctrines found in the Qur'ān? They developed two positions. One was that of the speculative or rationalist theologians[5] and the other was that of what are usually called the traditionalists. Let me take up first the position of the speculative theologians. The speculative theologians saw their task as one of interpreting the doctrines of the Qur'ān in such a way that they would be acceptable to reason, and they did this by accepting as true one of the contradictory doctrines and then explaining or interpreting the opposing doctrine in such a way as to make it agree with the doctrine they had chosen to accept.

Now the first group of theologians to interpret the Qur'ān in this way were the Mu'tazilites.[6] They were also known as the People of Unity and Justice because of the stress they placed on the unity and justice of God. The Mu'tazilites believed that the doctrine of God's unity was essential to Islam and that any statements in the Qur'ān which seemed to compromise this unity had therefore to be interpreted in such a manner as not to impair in any way God's absolute unity. If God is knowing, they said, he cannot be knowing through knowledge because then we would have two eternal beings, namely God's being or essence plus His knowledge. They therefore said that God cannot know through knowledge but only through His own essence. Similarly, they claimed that He is powerful not through power but through His essence, and also living and perceiving through His essence.[7] Thus

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[5] These were the *mutakallimūn* who engaged in *kalām* or speculative "speech" or "talk."

[6] For further information on the Mu'tazilites see the article "Mu'tazila" by D. Gimaret in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. VII, pp. 783-793.

[7] The Mu'tazilites denied, however, that speaking was one of God s attributes. Their position was that God did not speak Himself but that He created speech in others. See 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-Khamsah*, pp. 527-563. According to 'Abd al-Jabbār willing was also not one of God's eternal attributes. See his *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-Khamsah*, p. 440.

they denied that God had knowledge or power or other attributes in the sense that these attributes were superadded or additional to His essence. In reality all God's attributes were one and indistinguishable from His essence.[8]

Now in denying that God's attributes were distinct from His essence they went counter to certain verses of the Qur'an such as the verse I mentioned previously, "In His knowledge hath He revealed it," in which God's knowledge is treated as something distinct from His essence.

On the other hand, in accord with the verse that states, "Naught is as His likeness," the Mu'tazilites denied that there was any likeness at all between God and His creation. They were consequently obliged to use allegorical or metaphorical interpretation (*ta'wīl*) to explain the many anthropomorphic descriptions of God which are found in the Qur'ān. For example, in the verse which states, "He it is who created the heavens and the earth; then He mounted the throne," they interpreted the phrase "He mounted the throne" to mean "He gained mastery over." Similarly, the face of God, which is mentioned in a number of verses, they interpreted to mean God's essence.

In the same manner, when the Mu'tazilites took up the question of free will and determinism, they decided in favor of free will, and attributed to creatures the power to carry out their own acts. They argued that if humans did not have the power to choose and create their own acts, there would be no point to the rewards and punishments promised by God to humans in the next life. They claimed that God was a just God and that it was inconceivable that God would reward or punish humans for acts over which they had no power or control.[9]

Now the Mu'tazilites justified this use of allegorical interpretation by quoting a certain passage of the Qur'ān which they chose to read as follows:

> He it is who hath revealed unto thee the Scripture wherein are clear revelations, which are the substance of the book, and others which are allegorical. But those in whose hearts is doubt pursue that which is allegorical seeking dissension by seeking to explain it. None knoweth its explanation save God and those who are of sound instruction. They say: We believe therein; the whole is from our Lord; but only men of understanding really heed. (Qur'ān, III:7)

From this passage it is clear that the Qur'ān itself admits that it contains allegorical or ambiguous verses which demand explanation, and this is, of course, exactly what the Mu'tazilites were attempting to do, namely, to explain these allegorical verses on the assumption that they were those who were described as being "of sound instruction" in the verse quoted.

However, one of the lines in this same passage which I have just quoted is itself ambiguous. In Arabic the line which says, "None knoweth its explanation save God

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[8] For further details on the Mu'tazilite position on God's attributes see 'Abd al-Jabbār ibn Aḥmad, *Kitāb al-Uṣūl al-Khamsah*, pp. 182-213.

[9] On the Mu'tazilite position on free will and determinism see 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-Khamsah*, pp. 323-390.

and those who are of sound instruction," can just as easily be understood to mean, "None knoweth its explanation save God," with the end of the sentence coming at that point, and a new sentence beginning with "And those who are of sound instruction say: We believe therein: the whole is from our Lord." In other words there is a question here as to where one sentence ends and the next one begins. Thus, if we substitute the second way of reading this line for the first, the whole passage would then be read as follows:

> He it is who hath revealed unto thee the Scripture wherein are clear revelations which are the substance of the book, and others which are allegorical. But those in whose hearts is doubt pursue that which is allegorical seeking dissension by seeking to explain it. None knoweth its explanation save God. And those who are of sound instruction say: We believe therein; the whole is from our Lord; but only men of understanding really heed.

According to this reading, then, no one knows the meaning of the allegorical verses of the Qur'an except God, and it is therefore useless for any human to try to explain them. All one can do is simply to believe in them without knowing what their real meaning is since only God knows their real meaning.[10]

Now this reading of this verse was used to justify the other basic position which Muslims took with respect to allegorical or ambiguous verses in the Qur'ān. Those who took this position, that is, the position which rejected allegorical interpretation of the Qur'ān, are often referred to as traditionalists, and I should like to read to you a statement made by one of the most famous of these traditionalists, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal,[11] which I think expresses this position very clearly. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal was questioned once about the anthropomorphic descriptions of God both in the Qur'ān and in the Prophetic traditions and he answered as follows:

> We believe in them and accept them as true without rejecting any part of them . . . . God should not be described in excess of His own description of Himself, boundless and immeasurable: "There is nothing anything like him! He is the Hearing, the Seeing." Therefore, we say exactly what He has said, and describe Him as He has described Himself, without going beyond His description nor removing from Him any of His attributes merely for fear of some possible slander which might be levelled against us. We believe in these traditions, we acknowledge them, and we allow them to pass intact as they have come down to us, without being able to understand the how of them, nor to fathom their intended sense, except in accordance with His own description of Himself; and He is according to His own description the Hearing, the Seeing, boundless and immeasurable. His attributes proceed from Him and are His own. We do not go beyond the Koran or the traditions from the Prophet and his Companions; nor do we know the how of

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[10] On the use of allegorical interpretation by the Muʿtazilites see ʿAbd al-Jabbār, *Mutashābih al-Qur'ān*, especially pp. 13-39.

[11] See the article "Aḥmad B. Ḥanbal" by H. Laoust in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. I, pp. 272-277.

these, save by acknowledgement of the Apostle and the confirmation of the Qur'ān.[12]

Now the traditionalists not only abstained from using allegorical interpretation themselves, but severely criticized the speculative theologians for making use of it. Ibn Qudāmah[13] in a work called *The Censure Of Speculative Theology* lists nine reasons why allegorical interpretation is wrong.

The first reason he gives is that the Qur'ān itself prohibits allegorical interpretation, and this is evident from the passage I read to you earlier, particularly the line which reads, "None knoweth its explanation save God."

The second reason is that the Prophet himself did not use interpretation in explaining the Qur'ān, and if he saw no reason to use allegorical interpretation there is even less reason for anyone else to use it.

The third is that none of the early Muslims made any use of allegorical interpretation either, but merely accepted the Qur'ān and the traditions as they received them.

The fourth is that allegorical interpretation amounts to making judgments about God in matters about which the interpreter has no real knowledge. Let me quote from Ibn Qudāmah here:

> Allegorical interpretation is tantamount to the passing of judgment upon God regarding matters which the interpreter does not know, and the interpretation of His intent by that which the interpreter does not know that He intended. Now the most that the interpreter can claim is that a given expression admits a given meaning in the classical language. But it does not necessarily follow from the mere fact of the expression's admissibility of this meaning that this meaning is intended by it. For just as it may admit this meaning it may also admit others. It may even admit still other meanings with which the interpreter is not acquainted.[14]

The fifth reason is that allegorical interpretation is an innovation in religion and any innovations are automatically heretical. To prove his point here Ibn Qudāmah quotes several traditions of the Prophet. One of those he quotes is the following: "The most evil of things are the innovated ones." Another is: "Beware of innovated things for every innovation is a heretical innovation, and every heretical innovation is an error."

The sixth is that allegorical interpretation is unnecessary, because, Ibn Qudāmah says, and again I quote:

> For we have no need to know the meaning which God intended by His attributes; no course of action is intended by them, nor is there any obligation

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[12] Quoted by Ibn Qudāmah in his *Taḥrīm al-Naẓar*, pp. 8-9 (English translation), pp. 11-12 (Arabic text). The translation is that of George Makdisi.

[13] On Ibn Qudāmah see the article "Ibn Ḳudāma al-Maḳdisī" by G. Makdisi in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. III, pp. 482-483.

[14] The translation is that of George Makdisi. See Ibn Qudāmah, *Taḥrīm al-Naẓar*, p. 21 (English translation), pp. 30-31 (Arabic Text).

attached to them except to believe in them, and it is possible to believe in them without the knowledge of their intended sense.[15]

The seventh reason is that allegorical interpretation cannot be incumbent upon the generality of mankind because they do not have sufficient knowledge to undertake it.

The eighth is that allegorical interpretation amounts to private opinion concerning the Qur'ān and the traditions, and anyone who interprets the Qur'ān according to his private opinion commits an offense.

And finally, the ninth reason is that allegorical interpretation includes the ascription to God of attributes which God did not ascribe to Himself. For example, when the interpreter says that the Qur'ānic verses which state that God "mounted the throne" mean that He "gained mastery over," he is ascribing to God the attribute of "mastery" although God did not ascribe this attribute to Himself. He is furthermore denying to God the attribute of "mounting the throne" which God did ascribe to Himself.[16]

In summary, then, the traditionalist position is that the Qur'ān and the traditions are true and must be accepted and believed in as they are regardless of whether we can understand them or not. In fact, we should make no attempt to understand any Qur'ānic verse or tradition the meaning of which is not immediately obvious to us, for we have no way of knowing whether our interpretation of it is correct or not. Ambiguous verses in the Qur'ān need not bother us since the unambiguous verses are all we need for the satisfactory performance of our religious duties. Notice that the traditionalists do not say that scripture is always to be understood in its literal sense. All they say is that it should be accepted as true whether we can understand it or not. As far as I know no major Muslim sect ever held that scripture must always be understood in its literal meaning.

The traditionalist position has remained more or less the same throughout Islamic history up to the present day.[17] The speculative theologians, on the other hand, continued to develop their rationalist approach to Islamic doctrine. The Mu'tazilite school of theology, although ultimately rejected by most Sunni Muslims, continued to be favored by Shi'ite Muslims. Most Sunni Muslims adopted the Ash'arite school,[18] which had been founded by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī[19] in an

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[15] Again the translation is that of George Makdisi. See Ibn Qudāmah, *Taḥrīm al-Naẓar*, p. 22 (English translation), p. 32 (Arabic text).

[16] See Ibn Qudāmah, *Taḥrīm al-Naẓar*, pp. 20-23 (English translation), pp. 29-34 (Arabic text).

[17] The modern adherents to this position are known as *salafīs*, that is, those who follow the path of the pious ancestors (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*) who lived before the innovation of theological speculation.

[18] On the Ash'arites see the article "Ash'ariyya" by W. Montgomery Watt in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. I, p. 696.

[19] On al-Ash'arī see the article "Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī" by W. Montgomery Watt in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. I, pp. 894-895.

attempt to create a middle position between the position of the Mu'tazilites and that of the traditionalists. Other Sunnis followed a very similar school founded by Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī.[20]

With some exceptions the Ash'arites like the Mu'tazilites continued to use allegorical interpretation with respect to the anthropomorphic descriptions of God found in the Qur'ān.[21] However, they tried to construct a theology which was in some respects closer to the position of the traditionalists. They did not, for example, go as far as the Mu'tazilites in saying that God's attributes, being indistinguishable from His essence, had no real existence in themselves, but rather affirmed the attributes as being distinct eternal entities although they were at the same time inseparable from God's essence and could not therefore be considered separate divine beings.[22]

Similarly, not wanting to reduce in any way God's power over all events occurring in His Creation, but, on the other hand, wishing to maintain man's responsibility for his own acts, they devised the doctrine of acquisition (*kasb*) whereby God creates all human acts but humans acquire them by choosing them and thus assume responsibility for them.[23]

III. The Later Ash'arite Theologians.

Nevertheless, in spite of this earlier Ash'arite attempt to take a sort of middle position between the traditionalists and the Mu'tazilites, the later Ash'arite theolo-

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[20] See the articles "Al-Māturīdī" and "Māturīdiyya" by W. Madelung in the *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. VI, pp. 846-848.

[21] See, for example, al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-Dīn*, pp. 109-113; al-Juwaynī, *al-Irshād*, pp. 155-164; al-Ghazālī, *al-Iqtiṣād fī al-I'tiqād*, p. 95; al-Ghazālī, *Qānūn al-Ta'wīl*, pp. 6-12. Al-Ash'arī himself, however, at least in the two creeds attributed to him, did not use allegorical interpretation to explain the anthropomorphic descriptions of God, but took the traditionalist position. See his *al-Ibānah*, p. 8, and his *Maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn*, p. 320. Apparently al-Bāqillānī did not use allegorical interpretation either. See his *al-Tamhīd*, pp. 258-262.

[22] It was sometimes said by the Ash'arites, that God's attributes are "not He nor are they other than He." See al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-'Aqā'id al-Nasafīyah*, pp. 49-57 (English translation), pp. 258-260 (Arabic text); and al-Juwaynī, *al-Irshād*, p. 138. Al-Ash'arī's position on the attributes can be found in his *Kitāb al-Luma'*, pp. 16-19 (English translation), pp. 12-14 (Arabic text). Further discussion of the attributes can be found in al-Bāqillānī, *al-Inṣāf*, pp. 33-34; al-Bāqillānī, *al-Tamhīd*, pp. 197-257; al-Juwaynī, *al-Irshād*, pp. 79-138; al-Juwaynī, *al-Luma'*, pp. 138-147; al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-Dīn*, pp. 79-108; al-Ghazālī, *al-Iqtiṣād fī al-I'tiqād*, pp. 60-73. For the Maturidite position see al-Bazdawī, *Uṣūl al-Dīn*, pp. 34-40.

[23] On al-Ash'arī's doctrine of acquisition see his *Kitāb al-Luma'*, pp. 53-75 (English translation), pp. 37-53 (Arabic text). See also al-Ash'arī, *al-Ibānah*, p. 9; al-Juwaynī, *al-Irshād*, pp. 187-214; al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-Dīn*, pp. 133-137. For the Maturidite position see al-Bazdawī, *Uṣūl al-Dīn*, pp. 99-111.

gians[24] increasingly attempted to rationalize Islamic doctrine, so that we find such theologians as al-Taftāzānī[25] and al-Jurjānī[26] taking the position that scripture, that is, the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*, must be proven to be true by rational arguments before it can be accepted as the basis of the religion. In other words, they believed that it was not sufficient for an educated Muslim simply to believe in his religion and in the truth of its revelation on the basis of faith. On the contrary, they believed that a Muslim must be convinced on the basis of rational arguments that his religion was true.

Now in order to prove the truth of scripture by completely rational means, the later Ash'arite theologians developed a series of rational proofs which culminated in a proof for the truthfulness of the prophet; for if the Prophet could be demonstrated to be telling the truth, then all statements contained in revelation, both in the Qur'ān and in *ḥadīth*, would be true statements and one could believe in them on the basis of reason rather than through mere faith.

This series of rational proofs developed by the Ash'arite theologians included proofs for the following doctrines or propositions: 1) the universe is originated; 2) the universe has an originator or creator; 3) the creator of the universe is knowing, powerful and willing; 4) prophecy is possible; 5) miracles are possible; 6) miracles indicate the truthfulness of one who claims to be a prophet; 7) Muḥammad claimed to be a prophet and performed miracles.[27]

According to the theologians themselves, each of these proofs had to be demonstrated by what they called a rational proof or *dalīl 'aqlī*. They defined a rational proof as a proof based on premises known intuitively or necessarily to be true through reason or sense perception, and which was consequently said to result in certain knowledge. Six varieties of necessary premises upon which rational proofs could be based were commonly accepted by the theologians. These were: 1) *awwalīyāt*, first principles or axioms, such as the statement that the whole is greater than any of its parts; 2) *qaḍāyā qiyāsātuhā ma'ahā*, which are propositions containing their own syllogisms, such as the statement that four is an even number; 3) *mushāhadāt*, or sense perceptions, such as the statement that this fire burns;

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[24] These were the theologians who were active from about the 6th/12th century onwards and had come under the influence of the Islamic philosophers. Al-Ghazālī, who died in 505/1111, was apparently the first theologian to study the works of the philosophers and especially the works of Ibn Sīnā, and so might be considered both the last of the early theologians and the first of the later theologians. See Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, vol. III, pp. 52-54. See also the article "al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad B. Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī" by W. Montgomery Watt in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. II, pp. 1038-1041.

[25] On al-Taftāzānī see the article "al-Taftāzānī " by W. Madelung in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. X, pp. 88-89.

[26] On al-Jurjānī see the article "al-Djurdjānī" by A.S. Tritton in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. II, pp. 602-603.

[27] For these propositions see al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, vol. I, pp. 39-40; al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, vol. II, pp. 50-51; al-Qūshjī, *Sharḥ al-Tajrīd*, p. 462.

4) *mutawātirāt*, which are historical or geographical facts reported by a sufficient number of witnesses such that it would be impossible to suppose that they were all lying; 5) *mujarrabāt*, or facts known through experimentation, such as the statement that scammony is a laxative; 6) *ḥadsīyāt*, or acute guesses, as for example, the statement that the light of the moon is derived from the light of the sun.[28]

Distinguished from the rational proof was the scriptural proof or *dalīl naqlī*, which was defined as a proof containing one or more premises taken from scripture. Scriptural proofs could not, of course, be used in the series of arguments used to establish the truth of scripture for that would involve a circular argument. However, once scripture had been rationally demonstrated to be true on the basis of rational premises, scriptural proofs could be used in proving additional theological doctrines.

How successful, then, were these later Ash'arite theologians in establishing the truth of scripture by means of rational proofs? To their own satisfaction, at least, they were able to formulate proofs for all of the doctrines mentioned earlier except for the proposition stating that a miracle indicates the truthfulness of anyone claiming to be a prophet. Here they had to admit their inability to come up with any rational proof at all. Nevertheless in spite of their inability to prove this proposition rationally, they still believed that it was a true proposition. How could people be convinced, however, that it was a true proposition in the absence of any rational proof?

One solution to this problem was to resort to the following argument by analogy. Suppose that a powerful king is sitting on his throne before an audience. A man rises and announces that he is the messenger, or spokesman, of this king to his people. He then turns to the king and says something like "Your Majesty, if I am telling the truth with regard to my claim to be your messenger, then perform some act which is contrary to your usual custom." If the king then performs such an act all those present will know that the king performed that act only in order to confirm the truthfulness of the man claiming to be his messenger. In like manner God performs a miracle by the hand of the prophet and in so doing confirms the claim of the prophet to be telling the truth.

Realizing, however, that this argument by analogy fell short of being a really convincing argument, the theologians attempted another solution to this problem. This was to claim that the proposition that a miracle indicates the truthfulness of a

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[28] These premises may be found in Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Sharḥ al-Risālah al-Shamsīyah*, vol. II, p. 240; al-Iṣfahānī, *Maṭāli' al-Anẓār*, pp. 26-27; al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, vol. I, p. 19; al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, vol. I, p. 123, vol, II, p. 36; al-Āmidī, *Abkār al-Afkār*, fols. 17b-18a. These necessary premises are the same as the premises of demonstration given much earlier by the philosopher Ibn Sīnā. See his *al-Ishārāt wa-al-Tanbīhāt*, vol. I, pp. 213-219; his *al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq, al-Burhān*, pp. 63-64; and his *al-Najāh*, pp. 61-66. Perhaps it was al-Ghazālī who first introduced these premises to the theologians after studying Ibn Sīnā's writings on logic. See al-Ghazālī's *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifah*, pp. 47-49; his *Mi'yār al-'Ilm*, pp. 108-111; and his *Miḥakk al-Naẓar*, pp. 47-52.

prophet is known necessarily to be true in spite of the fact that it cannot be classed under any of the six varieties of necessary premisses previously mentioned which were commonly accepted by rational thinkers.

Nevertheless, the explanation of how such a proposition could be known necessarily to be true and why such a solution was acceptable to Ash'arite theologians, can be found in the Ash'arite doctrine of what can be called immediate causality as opposed to the Mu'tazilite doctrine of mediate causality or *tawlīd*.

According to Ash'arite doctrine God's power is limited only by logical impossibility. He is able to do anything He wishes except that which involves a logical contradiction. He cannot, for example, cause something to exist and not exist at the same time.[29] God is furthermore the immediate and only cause of everything that exists or occurs in the universe. All effects are caused directly by God rather than by the causes to which we commonly ascribe these effects. Thus, if someone moves his hand on which he is wearing a ring, God is the direct and immediate cause not only of the movement of the hand but also of the movement of the ring. The movement of the ring is not caused by the movement of the hand, nor the movement of the hand by the person who wills to move his hand.

Because God customarily acts in accordance with certain patterns and always, or almost always, causes the ring to move at the same time He causes the hand to move, it appears that the movement of the hand is the cause of the movement of the ring. It is, however, entirely within God's power to cause the hand to move without simultaneously causing the ring to move. Acts of God which are in accord with his customary pattern of acting are known as *'ādīyāt*. Acts which occur counter to His customary pattern are miracles or *khawāriq al-'ādah*, which literally means things which pierce or penetrate or go beyond the customary.[30]

This doctrine of immediate causality is not only used to explain the occurrence of miracles but also to explain how knowledge is acquired. Like everything else, knowledge is something created directly by God. If we know that a first principle or axiom is true, is because God created this knowledge in our minds following our conception of both the subject and the predicate of the axiom. Similarly the knowledge that the conclusion of a syllogism is true is created by God after He has created in our minds the knowledge of the premises.

This doctrine of God-caused knowledge thus explains how the proposition that a miracle indicates the truthfulness of the prophet can be known necessarily to be true; for when we witness a miracle and hear the words of the prophet, God creates in our minds the knowledge that the prophet is telling the truth.

However, since God is not under any compulsion to act according to his customary patterns and does, in fact, act counter to these patterns in the case of miracles, God can refrain from creating in our minds the knowledge of the truth of a proposition, even though that proposition might be true. Can God, however, create in our

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[29] On the limitation of God's power to what is logically possible see al-Sanūsī, *Sharḥ Umm al-Barāhīn*, pp. 98, 103-105.

[30] For an explanation of the Ash'arite position on causation see al-Ghazālī, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*, pp. 185-196 (English translation), pp. 277-296 (Arabic text).

minds the knowledge of the truth of a proposition which in itself is false? Can He, for example, create in our minds the knowledge that a prophet is telling the truth when in reality the prophet is lying? The theologians answered this question in the negative on the grounds that such an act on the part of God would involve a logical contradiction in that the prophet would be both telling the truth and lying at the same time. God's power extends only to acts which are logically possible and He consequently cannot create in our minds knowledge of the truth of a proposition which in itself is false.[31]

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[31] See Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Arba'īn fī Uṣūl al-Dīn*, pp. 316-324; al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, vol. VIII, pp. 228-230, 236-240; al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, vol. II, pp. 131-132; al-Āmidī, *Abkār al-Afkār*, fols. 214b-215a, 217a-217b, 218a, 22la-221b.

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RATIONAL AND SCRIPTURAL PROOFS
IN ISLAMIC THEOLOGY

(A paper read at the 1967 annual meeting of the American Oriental Society in New Haven, Connecticut, and updated in December 2006)

In the sections on *naẓar* or speculation in later Ash'arite theological works, such as the *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid* of al-Taftāzānī and the *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* of al-Jurjānī, a careful distinction is made between two types of proof which can be used to demonstrate theological doctrines. One of these is the rational proof or *dalīl 'aqlī*, by which is meant a proof based ultimately on premisses which are known to be true through reason or sense perception. The other is the scriptural proof or *dalīl naqlī*, whose premisses are taken from scripture, that is, from the Qur'ān or the *sunnah* of the Prophet.[1]

A rational proof results in certain knowledge if it is based on premisses known intuitively or necessarily to be true. Six varieties of necessary premisses are usually listed although al-Jurjānī following al-Ījī in *al-Mawāqif* and al-Āmidī in his *Abkār al-Afkār* list seven. The six usually given are the following:

1. *Awwalīyāt*, first principles or axioms, such as the statement that the whole is greater than any of its parts.

2. *Qaḍāyā qiyāsātuhā ma'ahā*, which are propositions containing their own syllogisms, such as the statement that four is an even number.

3. *Mushāhadāt*, or sense perceptions, such as the statement that this fire burns.

4. *Mutawātirāt*, which are historical or geographical facts known through *tawātur* transmission, that is, facts transmitted by a sufficient number of witnesses such that it would be impossible to suppose that they were all lying.

5. *Mujarrabāt*, or facts known through experimentation, such as the statement that scammony is a laxative.

6. *Ḥadsīyāt*, or acute guesses, as for example, the statement that the light of the moon is derived from that of the sun.

The seventh variety sometimes included in this list are *al-wahmīyāt fī al-maḥsūsāt*, or estimations or preconceptions with respect to objects of sense, such as the proposition that every body can be pointed to and is in a direction.[2]

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[1] See al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, I, 39-40; al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, II, 48-51; al-Iṣfahānī, *Maṭāli' al-Anẓār*, pp. 25-26.

[2] See al-Rāzī, Quṭb al-Dīn, *Sharḥ al-Risālah al-Shamsīyah*, II, 240; al-Iṣfahānī, *Maṭā1i' al-Anẓar*, pp. 26-7; al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, I, 19; al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, I, 123, II, 36; al-Āmidi, *Abkār al-Afkār*, fols. 17b-18a. It should be noted that these six premisses are derived from Ibn Sīnā. See his *al-Ishārāt wa-*

Rational proofs then, if based on any of these six varieties of necessary premisses, result in certain knowledge. Scriptural proofs, on the other hand, since they are not based on any of these premisses which are known necessarily to be true, cannot result in any knowledge at all unless scripture itself, from which the premisses of scriptural proofs are taken, can be demonstrated to be true. This, of course, must be done by means of rational proofs. Thus all scriptural proofs are ultimately based on the rational proofs required to prove the truth of scripture. In other words, in order to use premisses taken from scripture in proofs of theological doctrines, scripture as a whole must be demonstrated to be true by means of purely rational proofs.

Ash'arite theologians thus developed a series of rational proofs which culminated in a proof for the truthfulness of the Prophet; for if the Prophet is telling the truth, then statements contained in the Qur'ān and Sunnah are true statements and can consequently be used as premisses in scriptural proofs for various religious doctrines.

This series of rational proofs culminating in the proof for the truthfulness of the Prophet usually included proofs for the following propositions or doctrines:

1. The universe is originated.
2. The universe has an originator or creator.
3. The creator of the universe is knowing, powerful and willing.
4. Prophecy is possible.
5. Miracles are possible.
6. Miracles indicate the truthfulness of one who claims to be a prophet.
7. Muḥammad claimed to be a prophet and performed miracles.[3]

To summarize, one can say that any religious doctrine which is used in the proof for the truthfulness of the Prophet must itself be based on a rational proof, and that this proof must ultimately depend on premisses known necessarily to be true. Other doctrines not required in the proof for the truthfulness of the Prophet, such as God's unity, His having the attributes of sight, hearing and speech, and doctrines concerning the last day and heaven and hell, can all be based on scriptural proofs.

As has been mentioned, rational proofs, if based on premisses known necessarily to be true, result in certain knowledge. The question can be raised, however, as to whether or not scriptural proofs also result in certain knowledge even if the truthfulness of the prophet is established. The answer is "yes" if the particular scriptural proofs in question can satisfy three conditions.

The first of these is that the language of all scriptural statements used in a proof must be known through *tawātur*. By language is meant not only the morphology and syntax of the language but also the definitions of words as used and accepted at the time of the Prophet.

The second condition is that the meaning intended by the Prophet in making a statement must be known. Is a particular statement, for example, to be understood

al-Tanbīhāt, I, 213-219; *al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq, al-Burhān*, pp. 63-64; and *al-Najāh*, pp. 61-66.

[3] See al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, I, 39-40; al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, II, 50-51; al-Qūshjī, *Sharḥ al-Tajrīd*, pp. 462 ff.

literally or metaphorically? This question cannot be answered by means of *mu-tawātir* tradition but only through the use of *qarā'in*, that is, contextual evidence or other circumstantial evidence which, if available, can be used to determine the meaning intended by the Prophet in any particular statement.

The last condition is the absence of a rational counter argument or *mu'āriḍ 'aqlī*, that is, any valid rational proof for a statement that contradicts any of the premises or the conclusion of the scriptural proof in question. If such a rational counter argument exists it must be accepted and the scriptural argument either rejected or else interpreted allegorically so as to be in accord with what is known through reason. To reject the rational argument in favor of the scriptural argument is impossible, for to do so would not only invalidate reason as a source of certain knowledge but also scripture, since scripture can only be proven true through the use of rational arguments.

A further problem, however, is involved in this last condition that there be no rational counter argument, and that is that in the case of any particular scriptural proof one can never know for certain that a rational counter argument does not in fact exist, since it may be the case that no one has yet discovered one. It was therefore argued by some that no scriptural proof could result in certain knowledge since there always remained the possibility that a rational counter argument did in fact exist which would necessitate the allegorical interpretation of the statements involved in the scriptural proof. On the other hand, since the Ash'arite theologians did not consider legal precepts to be subject to rational counter arguments, this third condition did not apply to Islamic law.[4]

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[4] See al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, II, 51-58; al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ a1-Maqāṣid*, I, 40-41; al-Iṣfahānī, *Maṭāli' al-Anẓār*, p. 28.

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AL-JAMI ON WHETHER AN ETERNAL EFFECT
CAN RESULT FROM AN AGENT WITH CHOICE

(A paper read at the 1968 annual meeting of the Western Branch of the American Oriental Society in San Francisco, California, and updated in December 2006)

In his work *al-Durrah al-Fākhirah*,[1] ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jāmī (d. 898 A.H.) compares the Sufi position on a number of theological questions with the positions taken by the theologians, on the one hand, and by the philosophers, on the other. Most of the questions discussed are those over which philosophers and theologians were generally in disagreement, and include, for example, the following:

1. The nature of existence and the relationship between God's existence and His essence.
2. The relationship of God's attributes to His essence.
3. The question of God's power, that is, whether God is a necessary agent or an agent with choice.
4. The question of God's knowledge of particulars.
5. The problem of the emanation of multiplicity from unity.

In presenting the Sufi viewpoint on these questions al-Jāmī generally takes a position which is midway between the opposing positions of the philosophers and the theologians. On some points he agrees with the philosophers and on other points with the theologians. Often, however, he presents a third position in which he differs from both the philosophers and the theologians.

An example of this middle position often taken by al-Jāmī can be found in his discussion of the question of whether an eternal effect can result from a free agent or agent with choice.[2] This question, however, involves two other questions:

1. Is God a free agent (*mukhtār*), that is, an agent with choice? or is He a necessary agent (*mūjib*), that is, one without choice?
2. Is the world eternal or originated?

The position of the theologians was, of course, that the world is originated and that if the world is originated then God must be an agent with choice. They reasoned that if God were a necessary agent and cause of the world, then the world would have to be eternal due to the fact that an effect cannot temporally lag behind its cause if that cause is complete in all respects. On the contrary the effect must always exist simultaneously with the cause, and if the cause, namely God, is eternal

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[1] ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jāmī, *al-Durrah al-Fākhirah fī Taḥqīq Madhhab al-Ṣūfīyah wa-al-Mutakallimīn wa-al-Ḥukamā'*.

[2] al-Jāmī, *al-Durrah al-Fākhirah*, pp. 28-29, *The Precious Pearl*, p. 57.

then the effect, which is the world, must also be eternal. The world, however, is originated, and therefore God cannot be a necessary agent, but must, on the contrary, be an agent with choice.[3]

The philosophers, on the other hand, took the opposite position, namely, that God is a necessary agent and, using the same argument that the effect cannot lag behind its cause, concluded that the world must be eternal.[4]

Both groups agreed, however, that if God is a necessary agent, then the world must be eternal, but if, on the other hand, the world is originated, then God must be a free agent. Consequently, both philosophers and theologians denied that it was possible for an eternal effect to result from an agent with choice. They argued that the act of intending or choosing to create the world must necessarily precede the act of creating it, because it is impossible to intend to create something that at the moment of the intention already exists. In other words, the world must be non-existent when God chooses to create it. Thus, if God is an agent with the choice of creating the world or not creating it, then the world must be originated.[5]

Al-Jāmī's position on this question is the exact opposite of that of the philosophers and the theologians, for he maintains that the world is eternal and yet is nevertheless caused by an agent with choice. He supports this position with an argument proposed by al-Āmidī in his *Abkār al-Afkār* and which is later quoted by al-Jurjānī in his *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*. This argument asserts that the act of intending to create the world need not necessarily precede the act of creating in time, but need only precede it in essence (*bi-al-dhāt*) in the same way that a cause is said to precede its effect in essence even though both exist simultaneously. Thus God's intention to create the world, His creating the world, and the world's coming into existence are all temporally coexistent.[6]

To summarize al-Jāmī's position we can say that he agrees with the philosophers in maintaining that the world is eternal, and with the theologians in declaring that God is an agent with choice. He differs from both groups, however, in asserting that it is possible for an eternal effect to result from an agent with choice.

Some understanding of why al-Jāmī takes this unusual position can be had by examining more closely what he has in mind when he asserts that God has choice, and also what he means by an eternal effect.

The existence of an eternal effect, al-Jāmī says, has been affirmed by the Sufis as a result of knowledge gained through mystical experience. He identifies this eternal effect with "the most exalted pen" which, he says, following a tradition cited by

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[3] al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, III, 180; VIII, 50; al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, II, 59 ff.; al-Rāzī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, p. 234.

[4] al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, VIII, 53, al-Rāzī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, p. 234.

[5] al-Jāmī, *al-Durrah al-Fākhirah*, p. 28, *The Precious Pearl*, p. 57; al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, I, 96 ff.; al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, III, 178 ff.

[6] al-Jami, *al-Durrah al-Fākhirah*, pp. 28-29, *The Precious Pearl*, pp. 57-58; al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, III, 182 ff.; al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, I, 96; al-Āmidī, *Abkār al-Afkār*, fol. 190b.

al-Tirmidhī, and Abū Dāwūd among others, was the first thing created by God.[7] He further maintains that the cause of its existence is God's essence alone and that consequently no intermediary stands between it and its cause. Such being the case, it endures as long as its cause endures, and, since its cause is the eternal essence of God, it also is eternal.[8] A twelfth-century A.H. commentator on *al-Durrah al-Fākhirah* adds at this point that the most exalted pen is identical with the first effect (*al-ma'lūl al-awwal*) or first intellect (*al-'aql al-awwal*) of the philosophers and also with what the Sufis call the first individuation or emanation (*al-ta'ayyun al-awwal*).[9]

As for what he means when he asserts that God has choice, al-Jāmī declares that he is in complete agreement with the theologians who say that God's choice means that if He wills to create the world, He creates it, and if He does not will to create the world, He does not create it. Like the theologians al-Jāmī accepts both of these hypothetical propositions as true. He differs from them, however, in his explanation of why they are true. According to the theologians both are true because each proposition contains a true antecedent and consequent. Al-Jāmī, however, like the philosophers, accepts only the first one as true because both its antecedent and consequent are true, and maintains that the second one is true only because its antecedent and consequent are both false. In other words, what he says is that it is impossible for God not to will to create the world and therefore impossible for the world not to exist.[10]

This, however, is basically the position of the philosophers, who make God a necessary agent. Nevertheless, to avoid portraying God as a mere mechanical agent compelled to create the world, al-Jāmī prefers to follow the theologians in attributing freedom and choice to God even though his interpretation of God's choice is closer to that of the philosophers than it is to that of the theologians. Furthermore, by affirming God's choice he is able to preserve his middle position between the two schools and thus avoid some of the censure that would be directed against the Sufis were their position identical with that of the philosophers.

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[7] al-Jāmī, *al-Durrah al-Fākhirah*, pp. 28-29, *The Precious Pearl*, p. 57; Wensinck, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, p. 49.

[8] al-Jāmī, *al-Durrah al-Fākhirah*, p. 29, *The Precious Pearl*, p. 57.

[9] al-Husaynābādī, *al-Risālah al-Qudsīyah al-Ṭāhirah bi-Sharḥ al-Durrah al-Fākhirah*, fol. 116a.

[10] al-Jāmī, *al-Durrah al-Fākhirah*, p. 28, *The Precious Pearl*, p. 57. Note that a hypothetical proposition is false only when its antecedent is true and its consequent is false.

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'ABD AL-RAḤMĀN AL-JĀMĪ'S ARGUMENT
FOR THE EXISTENCE OF EXISTENCE

(A paper read at the 1964 annual meeting of the American Oriental Society in New York, N.Y., and updated in December 2006)

Before taking up al-Jāmī's arguments for the existence of existence[1] I should like first to explain briefly why it was that al-Jāmī was concerned with trying to prove that existence exists.

Al-Jāmī, who died in the year 898 of the *hijrah*, was, first of all, an adherent of the "oneness of existence" or *waḥdat al-wujūd* school of Islamic mysticism. The doctrines of this school go back to Ibn al-'Arabī,[2] but they were subsequently, and particularly during the seventh and eighth centuries A.H., greatly developed and clarified by such men as Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī,[3] 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Qāshānī,[4] and Dāwūd al-Qayṣarī.[5]

As these doctrines were developed, however, they began to encounter the opposition of some of the more rationalist theologians, such as al-Taftāzānī,[6] because, as these theologians claimed, they contradicted reason and could not, therefore, be true.

Now this position of the theologians was based on their belief that the truth of Islam, as revealed in the Qur'ān, depended ultimately upon truths which could be arrived at only through reason. That is, before one could accept the revelation of the Qur'ān as true one had first to use reason to prove the existence of God, that God has certain attributes, that it is possible for Him to send prophets, that Muḥammad is a prophet sent by God and that he is truthful. If one could not prove any of these points, then there was no reason why one should believe the Qur'ān

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[1] These arguments may be found in al-Jāmī's *Risālah fī al-Wujūd.*

[2] Muḥyī al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn al-'Arabī (d. 638 A.H.). See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, I, 571 (441), S, I, 790.

[3] Ṣadr al-Dīn Abū al-Ma'ālī Muḥammad ibn Isḥaq al-Qūnawī (d. 772 A.H.). See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, I, 585 (450), S, I, 807.

[4] Jamāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Qāshānī (d. 730 A.H.). See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, II, 262 (204), S, II, 280.

[5] Dāwūd ibn Maḥmūd al-Rūmī al-Qayṣarī (d. 751 A.H.). See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, II, 299 (231), S, II, 323.

[6] Sa'd al-Dīn Mas'ūd ibn 'Umar al-Taftāzānī (d. 791 A.H.). See his *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, I, 54-55 and his *Risālah fī Waḥdat al-Wujūd*. This latter work is also ascribed to 'Alā' al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Bukhārī (d. 841 A.H.) with the title *Fāḍiḥat al-Mulḥidīn wa-Nāṣiḥat al-Muwaḥḥidīn*. See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, I, 573 (422), S, I, 794.

to be true. Moreover, if any part of revelation seemed to contradict what reason determined to be true then that part of revelation must be interpreted in such a way as to be in accord with reason. Otherwise it could be said that revelation invalidated the very thing upon which it was ultimately based.[7]

In the same way it was claimed that knowledge gained through mystical experiences, like the knowledge gained from revelation, must not include anything that reason showed to be impossible. Mystical experiences, like revelation, were valid sources of knowledge but they had to be interpreted in such a way as to remain within the realm of what was rationally possible.

Because the opposition of the theologians to the Sufi doctrine of the oneness of existence was based on the argument that it contradicted reason, the Sufis, in defense of their doctrine, had to show that it could, on the contrary, be explained in a completely rational way; and in the ninth century we find a number of Sufis, including al-Fanārī,[8] al-Mahā'imī[9] and al-Jāmī, attempting to do just this.

Now the basic doctrine of the oneness of existence school is that God is absolute existence or *al-wujūd al-muṭlaq*, and that this absolute existence is the only thing that really exists. The doctrine is based on the experience of the Sufi in the state of *fanā'*, or annihilation, in which the external world, as well as the Sufi's awareness of his own self, disappears and he is conscious of God alone as the one Reality.

The conclusion that this one reality is absolute existence seems to have been arrived at as follows. First, a distinction was made between essence or quiddity on the one hand and existence on the other. Then existence was asserted to be a quality which could be predicated of quiddities. But because it would be absurd to say that existence itself did not exist, existence was then thought of as existing necessarily, and, since God is defined as the one necessarily existent being, God and existence must be one and the same being.

To this the rationalist theologians objected that absolute existence, insofar as it is an attribute common to everything said to exist, is a universal concept that exists only in the mind and can have no existence in the external world as a particular, individual thing.[10] God, on the other hand, is an individual existing in the external world and cannot therefore be the same as absolute existence.

It is in answer to this objection of the theologians that al-Jāmī attempts to show in his *Risālah fī al-Wujūd* that absolute existence can be said to exist in the external world as a single individual entity and that it can therefore be God.

Using a simple *modus tollens* argument he says that if existence did not exist, then nothing would exist at all; and since the consequent of this statement, that

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[7] See al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, II, 48-58.

[8] Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ḥamzah al-Fanārī (d. 834 A.H.) in his *Miṣbāḥ al-Uns*. See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, II, 303 (233), S, II, 328.

[9] 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī ibn Aḥmad al-Mahā'imī (d. 835 A.H.) in his *Ajillat al-Ta'yīd fī Sharḥ Adillat al-Tawḥīd*. See Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, II, 286 (221), S, II, 310.

[10] It was considered a natural universal (*kullī ṭabī'ī*) or concept of the second intention (*ma'qūl thānī*).

is, that nothing would exist at all, is obviously false, then the antecedent, that existence does not exist, is also false and that therefore existence does exist.

Now the truth of the statement that "if existence did not exist nothing would exist at all" is shown as follows: First, essences or quiddities in themselves are non-existent externally unless external existence is added to them. But if existence is also non-existent, then we will not be able to predicate it of a similarly non-existent quiddity and get, as a result, a quiddity existing externally. This is so because, in order to predicate an attribute of a subject, the subject must first exist and there is no reason to think that this rule does not apply in the case of predicating existence of a quiddity. Therefore, if the subject cannot be said to exist externally, we shall have to say that at least the predicate, or existence, must exist externally, and if this is so we can reverse the relationship and make existence the subject and predicate a quiddity of it. In other words, instead of saying that a certain quiddity exists, we can say that existence is a certain quiddity.

Existence then becomes the only real externally existent thing and quiddities remain purely mental entities inhering in existence; and since quiddities are purely mental entities existing only in the mind, existence can be the subject of many different and contradictory predicates.

Furthermore existence must exist through itself rather than through another existence superadded to it, for otherwise an endless chain of existences would result. Also, if it exists through itself, it must necessarily exist and, if this is so, it must be identical with God. Thus God or absolute existence becomes the one externally existing Reality, and the physical universe is reduced to a mere mental existence in God's knowledge.

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THE SUFI POSITION WITH RESPECT TO
THE PROBLEM OF UNIVERSALS

(A paper read at the 1970 annual meeting of the American Oriental Society in Baltimore, Maryland, and updated in December 2006)

The Sufi position on the existence of universals cannot be discussed except as part of the problem of universals in Islamic thought as a whole. I should like, therefore, by way of introduction, to summarize the positions of the various Islamic schools on this question.

Muslim works on logic distinguish between three kinds of universal: the natural universal (*al-kullī al-ṭabī'ī*), the logical universal (*al-kullī al-manṭiqī*), and the mental universal (*al-kullī al-'aqlī*). The difference between each of these is usually explained as follows:

If one says for example, that humanity is a universal (*al-insān kullī*) three concepts are involved: first, the concept of humanity as it is in itself (*min ḥayth huwa huwa*), without regard to whether it is universal or particular. This is the absolute quiddity or essence (*al-māhīyah al-muṭlaqah*) unconditioned by anything (*lā bi-sharṭ*). It is known as the natural universal; second, the concept of universality, which is predicated of humanity. This is known as the logical universal; and third, the combination of these two concepts, that is humanity plus universality, or humanity insofar as universality is predicated of it. This is called the abstracted quiddity (*al-māhīyah al-mujarradah*), or the quiddity conditioned by nothing (*bi-sharṭ lā*) rather than unconditioned by anything (*lā bi-sharṭ*). This is known as the mental universal. It was generally agreed that both the logical universal and the mental universal existed only in the mind. What was in question was the external existence of the natural universal.[1]

In the histories of Western philosophy the problem of universals is usually traced back to the passage in Porphyry's *Isagoge* in which he states that he will "refuse to say concerning genera and species whether they subsist, or whether, subsisting, they are corporeal or incorporeal, and whether they are separated from sensibles or placed in sensibles and in accord with them."[2]

Although no one as far as I know, has traced the controversy over universals in Islam to this passage in Porphyry's *Isagoge*, it is, however, fairly clear that the

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[1] See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq, al-Madkhal*, pp. 65-72; al-Kātibī, *al-Risālah al-Shamsīyah*, pp. 7, 11; *Majmū' Shurūḥ al-Shamsīyah*, I, 289-294; al-Urmawī, *Maṭāli' al-Anwār*, p. 53.

[2] See W.T. Jones, *A History of Western Philosophy*, pp. 422-430; Richard McKeon, *Selections from Medieval Philosophers*, I, 91 (Boethius), 219 (Abailard); Porphyry, *Isogoge*, p. 1 (Greek text), p. 25 (Latin translation).

various positions taken by Muslim thinkers with respect to natural universals do, in fact, correspond to the four alternative answers which can be given to Porphyry's question. These alternatives are, first, that natural universals exist in the mind only and have no existence in the external world; second, that natural universals exist outside the mind as corporeal substances; third, that natural universals exist outside the mind not as corporeal substances but as incorporeal substances placed in sensible substances; and fourth, that natural universals exist outside the mind as incorporeal substances but separated from sensible substances rather than placed in them.

Of these four alternatives the third corresponds to the position of the Islamic philosophers in the tradition of Ibn Sīnā who asserted that universals existed externally as incorporeal substances within particular sensible objects. They argued that any particular substance, such as an individual man, is made up of the universal, in this case humanity, plus individuation. And since the individual man is known to exist and the universal, "humanity," is a part of the existent individual man, it also must exist, although it is not perceived by the senses except as individuated.[3]

The first alternative, on the other hand, represents the position of the so-called "modern" theologians, such as Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī and al-Taftāzānī, who rejected the preceding argument of the philosophers maintaining that if universals were a part of each particular then it would be impossible to predicate a universal of its particulars because the universal, being a part of each particular, would have to exist prior to the particular and thus would differ from the particular with respect to existence. Since identity of existence is necessary for predication, the universal could not be predicated of its particulars, which is absurd. A wall, for example, is part of a house but exists prior to the house and therefore cannot be predicated of it. Furthermore, if universals, which are single entities, existed as parts of particulars they could then exist with contradictory qualities and in different places at one and the same time. The theologians therefore concluded that universals existed only in the mind.[4]

Porphyry's fourth alternative represents the position of the Ishrāqīs and other Platonists, who maintained that universals existed externally as incorporeal substances, called *muthul*, which were not placed in particulars but existed in the non-material world of ideas, or *'ālam al-mithāl*, completely separated from the world of sense.[5]

These, then, are three of the positions taken by Muslim thinkers in the medieval period on the question of the existence of universals. Let us turn now to the position of the *waḥdat al-wujūd* school of Sufism on this question. One might well wonder at

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[3] See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā', al-Ilāhīyāt*, pp. 202-212.

[4] See al-Rāzī, Quṭb al-Dīn, *Lawāmi' al-Asrār fī Sharḥ Maṭāli' al-Anwār*, pp. 53-56; al-Rāzī, Quṭb al-Dīn, *Risālah fī Taḥqīq al-Kullīyāt*, MS Leiden Or. 958(21), fols. 68b-69a; al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Shamsīyah*, pp. 46-47; al-Jurjānī, *Ḥāshiyah 'alā Sharḥ Maṭāli' al-Anwār*, pp. 134-138.

[5] See al-Suhrawardī, *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*, pp. 92-96, 229-235, 154-164; Abu Rayyān, *Uṣūl al-Falsafah al-Ishrāqīyah*, pp. 187-208.

first why the Sufis, who base their doctrine not on reason but on mystical experience, should find it necessary to take a position with respect to universals. The reason becomes apparent, however, when one considers that the central doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* Sufism is that God is Absolute Existence (*al-wujūd al-muṭlaq*), and that, according to the logicians, any absolute quiddity is by definition a natural universal. This means that God is a natural universal, and, if God is to exist outside the mind, then natural universals must also exist in some way outside the mind.

We consequently find that during the ninth century of the *hijrah* in particular Sufi writers frequently took up the question of natural universals and attempted to refute the arguments of the theologians against the external existence of universals. Shams al-Dīn al-Fanārī (d. 834 A.H.), for example, deals with this question in his commentary on al-Qūnawī's (d. 672 A.H.) *Miftāḥ al-Ghayb*,[6] as does al-Jāmī (d. 898 A.H.) in his *al-Durrah al-Fākhirah*[7] and his *Risālah fī al-Wujūd*,[8] as well as al-Mahā'imī (d. 835 A.H.) in his *Ajillat al-Ta'yīd*.[9]

Although there was general agreement among Sufi writers that the natural universal, Absolute Existence, did exist externally, there was some question as to which of the three alternative positions asserting the external existence of universals was most in harmony with Sufi doctrine as a whole. For example, a cardinal belief of the *waḥdat al-wujūd* school was that particulars and, in fact, the entire physical universe did not exist externally but existed only in the mind. Thus the Sufis could not adopt the position of the philosophers with respect to the external existence of natural universals because that was based on the premiss that particulars really existed externally. Consequently some Sufis turned to the Ishrāqī position on universals and made God a sort of Platonic *mithāl* existing externally but completely separated from particular material objects. This is the position presented by the unknown author of the work entitled *al-Muthul al-'Aqlīyah al-Aflāṭūnīyah*,[10] which was extensively quoted by al-Fanārī in his commentary on al-Qūnawī's *Miftāḥ al-Ghayb* in support of the view that Absolute Existence existed externally.[11]

According to Muḥibb Allāh al-Bihārī (d. 1119 A.H.) in a work on logic called *Sullam al-'Ulūm*, other Sufis adopted the position that universals existed externally as sensible substances. The commentators on this work explain that Absolute Existence, in the Sufi view, is the only real existent and the only externally existing universal. Consequently all forms of individuation (*ta'ayyun*), whether genera, species or particulars, exist only in the mind, and what is perceived and sensed as

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[6] See al-Fanārī, *Miṣbāḥ al-Uns bayn al-Ma'qūl wa-al-Mashhūd fī Sharḥ Miftāḥ Ghayb al-Jam' wa-al-Wujūd*, p. 35.

[7] See al-Jāmī, *al-Durrah al-Fākhirah*, Cairo, 1328, pp. 254-256; Tehran, 1980, pp. 6-8; *The Precious Pearl*, pp. 38-40.

[8] See al-Jāmī, *Risālah fī al-Wujūd*, MS Yahuda 3872, fols. 25b-27b; "al-Jami's Treatise on Existence," pp. 239-242, 250-254.

[9] See al-Mahā'imī, *Ajillat al-Ta'yīd fī Sharḥ Adillat al-Tawḥīd*, MS Yahuda 4601, Princeton University, fols. 7b-8a.

[10] See *al-Muthul al-'Aqlīyah al-Aflāṭūnīyah*, pp. 119-145.

[11] See al-Fanārī, op. cit., pp. 182-189; also al-Mahā'imī, op. cit., fols. 10a-10b.

the universe is in reality nothing but Absolute Existence. They further explain that this view is in accord with the actual experience of many Sufis who are quoted as having said that they never saw anything without seeing God in it.[12]

Except for the fact that al-Bihārī uses the word "sensible" rather than "corporeal," this Sufi position seems to correspond almost exactly to the second of Porphyry's four alternatives, namely, that universals are corporeal substances.

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[12] See Mubīn, Muḥammad, *Mirʾāt al-Shurūḥ*, pp. 165-166. See also al-Ghazālī's, *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, I, 259, and his *Miskkāt al-Anwār*, p. 63 (Gairdner translation, pp. 117-118).

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