AVICENNA
AND
THE ARISTOTELIAN TRADITION

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AVICENNA
AND
THE ARISTOTELIAN TRADITION

INTRODUCTION TO READING AVICENNA'S PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS

BY

DIMITRI GUTAS

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ΣΤΗΝ ΙΩΑΝΝΑ

In the formulation of historico-critical problems it is wrong to conceive of scientific discussion as a process at law in which there is an accused and a public prosecutor whose professional duty it is to demonstrate that the accused is guilty and has to be put out of circulation. In scientific discussion, since it is assumed that the purpose of discussion is the pursuit of truth and the progress of science, the person who shows himself most "advanced" is the one who takes up the point of view that his adversary may well be expressing a need which should be incorporated, if only as a subordinate aspect, in his own construction. To understand and to evaluate realistically one's adversary's position and his reasons (and sometimes one's adversary is the whole of past thought) means precisely to be liberated from the prison of ideologies in the bad sense of the word—that of blind ideological fanaticism. It means taking up a point of view that is "critical", which for the purpose of scientific research is the only fertile one.

Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci,
edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith.
International Publishers, New York, 1971, pp. 343-344.

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Investigating the subject treated in the book and the controversies of Avicennan scholarship was, as Avicenna himself would say, a pastime and delight. I owe this partly to friends and colleagues who, at different stages during the lengthy period of research and composition, always lent a willing and patient ear to the expositions, both formal and informal, of my theories, and never Withheld from me their time and Knowledge in discussing a point or arguing an issue: Hans Hinrich Biesterfeldt of Bochum; Gerhard Endreß of Hattingen; Richard M. Frank of Washington, D.C.; David A. King of Frankfurt am Main; J. Meric Pessagno of Westport, Connecticut. My heartfelt thanks go to them all. I also owe it, however, to the selfless love of my wife Ioanna who shared me with Avicenna. To her I dedicate this book.

Rethymno, 25 February 1987

INTRODUCTION

The year 1370 after the *Hijra* (1950 A.D.) corresponded to the lunar millenary anniversary of Avicenna's traditional date of birth. The international scholarly community celebrated this felicitous event with due pomp and circumstance: almost countless congresses, conferences, and meetings were held, memorial volumes, articles, and editorials published, new editions of the Master's works launched, and radio and television programs broadcast. The enthusiasm and vigor that went into the production of these activities were hardly misplaced: few individuals ever influenced and graced intellectual history to the same breadth and extent.

These activities also brought to a head the scholarly production on Avicenna, which had been gathering momentum for approximately a century. By the mid-Fifties, the cascade of scholarship on Avicenna, as if in protest against the excesses of what had immediately preceded, was reduced to the routine trickle. Today, close to four decades later, the waters have been considerably stilled, reflecting more clearly the deficiencies and omissions of previous research. The picture makes sadly manifest the fact that Avicennan studies are at present in a rather confused state.

The confusion is due to many factors, both endemic to Avicenna's manner of philosophical approach and production and the tradition the latter generated, and extrinsic to it, stemming from errors of scholarly omission as well as commission. Although we are well informed, due to certain fundamental works on Avicenna, about the general outline of his thought and its influence, we are nevertheless in a relative haze about a number of subjects which for other philosophers of his caliber are considered indispensable for further research. To start with one of the more basic—elementary, one would say—subjects, his life: we are in the fortunate position of possessing both an autobiography and a biography by a close disciple; yet rarely has an autobiographical document been so extensively quoted, paraphrased, and retold, but so frequently misunderstood and so little analyzed. Furthermore, its very existence seems to have inhibited investigation into additional sources already from the very beginning: in his *Essential Information on the Generations of Physicians* Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa, the thirteenth century bio-bibliographer, opens his section on Avicenna with a statement to that effect (L 26). The result of this for contemporary scholarship has been a lack of a comprehensive biography. We also have nothing serious about his "life and times," and still less

about his disciples who were, after all, responsible to a large extent for the edition and propagation of his works.[1]

We are also quite unclear about the most crucial subject, his works: their number, nature, transmission, present state, and most important, their relationship to each other, both in time and subject matter, and to Avicenna's work in general. Responsibility for this lies partly with Avicenna himself—he rarely kept second copies of his commissioned pieces—and partly with history: a number of his works was lost in pillages and fires. There exist three recent bibliographies of his works, with listings of the available manuscripts: one in Turkish (Ergin), another in Arabic (Anawati), and the third in Persian (Mahdavī), all superseding the previous bibliography in German by Brockelmann.[2] Extremely useful and fundamental for any future research as these are, because of the very nature of the work involved in their making—it is impossible for a single individual to examine personally the hundreds of existing manuscripts—they give widely conflicting and necessarily incomplete information. The determined Arabist may laboriously—and with gratitude—make his way through them and attempt to sort out the information provided, but Avicenna is a philosopher of the Latin West no less than he is of the Arab East, and the interested Latin scholar who wishes to find out which works of Avicenna were *not* translated into Latin—for those that were he is forever indebted to the untiring efforts of d'Alverny[3]—and to gain an idea of what he is missing, has indeed very little to go on: the tentative (and necessarily redundant) inventory in a European language by Anawati[4] found no successors.

To the uncertainty about the exact number and nature of his works, buttressed as it is by the general knowledge that some of them have been lost, there has been added another misleading factor throughout the history of Avicennan scholarship, and the combination of the two has

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[1] For the state of research on Avicenna's biography see Chapter 2, Introduction, note 3. For his disciples, the only study that broaches the subject is the brief article by M. El-Khodeiri, "Silsila muttaṣila min talāmīḏ Ibn Sīnā fī miʾatay ᶜām (Une série continue de disciples d'Avicenne pendant deux siècles)," *Millénaire d'Avicenne* [Congrès de Bagdad, 20-28 Mars 1952], Cairo 1952, 53-59.

[2] These bibliographies appeared in the following chronological order: C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, Suppl. 1, Leiden 1937, 812-828; O. Ergin, İbni Sina Bibliyografyası, in *Büyük Türk Filozof ve Tıb Üstadı İbni Sina. Şasiyeti* [*sic*] *ve eserleri hakkında tetkikler* [Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, VII.1], Istanbul 1937; G. C. Anawati, *Muʾallafāt Ibn Sīnā*, Cairo 1950; Y. Mahdavī, *Fehrest-e noṣḥahā-ye moṣannafāt-e Ebn-e Sīnā*, Tehran 1954; O. Ergin, *İbni Sina Bibliografyası*, 2nd ed., Istanbul 1956. See the comparative review by R. Sellheim in *Oriens* 11 (1958) 231-239.

[3] See the series of articles on "Avicenna Latinus" by M. T. d'Alverny published in the *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age*, 1961ff.

[4] G. C. Anawati, "La tradition manuscrite orientale de l'œuvre d'Avicenne," *Revue Thomiste* 51 (1951) 407-440.

created a scholarly hoax, or non-issue, of immense proportions that has consistently hampered research, especially in Western Arabic studies. Jaeger says of Aristotle that he "was the first thinker to set up along with his philosophy *a conception of his own position in history*."[5] If Aristotle was the first, I propose that Avicenna was the second in importance, for the words of Jaeger which I emphasize here are particularly true in his case. There is a cluster of texts by Avicenna, all composed during a specific period in his literary career, which reflect an awareness on his part of the new stage in the history of philosophy which his works had achieved, and which are explicitly intended to represent a revision and development of philosophy as transmitted in the Aristotelian tradition. Avicenna saw fit to call these texts Eastern (*mašriqīya*), but as chance would have it, the greater part of two of the works which date from that period is not extant. The historical fact of the loss of these works has given rise to two opposed interpretations which, however, are united in assuming that they are the very last which he composed, and in following an emotional approach of *bemoaning* the fact of their loss rather than the scholarly procedure of *studying* the extant sections and their relation to Avicenna's other works. The first interpretation sees the Eastern texts as the most mature expression of Avicenna's thought, concludes that "the secret of his evolution ... will remain concealed from us as long as we do not possess" them, and bemoans that "the irreparable lacuna in the transmission of his works does not allow us to understand in what respects he wished to complete, and even to correct, Aristotle."[6]

The other interpretation assumes the Eastern texts to represent not only the most mature, but also the *true* expression of Avicenna's thought, pitting it against and in contradiction to his other work. It creates a two-sided Avicenna: an exoteric side, rational and Aristotelian, and an esoteric, mystical and "Oriental."[7] Representative of this interpretation is the following fanciful passage:

> A close study of the "esoteric" writings of Ibn Sīnā will reveal that the "Oriental Philosophy" is not at all a philosophy in the rationalistic sense, nor a system of dialectic to fulfill certain mental needs; rather, it is a form

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[5] W. Jaeger, *Aristotle. Fundamentals of the History of His Development*, trans. R. Robinson, 2nd ed., Oxford 1948, 3.

[6] A.-M. Goichon, in *EI*2, III.941b, 944a. Such statements can be multiplied at will. Cf. only the conclusion of S. Afnan's English work on Avicenna (*Avicenna. His Life and Works*, London 1958, 290): "And yet he [Avicenna] never lived to complete his work. Of that *Oriental Philosophy* which was to contain the results of his mature thought, nothing remains but a few leaves; admittedly full of promise but serving no useful purpose." Cf. the discussion below in Chapter 2, W9 and W10.

[7] Edward Said's definition of the "Oriental" as the "other" in Western literature is particularly applicable in this case. See his *Orientalism*, New York 1978.

> of wisdom or a "theosophy" which has for its purpose the deliverance of man from this world of imperfection to the "world of light." It is non-Greek in the sense that the specific "genius" of the Greeks of the historical period was dialectical. They even hid the Egyptian, Orphic, and Babylonian mysteries, upon which Pythagoreanism was based, under a veil of dialectics. The "Oriental Philosophy" removes this veil and seeks to present the *philosophia perennis* not as something to satisfy the need for thinking but as a guide, or at least doctrinal aid, for the illumination of man which arises from the inner experience of its author. Its language is therefore primarily symbolic rather than dialectical even if it begins with Aristotelian logic and employs some of the cosmological ideas of the Peripatetic philosophers.[8]

One recent variant of this interpretation is that the loss of the Eastern texts does not matter, but that both the "esoteric" and "exoteric" aspects of Avicenna's thought can be gleaned from his extant works. In this variant, although what gave originally rise to the esoteric/exoteric dichotomy is discarded, the nefarious conclusion that *there is* such a dichotomy is preserved.[9]

The combination of all of the above factors thus makes the confusion reign supreme, with a distorting effect on further scholarship.[10] Not only has there been provided no basis for situating Avicenna in his intellectual milieu—there are no comprehensive biographies, since Avicenna's stylized autobiography is taken at its face value—, not only is there a general lack of studies on his predecessors and immediate successors, not only, finally, has there been no critical investigation of the precise number and nature of his works—since the assumption that some of his most mature writings have perished is universal—but there is also the additional problem of his "esoteric" and "exoteric" teachings, which every researcher into Avicenna has had to face. A student of Avicenna is thus confronted at the very outset with a set of encumbering presuppositions and the straightjacket of biased attitudes, to which he must

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[8] S. H. Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, Cambridge, Mass. 1964 (1st ed.), London 1978 (2nd ed.), 191. For the level of Nasr's scholarship in the history of Islamic science, his field of specialization, see D. A. King, "Islamic Mathematics and Astronomy," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 35 (1978) 339-342; and for a critical assessment of his method and approach in general, J. Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, Vol. V, Part 4, Cambridge 1980, xxxv-xliv.

[9] In a Harvard Ph.D. dissertation by S. A. Nuseibeh, *The Foundations of Avicenna's Philosophy*, 1978, xx.

[10] Another subject of intense debate in recent years has been the question whether Avicenna is a materialist (in the Marxist sense) or not. A work which summarizes the current state of the debate is E. Buschmann's dissertation, *Untersuchungen zum Problem der Materie bei Avicenna*, Frankfurt/M 1979. This question has but added to the confusion described above, if only because it has not been asked in the proper context, since most of the participants in the debate, including Buschmann herself, know no Arabic and read only the medieval Latin translations of Avicenna.

somehow make the facts which he discovers and analyzes fit. The result is that the conclusions he reaches inevitably reflect the initial distortions.

The present work is an attempt to set the record straight and provide a starting point for the future study of Avicenna. Since it is clear that Avicenna had a precise conception of his own position in the history of philosophy, the aim has been specifically to describe Avicenna's intellectual base and background, and the theoretical positions and orientations (*pace* Corbin, no pun on "orientations" intended) which provide the framework and field of activity of his philosophical work. Part One presents the documentation and the textual evidence upon which the detailed analyses and elaboration which follow in the remaining parts are based. It is divided into two chapters, the first of which presents translations of a series of texts in which Avicenna and his major disciples discuss his attitude toward his own philosophy and the Aristotelian tradition. The second chapter offers a critical inventory and relative chronology of Avicenna's major philosophical works.

Avicenna's philosophical work, as presented in Part One on the basis of his own statements and the inventory of his major philosophical writings, defines itself by constant reference, whether explicit or implicit, to the Aristotelian corpus and tradition, and stands in a manifest dialectical relationship to both of them. It is, in effect, a record of the way in which Avicenna received, disagreed with, modified, integrated, and communicated philosophical knowledge as conceived and transmitted in that tradition. Therefore the conscious and unconscious position of Avicenna vis-à-vis Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition is of crucial importance for reading his works, and forms the subject proper of the remainder of the book. By "reading" I mean having an orientation toward his work commensurate with his overall point of view and consistent with his intention, and understanding his thought in its historical and semantic context and *thereby* first evaluating its relation to what preceded in philosophy and its relevance for what succeeded, and ultimately assessing its significance for the history of ideas. There is nothing novel in such an approach to a philosopher; the study of most major thinkers has benefited from numerous investigations that have taken it. The study of Arabic-writing philosophers, however, for reasons that properly belong to the history of scholarship rather than here, has been consistently hampered by a general lack of *historical investigations preceding and establishing the boundaries* of normative evaluations.[11]

[11] In his recent normative study of Avicenna's *Throne Philosophy*, E. Meyer is fully aware of the problems of an ahistorical approach. His apologies are perfectly justified on the basis of his succinct formulation of the problem: "Philosophischer Gottesglaube: Ibn Sīnās Thronschrift," *ZDMG* 130 (1980) 226-227.

This lack is making itself obtrusively manifest in the unwelcome consequences it entails: on a general level it creates the multiple and often discordant approaches to Avicenna which result in the confusion described above, and more specifically it compels almost every author dealing with Avicenna at a certain level of comprehensiveness to waste both his own and the reader's time by taking a position on the issue of the Eastern philosophy after citing only inadequate and recurrent arguments, often unassimilated.[12] This issue, however, as well as the more general one of determining the most appropriate approach to Avicenna, cannot be solved independently and in abstraction; they are integrally related to the central question of the position of Avicenna with regard to Aristotle and the Peripatetic tradition.

In order to determine this position, we need to consider his own *testimony* about his conscious stand vis-à-vis Peripatetic philosophy, *internal evidence* from his philosophical works about the same subject, and the *material* of the Aristotelian corpus and tradition which were available to him and shaped his ideas—we have to retrace, so to speak, his intellectual upbringing. In discussing the latter question, due account has to be taken of the fact, frequently overlooked and sometimes deliberately slighted, that the Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition known to Avicenna are not those known to us. Avicenna had, in a way, both more and less of Aristotle: he had often incomplete and defective Arabic translations, we have the Greek original; he had access, unlike us, to numerous commentaries from the Peripatetic tradition, most of which have not survived; and most important, he was heir to a traditional understanding and analysis of Aristotle which are alien to both our philological and philosophical proclivities. In this light the central question thus becomes determining the position of Avicenna with regard to Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition *as known* to Avicenna. All this, finally, has to be assessed within Avicenna's historical and Islamic context.

Part Two will discuss Avicenna's reception of the Aristotelian tradition. Reception is here to be understood in both its objective and subjective sense, or historical and epistemological; what there was, in other words, for Avicenna to receive, and how he says he received it. Among Avicenna's pronouncements on his own work and his position in the history of philosophy none is more significant than his Autobiography,

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[12] So recently G. Finianos, *Les grandes divisions de l'être "mawjūd" selon Ibn Sīnā*, Fribourg 1976, 27-28, reproducing the previous arguments by G. C. Anawati, "Études Avicenniennes," *Revue Thomiste* 61 (1961) 109-135, and Nasr *Cosmological Doctrines* (2nd ed.) 185-186, who insists on the impossible reading *mušriqīya* more than fifty years after, and despite his references to the conclusive article by C. A. Nallino, "Filosofia «Orientale» od «Illuminativa» d'Avicenna?," *RSO* 10 (1923-25) 433-467.

and most of the discussion will accordingly focus on it. The Aristotelian tradition included not only a curriculum of higher studies to be followed in order to acquire a body of knowledge of supreme value—*the* knowledge according to its adherents—but also carried along with it procedural guidelines, expressed in both historical and normative terms, for its acquisition in specific social contexts. In its self-perception throughout the long history of its evolution, the tradition had developed concrete ideas about what it meant to do philosophy and how to do it in a society where it had to be (or alternately, where it should be) the occupation of a small minority. The need to reconcile these apparently contradictory facts—the blatant disproportion of the number of the individuals engaged in philosophy to the absolute worth of its goal—gave rise to concepts about the praxis of philosophy which, transmitted through generations of philosophers, were also part of the tradition received by Avicenna.

Part Three will treat Avicenna's reaction to the Aristotelian tradition so received, that is, the different aspects of its integration, modification, and communication in his works. There were major contradictions both within the received tradition and between it and the Islamic context in which Avicenna encountered it. For Avicenna, these represented areas of conflict which he could not, given his understanding of the philosophical praxis and his specific epistemology discussed in Part Two, either disregard or gloss over; they called for resolution and shaped to a large degree the direction his philosophical work was to take. At the same time, the very resolution of these problems, in ways that integrated the different strands of the tradition rather than reproduced it, implied the concomitant evolution of an independent attitude on his part toward the tradition. This attitude found concrete expression in the various methods he elaborated for the communication of his new systematization of the received knowledge. The identification of these methods and their description, treated in the final chapter, pave the way for a comprehensive reading of his books.

There is little need to remind the general reader, much less the specialist of Arabic philosophy, that Avicenna did not work in a vacuum. The two centuries that preceded Avicenna's emergence saw an intensive cultivation of the philosophical sciences both in the central Islamic lands and further afield to the East, in the countries where Avicenna grew up and worked. But the formative period of philosophy in Islam, and especially the history of Arabic Aristotelianism, have been very little studied and far too few texts are available in translation for a proper appreciation of the significance of these movements in general intellectual history. It was therefore necessary to include in my discussions many

translations of substantial passages from related literature in order to give the reader a feeling of the intellectual context of Arabic and Avicennan philosophy. Although Avicenna already has an unassailable position in the history of philosophy, his achievement comes alive and its enormity is better realized when it is seen against this background. Encomia of Avicenna abound; but they are for the most part perfunctory and seem to follow, as he would have said, customary practice. His works need to become available to world culture, and this book aspires to foster a sober interest in them by facilitating their reading.

LAYOUT OF THE WORK

Bibliographical Note

There is an immense bibliography on Avicenna in many languages. I cannot claim to have consulted all of it, or even all of the material that falls within my linguistic range, but I believe to have seen, within the limits of human fallibility, the constraints of time, and reasonably ready availability of recondite sources, everything that is even remotely relevant to the subject of this book. Much of what I have seen is either outdated or of very little scholarly value—if not downright misleading—and references to secondary literature have accordingly been selective. The purpose of this book is neither antiquarian, to write the history of scholarship on Avicenna on this subject, nor bibliographic, to refer to every single publication regardless of its worth. If a reference that may be considered germane by some is found missing, then the omission was deliberate. As Avicenna put it, "I refrained from prolix arguments in contradiction of doctrines patently invalid or sufficiently dealt with through the fundamental principles which we establish and the rules we present" (T9, §1). On the other hand, a descriptive and critical bibliography of works on Avicenna is a major desideratum and it will greatly facilitate future research; it lies, however, beyond the scope of the present study, which hopes to provide the basis and guidelines for its compilation.

For this reason I have not listed the bibliography separately. Full bibliographic references are given in the notes when a work is first cited; thereafter the same work is referred to by author and short title in cases where more than one work by the same author is used, and by author alone otherwise. The first page reference after the name of an author in the Index of Names will also identify the bibliographic citation.

Annotation

The rather lamentable state of the editions of most Arabic works drawn upon here made it necessary to comment extensively, for the sake of the Arabists, on the text of the passages selected for translation, and to include information about variant manuscript readings and lexicographic details. This study, however, is also intended for the non-Arabist who would have no use for such information. Accordingly it appeared advisable to adopt a twofold system of annotation. Matters

relating strictly to the choice or meaning of Arabic words are provided with notes indicated by superscript letters. The non-Arabist can skip these and concentrate on the numbered notes which contain the bibliographic references and other explanatory information.

Technical Terms

Avicenna uses a highly technical language. Many terms which he employs are common to Arabic philosophical and scholarly vocabulary, but others are peculiar to him and refer to specific concepts in his system. It has been necessary to alert the reader to the use of these terms in the texts of Avicenna as well as in my own discussion of them. In order to avoid giving in parentheses the Arabic word in every instance, these terms have been identified by capitalization. The Index of Technical Terms at the end of the volume lists them and refers to the chapters and sections where their specific definition is discussed.

Transliteration

The transliteration follows the rules established by the German Oriental Society (*Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft*), with the following exceptions: *j* instead of *ǧ*, and *-aw* and *-ay* for the diphthongs instead of *-au* and *-ai*. The inflection (*iʿrāb*) is indicated only when necessary for the comprehension of the transliterated passage.

For the benefit of non-Arabists, a hyphen (-) connects in the transliteration of proper names all the words that form a unit of nomenclature. Thus, Abū-l-Faraj Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib, ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla.

The article before single word proper names has been omitted in my text (e.g., Fārābī, Jūzjānī), but retained when it occurs in a translated passage.

Abbreviations

All abbreviations of titles of journals are those used in Pearson's *Index Islamicus*.

The abbreviations of reference works are the following:

Blachère *Dictionnaire*: R. Blachère, M. Chouémi, C. Denizeau, *Dictionnaire Arabe-Français-Anglais*, Paris 1967ff.

CAG: *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, Berlin 1882ff. Cf. K. Praechter in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 18 (1909) 516-38.

Dozy: R. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*, Leiden 1881.

EI: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1st ed., Leiden 1913-1938; 2nd ed., Leiden 1960ff.

GAS: F. Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, Leiden 1967ff.
Kazimirski: A. de B. Kazimirski, *Dictionnaire Arabe-Français*, Paris 1846-1860.
Lane: E. W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, London 1863-1893.
Reckendorf *Verhältnisse*: H. Reckendorf, *Die syntaktischen Verhältnisse des Arabischen*, Leiden 1895-1898.
WKAS: *Wörterbuch der klassischen arabischen Sprache*, Wiesbaden 1957ff.
Wright *Grammar*: W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 3rd ed., Cambridge 1896-1898.

The initials A and M before a number refer to the bibliographies of Anawati and Mahdavī, respectively, and the numbers following them to the serial number of Avicenna's works given there.

The following initials have been used to refer to the various sections and passages in the book:

L Lemmata, or passages cited, as numbered in the margins.
T Texts translated and numbered in Chapter 1.
W Works discussed and numbered in Chapter 2.

Signs

The paragraph sign (§) after a Text or a Lemma refers to the paragraph numbers in the translated passage.

In the *translated texts* throughout the book, the following signs have been used:

(...) Parenthetical remarks by the author of the passage.
[...] My own explanatory additions in English to the author's text.
<...> My conjectural additions to the Arabic text of the passage.

PART ONE

DOCUMENTS ON AVICENNA AND THE ARISTOTELIAN TRADITION

1.

PERSONAL TEXTS BY AVICENNA AND HIS DISCIPLES ON HIS RELATION TO THE ARISTOTELIAN TRADITION

Introduction

Avicenna had few reservations about expressing his thoughts on the nature and practice of philosophy, both in history and in his immediate environment. Acutely aware of the historical progression of the acquisition of knowledge through philosophy, he was never content to follow tacitly or leave unchallenged the presuppositions that governed the philosophical praxis. In numerous introductions, epilogues, and private letters, texts that can be described as personal, he raised these very issues and stated his position on them. His views were also reflected in the writings of his disciples, who responded to the earnestness and intensity with which he approached the work of philosophy. The fourteen texts translated in this chapter present a selection of these texts. The selection contains, I believe, the most relevant and the most significant pronouncements by Avicenna on these issues, but it does not aim to be comprehensive. Many were excluded for considerations of space, and others doubtless escaped my attention for lack of ready availability. The task of collecting all these texts, and especially Avicenna's considerable correspondence with his disciples, is a major desideratum for the future.

The first three texts provide the setting, or the normative background, for the rest. They inform about *what*, in Avicenna's view, is to be learned in philosophy (T1) and *how* it is to be learned (T2), and give an example of a person *who* learned it (T3). The remaining texts, except for the last, follow in chronological order the evolution of Avicenna's thoughts about Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition, about the historical progression of philosophy, and about the place of his own work in this continuum. The last section (T14), finally, also Avicenna's very last work, presents his own summary of his philosophical system. These texts are intended to be read in the order presented. Since they constitute the focus and provide the documentation for much of the discussion in this book, a serial reading will bring out the major themes and points which, to borrow Avicenna's phrase, "had they been perceived, there would have been no need" for the rest of the book (T9, §4).

Some of these texts are available in translations of varying accuracy; very few are available in editions even marginally critical. It was there-

fore necessary to provide relatively full, and separate, textual annotation, indicated by superscript letters. As these notes show, critical editions of all of Avicenna's works still remain to be done. My notes, which are based on a necessarily narrow base of printed and manuscript evidence, merely aim to contribute toward an eventual critical edition of these texts; they are not intended to substitute for a critical apparatus. Their main purpose is to enable the Arabist to read my versions while comparing them with the available Arabic texts in the cited publications.

My translations aim to render Avicenna's meaning as precisely as possible and are based for the most part on the detailed analyses of the texts in the body of the book. For this reason recurring technical terms which have a special significance in Avicenna's thought are always written with a capital letter; the reader's attention is directed to the Index of Technical Terms. References to earlier translations have accordingly been kept to a minimum and have been made primarily when their renditions of key passages, representing accepted wisdom, differ substantially from my own. References to editions and manuscripts, and other bibliographical information, are given at the beginning of each selection.

Text 1. From *Compendium on the Soul*

The eighth chapter of Avicenna's first philosophical treatise lists the intelligible forms, i.e., theoretical knowledge, to be acquired by the rational soul. It is extraordinary because it presents these forms in the order and in terms of the philosophical sciences as classified in the Aristotelian tradition. (See the discussion below, Chapter 2, W1, and Chapter 3.1.)

The text was first edited and translated into German by S. Landauer, "Die Psychologie des Ibn Sīnā," *ZDMG* 29 (1875) 335-418; the translation below is based on his edition (361.4-362.16 and 364.19-365.4, text; 404-408 and 410-411, translation, with useful annotation). The text published by A. F. al-Ahwānī, *Aḥwāl an-nafs*, Cairo 1371/1952, 168-171, differs from that of Landauer only in minor and insignificant details, left unrecorded here. In the notes, an occasional reference has been made to variant renderings of significant passages and terms in the Latin translation by Andrea Alpago (*Avicennae philosophi praeclarissimi ac medicorum principis Compendium de Anima, De Mahad, etc.*, Venice 1546, ff. 1-39v; repr. by Gregg International Publishers Limited, Westmead, Farnborough, Hants., England, 1969) and in the English translation by Edward Abbot van Dyck (*Avicena's* [*sic*] *Offering to the Prince. A Compendium on the Soul*, Verona 1906). Van Dyck (p. 9) refers to an earlier English translation by James Middleton MacDonald (Beirut 1884) which I have not seen.

Chapter 8

The Stages of the Human Soul from Inception to Perfection

1. There is no doubt that the species of rational living beings is distinguished from the irrational through a faculty by means of which it is able

to conceptualize the intelligibles. This faculty is the one called "rational soul," although it is also Customary to call it "material intellect," that is, potential intellect, by analogy to [primary] matter.

2. This faculty, which exists in the entire human species, does not in itself possess any intelligible forms, but these rather come about within it in one of two ways. The first is through divine inspiration, without any process of learning or utilization of the senses, as is the case with *a priori* intelligibles[1] like our belief that the whole is greater than the part and that "two contraries cannot be present in a single thing simultaneously."[2] People of mature intellectual capacity share the characteristic of having attained these forms.

3. The second way is to acquire [them] through syllogisms and Discover [them] through demonstration, as is the case with:[3]

> [I. LOGIC] The conceptualization of logical truths. Examples: genera, species, differentiae, properties, and accidents[4] [Porphyry's *Eisagoge*]; simple terms and the different kinds of compound terms [*De Interpretatione*];[5] the composition of syllogisms, both true and false [*Prior Analytics*]; propositions which, when organized[a] to form syllogisms, yield conclusions which are necessary and demonstrative [*Posterior Analytics*], or more [true than false] and dialectical [*Topics*], or equally [true and false] and rhetorical [*Rhetoric*], or less[b] [true

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[a] Perhaps *tašakkalat* is to be read for *šukkilat* in the printed texts.

[b] Reading *aqallīya* for *awwalīya* in the printed texts.

[1] "*A priori* intelligibles:" *al-maʿqūlāt al-badīhīya*; "Axiome," Landauer; "mentally-grasped self-evident axioms," van Dyck. These are the primary intelligible concepts upon which depend the secondary intelligibles that form the subject matter of logic. See, most recently, A. I. Sabra, "Avicenna on the Subject Matter of Logic," *The Journal of Philosophy* 77 (1980) 746-764, and especially pp. 753ff.

[2] Landauer (406 note 2) marks the quotation from the *Metaphysics* 1011b17-18.

[3] The remainder of this section (§3) consists of a single sentence. I have divided it and labeled each item in order to bring out Avicenna's extremely methodical and traditional enumeration of the subject matter of the sciences. Cf. the list below with the contents of Avicenna's *The Cure* in Chapter 2, W6a. For Avicenna's observance of the classification of the sciences in the Aristotelian tradition, and for the standard textbooks that corresponded to these sciences, see Chapter 3.1.

[4] The fifth of Porphyry's *quinque voces*, accident, is missing in the manuscripts used by Landauer and in the Hebrew translation, while it is found in Alpago's Latin. Despite Landauer's doubts, it is perhaps to be added to the text since it may have been omitted by the scribe of an archetype manuscript on account of a presumed dittography between *ḫawāṣṣ* and *aʿrāḍ* which look alike in Arabic.

[5] For the omission of the Categories see Chapter 6.4.

than false] and sophistical [*Sophistici Elenchi*], or impossible [i.e. totally false] and poetic [*Poetics*].[6]

[II. PHYSICS] Verification of physical matters. Examples: matter, form, privation, nature, place, time, rest, and motion [*Physics*]; celestial bodies and bodies composed of the elements [*De Caelo*]; the principles of generation and corruption[7] [*De Generatione et Corruptione*]; generation of phenomena in the atmosphere, in the mines [*Meteorologica*][8] and on the surface of the earth: plants [*De Plantis*] and animals [*Historia, De Partibus, De Motu, De Incessu, De Generatione Animalium*]; the real nature of man and the real nature of the self-conceptualization of the soul [*De Anima*].

[III. MATHEMATICS] Conceptualization of mathematical matters, namely, arithmetic [*Introduction to Arithmetic* by Nicomachus of Gerasa], pure geometry [Euclid's *Elements*], astronomical geometry [Ptolemy's *Almagest*], geometry of musical melodies [Ptolemy's *Harmonics*], and geometry of optics [Ptolemy's *Optics*].

[IV. METAPHYSICS][9]

[A. Universal science: (i) Being-as-such] Conceptualization of divine matters. For example: knowledge about the first principles of absolute being-as-such, and about its consequent properties [*lawāḥiq*], like potentiality, actuality, first principle, cause, substance, accident, genus, species, contradiction, affinity, congruence, incongruence, unity, and multiplicity.

[A. Universal Science: (ii) First Philosophy] Establishing the first principles of the theoretical sciences—namely Mathematics, Physics, and Logic—access to which can be gained only through this science [of Metaphysics].

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[6] This fivefold classification of propositions on the basis of their truth value and their correspondence to the last five books of Aristotle's *Organon* is standard late Alexandrian doctrine; it was transmitted into Syriac by Paul the Persian (*fl.* mid-sixth century) and naturalized in Arabic philosophy by Fārābī. See D. Gutas, "Paul the Persian on the Classification of the Parts of Aristotle's Philosophy: A Milestone between Alexandria and Baġdād," *Der Islam* 60 (1983) 242-243, and Diagrams IVa, IVb, and V. Avicenna was later to abandon and criticize this doctrine: *Al-Išārāt wa-t-tanbīhāt*, ed. by S. Dunyā, Cairo 1960-1968, I.462-3 = A.-M. Goichon, *Ibn Sīnā, Livre des Directives et Remarques*, Beirut/Paris 1951, 224 = S. C. Inati, *Ibn Sīnā, Remarks and Admonitions. Part One: Logic*, Toronto 1984, 148-149.

[7] Literally, "absolute generation and corruption" (*al-kawn wa-l-fasād al-muṭlaqayn*), that is, a discussion of generation and corruption in general, not related to specific things.

[8] For the problem of the 4th book of Aristotle's *Meteorologica* as the source of Arabic mineralogy see C. Baffioni, *La tradizione araba del IV Libro dei 'Meteorologica' di Aristotele* [Istituto Orientale di Napoli, *Annali* 40 (1980), fasc. 2, suppl. no. 23], Naples 1980.

[9] Much of the account of Metaphysics presented here is directly indebted to Fārābī's *On the Purposes of the Metaphysics*, translated below, L45. For the classification of the contents of Metaphysics by Avicenna, and for his sources other than Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, see Chapter 6.1 and 6.2.

[B. Theology: (iii) Natural Theology] Establishing the first creator, the first created, and the universal soul; the way in which creation occurs; the rank of the intellect with respect to the creator,[c] of the soul to the intellect, of sublunar matter[10] and the forms to the soul, and of the spheres, stars, and generated beings to matter and form; and why there is such a stark divergence in priority and posteriority among them.[11]

[B. Theology: (iv) Metaphysics of the Rational Soul] Knowledge about divine governance, the nature of the universe, the providence of the First One, prophetic revelation, the sanctified and Lordly spirit,[12] and the supernal angels; attaining the real meaning of the doctrines denying polytheism and the anthropomorphism of the creator;[13] attaining knowledge about the reward in store for the virtuous and the punishment for evildoers, and about the pleasure and pain befalling souls after their separation from the body.[14]

...

4. [Another aspect of the second way in which intelligibles come about in the rational soul:] In some people, keenness of mind[15] and contact with the universal intellect may so predispose the rational faculty as to free it from having recourse to syllogisms and reasoning in order to acquire knowledge; inspiration and revelation, rather, are sufficient sustenance for it. This specific property of the rational faculty is called sanctification, in accordance with which it is then called sanctified spirit. None shall gain the enjoyment of this rank except prophets and messengers of God, peace and prayers be upon them.

Text 2. From *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla*

Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla is the only philosophical summa by Avicenna written in Persian (see Chapter 2, W8). Like all his summae, the section on the human soul, which was a part of Physics, contained a discussion of the theory

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[c] Reading *al-mubdiʿ* for *al-ibdāʿ* in the printed texts.

[10] "Sublunar matter;" literally, "the matter of nature" (*al-hayūlā min aṭ-ṭabīʿa*). For the correct reading of the series enumerated here see Landauer 408, note 9.

[11] Avicenna later called this part "the fruit of Metaphysics." See T4, §1, and Chapter 6.1 and 6.2.

[12] That is, the rational faculty of the prophets, or the so-called "prophetic intellect." See the next paragraph (§4).

[13] These two doctrines (*širk*, *taśbīh*) are subjects regularly treated in Islamic theology (*kalām*).

[14] Avicenna later called this part "the fruit of Physics." See T4, §1, and Chapter 6.2.

[15] "Keenness of mind:" *yaqẓa*, cf. Dozy s.v.; Alpago and, following him, Landauer and van Dyck have "vigil:" *vigiliis*, "Nachtwachen," and "vigils," respectively. The reference here is to what Avicenna was later to call Intuition, *ḥads*. See Chapter 3.2.

of learning. The chapter translated below, the penultimate in the Physics, deals with this subject. The importance of this chapter lies in the fact that it alone, among all similar sections in Avicenna's summae, adds an autobiographical perspective to his theory of learning. In this passage Avicenna situates himself on his own scale of learning, and states his own conception of how he acquired knowledge and how it relates to the transmitted body of knowledge, the Aristotelian philosophy.

The translation is based on the text edited by M. Meškāt, *Dānešnāme-ye ʿAlāʾī, Ṭabīʿīyāt* [Anjoman-e Āṯār-e Mellī, No. 13], Tehran 1331/1953, pp. 141.10-145.3. There is a French translation by M. Achena and H. Massé, *Le Livre de science*, Paris 1955-1958, II.87-89.

Part III: Physics

Chapter: Exposition of the State of Powerful Souls

1. It is a fact that unknown [intelligible] things are acquired by means of the middle term [of a syllogism]. The middle term can be obtained either through quickness of apprehension, which pours Intuition into the soul[1] (and that is due to the soul's disposition to be affected by the active intellect), or from a teacher.

2. Intuition is likewise of two sorts: one comes about slowly and after delay, the other at once. There is no requirement that Intuition should occur with respect to some problems [only] and not others; as a matter of fact, if you want the truth, [the solution to] every problem has been found by means of Intuition, since everybody has learned from somebody else but he who was the very first never learned from anybody; there was, therefore, someone who found [solutions and knowledge] all by himself.

3. If someone knows the things of the world by applying himself to the utmost, his knowledge of most of the things will be either accurate or highly doubtful, since what he has been doing was Discovering [middle terms].[2] Accordingly among people [a] there is the person who needs a

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[1] "Which pours Intuition into the soul": *ke ḥads andar nafs afkand*. Achena-Massé take *ḥads* to be the subject of the dependent clause: "én ce sens que l'intuition intellectuelle jette dans l'âme ce moyen terme;" but quickness of apprehension, or acumen, is what *predisposes* the rational soul for Intuition. See Chapter 3.2, L7, §2.

[2] Literally, "since he has been a Discoverer" (*ke vey estenbāṭgar būde ast*; Achena-Massé: "parce qu'il aurait pratiqué des constatations [?]"). A more paraphrastic translation would be, "depending on how good he is at Discovering the middle terms". Avicenna is referring here, in an abbreviated fashion, to his theory that Intuition, i.e. the ability to discover the middle term, varies from person to person according to how many middle terms and how fast each person can discover them. See the parallel passage cited in Chapter 3.2, L7, §3.

teacher for most things, being completely incapable of any Intuition—or even worse, he might be incapable of understanding even with a teacher; [b] there may be a person who knows most things by Intuition and has a slight need for a teacher; and [c] there may also be a person,[3] though rarely, who can attain whenever he wishes the sciences from beginning to end in order of Intuition[4] without a teacher and in very little time. This is because he has made excellent contact with the active intellect so that he has absolutely no need of reflection, and therefore believes that [this knowledge] is being poured into his heart from one place[5]—and perhaps this is what the truth is. It is from this person that the basis of instruction for humans must come.

4. One must not be amazed at this. We ourselves have witnessed a person[6] who was not at this rank [of the prophet] and would learn things after reflection and hard work, but who nevertheless dispensed with excessive hard work through his strong Intuition. His Intuition in most things corresponded with what is found in books,[7] and consequently he did not have to endure the hard work of excessive book reading. At the age of eighteen or nineteen this person understood the philosophical sciences—from logic and physics and metaphysics [to] geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, music, medicine, and many abstruse sciences—in such a way that he saw no one else like himself. After that, many years went by without his adding anything more to that initial state [of knowledge]—and it is known that each one of these sciences requires years of instruction.[8]

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[3] I.e. a prophet.

[4] "In order of Intuition" (*be-tartīb-e ḥadsī*; Achena-Massé: "par voie [?] d'intuition"), i.e. the prophet does not learn wholesale and by heart, as it were, a body of doctrines in digest form without knowing how the different parts are interconnected, but rather intuits step by step, although with "computer" speed, and in a logical order which starts from axiomatic truths and proceeds by consecutive discoveries of middle terms until he encompasses all things that can be known with rational certainty. See the parallel passages cited in Chapter 3.2, L7, §3, and L12, §3.

[5] I.e., from the active intellect.

[6] Avicenna is referring here to himself. See his Autobiography in T3 and compare the parallel formulations.

[7] I.e., philosophical books in the Aristotelian tradition, mainly those referred to in Avicenna's list of the intelligible forms given in T1, §3. See the comments in T5, note 3.

[8] This is not a rhetorical statement. In Paul the Persian's introduction to the works of Aristotle, based on late Alexandrian sources, the time required for studying the philosophical sciences is specified as being between ten and twenty years: Miskawayh, *Kitāb as-Saʿāda*, Cairo 1335/1917, 71.10-11; see Gutas, "Paul the Persian" 235. In another passage of similar provenance (Chapter 3.4, L27), the time required is said to be ten years. Avicenna, whose conception of the philosophical curriculum was shaped by such works, is therefore comparing this time period to the approximately six years it took him to master these subjects. See also below, Chapter 3.1, note 13.

Text 3. The Autobiography

The Autobiography is readily available in numerous translations in many languages. I am including it here first because it is the focus of much discussion below (Chapter 3), and second because certain crucial passages have not received the care they deserve by translators if only through the inadvertence bred by familiarity. I therefore beg the reader to read once more with me this amazing text.

The only critical edition of the Arabic text, with facing English translation, is that by W. E. Gohlman, *The Life of Ibn Sina*, New York (Albany) 1974, 16-42, which has to be used in conjunction with the review by M. Ullmann in *Der Islam* 52 (1975) 148-151. My translation below is based on this edition, and my textual comments and suggestions have been indicated in the notes.[a] Among scholarly translations, the earliest, and one of the most accurate, is that by P. Kraus, "Eine arabische Biographie Avicennas," *Klinische Wochenschrift* 11 (1932) 1880b-1882b. The very readable English translation by A. J. Arberry was first published in his *Avicenna on Theology*, London 1951, 9-14, and later reprinted in a number of other publications (listed by Gohlman 117, note 28), most notably in the volume edited by G. M. Wickens, *Avicenna: Scientist and Philosopher*, London 1952, 9-20, where it was also provided with a running commentary. There is also a French translation by Achena-Massé, 6-11.

The bibliography on the Autobiography is extensive, but its worth is inversely proportional to its extent. There is a list of publications in Gohlman, supplemented by Ullmann in his review. References to Eastern European publications can be found in B. Brentjes and S. Brentjes, *Ibn Sina (Avicenna), der fürstliche Meister aus Buhara*, Leipzig 1979, and A. V. Sagadeev, *Ibn-Sina*, Moscow 1980. Among this mass of material, two studies stand out for their particularly perceptive analyses of the Autobiography: Sellheim's comments in his review of

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[a] Crisp and efficient as this edition appears to be (cf. the review by Ullmann 149, and by M. van Damme, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 33 [1976] 364), it may have to be done anew. Specifically, the following tasks would seem to be still on the agenda: (a) A more thorough understanding has to be gained of the relationship among the various manuscripts of the main recension. Gohlman 4 assumes his four primary manuscripts ABJN to derive independently from a common archetype. His documentation for this assumption, however, is exceedingly slim (he is content, in the examples he cites on p. 5, with only one separative error among them), and in one case, unfounded: the separative error he cites (p. 5) between A and the other witnesses is that on p. 64, line 5 of his edition, A has *baynahum* and the other manuscripts have *bi-tatmīm*. This, however, is not a separative error, but a variant reading of the same skeleton (*rasm*) of the word. (b) A better understanding has to be gained of the relationship which the recension represented by the texts of Ibn-al-Qifṭī (ed. by J. Lippert, *Taʾrīḫ al-ḥukamāʾ*, Leipzig 1903, 413-417) and Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa (ed. by A. Müller, *ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ*, Königsberg/Cairo 1882-84, II.2-4) bears to the main recension. If the variants in the former recension (which, incidentally, Gohlman calls "tradition," p. 6) are due to Ibn-al-Qifṭī's revision, as Gohlman assumes (pp. 5, 6), then they should either be discarded or, if they agree with the reading of some of the manuscripts of the main recension, explained and recorded in the apparatus, not taken in the text, as Gohlman says he has done (p. 6). (c) The paraphrase by Ẓahīr-ad-Dīn al-Bayhaqī must be studied in detail and the manuscript tradition which he used as a source identified. (Bayhaqī is cited below according to the two editions: *Tatimmat Ṣiwān al-ḥikma*, ed. by M. Shafīʿ, Lahore 1935, 38-62/*Taʾrīḫ ḥukamāʾ al-Islām*, ed. by M. Kurd ʿAlī, Damascus 1365/1946, 52-72.) (d) Proper consideration ought to be given to the medieval Persian and Latin translations of the Autobiography.

Ergin's bibliography, and the idiosyncratic article by G. Lüling, "Ein anderer Avicenna. Kritik seiner Autobiographie und ihrer bisherigen Behandlung," *ZDMG* Suppl. III.1 (1977) 496-513.

The Autobiography

1. My father was a man of Balḫ. He moved from there to Buḫārā in the days of the Prince Nūḥ ibn-Manṣūr,[1] during whose reign he was employed in the administration as the governor of a village in one of the royal estates of Buḫārā called Ḫarmayṯan, which is one of the regional capitals[2] there. Nearby is a village named Afšana, and there my father married my mother and took up his permanent residence.

2. I was born there, as was my younger brother, and later we moved to Buḫārā. I was provided with a teacher of the Qurʾān and a teacher of literature, and when I reached the age of ten I had mastered the Qurʾān and a great deal of literature to such an extent that I evoked great amazement.[3]

3. My father was among those who responded to the proselytizer of the Egyptians and was considered one of the Ismāʿīlīs.[4] He had heard from them the account about the soul and the intellect in the way in which *they* tell it and present it,[b] and so had my brother. They[5] would sometimes

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[b] Reading *yuʿarrifūnahu* in the text (Gohlman 18.5), not *yaʿrifūnahu*: "auffassen," Kraus; "understand," Arberry; "know," Gohlman. The emphasis is in the Arabic.

[1] Sāmānid ruler who reigned from 366/976 to 14 Rajab 387/23 July 997 (see further below, Chapter 2, W1, note 1). Working with the hypothesis of an earlier date for Avicenna's birth, Sellheim (237) suggests that Nūḥ ibn-Manṣūr in the text is a mistake for Manṣūr ibn-Nūḥ, the father (*regn.* 350/961-366/976). Cf. the remarks by Lüling 506, note 7.

[2] "Capitals:" the Arabic term used (*ummahāt al-qurā*, "mother of cities" = metropolis) is Qurʾānic, where it refers to Mecca (*Sūra* 6.92 and 42.7; cf. Lüling 500 and note 25). The expression was regularly employed in Arabic to indicate village or town centers; in Ibn-ʿAbd-Rabbihi's *Al-ʿIqd al-farīd*, for instance, it is used to refer to Medina, Ṭāʾif, and Ḫaybar in Arabia (Aḥmad Amīn *et al.*, eds., Cairo 1948-49, VI.27.5-7). See *EI*2 s.v. "ḳarya" (al-Wohaibi). Lüling interprets it as follows: "Ḫarmayṯan was a metropolis *of former times*" ("Kharmīṯan war eine Metropole der *Vorzeit*," *idem*, emphasis added). He understands the alleged reference to be to the importance of the town as a Buddhist center in pre-Islamic times, and he tries to associate Avicenna's family and the Sāmānids with this Buddhist tradition.

[3] Avicenna is indirectly referring here and in what follows to the strength of his Intuition; cf. T2, §4: "one must not be amazed at this," i.e. the ability of some people to learn uncommonly fast. See Chapter 3.2.

[4] In the tenth and eleventh centuries the Ismāʿīlī Šīʿīs from Fāṭimid Egypt were waging an intense conversion campaign in Central Asia. See the article on "Ismāʿīliyya" by W. Madelung in *EI*2, IV.198a, and Gohlman 120, note 11.

[5] The antecedent of the pronoun here is problematical. The text established by Gohlman, apparently on the basis of the manuscripts containing the Autobiography and not its recensions in later biographers who incorporated it, uses the plural pronoun

discuss this matter [i.e. the account about the soul and the intellect] among themselves, while I would listen to them and comprehend what they were saying, but my soul would not accept it;[c] and they began to summon me to it[6] with[d] constant talk on their tongues about philosophy, geometry, and Indian arithmetic.[7]

4. Then he [my father] sent me for a while[e] to a greengrocer[8] who used Indian arithmetic and I would thus learn from him.

5. Then Abū-ʿAbdallāh an-Nātilī,[9] who claimed to be a philosopher, came to Buḫārā. My father had him stay in our house, and he occupied

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[c] Gohlman punctuates incorrectly and mistranslates line 18.7: the period (or rather, comma) should be after *nafsī*, not *ilayhi*.

[d] A variant reading in a number of sources, not recorded by Gohlman, gives a different meaning to the whole sentence. For *yujrūna* in Gohlman 18.7, Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa (II.2.13) and, apparently following him, the otherwise unknown al-Kāšī (wrote in 754/1353: A. F. al-Ahwānī, *Nukat fī aḥwāl aš-Šayḫ ar-Raʾīs Ibn Sīnā [Ḏikrā Ibn Sīnā III]*, Cairo 1952, 10.6), read *wa-yujrūna*, while Ibn-al-Qifṭī reads *wa-yujriyāni* (413.16), retaining the conjunction. If the conjunction *wa-* is retained, the sentence then means, "they began to summon me to it and they began to talk constantly about philosophy, geometry, and Indian arithmetic."

[e] Arabic: *kāna yuwajjihunī*. Ibn-al-Qifṭī and Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa have *wa-aḫaḍa yuwajjihunī*.

throughout in the rest of the paragraph. This implies at least three people, viz., Avicenna's father, brother, and one (or more?) Ismāʿīlī proselytizer. The plural pronoun would further imply that, since the young Avicenna and the still younger brother were present, the discussions took place in their home where the Ismāʿīlī proselytizer could apparently visit freely. The text of the Autobiography as it appears in Ibn-al-Qifṭī, however, uses the dual pronoun throughout, referring to Avicenna's father and brother (this variant in the textual tradition is not recorded by Gohlman). This is the natural pronoun to expect in the structure of the Arabic paragraph, and may be the original reading. In the next paragraph (4), Avicenna shifts to the singular, referring to his father.

[6] I.e., specifically to the Ismāʿīlī doctrine about the soul and the intellect. The Arabic text does not support the more general interpretations of both Gohlman and Arberry: "They began to invite me to join the movement [!]" (Arberry); "And so [!] they began appealing to me to do it [to accept the Ismāʿīlī doctrines (!)]" (Gohlman).

[7] For Indian arithmetic see the article on "ʿilm al-ḥisāb" by A. I. Sabra in *EI*2 III.1138a. Bayhaqī *Tatimma* 40.1-2/52-3, and, following him, the Istanbul MS of the Autobiography, Ahmet III 3447 (= J in Gohlman), add that he also studied parts of the *Rasāʾil Iḫwān aṣ-Ṣafāʾ*. This fateful—and misleading—addition is nothing else, however, but Bayhaqī's mistaken inference based on Avicenna's statements in this passage; cf. V. Minorsky, "Avicenne l'homme," *Le livre du millénaire d'Avicenne*, vol. IV, Tehran 1956, p. 6, note 1; below, Chapter 3.4, note 108.

[8] Bayhaqī *Tatimma* 40.3/53, calls him Maḥmūd al-Massāḥ; Massāḥī (or Misāḥī?) in Gohlman 20.

[9] Little is known about this scholar. Bayhaqī lists him primarily as a philosopher; see M. Meyerhof, "ʿAlī al-Bayhaqī's Tatimmat Ṣiwān al-Ḥikma," *Osiris* 8 (1948) 142-143 (Bayhaqī *Tatimma* 22-23/37-38). He is, however, also listed as a physician by Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa I.240.-9. M. Ullmann, *Die Medizin im Islam*, Leiden/Köln 1970, 152, note 6, warns against identifying him with al-Ḥusayn an-Nātilī, the editor of Dioscurides (but see M. M. Sadek, *The Arabic Materia Medica of Dioscorides*, Quebec 1983, 54-60). Cf. further Sellheim 238, question no. 1.

himself with my education. Before his arrival, I used to occupy myself with jurisprudence, attending frequently Ismāʿīl az-Zāhid[10] about it. I was one of the most skillful questioners, having become familiar with the methods of posing questions and ways[f] of raising objections to a respondent in the manner Customary with these people.[11] Then I began to read the *Eisagoge* with an-Nātilī, and when he mentioned to me the definition of "genus," viz. "that which is predicated of many things differing in species, in answer to [the question] 'What is it?',"[12] I set about[g] a Verification of this definition in a manner such as he had never heard.[13]

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[f] Read *wujūh* for *wujūduhu* in Gohlman 20.6.

[g] The manuscripts of the Autobiography read *fa-aḅ(ḥ)aḍtuhu*, "I captivated him," while the recension of Ibn-al-Qifṭī and Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa reads *fa-aḥaḍtu*, "I set about." "Captivated" seems to be the improper word, in addition to being redundant, which might explain the "emendation" to "I set about" in Ibn-al-Qifṭī and Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa's recension. If there is a corruption, the original for *fa-aḅ(ḥ)aḍtuhu* may have been *fāḍaltuhu*, "I surpassed him in the Verification...".

[10] Abū Muḥammad Ismāʿīl b. al-Ḥusayn az-Zāhid, a noted Ḥanafī jurist of Buḫārā, died in 8 Šaʿbān 402/5 March 1012: al-Ḫaṭīb al-Baġdādī, *Taʾrīḫ Baġdād*, Beirut 1968, VI.310, no. 3355. See further on him D. Gutas, "Avicenna's *Maḏhab*, with an Appendix on the Question of His Date of Birth," *Actes du XIIIe Congrès de l'Union Européenne d'Arabisants et d'Islamisants, Venice, 29.IX-4.X.1986*, forthcoming.

[11] "Posing questions ... raising objections:" *muṭālaba ... iʿtirāḍ*. These are specific terms in Aristotelian dialectics, not general concepts, as implied by the existing translations: "Argumentation ... widerleg[en]," Kraus; "postulation ... rebuttal," Arberry; "prosecution ... rebuttal," Gohlman. Only Achena-Massé are more precise: "interrogation ... objection." The context here is dialectical discussion as analyzed by Aristotle in the *Topics*. For *muṭālaba* cf. Avicenna's *Aš-Šifāʾ*, *al-Manṭiq*, *al-Jadal*, A. F. El-Ehwany, ed., Cairo 1965, 315.12, reflecting the Greek *zētein* (*Topics* 158a23 = *yuṭālab* in the Arabic translation, ʿA. Badawī, *Manṭiq Arisṭū*, Cairo 1948, III.703); for *iʿtirāḍ* cf. *ibid.* 307.11, reflecting the Greek *enstasis* (*Topics* 156a39 = *muʿāraḍa* and *munāqaḍa* [for 156b3] in the Arabic translation, Badawī *Manṭiq* III.694). See the discussion in Chapter 3.1.

[12] This is the definition of "genus" given by Porphyry in the *Eisagoge* (p. 2.15-16 Busse, *CAG* IV.1), in the wording of Avicenna, *Aš-Šifāʾ*, *al-Manṭiq*, *al-Madḫal*, G. C. Anawati *et al.*, eds., Cairo 1952, 47.18-19. Abū-ʿUṯmān ad-Dimašqī's translation of the Greek text reads, "*al-maḥmūl ʿalā kaṯīrīn muḫtalifīn bi-n-naw*ʿ *min ṭarīq mā huwa*" (Badawī *Manṭiq* III.1024).

[13] Avicenna was conscious of his novel analysis of the question "What is it?" which he incorporated in most of his works. In *Pointers and Reminders* he refers to this problem, and almost certainly to Nātilī, in similar words: "Logicians who Determine Validity on the basis of the literal sense barely make a distinction between essential [universal] terms and the predicate in answer to [the question] 'What is it?'... Then they become confused when one Verifies for them the status of essential terms which are more general [than the thing defined] but not themselves genera, like the things which they call generic differentiae" (*Išārāt* I.174-75; cf. Goichon *Directives* 92-93, Inati 58-59). The expression "logicians who Determine Validity on the basis of the literal sense," above, translates *al-manṭiqiyūn aẓ-ẓāhirīyūn ʿinda t-taḥṣīl*. Goichon and Inati take *ʿinda t-taḥṣīl* to refer not to *aẓ-ẓāhirīyūn*, as I do, but to the person studying *them*: "si l'on scrute leurs théories;" "when [the views] of the logicians ... are examined." There is a variant *ʿinda t-taḥṣīl ʿalayhim*, which Ṭūsī in his commentary (ed. by S. Dunyā together with the *Išārāt*) interprets as *nubbihū*, "when alerted [to what their false opinion leads to...]." For *ẓāhirīyūn* see below, note 15.

He was extremely amazed at me and cautioned my father that I should occupy myself with nothing else but Philosophy. Whatever problem he posed I conceptualized[14] it better then he,[h] until I finished [in this fashion] a literal[15] reading of Logic with him; as for its minute implications, though, he had no notion of them. Then I began to read the books [of the *Organon*] by myself and consult the commentaries until I had mastered Logic.

6. As for the *Elements* of Euclid, I read the first five or six propositions[16] with him, and thereafter undertook on my own to solve the entire remainder of the book. Next I moved on to the *Almagest* [of Ptolemy] and when I had finished its introductory sections and reached the geometrical figures,[17] an-Nātilī said to me, "Take over reading and solving them [i.e. the geometrical figures] by yourself,[i] and then submit them to me so that

[h] I follow here the reading of the recension in Ibn-al-Qifṭī (414.6-7) and Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa (II.3.3-4). In the manuscripts of the Autobiography this sentence is placed after "amazed at me" (*kulla l-ʿajab*, Gohlman 22.3).

[i] Or, following the vocalization suggested by Lippert, "Take over reading them and solve them (*ḥullahā*) by yourself" (Ibn-al-Qifṭī 414.12).

[14] This is a reference to Avicenna's theory that "all knowledge is either forming concepts (*taṣawwur*) or granting assent (*taṣdīq*)" (*Najāt*, Cairo 1331/1912, 3). For a detailed discussion of these two terms see J. van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre des ʿAḍudaddīn al-Īcī*, Wiesbaden 1966, 95-113. Note the implication here that since Avicenna considers himself better than his teacher, he has necessarily a more powerful Intuition.

[15] Avicenna is fond of explanatory descriptions which, though immediately apparent to his contemporaries, may seem colorful to us. Among the Islamic schools of law there was one known as the Ẓāhirīya, i.e., "the literalists," "which would derive the law only from the literal text (*ẓāhir*) of the Qurʾān" and the Prophetic Traditions (see R. Strothmann's article on "al-Ẓāhirīya" in *EI*1); they were also called "Dāʾūdīya" after the founder, Dāʾūd ibn-Ḫalaf. On this analogy Avicenna divides logicians into "literalists" (*aẓ-ẓāhirīyūn*, see the text quoted above, note 13), i.e., those who would adhere uncritically to the literal text, or the apparent meaning, of Aristotle's *Organon*, and into those (like himself) who would delve into its deeper implications. In a statement reported in the memoirs of a disciple from Rayy, Avicenna describes the literalists as never having "suffered the pains of analyzing the details of problems so that they may gain a syllogistic habit" (T13, §4), and as paying too much attention to the *form* of the syllogism rather than its contents (T13, §§5-6). N. Shehaby, *The Propositional Logic of Avicenna*, Dordrecht/Boston 1973, 8 suggests, without any argument, that "literalists" might refer to the Stoics, but this is highly unlikely, especially in view of the discussion here. On this basis, then, Avicenna classes Nātilī with the literalists and says that consequently he could only have finished a literal reading of the *Organon* (*ẓawāhir al-manṭiq*) with him. The implication is also that he read the entire *Organon* with Nātilī, not only some parts: "die einfachen Teile," Kraus; "les parties évidentes," Achena-Massé; "the straightforward parts," Arberry; "the simple parts," Gohlman.

[16] I.e., Avicenna read with Nātilī the introductory definitions and postulates up to the sixth proposition of Book I of the *Elements*.

[17] I.e., Avicenna read with Nātilī as far as Book I, Chapter 8 of the *Almagest*. Spherical astronomy proper, which contains the "geometrical figures" mentioned by Avicenna, starts with Chapter 9. Bayhaqī, who paraphrases this information from Avicenna's Autobiography and adds it to Nātilī's biography, misunderstands the reference here (*Tatimma* 22.4/37 end).

I can show you what is right and what is wrong." But the man could not deal with the book, so I made the analysis myself; and many were the figures with which he was unfamiliar until I presented them to him and made him understand them! Then an-Nātilī took leave of me, heading for Gurgānj, and I occupied myself on my own with Determining the Validity of books, both original texts and commentaries,[j] on Physics and Metaphysics, and the gates of the Philosophical Sciences began opening for me.

7. Next I desired [to learn] medicine and I read the books that have been written on this subject. Medicine is not one of the difficult sciences, and therefore I excelled in it in a very short time, to the point that distinguised physicians began to read medicine with me.[18] I cared for the sick, and there opened up to me indescribable possibilities of therapy which can only be acquired through experience.[19] At the same time I was also occupied with jurisprudence and would engage in legal disputations, being now sixteen years of age.

8. The next year and a half I devoted myself entirely to reading Philosophy: I read Logic and all the parts of philosophy once again. During this time I did not sleep completely through a single night, or occupy myself with anything else by day. I compiled a set of files for myself, and for each argument that I examined, I recorded the syllogistic premisses it contained, the way in which they were composed,[k] and the conclusions which they might yield,[l] and I would also take into account the conditions of its premisses [i.e. their modalities] until I had Ascertained that particular problem. Every time I was at a loss about a problem, concerning which I was unable to find the middle term in a syllogism, I would repair on its account to the mosque and worship, praying humbly to the All-Creator to disclose to me its obscurity and make its difficulty

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[j] Read *šurūḥ* for *šurūᶜ* in Gohlman 24.6.

[k] "Composed:" reading *wa-tarkībaha* for the transmitted *tartībaha*. See the analysis below, Chapter 3.3A and note 71.

[l] The correct text for this sentence is given by the oldest manuscript of the Autobiography, Üniversite 4755 (B in Gohlman's apparatus): *aṯbattu mā fīhā min al-muqqaddimāt al-qiyāsīya wa-tartībahā wa-mā ᶜasāhā tuntiju* (cf. Gohlman's apparatus to 28.1-2). Gohlman's reconstruction, *kuntu anẓuru fīhā aṯbattu (fīhā) mā fīhā min muqaddimāt qiyāsīya* etc., confuses the evidence of the manuscripts and has one *fīhā* too many (if I am right in assuming that the *fīhā* in parentheses on 28.1 is intended as an editorial addition). For *tartībahā* I read *tarkībahā*; see the preceding note.

[18] It appears that Avicenna was not completely self-taught in medicine (as Lüling 504 would infer from his silence). There are reports mentioning two physicians who were his teachers: Abū-Manṣūr al-Ḥasan ibn-Nūḥ al-Qumrī and Abū-Sahl ᶜĪsā ıbn-Yaḥyā al-Maṣīḥī. See Ullmann *Medizin* 147 and 151, respectively.

[19] The translation of this sentence is by Ullmann in his review.

easy.[m] At night I would return home, set the lamp before me, and occupy myself with reading and writing. Whenever I felt drowsy or weakening, I would turn aside to drink a cup of wine to regain my strength, and then I would go back to my reading. Whenever I fell asleep, I would see those very problems in my dream; and many problems became clear to me while asleep. So I continued until all the Philosophical Sciences became deeply rooted in me and I understood them as much as is humanly possible.[20] Everything that I knew at that time is just as I know it now; I have added nothing more to it to this day.

9. Having mastered Logic, Physics and Mathematics, I had now reached Theology. I read the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle but did not understand what it contained and was confused about the author's purpose to the point that I reread it forty times and consequently memorized it. In spite of this I still did not understand it or what was intended by it, and I said, despairing of myself, "There is no way to understand this book!" One afternoon I was at the booksellers' quarter when a crier came up holding a volume which he was hawking for sale. He offered it to me but I refused it in vexation, believing that there was no use in this particular science. But he said to me, "Buy it; its owner needs the money and it's cheap; I'll sell it to you for three dirhams." So I bought it and it turned out to be Abū-Naṣr al-Fārābī's book *On the Purposes of the Metaphysics*. I returned home and hastened to read it, and at once the purposes of that book were disclosed to me because I had learned it by heart. I rejoiced at this and the next day I gave much in alms to the poor in gratitude to God Exalted.[21]

10. It happened that the Sultan at that time in Buḫārā, Nūḥ ibn-Manṣūr, had an illness which perplexed the physicians. Since my name had become well known among them for my complete devotion to the Philosophical Sciences and to reading, they mentioned me in his presence and asked him to summon me. So I presented myself and collaborated with them in treating him, and was enrolled in his service. One day I asked his permission to enter their library, look through it, and read its

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[m] The text in the recension of Ibn-al-Qifṭī and Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa reads, "praying humbly to the All-Creator until He disclosed to me its obscurity and made its difficulty easy."

[20] This formulation reflects and conflates two of the six canonical definitions of philosophy in Alexandrian Aristotelianism. Philosophy is the knowledge of the real nature of things and the imitation of God to the extent of human ability. See D. Gutas, *Greek Wisdom Literature in Arabic Translation*, New Haven 1975, 225-227 and 333-335. For an analysis of Avicenna's methods of study described here see below, Chapter 3.3.

[21] The significance of this incident for Avicenna's philosophy is discussed below, Chapter 6.1.

contents. He gave me permission and I was admitted to a building with many rooms; in each room there were chests of books piled one on top of the other. In one of the rooms were books on the Arabic language and poetry, in another jurisprudence, and so on in each room a separate science. I looked through the catalogue of books by the ancients and requested those which I needed. I saw books whose very names are unknown to many and which I had never seen before nor have I seen since.[22] I read those books, mastered their teachings, and realized how far each man had advanced in his science.

11. So by the time I reached my eighteenth year I had completed my study in all these Philosophical Sciences. At that time my retention of Knowledge was better, but today my grasp of it is more mature; otherwise the Knowledge is the same, nothing new having come to me since.

12. In my neighborhood there lived a man called Abū-l-Ḥasan al-ʿArūḍī [the Prosodist], who asked me to compose for him a comprehensive work on this Knowledge [i.e. Philosophy]. I composed for him *The Compilation*, which I named after him [i.e. *Philosophy for ʿArūḍī*], and I treated in it all the sciences except mathematics.[23] At that time I was twenty-one years old.

13. In my neighborhood there also lived a man called Abū-Bakr al-Baraqī, a Ḫwārizmian by birth. A prudent man, he favored jurisprudence, Qurʾānic exegesis, and asceticism, but also had an inclination for these Philosophical Sciences. He asked me to comment on the books [on Philosophy] and so I composed *The Available and the Valid* for him in about twenty volumes, and I also composed a book for him on Ethics which I called *Piety and Sin*. These two books exist only in his possession because he never lent them to anybody to copy from them.[24]

14. Then my father died. Independent now, I took over one of the administrative posts of the Sultan. However, necessity led me to abandon Buḫārā and move to Gurgānj, where Abū-l-Ḥusayn as-Suhaylī, a lover of the Philosophical Sciences, was a minister.[25] I was introduced to the Prince there, ʿAlī ibn-Maʾmūn;[26] at that time I was in lawyer's garb,

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[22] An example of the rare books mentioned here is provided by Avicenna in the Prior Analytics of *The Cure*, Shehaby 159; see also below, Chapter 2, W6b. For this and the other libraries visited by Avicenna in his lifetime see M. Weisweiler, "Avicenna und die iranischen Fürstenbibliotheken seiner Zeit," *Avicenna Commemoration Volume*, Calcutta (Iran Society) 1956, 47-63.

[23] See Chapter 2, W2.

[24] See Chapter 2, W3. On Baraqī see Gutas "Avicenna's *Maḏhab*."

[25] Abū-l-Ḥusayn/Abū-l-Ḥasan Sahl ibn-Muḥammad as-Suhaylī was a well-known patron of the Greek sciences. He also commissioned works from Avicenna's teacher of medicine, Abū-Sahl al-Masīḥī. See Ullmann *Medizin* 151.

[26] The Ḫwārizm-Šāh ʿAlī ibn-Maʾmūn ruled from 387/997 to 399/1009.

wearing the *ṭaylasān* scarf turned under the chin. They fixed for me a monthly salary which provided enough for someone like me.

15. Then necessity led me to move to Nasā, and from there to Bāward, and then to Ṭūs, then to Samanqān, then to Jājarm (the frontier of Ḫurāsān), and then to Jurjān. I was planning to go to Prince Qābūs, but it happened meanwhile that he was taken and imprisoned in a fortress, where he died. Then I departed for Dihistān, where I fell very ill. I returned to Jurjān, and there I became associated with Abū-ʿUbayd al-Jūzjānī.[27] He recited to me an ode on my state of affairs which contained the following verse by a poet:

When I became great, no city[28] was big enough for me;
When my price went up, no one would buy me.

Text 4. Introduction to *The Provenance and Destination*

The Provenance and Destination is the first extant work by Avicenna which sets forth his metaphysical theory in a format that is largely independent of Aristotelian models. It was copied extensively in both *The Cure* and *The Salvation* (see W4). The title refers to the place of origin of all being (Provenance, *al-mabdaʾ*) and to the place of return of the rational soul (Destination, *al-maʿād*).[1] These two concepts play a large role in Avicenna's metaphysics, and especially in what I have called the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul (see Chapter 6.2). The Introduction is significant for explicitly locating the center, in Avicenna's view, of Aristotelian Physics and Metaphysics, and for presenting his understanding and analysis of traditional methods of philosophical expression (see Chapter 8.1).

The work has been recently published by ʿA. Nūrānī, *Al-Mabdaʾ wa-l-maʿād* [Wisdom of Persia Series XXXVI], Tehran 1984. The translation below is based on the Istanbul MS Ahmet III, 3268, f. 61r (I), as copied by Mahdavī 213 and Nūrānī 1,[a] and the Milan MS Ambrosiana 320 (Hammer), ff. 118v-119r (A). I have indicated the relevant variants in the notes.

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[27] Kraus "Biographie" 1882a, note †††, hinted, and Lüling boldly proposed, that political reasons lay behind Avicenna's travels. For the geographical and chronological details see Lüling's maps, Gohlman's notes, and Chapter 2, W6, below.

[28] There is a pun here. *Miṣr* also means "Egypt," and the hemistich then means, "When I became great, even Egypt was not big enough for me."

[a] In his introduction, Nūrānī says that he based his "edition" on the Istanbul MS Ahmet III, 3227, dated 580H, with due consideration of other MSS. His text, however, has no apparatus criticus, and furthermore, according to Mahdavī, it is MS Ahmet III, 3268 (and not 3227) that is dated 580H. The text of the introduction, finally, as given by both Mahdavī and Nūrānī, except for a single variant (below, note h), is verbatim identical. Although it is impossible to be certain without an examination of the MSS, it would seem that they both copy from the same MS and that the MS numbers have been confused. For the sake of brevity I treat their texts as representing a single witness.

[1] The subject of *maʿād* was treated extensively by Jean Michot in a doctoral dissertation (Louvain-la Neuve 1981) which I have not seen. See the reference by R. Arnaldez in the article "Maʿād" in *EI*2, V.893b.

Introduction

1. In this treatise I wish to indicate what the Validating[b] Peripatetic philosophers really thought about the state [*ḥāl*] of Provenance and Destination in order to gain favor with Master Abū-Aḥmad ibn-Muḥammad ibn-Ibrāhīm al-Fārisī.[c] This treatise of mine contains the fruits of two great sciences, one of which is characterized by being about metaphysical, and the other physical, matters. The fruit of the science dealing with metaphysical matters is that part of it known as theology,[2] which treats [the subjects of] Lordship, the first principle,[3] and the relationship which beings bear to it according to their rank.[4] The fruit of the science dealing with physical matters is the knowledge that the human soul survives and that it has a Destination.[5]

2. I have divided this book into three parts: (a) Establishing the first principle of the universe and its oneness; enumeration of the attributes befitting it. (b) Indicating the order of the emanation of being from the being [of the first principle], beginning with the first being [emanating] from it and ending with the last beings after it. (c) Indicating the survival of the human soul; the real bliss in the Hereafter, and what is a certain kind of bliss that is not real;[d] the real misery in the Hereafter, and what is a certain kind of misery that is not real.[e]

3. In these parts I intend[f] to clarify what they [the Peripatetic philosophers] deliberately neglected,[g] proclaim what they concealed and suppressed, collect what they dispersed, and expand what they summarized[6] to the best of the inadequate abilities of a person like me

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[b] *Al-muḥaṣṣilīn* I; *al-muḥliṣīn* A, i.e., "the devotees" of the doctrine.

[c] *Taqarruban bihi ilā š-šayḫi Abī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Fārisī* A, is omitted in I.

[d] Reading *ġayr al-ḥaqīqīya* for *wa-ġayr al-ḥaqīqīya* A, and *wa-ġayr ḥaqīqīya* I. See the next note. Retaining the conjunction would imply a tripartition of bliss (real bliss, a certain kind of bliss, unreal bliss), but Avicenna speaks only of two kinds in the work itself. See the headings of Chapters 14 and 15 in Mahdavī 216, Nūrānī 109 and 114.

[e] Reading *ġayr al-ḥaqīqīya* A for *wa-ġayr al-ḥaqīqīya* I.

[f] Reading *ataḥaddā* A for *ataḥarrā* I.

[g] Reading *aġfalū* A for *aġlaqū* I.

[2] The text has *Uṯūlūǧiyā*, a clear reference to the title of the Arabic *Enneads*, the *Theologia Aristotelis*. For Avicenna this is part of Peripatetic doctrine, despite the fact that he expressed some doubts about the validity of the ascription of the work to Aristotle. See T12, §3.

[3] The word *mabda'* means both first principle and place of origin; Avicenna is referring here both to the subject matter of his treatise and to its title.

[4] Cf. T1, §3, IV B iii, and note 11.

[5] Cf. T1, §3, IV B iv, and note 14.

[6] These are the ways in which, according to later Aristotelian tradition, philosophical knowledge in published books could be Withheld from those unworthy to receive it. Hence the need for explanation, or decoding, a task which Avicenna sets for himself in this work. See the discussion in Chapter 5.3.

beset with these afflictions: the age of scholarship is becoming extinct, interests are turning away from the philosophical sciences toward various pursuits, and hatred is heaped upon those who concern themselves with[h] some part of truth; furthermore, earnestness is exhausted and energy dissipates[i] from the minds of those who have been tried as sorely, and subjected to as many vicissitudes of time, as I have been.[7] But God is our resort, with Him is the Power and the Might!

Text 5. From *The State of the Human Soul*

This treatise is the counterpart of *The Provenance and Destination* with regard to Avicenna's theory of the soul. It was also copied extensively in both *The Cure* and *The Salvation*. See Chapter 2, W5.

The text is translated from the edition by Ahwānī *Aḥwāl* 141-42. The transcription of the text by H. Z. Ülken (*İbn Sina Risâleleri*, Istanbul 1953, II.153-154) from MS Istanbul, Ahmet III, 3447, riddled with errors, has not been taken into account. Ahwānī also used the Ahmet III MS for his edition, but the variants he cites frequently do not coincide with the readings in Ülken. No attempt has been made here to edit the brief passage translated below; any textual comments have been relegated to the notes.

Chapter 16

[Epilogue:] The Occasion[a] of this Treatise

1. In this essay I have left out a discussion of the superficial aspects of the theory of the soul,[1] except for what was absolutely necessary, and

[h] Both A and Nūrānī read *taʿāṭā*; Mahdavī reads *yuʿāṭā*, "those who are given."
[i] Reading *infilāl* I for *inqilāb* A.

[7] Avicenna's complaint about the times is not merely rhetorical, although such complaints were commonplace in much scholarly writing (see Chapter 5.3). At the time when Avicenna was writing this treatise, his social and political world had indeed collapsed. The Sāmānid state was destroyed, its lands and his home overran by the Turkish Qarāḫānids; Avicenna was a man without a country. This work was written shortly after he had come to Jurjān after long travels, described in the Autobiography (T3, §15), in a period of great political instability in the area (cf. Lüling).

[a] "Occasion:" *maḥall*. In the table of contents of this treatise given by Mahdavī 246, the reading is given as *mujmal*, "summary," without indication of the manuscript from which it was taken. The table of contents given by Avicenna himself, however, in the introduction to the work (Ahwānī *Aḥwāl* 47) has *maḥall*.

[1] By "superficial aspects [*al-umūr aẓ-ẓāhira*] of the theory of the soul [*ʿilm an-nafs*]," that is, of the Aristotelian *De Anima* and its elaboration in the tradition, Avicenna is referring to the discussion of the vegetative and animal souls (Books I and II of *De Anima*), matters with which he dealt in detail both in his earlier *Compendium on the Soul* (W1) and later in *The Cure* (W6). In this treatise he concentrates primarily on the rational soul (see Chapter 2, W5).

have instead removed the cover, lifted the veil, and indicated the innermost ideas[2] stored in the depths of books[3] and Withheld from explicit mention.[4]

2. [I did this] because I wish to gain favor with my friends and also because, first, I am confident that in our times there is no one who would either inherit these innermost ideas through instruction or be able to gain a comprehensive knowledge of them through Discovery,[5] and second, I have relinquished the hope that the person who desires to perpetuate the Philosophical Sciences and bequeath them to posterity has any means or device at his disposal other than to record them and put them down in writing in black and white. One cannot rely either on the student's desire to Ascertain them in the proper manner, uphold them, and bequeath them to posterity, or on the solicitude of our contemporaries and their like-minded successors to search for the symbolically expressed passages [in these books] and interpret them (should symbolic expression have in fact been used) and to elaborate their succinct passages (should the author have in fact restricted himself only to a succinct exposition).[6]

3. I have then forbidden all my friends who would read [this treatise][b] to squander[7] it on an evil or obdurate person, or to show it to him, or to deposit it where it does not belong, and bound them [by an oath] to God as their adversary in my behalf [should they violate the oath].[8]

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[b] The text here has the masculine pronoun, *yaqraʾu-hu*, to refer to the feminine "essay," *maqāla*, at the beginning of this passage.

[2] "Innermost ideas:" *asrār*. I have not used the word "secrets" to render *asrār* in order to avoid the association, in the mind of the English reader, first with the extended meaning of the word as "mystery," and second with any notion of a presumed "esoteric" doctrine of Avicenna. *Asrār* means here "secrets" only in the sense of something hidden from view because stored deep inside something else. This is evident in the above passage, where it is contrasted with "superficial," or external, matters, *al-umūr az-ẓāhira*, and with things that are not expressed outwardly, or explicitly, *at-taṣrīḥ bihā*.

[3] "Books," that is, on the subject written by Aristotle and the philosophers in the tradition. Cf. a similar use of the absolute *kutub*, "books," in T2, §4, and in the Autobiography (T3, end of paragraph 6), where the reference to the Aristotelian tradition is evident: "I occupied myself on my own with Determining the Validity of *books*, both original texts and commentaries, on Physics and Metaphysics." See the discussion on *ʿilm*, below, end of Chapter 3.1. The expression "in the depths of books" seems to be taken directly from the passage of Fārābī's treatise translated in Chapter 5.3, L43, §1.

[4] "Withheld from explicit mention:" *al-maḍnūn bi-t-taṣrīḥ bihā*. See the discussion of the concept of "Withholding," *ḍanna*, below, Chapter 5.3.

[5] The reference here is to the twin sources of knowledge mentioned in Texts 1 and 2, instruction and Discovery, the latter either through syllogisms or Intuition. See Chapter 3.2.

[6] For the "evil times" motif see T4. On the concepts of the philosophical praxis and methods of philosophical communication adumbrated here see Chapters 5 and 8.

[7] *Baḏala*, "to spend freely," is the antonym of *ḍanna*, "be stingy, withholding." See Chapter 5.3.

[8] Cf. the similar oath of reservation at the end of *Pointers and Reminders*, T10, §8.

Text 6. From *The Cure*: Prologue and Epilogue of Sophistics

Aristotle's epilogue to the *Sophistici Elenchi* played a significant role in late Alexandrian Aristotelianism in the formation of a stylized conception of the history of philosophy (see Chapter 4). This conception was transmitted to Arabic philosophy, and Avicenna took the opportunity while paraphrasing the Aristotelian text in *The Cure* to express his views on the subject in general and on individual philosophers and philosophical traditions in particular (see Chapter 7).

The selection below is translated from *Aš-Šifāʾ, Al-Manṭiq, As-Safsaṭa*, A. F. El-Ehwany, ed., Cairo 1958, 4.11-5.10, 110-115.

A. Prologue

[In the Prologue to the Sophistics, Avicenna follows Aristotle's argument (164a20-165a20) in an expanded paraphrase. After 165a20, he inserts the following parenthetical remarks based on his personal experience, and then resumes his paraphrase.]

1. [165a20-21] It seems that it is more preferable for some people—no, most of them—to be thought of as philosophers without being such than to be philosophers in themselves without being taken as such.

2. As a matter of fact, in our time we have seen and witnessed people who fit this description: for they would feign philosophy, advocate it, and summon people to it, despite the fact that their degree of its attainment was miserable. When we advised them of their deficiency, and their situation became apparent to people, they denied that philosophy has any validity or usefulness. But as it was impossible for many of them to have sheer ignorance be imputed to them, to claim that philosophy is fundamentally worthless, and to abandon completely knowledge and reason, they attempted to slander the Peripatetics and to find fault with books on logic as well as those who built on their basis: they propagated the delusion that philosophy is [only] Platonic, wisdom [only] Socratic, and that among the ancients only the earliest, and among philosophers only the Pythagoreans[a] possessed knowledge.

3. Many of them said: "Although philosophy may have some validity, learning it is nevertheless futile. The human soul, like that of the beasts, perishes, and philosophy is [therefore] useless in this world; and as for the next [world], there is none." Whoever would like to be thought of as a philosopher but his powers fall short of attaining philosophy, or indolence and ample means prevent him from it, will find no other alternative but to espouse the discipline of the sophists. From this results

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[a] Reading *illā ʿinda l-qudamāʾ min al-awāʾil wa-l-Fīṯāġūrīyīn min al-falāsifa*, without paragraph break.

deliberate sophistry, although sometimes it also arises out of fallacious reasoning. [Avicenna then resumes his paraphrase of the Aristotelian text.]

B. Epilogue

Absolving Aristotle of Deficiency (if indeed there was any)

1. [183a27-36] We have explained the [different] aspects of sophistical arguments and their solution, how to ask questions using them, and how to argue against them. We must now restate our purpose in a few words.

2. [183a37-b9] Aristotle said: 'Since we have attempted to obtain rules which would enable us to adduce syllogisms based on generally accepted opinions for the purposes of dialectical [argumentation] or the art of examination, and since the art of sophistry resembles both of them, that is, dialectic and examination (dialectic because they have common subjects and because sophistry sometimes imitates dialectic and is accordingly called the art of pretense, and examination because of the attempt to deceive and because it is also associated with dialectic), we had [the *Topics*] followed by an investigation into this discipline [of sophistry]. But we did not restrict ourselves[b] in this subject to matters that pertain to the questioner [only], but also to the respondent in his defense of his position[1] by means of homonyms,[2] to matters he should take into account concerning generally accepted opinions, and to matters that pertain to a person imitating a respondent in his defense of sophistical positions.[1] Defense, in short, is more difficult than interrogation, since interrogation is like destroying and defense like constructing, and the defender has to proceed by means of generally accepted opinions only and nothing else, while the questioner has at his disposal whatever comes his way. This is why[c] Socrates would not be a respondent, since he would acknowledge that he was not good at it,[3] but he would rather assume the position of a questioner.'

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[b] The text has, "we did not branch out and we did not restrict ourselves," which makes little sense. The construction *wa-lam* ... *wa-lam* is also suspect; and *wa-lam nataša*^{cc}*ab* does not belong to the preceding sentence.

[c] Reading *li-ḏālika*, along with four manuscripts (see the app. crit.) and Ibn-Zur^{c}a (Badawī *Manṭiq* 1010.1).

[1] *Waḍ*^{c}, i.e. *topos*.

[2] *Bi-l-muštarakāt*. This misunderstanding on Avicenna's part is due to the faulty translation of Ibn-Zur^{c}a, who renders *homotropōs* (183b6) by *bi-štirāki l-ism* (Badawī *Manṭiq* 1009.-2), as if it meant *homōnymōs*.

[3] *Lā yuḥsinu ḏālika* for *ouk eidenai* (183b8) is Ibn-Zur^{c}a's translation (Badawī *Manṭiq* 1010.2).

3. [183b9-34] It must not be understood from what follows next in Aristotle's text that he is talking about syllogism in general, but about sophistical syllogisms; and although he expressed himself as follows,[d] 'In the demonstrative and dialectical disciplines that we mentioned we took fundamental principles from our predecessors,' he does not mean that [he found] these principles [expressed in a theoretical manner,] abstracted from concrete things, but [that he perceived them] as they were used in concrete things. In demonstrative arguments—in geometry, for example—and in dialectical and rhetorical questions and answers there were used particulars from which universal rules could be extracted. When men first became aware of dialectic and rhetoric, these particulars were very few; only later did they branch out and multiply as talented people began to appear, build upon these particulars, alter them, and correct them. They acquired an aptitude [for dialectic and rhetoric], albeit not from rules, and they performed interrogations, offered solutions, and conducted disputes satisfactorily on the basis of particulars. Occasionally, they also suggested certain universals, though few. Aristotle mentioned a succession of people in rhetorical education who followed after the ancients—like Tisias,[4] and after him Thrasymachus, the person who debated Socrates on the subject of justice, and then Theodorus.

4. [Then Aristotle says (183b34-36):] 'With regard to argumentation against the sophists, however, earlier scholars did not treat adequately any part of it that is of account because there was little need for it; as a matter of fact, they had nothing of this subject—be it with regard to principles or particulars—which we could inherit from them at all. Accordingly, as the need for the discipline of sophistry was little, they did not even finish posing its problems, let alone solving them; instead they talked about a few particular examples and some things related to rhetoric. For our part, however, we elaborated slightly on the subject, investigated and collected [different] aspects of captious questions, and abstracted[e] from concrete things a universal discipline.'

5. [183b36-184a9] 'A need *was* felt, on the other hand, for something like rhetoric, precisely in order to [be able to] choose certain things and avoid others. Early men first came upon this kind of rhetoric only, and then they made some discoveries. But they were in a hurry, and they would teach and learn before abstracting the discipline [of rhetoric], for

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[d] *Wa-in kāna kaḏālika qāla*: the text seems doubtful here.

[e] Reading *jarradnā* for *jarradnāhā* in the text.

[4] Avicenna has *Ṭīṭās*, a mistranscription of the name found only in Ibn-Zurʿa (Badawī *Manṭiq* 1011.6 app.).

what was learned from their teachers was by way of learning from an experienced teacher, not from one who can construct a syllogism; they would thus acquire neither a discipline nor something universal, except for things of no account but which would bring about an [immediate] benefit.' [There follows a long elaboration (pp. 112.11-113.5) of Aristotle's example from the cobbler's craft (184a5-9): giving people shoes does not teach them how to make them.][5] Aristotle said: 'We therefore did not acquire from our predecessors their discipline, but merely inherited from them ready-made examples[6] in rhetoric, dialectic, and demonstration.'

6. Aristotle said [184a9-end]: 'As for the form of syllogism, and the form of each individual syllogism, this is something in whose quest we toiled for a long time until we discovered it. If any deficiency appears in this single art, then let the person[f] who becomes conscious of this upon close scrutiny grant pardon, let him accept[g] the boon of whatever truth we have imparted to him, and let him know[h] that imparting principles and deriving the foundation of a discipline occupy a loftier position and higher rank than building upon it, especially when the discovery, despite its recent origin, comprehends the totality of the discipline and its rules, out of which only matters of consequence can sprout.' This is then what Aristotle says.

7. As for me [i.e. Avicenna], I say to my fellow students and scholars: Reflect upon what this great man said, and then consider: after almost one thousand three hundred and thirty years, was this goal reached by anyone who blamed Aristotle for being deficient, and who was right in identifying a defect in him because Aristotle was in fact deficient in such and such a matter? And did there appear after him anybody who added anything at all to this art beyond what Aristotle said? Certainly not; for what Aristotle did is complete and perfect. The distinction falls on him and cannot be transferred to anyone else. For our part, despite the fact that our investigation was profound (in the days when we applied ourselves to Philosophy in total absorption and did independent thinking we had a better mind and more time for worthier matters), we considered [this discipline], studied it thoroughly, scrutinized it closely, and found no method for [the study of] sophistical matters other than the one Aristotle gave.[7] If there is anything, it is some details in certain chapters

[f] Reading *fa-l-yaʿḏir*.
[g] Reading *wa-l-yaqbal*.
[h] Reading *wa-l-yaʿlam*.

[5] Avicenna's prolixity here is partly based on his attempt to elucidate the rather garbled translation by Ibn-Zurʿa he was following.
[6] The analogy here is to the ready-made shoes instead of the cobbler's craft given to people.
[7] Cf. the Autobiography (T3) and the Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8, §2).

which we have taken from him—something for which we hope to provide more evidence in the *Appendices* when we hope to have more time for worthier matters.[8]

8. Aristotle's teacher [Plato] digressed from the due course and did not treat the subject adequately in what he wrote in the book which he called *The Sophist.*[9] His digression was due to his confusion of Logic with Physics and Theology, [subjects] feebly distinguished by philosophers before the appearance of this great man [Aristotle]. Plato's inadequate treatment was due to the fact that the only way for the occurrence of sophistry which he understood was homonymy. It is proper, then, that the truth be told: if the extent of Plato's achievements in Philosophy is what came down to us of him, then his wares were paltry indeed and philosophy in his time had not matured to the point of reaping.[10] Whoever affects allegiance to him with only the amount of knowledge about Plato that has been transmitted to us at his disposal, then he does this either out of envy for Aristotle or out of a foolish notion that the prior in time is also in a discipline prior in rank. The truth, however, is the opposite.

Text 7. Introduction to *The Cure*, by Jūzjānī

Abū-ʿUbayd ʿAbd-al-Wāḥid ibn-Muḥammad al-Jūzjānī, one of Avicenna's closest disciples and his biographer, wrote two accounts of the genesis of *The Cure*. The first was in the following Introduction, written shortly after the work was completed, and the second was incorporated in his Biography of Avicenna, written after the latter's death. These accounts provide significant information about Avicenna's attitude toward his work and Jūzjānī's perception of them (see W6).

The text is translated from *Madḫal* 1-4. It has been compared with MS Leiden Golius 4 (No. 1444 in P. de Jong and M. J. de Goeje, *Catalogus Codicum Orientalium Bibliothecae Academiae Lugduno Batavae*, Leiden 1865, 316-319), which was not used in the Cairo edition. The text given in Mahdavī 127-129, apparently from MS Bodleian Pococke 119 and also not used in the Cairo edition, agrees almost verbatim with it. The Latin translation by Avendauth, edited by A. Birkenmajer, "Avicennas Vorrede zum 'Liber Sufficientiae' und Roger Bacon," *Revue Néoscolastique de Philosophie* 36 (1934) 314-317, has been compared throughout. (In this connection it is to be noted that Birkenmajer's identifica-

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[8] Cf. what Avicenna himself has to say about the Sophistics of *The Cure* in a later text, T13, §7.

[9] Literally, *Sophistics* (*sūfisṭīqā*).

[10] Cf. a similar formulation by Ḥunayn ibn-Isḥāq quoted below, Chapter 4, L30. This and the preceding two paragraphs are paraphrased by Šahrazūrī and Quṭb-ad-Dīn Šīrāzī in their commentaries on Suhrawardī's *Philosophy of Illumination* (*Ḥikmat al-išrāq*). They indicate that Suhrawardī had these passages by Avicenna in mind when he mentioned in the introduction to the work that Aristotle's importance should not be exaggerated. See H. Corbin, *Œuvres philosophiques et mystiques de ... Sohrawardi* (*Opera Metaphysica et Mystica II*), Tehran/Paris 1952, 303-304.

tion, following A. Jourdain, of Avendauth with Johannes Hispalensis has been disproved by M. T. d'Alverny, "Avendauth?", *Homenaje a Millás-Vallicrosa*, Barcelona 1954, 19-43.) In a recent cursory review of the Introduction, S. van Riet indicated that a new edition of the Latin translation would be forthcoming in the *Avicenna Latinus* project ("Données biographiques pour l'histoire du *Shifā'* d'Avicenne," *Bulletin de la Classe des Lettres et des Sciences Morales et Politiques*, Académie Royale de Belgique, Bruxelles, 66 [1980] 314-329).

Introduction to *The Cure*

1. My love for the philosophical sciences and my desire to acquire true knowledge prompted me to abandon my country and emigrate to the country where Avicenna—may God perpetuate his days[1]—resided, because the reports about him that came to my attention and his writings[a] to which I was exposed required that I favor him above everybody else known for this discipline and associated with this subject.[b] The reports that had reached me about him indicated that he was proficient in these sciences already as a young man—an adolescent still in his teens[c]—and that he had written many works, except that he would little Withhold them [from others] and showed little interest in keeping copies[d] [for himself]. My desire was thus confirmed that I should go to him and join his company, and insistently request from him to concern himself [only] with writing while I concerned myself with keeping[e] [what he wrote].[2]

The numbers in parentheses after the Latin words refer to the lines of Birkenmajer's text.

[a] "Writings:" *kalām*, literally, "words;" Latin: *sermo* (17).

[b] "Subject:" *jumla*; literally, "set, or group [of sciences]." The Latin also translates according to the sense: *sciencia* (19).

[c] Literally, "not having exceeded two decades (*ʿaqdayn, sic lege*) of life." The Latin has *XL* (22), which is difficult to account for (barring scribal errors) unless the translator mistook *ʿaqd* for "score" rather than "half-score."

[d] The Latin has *codice radices* (24), which might imply an original Arabic reading of *uṣūlihā* for the transmitted *nusaḫihā*, although such a reading is not attested in the Arabic apparatus. It seems that *codice radices* is the interpretation of the translator. See the following note.

[e] Again the Latin translator interprets "keeping" (*ḍabṭ*) as *mihi copiam faciendo* (27).

[1] The implication is, naturally, that Avicenna is still alive. Some manuscripts have instead, "may God have mercy on his soul;" the Latin omits the phrase entirely. See the discussion in Chapter 2, W6.

[2] See a similar statement by Jūzjānī in *GAS* VI.281, note 3. When Jūzjānī's works are all collected and examined, it is likely that more such statements will emerge.—It appears that it was common practice for scholars to have secretaries who would record (*mudawwin*) their books. See Bayhaqī 102.3/109 for a secretary of Fārābī; Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa II.139.19.

2. So I went to Jurjān where he resided at the time; he was then approximately thirty-two years old. He was afflicted with serving the Sultan[3] and acting in his administration,[f] something which occupied all his time,[4] and I could therefore avail myself of only a few opportunities during which I took down some dictation on Logic and Physics.[5] When I appealed to him to compose long works and commentaries, he referred to the commentaries he had written and books he had composed in his native country. I had heard, however, that these were widely dispersed and that people who owned a copy of them Withheld them [from others]; as for him, it was not his habit to save a copy for himself, just as it was not his habit to make a copy from his archetype or transcribe [an archetype] from his rough draft: he would only either dictate[g] or himself write the manuscript and give it to the person who had commissioned it from him. Moreover, he suffered from successive misfortunes, and disasters destroyed his books.[6]

3. For a number of years I kept moving with him from Jurjān to Rayy and from Rayy to Hamaḏān, where he was employed as the minister of King Šams-ad-Dawla,[h] an occupation that proved distressful to us and a waste of our time.[i,7] In the meantime, the hope of ever obtaining his

[f] "Acting in his administration:" *at-taṣarruf fī ʿamalihi*; cf. the Latin, *occupatus in ipsius negociis disponendis* (30).

[g] It might be useful to give here the Arabic and Latin (38-42) technical terms for manuscript writing used in this passage: *nusḫa* = *codex*; *ḫazana* (or *ḫazzana*) = *in thesauriolo repono*; *ḥarrara* = *in textualem litteram redigo*; *dustūr* = *prima notula*; *amlā* = *ad notandum do*. The phrase *yuḥrija min as-sawād* is either omitted in the Latin or incorporated into the preceding *yuḥarrira min ad-dustūr* and together translated as *post primam notulam in textualem litteram redigeret*. For *dustūr* = "archetype" there is the authority of a marginal gloss in MS Vienna 105, f. 69r, of Ibn-al-Qifṭī's *Taʾrīḫ al-ḥukamāʾ*, explaining the word (*dasātīr*, 120.13) as *an-nusḫa al-maʿmūla awwalan ṯumma yunqalu ʿanhā*, "the first [clean] copy from which other copies are made." This gloss is cited by D. Chwolsohn, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, St. Petersburg 1856, Vol. 2, pp. iii-iv.

[h] Some MSS add, "may God sanctify his soul." The Latin omits this.

[i] The Latin reads this sentence differently: *que utique occupacio mihi dampnosa extitit et ei non minime tediosa* (48-49).

[3] The Sultan at the time in Jurjān was the son of the Ziyārid Qābūs, Falak-al-Maʿālī Manūchihr (d. 420/1029; see C. E. Bosworth, "On the Chronology of the Ziyārids in Gurgān and Ṭabaristān," *Der Islam* 40 [1964] 25-34). Avicenna did not fare very well in this position, as is evident from Jūzjānī's choice of words, "afflicted with" (*buliya bi-*), an expression also used by Avicenna himself in the Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8, §4) and perhaps referring to his associates in Jurjān. In the Biography (45) Jūzjānī does not mention that Avicenna was employed in Manūchihr's court.

[4] The Latin adds, "to be able to accede on every occasion to my requests," *usquequaque meis postulacionibus annuendi* (line 31). The Arabic manuscripts show no indication of such an addition.

[5] Cf. Jūzjānī's Biography 45.

[6] See what next follows and the Biography.

[7] For details about their travels from Jurjān to Hamaḏān and the causes of their distress see the Biography 49-57.

lost works[j] having dimmed, we[8] asked[k] him to rewrite them and he said, "I have neither the time nor the inclination to occupy myself with close textual analysis[9] and commentary. But if you [pl.] would be content with whatever I have readily in mind [which I have thought] on my own, then I could write for you [pl.] a comprehensive[l] work arranged in the order which will occur to me."[10] We readily offered our consent to this and urged[m] that he start with Physics. He began with that and wrote approximately twenty folia, but was then interrupted by administrative disruptions.

4. But time dealt its blows destroying that King.[11] Avicenna saw fit not to remain in the same state nor to resume the same duties, and trusted that the prudent thing for him to do, in furthering his purposes in this regard, would be to hide in anticipation of an opportunity to leave that region. Availing myself of his unexpected seclusion and leisure, I pressed him to complete *The Cure*. He voluntarily applied himself with great earnestness to its composition, and in a period of twenty days he finished Metaphysics and Physics (except the two books on Zoology and Botany) without having available any book to consult, but by relying solely upon his natural talents. He also started on Logic and wrote the opening address and associated material.[12]

5. Then the notables of that state resented his being in hiding, and they were particularly displeased with his intentions to leave, thinking that it was in order to plot a conspiracy or join forces with the enemy. A close

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j The Latin adds, *ad quas me transsumpserat* (50).

k The Latin elaborates: *a iugi precum instancia ... non desisterem* (51-52).

l "Comprehensive:" *jāmi*^{c}; *summata* (56).

m "Urged:" *ḥarraḍnā*, as in the MS Golius 4, p. 317.17, and the Latin *insistendo* (59); the Cairo edition has *ḥariṣnā*, "we desired."

[8] Jūzjānī is apparently referring here to himself and other disciples, if one is to judge by Avicenna's reply to them in the plural and Jūzjānī's use of the first person singular in other parts of the text where he is speaking only about himself. The Latin translation (lines 52, 53) has the singular, and Jūzjānī himself uses the singular in the parallel passage in the Biography; see the discussion below, Chapter 2, W6.

[9] "Close textual analysis:" *alfāẓ*; literally, "terms," "words;" the Latin has *sermones* (line 53). By *alfāẓ* Avicenna is not referring here to the simple and compound terms discussed in the *Categories* and *De Interpretatione* (cf. T1, §3 I), but to the *ipsissima verba* of the Aristotelian text, i.e., to textual analysis.

[10] For Jūzjānī's parallel report in the Biography see Chapter 2, W6. Cf. Avicenna's Prologue to *The Cure* (T9, §1).

[11] Šams-ad-Dawla died in 412/1021. The circumstances are described in the Biography 57.

[12] Cf. the parallel passage in the Biography 57.6-59.8. Jūzjānī says there that Avicenna wrote "a part" (*juz'an*) of Logic. This part, here identified as "opening address," is almost certainly chapters 2-4 in the Cairo edition, containing the introduction to philosophy and Logic, not the Prologue to *The Cure* (T9).

servant, who coveted his downfall[n] in order to obtain whatever worldly possessions Avicenna had with him, informed on him to his persecutors. These people were among those to whom Avicenna had formerly done such favors that should have prevented them from attempting to deprive him of his possessions, had they of good deeds been mindful. [The servant] told them his [hiding] place[o] and he was detained[p] by being imprisoned in the castle of Fardajān. He remained there for a period of four months during which time the affairs of that region were brought to a certain resolution and the contesting party withdrew from it.[q] Avicenna was released and was offered to be reinstated as minister, but he excused himself and asked for a leave of absence, which he received.[13]

6. There [in Hamaḏān] he worked on the Logic [of *The Cure*]. He had access to the books [of Aristotle], and it consequently happened that he followed a course parallel to them, proceeding according to the order followed by people [in the Aristotelian tradition][r] and discussing their statements of which he disapproved. As a result, the Logic grew longer and was completed in Iṣfahān. The Mathematics, on the other hand, he had written in a summary fashion much earlier, and thought that he would add it to *The Cure*. He composed also the Zoology and Botany [later],[14] finishing with these books.[s] In most of the Zoology he followed a course parallel to Aristotle, and expanded it[t] quite beyond the latter's book. At that time he had reached the age of forty.[15]

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[n] "His downfall:" *tawrīṭihi fī mahlaka*, literally, "to involve him in peril." The Latin interprets this as "death:" *mortem* (77).

[o] Because of the long parenthetical phrase immediately preceding, the Latin elaborates: *Induxit itaque eos ad locum, ubi ipse latitabat, proditor memoratus* (82-83).

[p] "Detained:" *ustūṭiqa minhu*; the Latin also has, *captiuantes eum* (83); cf. Dozy s.v. The meaning of arrest comes from the literal sense of the verb: "to be secure against someone," and it is not unlikely that this may be the intended meaning here, i.e. the persecutors secured themselves against the presumed threat coming from Avicenna's actions by imprisoning him.

[q] I.e., from that region, Hamaḏān. The Latin misunderstands *wa-tārakahā l-munāziʿūn, eius detentores ad cor redeuntes* (86-87), i.e. "his detainers coming to their senses."

[r] The Latin also paraphrases: *antecessorum uestigia secutus est et ordinem* (90-91).

[s] "These books," *hāḏihi l-kutub*, must refer in the context to the two sections on Botany and Zoology, although normally one would have expected the dual number. In the Biography also (66.2-3) Jūzjānī neglects to use the dual when referring to these two books: *kitābay ... ṣannafahā* instead of *kitābay ... ṣannafahumā*. The Latin, on the other hand, omits *wa-fariġa min hāḏihi l-kutub*, which might raise the possibility that these words are a later addition.

[t] The pronoun is feminine, which is of dubious antecedent, if the transmitted text is correct: *wa-zāda fīhā min ḏālika ziyādātin*. The Latin understands the sentence to mean, *multas in libro suo addiciones et intenciones interserens ex eodem* (98-99), which makes little sense in the context.

[13] For the details see the Biography 59-61.

[14] That is, after his move to Iṣfahān. See the more detailed account in the Biography 61-67.

[15] This number is inaccurate. See the discussion in W6.

7. My purpose in recounting these stories is to tell the reason why Avicenna declined to comment on the texts [of Aristotle][9] and why there is a disparity between his organization of the Logic and that of the Physics and Metaphysics, and also to provoke wonder for his ability to compose the Physics and Metaphysics in a period of twenty days without having access to books but by taking dictation only from his heart which was preoccupied with the afflictions [then] besetting it.[u] The person who studies this book [*The Cure*] with attention and consideration will find such fine and rare statements, Derivations of Corollary Principles,[v] and explanations as he will never find in all the books of past authors.

Text 8. Introduction to *The Easterners*

Avicenna's famous Introduction to *The Easterners* (Chapter 2, W9) is a concrete exposition of his understanding of the philosophical work and of his own position in its historical development. It is, in essence, his manifesto of the philosophical praxis as he came to formulate it later in his life (see Chapter 5).

The Introduction has been the subject of considerable discussion and a number of translations; the text, however, still lacks a proper edition. It was first published in 1910 in Cairo, in a volume arbitrarily entitled by the publisher (al-Maktaba as-Salafīya) *Manṭiq al-mašriqīyīn*, 2-4. The text was printed on the basis of the Cairo manuscript Dār al-Kutub Ḥikma 6 M[uṣṭafā Fāḍil], ff. 116v-117r,[1] but the person who copied it made many and serious errors. It was later reprinted by photo-offset in Tehran by Maktabat al-Jaᶜfarī at-Tabrīzī (no date given, but probably in the Seventies), and, recast in a new type-font, in Beirut in 1982, with Šukrī Najjār appearing as the "editor." In his Arabic translation of Nallino's article, ᶜA. Badawī copied the text from the Cairo edition, although it seems that he added his own corrections without recourse to the Cairo manuscript (*at-Turāṯ al-yūnānī fī l-ḥaḍāra al-islāmīya*, Cairo 1965, 3rd ed., pp. 279-282).

My translation below is based on the actual readings of the Cairo manuscript (C), the most significant of which have been indicated in the textual notes; the numerous mistranscriptions of the defective Cairo edition have not been recorded. The text of the Cairo edition was also collated by Mahdavī 89-91 with the Istanbul manuscript Aya Sofya 4852, ff. 34vff (I). I have adopted some of the readings of the Aya Sofya manuscript, as recorded by Mahdavī, and indicated them in the notes.

Among the numerous translations that have been made, most noteworthy are those by Nallino, 455-458, and especially Anawati "Études" 112-115. Badawī's

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[u] "By taking dictation ... besetting it:" the Latin misreads, *sed solo sui cordis suffultus repositorio* (105-106), apparently reading *bi-mā yumla'u* (*repositorio*) for *wa-innamā yumlī*, but the rest is unclear.

[v] "Corollary Principles:" *tafrīᶜāt*; The Latin has *extraneis inuencionibus* (107).

[1] For a description of this manuscript see D. Gutas, "Notes and Texts from Cairo MSS, II: Texts from Avicenna's Library in a Copy by ᶜAbd-ar-Razzāq aṣ-Ṣiġnāḫī," *Manuscripts of the Middle East*, 2 (1987).

own translation appeared in his *Histoire de la Philosophie en Islam*, Paris 1972, II.607-609. They were all based on the defective Cairo edition, however, and their renderings accordingly suffer. The fact that none of them is, strictly speaking, complete, is attributable to the relative unintelligibility of the printed text (Nallino omits the last part of §6, below, Anawati omits the phrase before "This is the utmost..." in §1, and Badawī omits the entire §§5 and 6).

A number of articles by A.-M. Goichon, all overlapping and occasionally copying each other, contain extended paraphrases of the Introduction interspersed with literal translations of key passages. These are significant for the discussion of the Introduction within the context of Avicenna's philosophical orientation in general and of the Autobiography and his life in particular. In chronological order, they are the following: "L'évolution philosophique d'Avicenne," *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger* 138 (1948) 318-329, reprinted as the first part of the "Introduction" of her *Directives* 1-19; "La Personnalité d'Avicenne," *Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* (Tunis) 15 (1952) 265-282 (with minor modifications, this article reappeared as "L'unité de la pensée avicennienne," *Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Sciences* 5 [1952] 290-308); "La nouveauté de la logique d'Ibn Sina," *Millénaire d'Avicenne, Congrès de Bagdad*, 20-28 Mars 1952, Cairo 1952, 41-58; "Philosophie et histoire des sciences," *CT* 3 (1955) 17-40. Certain passages of the Introduction, finally, were translated and discussed by S. Pines, "La 'Philosophie Orientale' d'Avicenne et sa polémique contre les Bagdadiens," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age* 27 (1952) 5-37.

Introduction

1. We have resolved to compile a treatise on matters about which researchers have disagreed. In it we shall neither proceed by following Partisan considerations, our own fancy,[2] Customary Practice, or personal habit,[3] nor be concerned about any apparent departure[4] on our

[2] "Our own fancy:" *hawan*. The term refers to one's subjective fanciful notions that are contrary to acceptable standards set by reason, custom, or law; it does not mean "passione" (Nallino) or "passion" (Anawati "Études"). Avicenna uses the term in the same sense and context in the Prologue to *The Cure*, T9, §1. Heretics in Islam are called *ahl al-bidʿa wa-l-ahwāʾ*, "innovators and those who follow their own fancy," as in the title of Malaṭī's book, ed. S. Dedering (Bibliotheca Islamica 9), Wiesbaden 1936. As a matter of fact, *hawan* was used by Ḥunayn's nephew, Ḥubayš, to translate the Greek *hairesis*; see H. H. Biesterfeldt, *Galens Traktat 'Dass die Kräfte der Seele den Mischungen des Körpers folgen' in arabischer Übersetzung* [Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes XL, 4], Wiesbaden 1973, 213 s.v. Cf. also Dozy, s.v., and F. Pollak, "Beiträge zum arabischen Lexikon," *WZKM* 32 (1925) 253-254.

[3] Note the two pairs of opposites: Avicenna says that he will follow neither sectarian nor private opinion, and neither public custom nor individual habit. These two pairs are significant in indicating what Avicenna understood to be the objective philosophical method that leads to Knowledge, *al-ʿilm*; they should not be glossed over by such generalized renderings as, e.g., "impartially, disinterestedly, and without regard to accepted custom" (F. W. Zimmermann in E. Booth, *Aristotelian Aporetic Ontology in Islamic and Christian Thinkers*, Cambridge 1983, 107); see Chapter 5.1. In the Prologue to *The Cure* (T9, §4) Avicenna describes the method he followed in *The Easterners* in positive terms as follows: "I presented philosophy as it is in itself."

[4] As Avicenna clarifies in his Prologue to *The Cure* (T9, §4), this "apparent departure" is due to his use of an indirect and conciliatory approach in that book as opposed to the direct method to be employed in the present one.

part both from what those who study the books of the Greeks are accustomed to[a] out of unmindfulness and obtuseness, and from what our position has been understood to be in books which we composed for the common philosophasters,[5] who are infatuated with the Peripatetics and who think that no one else was ever guided by God or attained to His mercy. At the same time we acknowledge the merit of the most excellent of their predecessors [Aristotle] in being awake to that concerning which his masters and teachers were in deep sleep, in distinguishing the parts of the sciences one from the other and in classifying them better than they,[6] in perceiving the truth in many things, in discerning sound and eminent[b] Fundamental Principles in most sciences, and in disclosing to people what his compatriots who preceded him had overlooked.[c] This is the utmost that can be accomplished by a person who is the first to try his hand at separating what lay confused and restoring what had been impaired; and it behooves his successors to gather the loose ends he left, repair any breach[d] they find in what he constructed, and Supply Corollaries to Fundamental Principles he presented. But his successors were unable to free themselves of the imperfections[7] of what they inherited from him, and they spent their lives in efforts to understand what he accomplished best and in Partisan Adherence to some defective theories he originated.[e] These people

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[a] Reading *alifahu*, along with Badawī (*Turāṯ* 279, note 1), for *allafahu*, as translated by Nallino: "[scritti] composti."

[b] Reading *sarīya* instead of *sirrīya*, as understood by Nallino: "segreti." Badawī *Histoire* 608 apparently also read *sarīya*: "riches."

[c] C, I: *ʿalā mā sahā fīhi s-salafu min ahli bilādihi.*

[d] Or, "breaches," reading *ṯulaman yajidūnahā* (I) for *ṯalman yajidūnahu* (C).

[e] "Some defective theories he originated." The reading is somewhat uncertain here. C seems to have *mā fṯr min taqṣīrihi*, although the word *fṯr* is slightly smudged, while I, according to Mahdavī, has *fṯn*. The Cairo edition, followed by both Badawī *Turāṯ* and Mahdavī, has *far(r)aṭa*, which is certainly not the original reading and in any case unsatisfactory. I prefer to follow C, however lamely, reading perhaps *fuṭira*. More manuscript evidence will be required before the question is settled, though there is little doubt about the intended meaning.

[5] Note the implication that even in his indirect and conciliatory works Avicenna maintained the same theories he is about to expound; the only difference is that they have been understood differently. Cf. Nallino's note (p. 455, note 3): "Cioè da ciò che gli altri avranno potuto trovare nei nostri libri."

[6] In the schematized history of philosophy which was developed in late Alexandrian times and taken over in the Syriac and Arabic traditions, Aristotle figures as the classificator of the sciences (i.e., of the parts of philosophy) *par excellence*. See the discussion and the texts presented below, Chapter 4.

[7] As Nallino rightly saw, *ʿuhda* is here to be translated as "imperfection"("difetti"). The metaphor is taken from the concept of liability for defects in the transferral of goods from one owner to the next. See Lane, s.v. Anawati and Badawī understood the term as "obligation": "l'obligation qu'ils avaient à l'égard de ce qu'ils ont hérité de lui," Anawati "Études"; "aucun ... n'a pu s'acquitter de cette obligation," Badawī *Histoire*.

occupy themselves all their lives with what has already been done, neither finding time in which to consult their own minds nor, had they found it, thinking it permissible[f] to consider the statements of the ancients in need of addition, correction, or revision.[8]

2. As for ourselves, getting to understand what they[9] said has been easy for us from the very moment when we first occupied ourselves with it since it is not unlikely that Philosophical Sciences may have come to us from a direction other than that of the Greeks.[10] We were occupied with it in the prime of our youth, and were granted such success by God that we were able thereby to come to comprehend in a short time what they bequeathed.[11] We then measured all that, word by word, against the sort[12] of science which the Greeks call logic—it is not unlikely that the Easterners may have another name for it[13]—and we thus came to know what could bear such a confrontation and what resisted it. For each thing, we sought its manner[g] [in which it was argued for], with the result that whatever is true was [actually shown to be] true, and whatever is false [was actually shown to be] false.[14]

[f] C, I: *wa-lā law wajadahā staḥalla.*

[g] C, I: *wajhahu*, correctly guessed by Nallino 457 note 1.

[8] Cf. a similar statement in his introduction to the Physics of *The Cure*, cited below, Chapter 5.2, L38.

[9] I.e., Aristotle and all the successors of Aristotle, both Greek and Arabic, and not only the Muslims as Nallino remarks, 456, note 2.

[10] I.e., from the active intellect through Intuition, which "in most things corresponded with what is found in [Greek philosophical] books." See the parallel passage in T2, §4, and the discussion below, Chapter 3.2 and note 65. Some of the renditions of the word *jiha* (direction) in this passage given by earlier translators completely prejudge the interpretation. Thus Badawī translates it as "nation": "... quelques sciences nous sont parvenues d'autres nations [!] que de la nation grecque" (*Histoire* 608), whereas Pines and Anawati interpret the word to refer to different, *non*-Greek sciences: "des sciences qui ne dérivent pas [!] des Grecs," Pines ("Philosophie Orientale" 24); "certains sciences ... en dehors [!] de celles (transmises) par les Grecs," Anawati ("Études" 113). The Arabic text is talking, of course, about a different *direction*, not about sciences from different nations or about sciences different from those of the Greeks.

[11] In the articles listed above, Goichon translates as follows this crucial sentence ("Évolution" 326 = *Directives* 14 = "Personnalité" 280 = "Unité" 305 = "Nouveauté" 46 = "Philosophie" 31): "Depuis, par la grâce de Dieu, nous trouvâmes ce qui nous avait manqué à cause de cette jeunesse, en réfléchissant assez longuement sur l'héritage transmis." Her grammatical analysis in "Philosophie" 31, note 36, of the Arabic text in defense of this reading is quite implausible.

[12] "Sort:" *namaṭ*; this is the name Avicenna gives to the chapters of the *Pointers and Reminders*. See W11.

[13] I.e., "the instrumental science," *al-ʿilm al-ālī*. See the discussion below, Chapter 6.5.

[14] Avicenna is referring here to his syllogistic analysis of all philosophy by means of his index cards, or "set of files": arguments that "could bear such a confrontation," i.e., that could be put in demonstrative syllogistic form, were proven to be true, and those that "resisted it," i.e., that defied syllogistic analysis, were shown to be baseless. This is what Avicenna means by seeking for every thing "its manner" (*wajh*) of argumentation. See T3, §8 and the discussion below, Chapter 3.3A.

3. Now since those who are occupied with Philosophy are forcefully asserting their descent from the Peripatetics among the Greeks, we were loath to create schisms and disagree with the majority of the people. We thus joined their ranks and Adhered in a Partisan spirit to the Peripatetics, since they were the sect among them most worthy of such an Adherence.[15] We perfected what they meant to say but[h] fell short of doing, never reaching their aim in it;[i] and we pretended not to see what they were mistaken about, devising reasons for it and pretexts, while we were conscious of its real nature and aware of its defect.[j,16] If ever we spoke out openly our disagreement with them, then it concerned matters which it was impossible to tolerate; the greater part [of these matters], however, we concealed with the veils of feigned neglect:

4. [a] Among these were matters <about> which[k] we were loath to have ignorant people become aware of [our] disagreement with something which was so widely accepted among them that they might have doubts about clear daylight but not about it, although parts of it were so subtle as to dim the mind's eyes of our contemporaries.[17] As a matter of fact, we were afflicted with a company of them—as devoid of understanding "as if they were propped-up blocks of wood" [Qurʾān 63.4]—who consider profound theoretical analysis a heresy, and disagreement with what is widely accepted a deviation from the right path, as if they were the Ḥanbalites among the authors[l] of Prophetic Traditions.[18] Had we found among them someone following the right course,[19] we would have convinced him about what we had Verified, thus benefiting them with it; and perhaps it would have been easy for them to penetrate into its

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[h] C, I: *fa-qaṣarū* (C corrects from *wa-qaṣarū* above the line).

[i] C, I: *fīhi* for *minhu* in the printed text.

[j] Reading *ḥalalihi* with I; C sems to have *ẓlh*.

[k] Perhaps *fa-min jumlati ḏālika mā karihna <fīhi> an yaqifa* ... is to be read; cf. note n below.

[l] C, I: *al-Ḥanābilatu min katabati l-ḥadīṯi*.

[15] This particular point, as well as the argument of this whole Introduction, are found at the conclusion of *The Principles of the Universe* (*Fī mabādiʾ al-kull*) attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias. See the translation of this passage below, Chapter 4, L34.

[16] Cf. the similar expression in his introduction to the Physics of *The Cure*, Chapter 5.2, L38.

[17] The reasons for Avicenna's unwillingness to have common people understand that he is disagreeing with what they believe are discussed in Chapter 8.2; cf. L75[b].

[18] The Ḥanbalī legal rite has been traditionally the most conservative in Islam. They set great store by the Traditions of the Prophet (*ḥadīṯ*), which they used in legal argumentation almost to the exclusion of all other accepted methods, such as analogy and individual opinion. Note the religious terminology throughout, with the implication that philosophers had become as dogmatic as the most conservative religious people.

[19] Literally, "someone rightly guided [by God]," continuing the religious metaphor. Cf. the similar description of the ideal student in T10, §7 below.

meaning, thus benefiting us in turn with something which they alone would have been able to fathom.[m]

5. [b] Also among <these> were matters which we Withheld from making public out of a desire to protect overlooked truths[n] lest they be Pointed to and not accepted except in a Partisan spirit.[20] For this reason, in many matters with whose difficulty[o] we were fully acquainted, we followed a course of accommodation [with the Peripatetics] rather than one of disputation, although[p] with regard to what was disclosed to us from the moment when we first applied ourselves to this field, we would expressly reconsider[q] our position and examine anew whatever we thought repeatedly demanded closer scrutiny because an opinion was confusing to us[r] and doubt crept in our beliefs, and we said "perhaps" and "maybe." But you, our friends, know what our position was at the beginning, at the end, and during the times[s] between our first statement [on these matters] and the second.[21]

6. If we find this [to be] our case,[t] then we should all the more trust in most of what we determined, stated, and supplied by way of emendation, especially with regard to matters which are the greatest purposes and the ultimate goals which we have considered and reconsidered hundreds of times. And since such is the case,[t] and matters[t] stand as briefly described here, we wished to compile a book that will include the fundamental elements of true Philosophy, which can be Discovered by

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[m] C: *bi-t-tanaqquri*; I *bi-t-tanqīri*.

[n] C, I: *wa-min jumlati <ḏālika> ma ḍanannā bi-iʿlānihi ġāʾirīna* (ʿābirīna C) *ʿalā ḥaqqin maġfūlin ʿanhu*. For my addition of *ḏālika* see above, note k, and cf. Anawati "Études" 114.20, "Au nombre des [questions] que...".

[o] C: *bi-najdatihi*; *yataḥaddaṯuhu* I [!].

[p] C, I: *wa-in* instead of *wa-law* in the printed text.

[q] C, I: *nubdī* for *lam nbd* in the printed text.

[r] C, I: *li-mā bannatanā* (*blynʾ* I) *fīhi raʾyunā* (*rʾyʾ* C) *li-ḫtilāṭin* (*lʾḫtlṭ* C) *ʿalaynā r-raʾyu*. "Repeatedly demanded closer scrutiny:" *bannatanā fīhi raʾyunā. Bannata* is to question someone minutely and repeatedly. See Ṣaġānī, *At-Takmila ... li-Kitāb Tāj al-luġa*, Cairo 1970, I.302; cf. Kazimirsky, s.v.

[s] Both Nallino and Anawati take the word *ṭūla* in *ṭūla l-mudda* not as a preposition but as a noun and the object of the preceding verb, *taʿlamūna*: "la lunghezza del tempo [trascorso]," Nallino; "la longue période qui sépare," Anawati "Études".

[t] "Case" and "matters": *ṣūra* and *qiṣṣa* (C, I, instead of *qaḍīya* in the printed text), respectively, are used in their colloquial senses here, as taken over later by both Persian and Ottoman Turkish. Anawati "Études", however, translates the first *ṣūra* as "forme" and only the second as "la chose".

[20] For the concept of Withholding knowledge and what is to be Withheld see Chapter 5.3.

[21] I.e., his position never changed; despite his repeated examination of difficult questions, his views remained constant, as he says twice in the Autobiography (T3, §§8, 11). See the discussion below, Chapter 3.3Ei.

anybody who examines a lot, reflects[u] long, and has almost fully developed Intuition,[22] and who, striving for Partisan Adherence to many things[v] discordant with truth, is in great demand[w] on account of his Partisanship and statements in everybody's eyes except his own. There is no one more worthy of being listened to than the Partisan[x] of a group when he requires them to follow truth,[y] for nothing but truth will save them from [their] faults.[23]

7. We have compiled this book to show it only to ourselves—I mean to those who are to us like ourselves; as for the common people among those who struggle to master this subject, we gave them in *The Cure* what is [already] too much for them and even more than what they need, and we shall give them again in the *Appendices* what is suitable for them in excess of what they have already received.[24]

In every case, God is our only recourse.

Text 9. From *The Cure*: The Prologue

Avicenna wrote the Prologue to *The Cure* some time after the work had been completed, apparently in order to counter some of the implications of Jūzjānī's earlier Introduction (T7; see Chapter 2, W6). In the meantime Avicenna had also written *The Easterners*, and he took the opportunity afforded by the Prologue to state the relationship of the two works to each other and to his work and the Peripatetic tradition as a whole.

The Prologue created a stir in the West, both medieval and modern, and attracted attention quite beyond Avicenna's original intentions, primarily because of his mention of Eastern philosophy. *The Easterners*, however, was lost quite early in the East (see W9), and was never available in the Muslim West in Arabic, let alone in a Latin translation. All medieval Western authors who referred to it, therefore, derived their information from Avicenna's few words about it in the Prologue. This is true of Roger Bacon, who read the Prologue in Avendauth's Latin translation (edited by Birkenmajer, see T7), of Averroes,

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[u] C *wa-afkara*; I *wa-ftakara*.
[v] I *li-kaṯīrin mimmā*; C *li-kaṯīrin fī-mā*.
[w] C, I: *nafāqan* (C corrects from *wifāqan* above the line). Cf. Dozy s.v. *nafaqa ʿalā*.
[x] *Al-mutaʿaṣṣib* Mahdavī; C, I: *at-taʿaṣṣub*.
[y] I read *aḫaḍa bi-ṣidqin ʿalayhim*; C does not dot the *bi-* of *bi-ṣidqin*. I has *mṣdq*.

[22] "Almost fully developed Intuition:" literally, "excellence of Intuition," *jūdat al-ḥads*. This expression reflects the Arabic translation of Aristotle's *eustochia* in the *Posterior Analytics*, *ḥusnu ḥadsin*. See the discussion below, Chapter 3.2. "Almost fully developed" refers to Avicenna's position that Intuition is possessed to varying degrees by humans, and that the person who can understand his exposition should have, like him, these powers "almost fully developed;" the only people who have them "fully developed" are, of course, the prophets, and Avicenna wishes to stop just short of claiming similar powers.

[23] See the discussion in Chapter 2, W9e and Chapter 5.2.

[24] See Chapter 5.3.

and especially of Ibn-Ṭufayl, who interpreted Avicenna's reference to that work to suit his own purposes and used Avicenna's phrase as the subtitle of his "philosophical romance," *Ḥayy ibn-Yaqẓān, On the Secrets of the Eastern Philosophy (Fī asrār al-ḥikma al-mašriqīya*; see the testimonia in W9). In modern times Ibn-Ṭufayl's subtitle was appropriated at the end of last century by A. F. Mehren who used it arbitrarily as the Arabic title of his own edition of a number of Avicenna's opuscula and selections from the *Pointers and Reminders: Rasāʾil ... Ibn Sīnā fī asrār al-ḥikma al-mašriqīya*, Leiden 1889-1899. The French title, which presumably (but incorrectly) translated the Arabic, was *Traités mystiques ... d'Avicenne*, and these works have ever since been branded as mystical.

The debate about the same issue has been continued in more recent times in the partial translations and paraphrases of the Prologue; there has never been a complete translation. The first of these was by I. Madkour in his *L'Organon d'Aristote dans le monde arabe*, Paris 1934, 22-23, followed by Goichon "Nouveauté" 43-45, Anawati "Études" 111-112, and Badawī *Histoire* II.609-611. Goichon also discussed the issue in most of her articles listed above in T8, notably in "Philosophie" 29-31. In all these studies the remainder of the Prologue has received slight attention.

The translation is based on the edition of the Prologue in *Madḫal*, 9.7-11.16, collated for the most significant variants with the Latin translation; my comments are given in the notes. The text given by Mahdavī 129-131 reproduces that of the Cairo edition.

Prologue

1. Our purpose in this book, which we hope that time will allow us to complete, and that success granted by God will attend us in its composition, is to set down in it the gist of the Fundamental Principles which we have Ascertained—both the Fundamental Principles contained in the philosophical sciences[a] attributed to the ancients and based on methodical and Verified theoretical analysis, and the Fundamental Principles Discovered by [a series of] insights[1] cooperatively attaining the

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The numbers in parentheses after the Latin words refer to the lines in Birkenmajer's edition.

[a] For *fī l-ʿulūm al-falsafīya* the Latin has *in sententiis* (11), which seems to be a mistranscription for *in scientiis*. The omission of *al-falsafīya* in the Latin reflects the reading in some Arabic manuscripts.

[1] "Insights:" *afhām*, literally, "acts of discernment," as in the Latin translation, *intelligendi actiones* (13). Avicenna is referring here to his theory of Intuition. The implication is that these "acts of discernment" belong to a single person, Avicenna himself (cf. T2), and not to collective efforts, as translated by Madkour 22, "études ... collectives," and Anawati "Études" 111, "les intelligences qui collaborent." This becomes further clear from Avicenna's use of the term "Discovery" (*istinbāṭ*), associated with Intuition, and his statement further down that this truth was "diligently pursued" (*al-mujtahad fīhi*), i.e., by a single person. Cf. Ṭūsī's explanation of *mujāhada* in *Išārāt* III.151 as attaining something "through personal effort..., not through following the Authority of the majority of the Peripatetics" (*bi-l-jahd ... lā bi-t-taqlīd li-jumhūr al-Mašššāʾīn*).

truth which was diligently pursued for a long time—until it finally results in a straightforward compendium upon which most opinions will agree and which will help remove the veils of fanciful notions.[2] I sought to set down in it most of the discipline, indicate in every passage where ambiguity may occur, and solve it by setting forth clearly the correct answer to the extent of my ability. [I also sought] to Supply the Corollary Principles along with the Fundamental ones, excluding only what I trust will be revealed to the person who is able to see what we are displaying and ascertain what we are depicting,[b] or what escaped my memory and did not occur to my thought. I strove in earnest to be concise and always to avoid repetition—barring mistakes and oversights—and I refrained from prolix arguments in conradiction of doctrines patently[c] invalid or sufficiently dealt with[d] through the Fundamental Principles which we establish and the rules we present.

2. There is nothing of account to be found in the books of the ancients which we did not include in this book of ours; if it is not found in the place where it is Customary to record it, then it will be found in another place which I thought more appropriate for it. To this I added some of the things which I perceived through my own reflection and whose Validity I Determined through my own theoretical analysis, especially in Physics and Metaphysics—and even in Logic, if you will:[e] for although it is Customary to prolong [the discussion on] the first principles of logic with material that does not belong to Logic but only to the philosophical discipline—I mean the First Philosophy[3]—I avoided mentioning any of that [in Logic] and wasting thereby time, and deferred it to its [proper] place.

3. Then I thought it appropriate that I should write another book to follow this one. I have called it *Appendices*, and it will end with my life,

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[b] "Excluding ... depicting:" the Latin summarizes, *preterquam in hiis, de quorum presumebam manifestacione sufficienter ea intuenti* (21-22).

[c] The abbreviation in the Latin (26) should perhaps be read, *patente*.

[d] "Sufficiently dealt with:" *makfiyat aš-šuġl*. See *WKAS* I.286a-b.

[e] "If you will," literally, "for whomever it please" (*li-man aḥabba*), is attested in three of the ten manuscripts used in the Cairo edition of the Arabic text, and in the Latin translation: *cui licet* (*libet*? Birkenmajer) *cordi fuerit* (app. crit. to line 34). One of the three manuscripts containing this phrase (Istanbul Yeni Cami 772) is dated 628/1230, and the Latin translation must be based on a manuscript copied a century after Avicenna's death at the latest. This *lectio difficilior* is in all probability original. Madkour 22, who was using the other two manuscripts containing the phrase (British Museum Or. 7500 = M, and India Office 475 = H), translates, "et même en logique si l'on veut."

[2] "Fanciful notions:" *ahwā'*. See note 2 in T8. The Latin renders, "*caligines uoluntatum* (17)."

[3] The reference is to the Universal Science Part of Metaphysics. For the inclusion of the Categories in this science see Chapter 6.1 and 6.4.

finding its termination[f] in whatever will have been completed every year. It is like a commentary to this book, Providing Corollaries to its Fundamental Principles and elaborating upon its briefly expressed concepts.

4. I also wrote a book other than these two, in which I presented philosophy as it is in itself[4] and as required by an unbiased attitude[g] which neither takes into account in [this book] the views of colleagues in the discipline, nor takes precautions[h] here against creating schisms among them as is done elsewhere;[5] this is my book on Eastern philosophy.[6] But as for the present book, it is more elaborate and more accommodating to my Peripatetic colleagues. Whoever wants the truth [stated] without

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[f] "Finding its termination:" *yuʾarraḫu*. For this meaning of *arraḫa* as "to appoint a terminus" see the definition of Ṣūlī (*Adab al-kuttāb* 178, Cairo 1341): "The *taʾrīḫ* of each thing is its goal (*ġāyatuhu*) and its final time;" translated in F. Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography*, 2nd ed., Leiden 1968, 272; cf. also 14 note 3. The Latin, which transposes this phrase to the end of this paragraph (after "concepts"), understands the word in its conventional sense of "to date:" *temporali illius anno numero annotabo* (43-44). The same applies to Anawati's version ("Études" 112): "chaque partie [!] portera la date de l'année de son achèvement."

[g] "Unbiased attitude," literally, "unadulterated opinion," *ar-raʾy aṣ-ṣarīḥ*; *opinio pura* (47).

[h] Reading *wa-lā yattaqī* for *wa-lā yuttaqā* in the passive as in the edition. See note 5.

[4] "As it is in itself:" *ʿalā mā hiya fī ṭ-ṭabʿ* = "as it is in its nature," the *ṭabʿ* being the intrinsic characteristic or nature of a thing, to the exclusion of all accidental or historical increments and appurtenances; cf. Avicenna's own definition of the word in Goichon, *Lexique de la langue philosophique d'Ibn Sīnā*, Paris 1938, §393.

[5] "Which neither takes ... elsewhere." This crucial phrase has been largely misinterpreted, with serious effects on the understanding of Avicenna's meaning. The Latin version contains a serious mistranslation: *non obseruando semitam aut partem, ad quam declinant participes in arte, neque formidando a suarum ictibus lancearum* [! *min šaqqi ʿaṣāhum*], *hoc quod fuit in aliis formidatum* (47-49). This led Roger Bacon to describe the book by saying that Avicenna was not afraid in it of the "*ictus lancearum contradicentium*," the blows of the barbs of his opponents (Birkenmajer 308, 309). Among modern versions, the most accurate is that by Anawati "Études" 112: "l'opinion franche qui ne ménage pas le point de vue des compagnons dans la philosophie et où on ne craint pas [reading *yuttaqā*, as in the edition; cf. note h] de faire sécession comme on le ferait dans d'autres livres." Madkour 22 paraphrases: "sans tenir compte des autres philosophes, ni des doctrines qui s'opposent à nous et dont nous nous sommes occupé dans d'autres écrits." Goichon "Nouveauté" 44 translates: "à laquelle [à l'opinion pure] n'a point égard la majeure partie de ceux qui partagent cette discipline. Celui qui *shaqqa* [!] *ʾasâhum* (qui fit schisme, qui partit en dissidence) ne craint pas dans ce livre ce qu'il craint dans les autres." Badawī *Histoire* translates: "... l'opinion qui ne se soucie pas de la ligne adoptée par les confrères, et où celui qui se met [!] en désaccord avec eux ne craint pas de les contredire." Both Goichon and Badawī wrongly assume the subject of the first *yattaqī* to be *man* (*šaqqa*) and not *ar-raʾy aṣ-ṣarīḥ*. If this were the reading, and given the fact that the two clauses *lā yurāʿī* and *lā yattaqī* are relative in need of an *ʿāʾid*, the pronouns in *fīhi* and *ġayrihi* would have to refer to *ar-raʾy aṣ-ṣarīḥ*, which makes little sense.—The taking of precautions mentioned here is the circumlocution referred to as "indirection" (*majmaja*) below in the same paragraph.

[6] I.e., *The Easterners*; see W9.

indirection,[i] he should seek the former book; whoever wants the truth [stated] in a way which is somewhat conciliatory to colleagues,[j] elaborates a lot, and alludes to things which, had they been perceived, there would have been no need for the other book, then he should read the present book.[7]

5. [A. Logic] In the first part of this book I began with Logic. I strove to have it run parallel to the order of Aristotle's books [on Logic],[k] supplying in addition [discussions on] hidden[l] and subtle issues which are lacking in available books.

[B. Physics] Logic is then followed by Physics, but [here] I was mostly unsuccessful[m] in pursuing a course parallel to the systematic treatise and the memoranda of Aristotle,[8] the paradigmatic master in this discipline.

[C. Mathematics] Physics is then followed by Geometry: I made a terse[n] summary of Euclid's *Elements* in which I restricted[o] myself to the

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[i] "indirection:" *majmaja*. The word indicates lack of explicitness or forthrightness (cf. Lane, s.v.), and may be closer to "equivocation" or "prevarication" than to "circumlocution," although here it does not seem to have the negative implications of "prevaricate" or "equivocate." I have accordingly preferred the more neutral rendering "indirection." In any case, the context here provides the definition: *majmaja* is indirection qualified by whatever is described in the following sentence (viz. a way which seeks to be accommodating, etc.). An example of *majmaja* in the sense of "prevaricate" is found in the *Fihrist* of Ibn-an-Nadīm (G. Flügel, ed., Leipzig 1871-1872, 320.16): when the Caliph al-Maʾmūn asked the Ṣābians if they had a book or a prophet, they prevaricated (*majmajū fī l-qawl*), thus provoking his ire (B. Dodge mistranslates, "they stammered in replying," *The Fihrist of al-Nadim*, New York 1970, 751). The Latin translation has *titubacio* (52; "faltering," "hesitating"), apparently translating an Arabic original *jamjama* instead of *majmaja*. Although the apparatus of the Cairo edition does not list *jamjama* as a variant here, it must have existed because *jamjama* appears in two manuscripts of Ibn-Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy ibn-Yaqẓān*, who quotes this passage (see Testimonium [12] in W9).

[j] The two Latin variants for *aš-šurakāʾ*, *principia* and *principes* (54), should read *participes*.

[k] The Latin has only, *ut logicorum libros imitarer* (60).

[l] The Latin apparently read a word other than *asrār: in intencionis* T, *imitaciones* C (60).

[m] The Latin should read, along with the manuscript C, *neque* (= *wa-lam*), instead of *ubi* (62).

[n] "Terse:" *laṭīf*. See Dozy s.v. "Explicatif" [?] Madkour 23.

[o] The Latin should perhaps read *contractus* for *cum temperatus* (67).

[7] For Avicenna's understanding of the method of "indirection" used to write philosophical books see Chapter 5.3. Cf. also note i above.

[8] The division of Aristotle's works into systematic treatises and memoranda was part of the instruction in the Aristotelian school tradition. Cf. Paul the Persian, *ap.* Miskawayh *Saʿāda* 69.3-5, 70.10-11: "Aristotle composed on the subject of Physics a book in which he mentioned the properties [*umūr*] common to all natural things, be they subject to generation or not, and he called it *Physikē akroasis*;" "Aristotle also wrote other treatises and books which he called memoranda [*taḏākīr* = *hypomnēmata*]; these are numerous, according to the catalogue of his books." Cf. Gutas, "Paul the Persian" 235 and note 9, and Ullmann's review of Gohlman, p. 150.

solution of its ambiguities. I then complemented Geometry with a similar summary of [Ptolemy's] *Almagest* on Astronomy, which contains, despite the abridgment, explanations and instructions. After I finished this, I appended to it such additions as are necessary for the student to know in order to complete[p] thereby [his study of] this discipline and correlate astronomical observations with natural laws. Astronomy is then followed by a terse summary of the *Introduction to Arithmetic* [by Nicomachus of Gerasa]. I then concluded the discipline of the mathematicians with an abridgment of the science of Music in a manner which was disclosed to me after long research and detailed theoretical analysis.

[D. METAPHYSICS] Finally, I concluded the book with the science that belongs to Metaphysics[9] in accordance with its parts and aspects, while referring in it [only] to the essential elements[q] of Ethics and Politics,[10] in anticipation of a comprehensive and separate book which I will write on these subjects.[11]

6. This book, though small in volume, contains much of Philosophy. The person who studies it attentively and reflects on it will hardly fail to acquire most of the [philosophical] discipline, including[r] the additions which were Customarily omitted from other books.[12]

Text 10. From *Pointers and Reminders*: Prologues and Epilogue

In his last major work (W11), Avicenna touches briefly, in the form of advice to the reader, upon the essential elements that govern the philosophical praxis and gives particularly valuable information on the indicative method of composition (Chapter 8.3).

The translation is based on *Išārāt* I.113-114; II.147; IV.161-164. There is a French translation by Goichon *Directives* 77, 246, 525-526, and for the first part only, an English translation by Inati 46.

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[p] Perhaps *yutimma* is preferable to *tatimma* in the edition. Cf. the following verb, *yuṭābiqa*.

[q] "Essential elements:" *jumal*. Cf. Blachère *Dictionnaire* 1724a-b. "Données" Madkour 23.

[r] The Arabic has *ilā*, "up to," but perhaps *min* is to be read, following the Latin *ex* (86), yielding the following sense: "most of the [philosophical] discipline from the additions which ...".

[9] "The Science that belongs to Metaphysics:" see Chapter 6.1.

[10] For the contents of the tenth book of the *Ilāhīyāt* see Chapter 6.2.

[11] Avicenna never wrote this book. For the classification of the subjects mentioned in this Prologue see T1 and Chapter 3.1.

[12] These "additions" constitute the points about which Avicenna came in conflict with the Aristotelian tradition, and his own views which he integrated into the system. See Chapter 6.

Prologue to Logic

1. I praise God, who graciously bestows success;
I ask God for guidance in His path,
for inspiration with the truth through its Verification,[1]
and to bless His servants chosen for His mission
and especially Muḥammad and his family.[2]

2. O you who are zealous to Ascertain the truth: I have exposed to you in these Pointers and reminders Fundamental Principles and essential elements[a] of philosophy; if sagacity takes hold of your hand [to guide you],[3] it will become easy for you to Derive Corollary Principles from the former and work out the details of the latter.

3. I will start with Logic and then proceed to Physics and on to the science that precedes it.[4]

Prologue to Physics and Metaphysics

4. What follows are Pointers to Fundamental Principles and reminders of essential elements.[a] Whoever finds them easy will be able to gain insights through them, while he who finds them difficult will not benefit even from the most obvious of them.[5] We rely on God for success.

5. Here I repeat my admonition and restate my request that the contents of these parts be Withheld as much as possible from those who do not meet the conditions I stipulated at the end of these Pointers.

Epilogue

Admonition

6. Dear Friend:
I have churned for you in these Pointers the cream of truth and have fed you choice morsels of philosophy
in pithy[b] sayings.

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[a] *Jumal.* See T9, note q.
[b] *Laṭāʾif.* See T9, note n.

[1] I.e., Avicenna is not asking for inspiration with the truth *tout court*—in which case the truth will have to be accepted through Partisan Adherence to an authoritative source, *taʿaṣṣuban*—but for inspiration with the truth at the end of a process of investigation and Verification by the researcher. See Chapter 3.3E.

[2] The five lines of this introduction are written in rhyming prose, *sajʿ*.

[3] "If sagacity takes hold of your hand," *in aḫaḏat al-faṭānatu bi-yadika*; Goichon *Directives* 77 reads the verb in the second person, "si tu en prends la compréhension avec la main," which she interprets as, "si tu en possèdes avec maîtrise la compréhension." Inati has, "if you are directed by intelligence." The reference, however, is again to Intuition.

[4] I.e., Metaphysics as First Philosophy, which precedes Physics because it provides its principles. See Chapter 6.1.

[5] What Avicenna is doing here is publishing philosophy without publicizing it, like Aristotle. Those without Intuition will find these pointers impenetrable, while those with Intuition will be able to Work Out the Corollaries. See T2, §3 and Chapter 5.3.

Protect them from ignorant people,
those who would make them trite,
those not endowed with blazing[6] sagacity,
training, and practice,
those whose tendencies lie with the rabble,
or are among the sycophants[7] and parasites[8]
of these philosophers.

7. If you find somebody whose heart you trust to be pure,
his way of life straight,
who abstains from the sudden insinuations of the Whisperer,[9]
and who directs his attention to the truth
readily and sincerely,
then answer his questions in degrees,
in fragments,
in installments,
so that you can detect from what you just said
what to say next.
Bind him with inviolable oaths to God to follow your path in what you gave him,
finding solace in you.

8. If you publicize or squander this knowledge, then God [will judge] between us.[10]

Text 11. From a Letter to an Anonymous Disciple

Avicenna wrote this letter to an unidentified disciple after the pillage of his books in 425/1034 (see W9), a few years before his death. It is a very personal letter, written in a dejected mood, tired and mellow in its tone. The burning zeal for philosophical discussion, however, and the intellectual self-assurance are still evident. Of particular significance are Avicenna's statements about method (see note 7 below).

The letter is preserved among the *Discussions* (*Mubāḥaṯāt*). The translation below is based on the Oxford recension of the work (see W12), MS Bodleian, Hunt. 534, ff. 5r12-6r ult. (H). This has been compared throughout with the Cairo recension, MS Dār-al-Kutub, Ḥikma 6 M[uṣṭafā Fāḍil], ff. 110v21-111v11 (C) and the divergences recorded in the notes. The Leiden MS Or. 864 Warn., ff. 16v1-18r3 (L) follows the Oxford recension in the body of the text,

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[6] Cf. the passage on Intuition from *The Salvation*, Chapter 3.2, L7, §3: "he blazes with Intuition."

[7] "Sycophants:" *malāḥida*. Not so much "atheists" or "heretics," as "hangers-on," those who lean toward something, *alḥada*, with ulterior motives.

[8] "Parasites:" *ḥamaj*, literally, "gnats," "infecting the faces and eyes of sheep and donkeys," says Ṭūsī. Another meaning given is "riff-raff."

[9] The reference is to Satan, Qur'ān 113.

[10] The book ends with a quotation from the Qur'ān, 4.83ff. The Epilogue is written entirely in *saj'*.

but it was collated in the margins with a manuscript deriving from the Cairo recension (see note h below). Its readings have been compared but not recorded since they do not contribute in any significant way to the purposes of the present translation.

ʿAbdurraḥmān Badawī published the letter from the Cairo manuscript in his *Arisṭū ʿinda l-ʿArab* (Cairo 1947), pp. 245-246. He omitted the middle part of the text because it had already been excerpted and inserted among the rest of the *Mubāḥaṯāt* by the recensor (pp. 228.12-229.11 Badawī). All significant divergences between the readings of Badawī and those in MSS H and C are recorded in the notes. The part of the letter translated below corresponds to pp. 245, 228.12-14, 229.8-11, 246 in Badawī.

The beginning and end of the letter were also transcribed from the Oxford manuscript by Mahdavī 203-204. This has not been taken into account.

The first paragraph of this letter was briefly discussed by Badawī *Arisṭū* 25-27 (introduction), whose conclusions were disputed by Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 22 note 1. Pines's own version and remarks were in turn marred by his dependence on the defective text in Badawī.

The Letter

1. You expressed sorrow for the loss of *Pointers and Reminders*, but I think that a copy of this book has been preserved. As for the Eastern questions,[1] I had packed them up[a]—no, most of them—[as they were] in their quires[2] so that[b] no one would look at them, and I had also[c] written down on slips of paper some passages from the *Throne Philosophy*;[3] it is these which got lost. They were not voluminous, however, (although they did treat many subjects and were quite comprehensive,) and it would be easy to rewrite them. But yes, the *Fair Judgment*, on the other hand, had to be extensive, and rewriting it would require work.[4]

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[a] "I had packed them up:" *fa-qad kuntu ʿaba'tuhā* H; *fa-qad ktb ʿaba'tuhā* C; *fa-qad katabtu aʿyānahā* [!] Badawī.

[b] *Fī ajzā'ihā bi-ḥayṯu* H; *bi-ḥayṯu* om. C.

[c] *Ayḍan* H; *minhā* C.

[1] By Eastern questions and Eastern Fundamental Principles are meant the texts on Eastern philosophy, which were lost. See Chapter 2, W9.

[2] I.e., he packed the quires (*ajzā'*) away without having them bound as books for distribution. Suhrawardī must be referring to this very passage when he says that "the quires (*karārīs*) which Avicenna attributed to the Easterners are extant separately in unbound form" (Chapter 2, W9a, Testimonium 13).

[3] For this work see Meyer "Thronschrift".

[4] It is to be noted that this passage implies that the *Fair Judgment* was *not* among the quires of the Eastern questions and the fragments of the *Throne Philosophy* which were lost on this occasion (i.e., in 425/1034). What was lost, as Avicenna says, was not "voluminous" (*kabīrat al-ḥajm*), while the *Fair Judgment* was "extensive" (*mabsūṭ*) and, "had it been transcribed clearly, would have comprised twenty volumes" (T12, §3); it must therefore have been lost on another occasion (i.e., earlier in 421/1030). See the discussion about the dating of these books and the events surrounding them in Chapter 2, W9 and W10.

2. But then, who is going to rewrite it, and who is he who is so free from the worthless as to devote himself exclusively to truth, from this world to the next, and from superfluities to superiority? Indeed, fate has plunged in me the talons of vicissitudes and I don't know how to extricate and save myself. I have been driven to perform tasks I am not the man for, and I got so detached from Knowledge that it is as if I can catch a glimpse of it from behind a thick veil only. And yet I tender thanks to God Almighty, for He, despite the contending situations, the compounding tribulations, the obtruding peregrinations, and the conflicting alternations, will not leave me without a spark, will revive my heart, and make my step firm. Him I praise for whatever helps or harms, hurts or cheers.

3. As for the questions which you asked me, they are significant questions about the Philosophical Sciences, and especially these particular ones.[d] But treating such questions briefly leads to error, while too many of them overtax a mind preoccupied with cares and it can hardly concentrate on the areas[e] requiring explanation, especially for somebody who is like me and in my situation. I have studied these questions carefully and I have found them to be the proper ones; some I have answered at sufficient length,[f] others by means of Pointers, and still other perhaps I have been unable to answer at all.

4. The invariable element in animals may be [a subject] more amenable to a clear exposition; as a matter of fact, I dealt with it thoroughly in the Eastern Fundamental Principles by first raising doubts and then solving them.[1] In the case of plants, however, a clear exposition [of the same subject] is more difficult.

5. If there is no constant element [in plants] which would be infinite[g] and come about through the species, then it will come about through number... .

> [Avicenna next lists a series of questions and problems associated with establishing the constant principle in plants, corresponding to the soul in humans and animals, which lends them perpetuity and continuity.]

6. Let the members of our group help each other to reach truth in this matter and not despair of God's comfort. That there is inevitably something constant under change is known to anybody who might wish to think a little; as for its problematic aspects, they are those which we men-

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[d] *Lā siyyamā hāḏihi l-masāʾil* om. H.

[e] The reading is uncertain here. Badawī reads C as *biqāʿ*, which can hardly be correct; H omits the phrase, and a second hand has added in the margin, *nqʾyḥ* [?] or *nqʾṯḥ* [?].

[f] Reading *maqnaʿ* for *muqniʿ* (Badawī).

[g] Reading *ġayra mutanāhin* with H; C omits *mutanāhin*.

tioned. I will be delighted with anybody who takes up these problems because the truth about them will appear,[h] as I estimate, at a short distance.

7. Indeed, I am delighted with you for having taken up this sort[i] of investigation which you delineated after [suggesting] a sort I disapproved of,[j] because this sort of investigation, i.e., an investigation with demonstrative methods,[k] is appropriate for the loftiest Philosophical Science,[5] while many [aspects] of the [sort of investigation] which you called for when I was in Rayy were inappropriate. You should engage in more such discussions [with me] on anything you wish, because in them lies pleasure and benefit. Whatever I am able to bring to light I will do so either openly, or from behind a veil which will act as a useful kind of stimulus and drill for it [i.e., the question at hand]; whatever I am unable to do so, I will excuse myself and admit it, since what is known to mankind is limited.

8. For my part, with regard to matters upon which I have spent great effort, I have come to know things which[l] I have Verified and cannot be improved, except that they are few. What I neither know nor have a way of knowing, on the other hand, is much indeed, but I sometimes have no hopes that about what I do not know I will ever come into possession of new knowledge which I have not[m] already achieved by the assiduous research I have been engaged in, despite the fact that my dedication to the search for truth[6] is unmatched. Currently I am in such unpleasant circumstances and so overwhelmingly busy that I would be content[n] if I were able to retain an idea that I got hold of at first try—and yet, despite all this I praise God. He has granted me an incessant certainty

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[h] Reading *wa-ana afraḥu mim-man ḥāḍa fī hāḍihi š-šubahi fa-innahu yalūḥu* with H; *wa-ammā l-faraju (frḥ* L) *fa-min ḥaṣāṣin li-hāḍihi š-šubahi yalūḥu* C. L has the reading of H in the text and of C in the margin. The latter reading, which seems to be the *lectio difficilior*, would mean, "As for the successful solutions [*al-faraj*?], the truth about these problems will glimmer through their cracks." The final decision about choice of variants will have to depend on a study of the relation of these two recensions of the *Mubāḥaṭāt*.

[i] Reading *la-afraḥu mim-man ḥāḍa min* [*sic*; *fī*?] *hāḍa n-namaṭ* with H; *mim-man ḥāḍa* om. C.

[j] *Kuntu astakrihuhu* Badawī; *ktb astakrihuhu* H.

[k] *Burhānī* H; *burhānī munāsib jiddan* C. The reading in C appears to be a marginal correction inserted into the text as a doublet. Perhaps *jiddan* should be read before the first *munāsib*: it "is eminently appropriate."

[l] *ʿAlimtu ašyāʾa qad ḥaqqaqtuhā* H; *ʿalimtu kaṯīra* [!] *ašyāʾa maʿrifatan qad ḥaqqaqtuhā* Badawī.

[m] *Lam* C; *am* H.

[n] Reading *iqtanaʿtu bihi* with H; *aqnaʿtu* [?] Badawī.

[5] I.e., Metaphysics or Theology.

[6] "My dedication ... truth:" *wa-anā muslimun ilā ṭalabi l-ḥaqq*, with the *double entendre*, "My dedication to the search of God," or even, "I am a Muslim in search of God."

about Fundamental Principles which the seeker of salvation must without fail know,[o] and a wideranging competence[p] in subsequent areas.[q,7]

Text 12. From the Letter to Kiyā

This letter, similar in tone to the preceding, was written about a year before Avicenna's death (W10), and sounds the basic themes of philosophical method (Chapters 5 and 8).

The text was first discovered by P. Kraus in the Cairo Avicenna *majmūʿa* Dār al-Kutub Ḥikma 6M, where it also forms the opening selection of the *Discussions* (*Mubāḥaṯāt*, W12). In an extended footnote in his "Plotin chez les Arabes," *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte* 23 (1940-1941) 272, note 3, Kraus presented an extract from it (§3 below). It was later edited by ʿA. Badawī, on the basis of the Cairo manuscript, in his *Arisṭū* 120.9-122.8. This letter is extant in a number of manuscripts (cf. M 12, A 259), and it will require a critical edition. My translation below is based on the actual readings of the Cairo manuscript (C), as indicated in the textual notes.

Pines based his "Philosophie Orientale" on a translation (6-9) and study of this letter; Goichon discussed it briefly in "Philosophie" 21-22.

Letter to Kiyā

1. What you mentioned about the disagreement, obtuseness, and wavering of people on the subject of the soul and the intellect, and especially of the simple-minded Christians of Baġdād,[1] is just as you said. Already Alexander, Themistius, and others were perplexed on this issue, each being right in some respects and wrong in others. The reason for this is the obscurity of Aristotle's method [of composition],[2] which led them to think that he took up the exposition of the survival of the soul

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[o] Reading *lā budda li-ṭālibi n-najāti minhā ʿārifan* with H; C omits *ʿārifan*.

[p] For the use of *majāl* as the *maṣdar* of the Ist form of the verb see Dozy, s.v. For the expression *ḍīq majāl* cf. T13, note g.

[q] C adds, *wa-maʿrifatan bi-mā lā aʿrifuhu bāliġatan*, "and a far-reaching [sufficient?] knowledge about what I do not know" [?].

[7] I.e., competence in the areas of Working Out Corollary Principles from the Fundamental Principles "and whatever is further derived from them," as the anonymous disciple from Rayy says in his Memoirs (T13, §5). For the importance of this letter for Avicenna's method see Chapters 3.3A, 5.1, 8.

[1] The reference here is to the Christian philosophers in Baġdād, and particularly to Abū-l-Faraj Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib, Abū-l-Ḫayr Ibn-al-Ḫammār, and Ibn-as-Samḥ, the targets of Avicenna's philosophical ire in the dispute described in a disciple's memoirs in T13, §§3-4, below.

[2] *Maḏhab* here means "method of composition" and not "doctrine," as translated by Pines "Philosophie Orientale". For the influence on Avicenna of the traditional doctrine of Aristotle's obscurity of method see Chapters 5.3 and 8.2.

or its annihilation upon death *only* when he was composing the last book of the *De Anima*.[3] This, however, is not so; on the contrary, already in the first book, in the course of his argument with Democritus on the subject of the soul, he Worked Out Corollary Principles[a] in a concealed fashion, and offered to those who have an understanding of this matter the Fundamental Principle, namely, that the thing in which the universal intelligibles are conceived is indivisible.[4] He thus precluded the possibility that it is corporeal substance which receives the [universal] intelligible concepts. What receives them, therefore, is a substance subsisting by itself, neither divisible [itself] nor [existing] in something divisible on account of which it could become divisible. It is free of any resemblance to a body or anything corporeal. Then, in the last book [of the *De Anima*], Aristotle devoted himself exclusively to an exposition of the faculties which accompany the soul in its survival only, since he had already indicated previously that the [faculties of] sense-perception, memory, and their likes, and the motive faculty, cannot subsist without a body, and it had become clear from the import of his argument that perceiving by the senses, both in its external and internal aspects, can only come about by means of something divisible. He thus wished to investigate the intellectual faculties [in the last book of the *De Anima*]. He began with the faculty called material intellect [in Book III.4] and showed that it does not perish, and then he went on to another faculty [in Book III.5] and stated plainly that it also does not perish. Now his word[b] "also" indicates that a second[c] pronouncement is analogous to

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[a] Reading *qad farraʿa* with C, for *faraʿa* in Badawī.

[b] Reading *lafẓuhu* (C) for *lafẓat* in Badawī. Even though C never indicates the *tāʾ marbūṭa*, it is clear from what follows (see note 5) that the word *aydan* refers to Aristotle's text.

[c] Reading *ṯāniyan*, indicated clearly in C and correctly surmised by Finnegan (see note 5), for *ṯābitan* in Badawī.

[3] According to the division of the *De Anima* in the translation used by Avicenna, the last "book" began with III.4, what Avicenna describes below as the discussion of the material intellect. The same translation was also used by Averroes for his lemmata in the Large Commentary; see F. S. Crawford, *Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium Magnum in Aristotelis De Anima libros*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1953, 379. The various translations of the *De Anima* used by these philosophers are discussed by R. M. Frank, "Some Fragments of Isḥāq's Translation of the *De Anima*," *Cahiers de Byrsa* 8 (1958-59) 231-251, and by H. Gätje, *Studien zur Überlieferung der aristotelischen Psychologie im Islam*, Heidelberg 1971, 28-44.

[4] The passage of the *De Anima* referred to here is I.2, 405a8-13 (not I.3, as suggested by Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 6 note 2). The statement of Aristotle which Avicenna considered as providing the Fundamental Principle read as follows in the Arabic translation (as reflected in the Latin version, Crawford 39.3-4): "Democritus said that the soul and the intellect are the same and that it is one of [*ex* = **min*?] the primary indivisible bodies." In the *Marginal Notes on De Anima* (see W10), Avicenna devotes a lengthy discussion to this very passage where he presents all the arguments alluded to here (Badawī *Arisṭū* 79-83).

the first;[5] but because a certain person imagined something else (on the basis of his belief that the material intellect is the rational soul itself, or that the material intellect[d] is a certain disposition of the heart, and that accordingly the intelligibles are received[e] by the body of the heart by means of this disposition),[6] he got confused,[f] came up with the wrong opinion, and strayed from the ideal path.[7] The truth is that this [material] intellect is a disposition of the *substance* of the soul, not of any *body*, and that it accompanies the substance of the soul in every state. Upon the subject that the divisible cannot receive the intelligible I have expatiated in a treatise [elsewhere] in specific[g] and unequivocal terms; perhaps I wil present it to you, should God decree that I meet you.[8]

2. As for John Philoponus' book on the refutation of Aristotle,[9] it is a book which is apparently cogent but essentially weak, while applying oneself to these problems[10] and succeeding in solving them [require] a powerful soul[11] and ample philosophical Knowledge. I did what should

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[d] I include here the phrase omitted in C by *homoioteleuton*, and found in the British Museum manuscript Or. 8069, given by Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 7, note 2.

[e] Reading *fa-kāna* with C for *fa-ka-anna* in Badawī.

[f] There is no need to supply <*wa-*> here, as Badawī does.

[g] Reading the unpointed skeleton in C as *muᶜayyanan* instead of *muġniyan* with Badawī.

[5] The reference here is to *De Anima* III.5, 430a17, which read as follows in the translation used by Avicenna (Crawford 440.1-2): "This intellect also [*etiam* = **aydan*] is separable, unmixed and impassive." This corresponds, as noted by J. Finnegan ("Al-Fārābī et le περὶ νοῦ d'Alexandre d'Aphrodise," *Mélanges Louis Massignon*, Damascus 1957, II.134 note 4), to the Greek *kai houtos ho nous chōristos kai apathēs kai amigēs*, where the first *kai* was translated by *aydan*. What Avicenna means is that since the active intellect is said to be "also" separable (the second pronouncement), then this must imply that the passive, or material, intellect is separable (the first pronouncement); he then proceeds, on this basis, to criticize those who denied the separability of the material intellect. It is interesting to note that Averroes understood the Aristotelian text in precisely the same manner: "I.e., this intellect also is separable, like the material intellect, and it is also impassive and unmixed like it" (Crawford 440.8-10).

[6] Avicenna refers to the same doctrine in much the same words in his *Marginal Notes on De Anima* (Badawī *Arisṭū* 92.15-16), as noted by J. Finnegan, "Avicenna's Refutation of Porphyrius," *Avicenna Commemoration Volume*, Calcutta (Iran Society) 1956, 195 and note 3.

[7] The reference here seems to be to Alexander of Aphrodisias, about whom Avicenna makes a similar comment in his *Marginal Notes on De Anima*, Badawī *Arisṭū* 101.17-19 (mentioned by Finnegan "Porphyrius" 192 note 1). That this doctrine should also be that of the Porphyrians, as Finnegan claims ("Porphyrius" 196) with some misgivings, seems open to doubt.

[8] Avicenna repeats the same wish below, in paragraph 4.

[9] The reference seems to be to Philoponus' book *De Aeternitate Mundi contra Aristotelem*, now lost. See the note by Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 7, note 4.

[10] "Problems:"*šukūk*, literally, "doubts;" "critiques," Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 8. This is the technical term for the genre of scholarly literature in the form of *aporiai kai lyseis, dubitationes et solutiones*. Cf. the title of Ibn-al-Hayṯam's work, *aš-Šukūk ᶜalā Baṭlamyūs*.

[11] By "powerful soul" Avicenna is referring to his theory of Intuition. See T2.

be done in this regard, by means of commentary, detailed exposition, and Working Out of Corollary Principles on the basis of Fundamental Principles, in what I wrote in my comprehensive book, *The Cure*, which contains all the sciences of the ancients, even music. The complexities of these problems are such that they cannot be comprehended by the superficial[h] scholars you know, for their solution is built upon the Corollaries of Fundamental Principles [found] in the *Physics*: both[i] the *Physics* and the *De Caelo* [contain] Fundamental Principles which themselves are Corollaries of the Fundamental Principles set forth in the *Physics*, though these Corollary Principles are not stated explicitly in the *Physics* but only implicitly.[12] So whoever does not *first* churn the concepts of the *Physics* to produce the cream of these Corollary Principles, he will have wasted his efforts to gain an understanding and suffer the same fate as those [Christians of Baġdād] we are talking about and John Philoponus. Indeed, some people tried to refute his refutation, but they approached the house from the rear instead of the [front] door, and they misled themselves into contentment with what they wrote. As for ourselves, we have clarified these [Fundamental Principles] common to both books;[13] whoever comes to understand them will find all the problems vapid and undaunting.

3. You asked to find out how I go about in such matters. I will tell you: I had composed a book which I called *Fair Judgment*. I divided scholars into two groups, the Westerners and the Easterners, and I had the Easterners argue against the Westerners until I intervened to Judge Fairly when there was a real point of dispute between them.[j] This book had contained approximately twenty-eight thousand questions. I commented clearly on the difficult passages in the original texts[14] up to the end of the *Theologia Aristotelis*, despite the fact that the *Theologia* is some-

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[h] *Rasmīyūn*. For the meaning see F. Jabre, *Essai sur le lexique de Ghazālī*, Beirut 1970, 108-109, and cf. Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 8 note 2, objected to by Goichon "Philosophie" 21 note 8. The reference is to the Christians of Baġdād.

[i] The use of *bayna ... bayna* in this context is distributive (cf. Wright *Grammar* II.180D-181A), not limitative as understood by Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 8: "(pour passer) de la *Physique* au *De Caelo* (il est besoin) de principes...". Literally, the above passage reads, "for both *Physics* and *De Caelo* there are principles which...".

[j] Reading *al-lidād* (C), the verbal noun of the 3rd stem (*WKAS* II 1, 436a). Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 9 reads, "Jusqu'à ce que la dispute eût été éclaircie [!] et que je procédasse à un arbitrage équitable." Cf. the better rendering of Anawati "Œuvre" 416, "quand l'opposition devient réelle, je m'avance pour les départager équitablement." For *ḥaqqa* used in this sense see Jūzjānī's Introduction to *The Cure* (T7, §1).

[12] For the understanding of Aristotle's method of composition indicated here see Chapters 5.3 and 8.

[13] I.e., *De Caelo* and *Physics*.

[14] I.e., the books in the Aristotelian tradition, as listed in T1, §3.

what suspect, and I talked about the oversights of the commentators. I wrote it in a short period of time—[a work] which, had it been transcribed clearly, would have comprised twenty volumes.[15] Then it was lost in the course of some rout, since there was only the first draft. Investigating it and these controversies was a pastime; after completing something I am working on [at present], I will occupy myself with rewriting it, although even thinking about rewriting is oppressive.[k] But it had contained an exposition[l] of the weakness of the Baġdādīs, and of their deficiency and ignorance. At the present moment it is impossible for me [to rewrite it]: I do not have the free time for it, but am occupied with men like Alexander [of Aphrodisias], Themistius, John Philoponus, and their likes. As for Abū-Naṣr al-Fārābī, he ought to be very highly thought of, and not to be weighed in the same scale with the rest:[m] he is all but the most excellent of our predecessors.[16]

4. Perhaps God will make it easy [for me] to meet with you; it will be mutually beneficial. You should excuse my disorderly writing and crooked letters, but I have not undertaken to correspond in my own hand for a year or two now. Debilitating and long diseases which sapped my strength have kept me immobilized and prevented my hand from writing. This is the first thing I write in my own hand.

Text 13. Memoirs of a Disciple from Rayy

These memoirs in the form of a letter present a lively picture of Avicenna as a philosopher and a teacher, and offer valuable information about his books and philosophical method. They were written by an anonymous disciple of Avicenna in Rayy (§2, end), and addressed to an equally anonymous gentleman (*šayḫ*) in ʿIrāq, presumably in Baġdād (§4, middle). They are preserved in the Oxford recension of the *Discussions* (see W12), and a thorough study of the transmission of this work may enable us in the future to identify these individuals. At present the question must remain open.

The purpose of the letter is in the main apologetic. An emissary of Avicenna arrived in Baġdād and sought to buy the books of the eminent philosopher Abū-l-Faraj Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib. Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib, however, was displeased at the idea of having Avicenna acquire his books, and in order to discourage the sale, and perhaps also insult Avicenna, asked for an exorbitant price. The reason for Ibn-

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[k] Literally, "even the shadow of rewriting in heavy," i.e. let alone the actual rewriting itself. See Lane s.v. *ẓill*.

[l] *Talḫīṣ*. See *WKAS* II 1, 428b.

[m] Literally, "not to be made to run in the same course with the others."

[15] Cf. the similar account of the disciple from Rayy, T13, §2.

[16] This is the beginning of the tradition that Fārābī is the "second teacher" after Aristotle. Bayhaqī, who cites this passage in his chapter on Abū-l-Ḫayr Ibn-Suwār (13.5-7/27), seems to have had a different text here.

aṭ-Ṭayyib's displeasure—apparently scholarly rivalry—is not stated in the letter; the author merely says discreetly, "the fact that somebody like Avicenna had sent for Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib's books did not meet with the latter's pleasure" (§3, middle). The emissary, however, was instructed to purchase the books irrespective of the price, and thus the sale was made. The story must have circulated in Baġdād quickly. In the philosophical circles in which the rivalry between the two men was known, Avicenna's eagerness to acquire the books despite the insultingly inflated price was interpreted—perhaps even at the suggestion of Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib himself—as indicating a commensurate scholarly need for them on his part. The letter was written in order to dispel this notion. The author asks specifically the recipient to circulate the letter so that people could realize that "the need for [Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib's] books was not as great as implied by [the willingness to pay] such an exorbitant price and ... that there was no satisfaction with them" (§4, middle). It was written either at the request of the recipient, who must have heard the rumours in Baġdād and wished to find out the true facts from his acquaintance in Rayy, or else it was sent on the disciple's own initiative in order to restore Avicenna's reputation in Baġdād. In any case, we owe this letter and the useful information it contains to an all too human situation: philosophical rivalry, scholarly gossip, and the hurt pride of a disciple.

The background of the letter is equally revealing. After the loss of the *Fair Judgment* during the sack of Iṣfahān, Avicenna would be neither enticed to rewrite it upon the request of his disciples in Rayy, nor provoked into polemics by sending for the new books of the philosophers in Baġdād. It was only when a rich young man—the Alcibiades of the group—offered to buy the books himself, thus suggesting that the real reason for Avicenna's refusal to consider rewriting the book was niggardliness, that Avicenna was moved to action and sent his emissary to Baġdād with the inevitable instructions that the books be bought at any price. We thus owe the events that prompted the letter also to a human situation: the young disciple's insolence and the master's *amour propre* and umbrageousness.

The events described in the letter took place in 421/1030, after the attack on Iṣfahān by the Ghaznavid Masʿūd and the loss of the *Fair Judgment* earlier that year. The letter itself was probably written shortly afterwards: after the death of the Ghaznavid Maḥmūd in May of 1030, who is referred to as "the late Sultan" (§2, beginning), but before the death of Avicenna in 428/1037, because he is referred to in the letter as "the man we are talking about" (*fulān*), without the customary (and in the case of a disciple, obligatory) benedictory formulae for the dead. In any case, the extreme upper limit is Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib's death in 435/1043, since he was alive at the time the letter was written. For further details on the chronology and the political events see Chapter 2, W10b.

The translation below is based on the text of the *Discussions* (*Mubāḥaṯāt*) in the Oxford MS, Bodleian Hunt. 534, ff. 13v ult.-15v -2 (H). This extremely reliable manuscript has been followed throughout except in a few cases, indicated in the textual notes. The Leiden MS Warn. Or. 864, ff. 64r1-66r11 (L), which appears to be derived from the Hunt. manuscript, was also consulted. The text of the letter was transcribed, apparently from the Hunt. manuscript but with numerous inaccuracies, in Mahdavī 206-210. All instances where Mahdavī differs from the Hunt. manuscript are recorded in the textual notes.

The letter was first noted in the Hunt. manuscript by S. M. Stern, who brought it to the attention of S. Pines just as the latter's "Philosophie Orien-

tale'' was about to be published. Pines could only include in an Appendix (pp. 35-36) a brief summary and a translation of the passage on the *Metaphysics* (§8, end; see also p. 21, n. 2). Stern himself apparently intended to edit the letter, as Pines reports, but the project never materialized. He only used the information on Ibn-as-Samḥ, and translated the relevant sentence (§3, middle), in his ''Ibn al-Samḥ,'' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1956, 32-33.

Memoirs of a Disciple from Rayy

1. God prolong your days! You are aware of the relationship between a group of us and Avicenna, just as you know the degree of attainment in all the sciences, and especially the true ones, with which God has distinguished him.

2. In the year when the horsemen of the late Sultan overran these lands, Avicenna was prompted for some reason to occupy himself with a book which he called *Fair Judgment*. It contained commentaries on all the books of Aristotle, among which he even included the *Theologia* [*Aristotelis*], about whose contents he brought out matters that had never been taken into account.[1] He examined all divergences of exegesis and Judged every question and every philosopher by bestowing Fairly praise or blame, and appreciation or deprecation. God only knows the number of problems and solutions, and Corollaries based on Fundamental Principles, which resulted, although the period [in which the book was composed] was from the middle of the month of Dey to the end of the month of Ḫordād in [less than] a year![2] It came to more than six thousand folios written in a cursive hand and ten thousand folios written in a print hand;[3] it relieved him, however, of what he needed to communicate and left him manifestly cheered. The number of issues he discussed as lemmata[a] about which he traced where previous statements were wrong, mistaken, deficient, or corrupt, was over twenty-seven thousand. But before all this was transcribed into a clean copy, he was hindered by a military rout in which all his belongings and books were carried off at the

[a] Reading *wa-jaʿalahu mawḍiʿan* for *mawḍiʿ* (nom. or gen.) in H and Mahdavī. L has *mawḍūʿ* (nom. or gen.).

[1] This is correct. The extant portions of Avicenna's commentary (see W10) are thorough and original. This is largely due, of course, to the fact that the *Theologia*, not being an Aristotelian text, had not been subjected to repeated commentaries in the Alexandrian tradition.

[2] That is, from about mid-December to early June, or approximately five and a half months. For a discussion of these dates see W10b.

[3] Cf. a similar statement by Rāzī in his autobiography: ''So great in fact have been my endeavours and endurance, that in a single year I have written as many as 20,000 pages in a script as minute as that used in amulets (*ḫaṭṭ at-taʿāwīḏ*);'' A. J. Arberry, *The Spiritual Physick of Rhazes* (London 1950) 16; Arabic text and French translation by P. Kraus, ''Raziana I,'' *Orientalia* 4 (1935) 320.12, 334.

gate of Iṣfahān. When he returned to Rayy, he was urged to rewrite all that, but he found this repugnant,[b] since doing all over again something that has just been completed is onerous.[4]

3. The instigations and incitements, however, continued: he was told, "If you would send for what the Modernists in Baġdād have just produced, perhaps the new[c] ideas might move you into action to pass judgment on them[5] by declaring them valid or erroneous." Then an aristocratic young man, one of the sons of the commanders, came forth and said that he would send from his own money the initial payment[d] needed to procure whatever [books] could be found there by the two masters, both of whom were alive at the time (God prolong the life of the survivor!).[6] Avicenna resented this and, loath to behave like a miser, instructed one of his friends to purchase the recent[e] books by the two masters. However, only the books by the venerable master [Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib] who is still alive could be located (God be pleased with him!). Avicenna was dealt unfairly in the transaction and was asked an exorbitant price: the fact that somebody like him had sent for that master's books did not meet with the latter's pleasure. But Avicenna had directed his friend not to be deterred from the purchase by a high price, and thus a number of that master's books was procured. When we studied them

[b] Reading *fa-staqazza*, clearly indicated in H. The word is not attested in the dictionaries.

[c] Reading the unpointed skeleton in H as *al-jadīda*, along with L. Mahdavī reads *al-ḥadīda*; but cf. note e below. Pines also paraphrases ("Philosophie Orientale" 35), "idées nouvelles."

[d] *Yastaftiḥu*. For this meaning of the verb see Dozy s.v.

[e] Reading *mā tajaddada*, clearly indicated in H; *mā yajidu* Mahdavī.

[4] Cf. the similar account given by Avicenna himself in the letter to Kiyā, T12, §3.

[5] Presumably the new ideas, although it would be more appropriate to understand by the pronoun the books of the Baġdādīs.

[6] Three Baġdādī scholars are mentioned by name in this letter: Abū-l-Ḫayr Ibn-al-Ḫammār (born 331/942), Abū-ʿAlī Ibn-as-Samḥ (died 418/1027), and Abū-l-Faraj Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib (died 435/1043). Since the events described in this letter took place in 421/1030 (see W10b), the scholar still alive at the time the letter was written is thus definitely Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib, as is also obvious from what follows. Ibn-as-Samḥ is listed by Ibn-al-Qifṭī 412 as having died in 418/1027, and thus he cannot be one of "the two masters" mentioned in this sentence. This leaves Ibn-al-Ḫammār, whose date of death is not known but who must have died, according to the information provided by this letter, sometime during 421/1030, at the age of 88 solar years. However, this calculation of the date of his death is valid only if Ibn-al-Qifṭī's date for the death of Ibn-as-Samḥ is reliable; if not, one of "the two masters" could just as well be Ibn-as-Samḥ whose date of death will have to be revised accordingly. The information provided by Ibn-Buṭlān (*ap.* Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa I.242-43; cf. the English translation of the passage in J. Schacht and M. Meyerhof, *The Medico-Philosophical Controversy between Ibn Butlan of Baghdad and Ibn Ridwan of Cairo*, Cairo 1937, 62-63), that Ibn-as-Samḥ and Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib died within "a period of ten and some odd years" (*fī muddati biḍʿa ʿašrata sanatan*) of each other is too vague to be of specific use here; nevertheless, it assures that the general range of these dates is correct.

carefully, we found such befuddlement and mental confusion the likes of which discriminating people[7] had never seen. Avicenna then spoke upraidingly to his instigators: "Didn't I tell you that this is the level [of Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib] and this the procedure? And that Abū-l-Ḫayr Ibn-al-Ḫammār and Ibn-as-Samḥ,[f] because their field is so narrow,[g] adhere[h] more closely than others to the [traditional] transmission[i] of certain books? To hear people magnify the substance and overrate the price [of Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib's books] you would think that they are brandishing[j] [for sale] something that no eye has ever seen or ear has ever heard." Then he said, "What one should do with these books is to send them back to their vendor and let him keep the money![8] On the other hand, I have heard that the master," meaning Abū-l-Faraj Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib, "was suffering[k] for a period from mental derangement due to illnesses that continuously befall thinkers;[9] perhaps this is one of his works from that period. Maybe time will cure him."[10]

4. Nevertheless, we are certainly astonished at those who are content with such a paltry[l] amount of research and then with such a deficient sort of exposition. Upon my life, these people relax and are satisfied with whatever they imagine to be the case which is easily treated, dismissing logic absolutely. With regard to the matters of syllogisms, their dismissal

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[f] *Ibn as-Samḥ* H.

[g] *ʿAlā ḍīqi majālihimā* seems to mean here "because their field is so narrow," rather than "in spite of their limited capacity," as in Stern, "Ibn al-Samḥ" 33. The same expression is used again later on in this text, §4, in this sense: *ḍīq majāl li-l-bayān*, "the narrow scope of exposition." Cf. Pines's paraphrase ("Philosophie Orientale" 36, n. 1), "ces savants sans envergure." Cf. also T11, note p.

[h] Reading *kāna taʿalluquhumā* with Mahdavī and L; *kāna wa-taʿalluquhumā* H.

[i] *Bi-riwāya* H; *bi-zāwiya* [!] L, followed by Stern in his translation ("Ibn al-Samḥ" 33): "this or that little corner."

[j] Reading *yahuzzūna* with H; *yḥḏwn* L; *yhdwn* Mahdavī.

[k] Reading *qad* for *fd* in Mahdavī.

[l] *Nazr* H; *nḏr* Mahdavī.

[7] *Ahl at-taḥṣīl*. I translate this term as "discriminating people" rather than in Avicenna's special sense of "those who Determine the Validity [of philosophical texts]" (see the Index of Technical Terms) because the words are used by the disciple in what appears to be a broader meaning. Nevertheless, since Avicenna criticized Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib, among other things, for not Determining the Validity of philosophical statements, echoes of this narrower signification are certainly to be perceived in this term as it is used here.

[8] Bayhaqī repeats this statement of Avicenna in his chapter on Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib (28.1/43), as noted by Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 16, n. 5, and Mahdavī 208, n. 1.

[9] According to Galenic humoral pathology, continuous thinking, or brooding, causes an excess of black bile in the body, which in turn brings about "black bile diseases," i.e., mental disorders, collectively known as *melancholia*, *sawdāʾ*.

[10] That Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib suffered from some mental disorder on account of his excessive study of metaphysics is reported by his student, Ibn-Buṭlān. See J. Schacht and M. Meyerhof, *Controversy* 87-88 (54 of the Arabic text).

is complete and they pay no attention whatever to them—and not only today, but they have been doing this for quite some time. As for the forms of syllogisms, specifically these people have disregarded them. Whenever they treated them, they strayed from the right path because they never acquired the habit of dealing with them and they never suffered the pains of analyzing the details of problems so that they may gain a syllogistic habit; their sole reliance, instead, is upon ideas not subject to rules.[11] I ask you to submit this account of the affair[m] to the discriminating[12] students of these sciences so that they will know, first, that the need for these books [by Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib] was not as great as implied by [the willingness to pay] such an exorbitant price, and second, that there was no satisfaction with them.[n] By God, among the books of confused people that we have studied carefully, never have our eyes fallen on anything more astray and tortuous[o] than the contents of these books: the[p] scant attention to substance [*al-maʿānī*], the narrow scope of exposition, the dubious argumentation that fails to convince,[q] the use of rhetorical and sophistical methods in the demonstrative sciences,[13] and the inconsistent procedures. These books [by Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib] that became available to us are those which he composed on the *Eisagoge* [of Porphyry], *Categories*, *De Interpretatione*, *Sophistici Elenchi*, *De Caelo*, *De Sensu et Sensato*, and *Metaphysics*. If anybody[r] in ʿIrāq to whom this letter is shown is doubtful that our group is right, let him turn to[s] any passage he wishes among the subjects [*al-maʿānī*] included in[t] these books—and especially in Physics and Theology—so that we may write some[u] of the corrup-

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[m] "Account of the affair:" *ṣūra*; cf. T8, note t.

[n] *Iqtirāru ʿaynin*: note the unusual VIIIth form of the verb for this familiar expression.

[o] Reading *aḥraj wa-aʿwaj* with H; *aḥraj wa-aḥwaj* Mahdavī. For the elative use of *afʿal* for deformities cf. W1 below, note m.

[p] I read *min qillat* ... for *maʿa qillat* ... in the MSS and Mahdavī. If *maʿa* were to be retained the meaning could possibly be, "Despite the fact that the books of confused people normally pay scant attention to substance, have a narrow scope of exposition, etc., Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib's books are even *more* astray and tortuous than they."

[q] *Tabkīt* Mahdavī; unpointed skeleton in H.

[r] Reading *fa-man* with H; *mimman* Mahdavī.

[s] Reading *fa-l-yaʿtanni* with H; *fa-l-yataʿayyan* [!] Mahdavī. L has *fa-l-yuʿayyin*, which corroborates the skeleton, if not the points of H. *Iʿtanna ʿalā*, in the VIIIth form, is not attested in the dictionaries; but cf. the base form, used with *ʿalā*, in Dozy, s.v.

[t] *ʿAlayhi* sic H.

[u] *Baʿḍan mā* [!] H; *baʿḍa mā* L, Mahdavī.

[11] This "syllogistic habit" is of course what Avicenna says he acquired in his youth; cf. his Autobiography (T3, §8) and the discussion in Chapter 3.3A.

[12] See above, note 7.

[13] What is meant here is that they use rhetorical or sophistical premisses or propositions when they deal with subjects that need to be analyzed by means of demonstrative propositions.

tions, inconsistencies, and nonsense that it contains in such a manner that no one will have any more doubts and no two people will disagree about pronouncing us right on the subject. As for Avicenna, [he will not write such refutations] because he keeps himself above[v] engaging in arguments about everything and everybody and upsetting friends, and because he never mentions anybody except with good words and excessive regard[w].[14]

5. What is astonishing, though, is that one should dare to have such confounded writings be taken to someone like Avicenna: for he is the person who taught us to analyze into simple terms [of syllogisms] all the Philosophical Sciences, all their Corollary Principles, and whatever is further derived from them, not according to the forms of the [syllogistic] figures but according to their matters. He also taught us how to take into account the relations existing among simple terms, as well as, among other things, his minute investigation of these relations and especially of the sciences of the demonstrative syllogism. After every subject [*mawḍiᶜ*] in the Philosophical Sciences, middle terms occur in this syllogism, and there is need to bring them in from outside [of the syllogism] and [to know] where they can be found and where they cannot.[x] For Avicenna has a superbly detailed knowledge, unparalleled in others, of what does not constitute terms of premisses in demonstrative, dialectical, and sophistical syllogisms.

6. We constantly used to hear him say: "In analysis, do not spend too much time taking into account the forms of syllogisms for that's one of the easy parts and a sound instinct rarely makes a mistake about it; you should rather practice examining in detail the matters [of syllogisms]."

7. We also heard from him that it is beneficial to Determine the Validity of these books because, [he said,] "the limited sophistical *topoi* are both verbal and semantic [in nature]. Those that Aristotle set down are few, but the Corollary Principles which we Worked Out are many and almost equivalent to the dialectical *topoi*. The Sophistics [part of *The*

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[v] H has the unusual VIIIth form, *yantazihu*, which is to be preferred. L "corrects" it to the Vth: *yatanazzahu*; *ytzh* Mahdavī.

[w] "Excessive regard:" *šahāda mufriṭa*; cf. the Persian-Turkish expression, *ḥosn-e* (*ḥüsn-ü*) *šehādet*.

[x] The structure of this sentence, if it is not corrupt, is not clear to me. Mahdavī reproduces the text in H (the first letter in *yaqifu* has a small vertical line drawn over it). L has the same skeleton text as in H, but a second hand added points later to read *yᶜd* (*yaᶜuddu*?) for *bᶜd* in H and *ṯqf* (*ṯaqa/ifa*?) for *yqf* in H.

[14] This is a reference, stated in flattering terms, to what Avicenna repeatedly says about his unwillingness to write commentaries and detailed refutations. See T8, §3; T9, §1 end; L38 from the introduction to the Physics part of *The Cure*, and the discussion in Chapter 5.2.

Cure] is not short on account of their small number: the very same *topoi* are examined repeatedly in order that the book reach an appropriate length. All these *topoi* are provided in these compilations [of mine] with examples drawn from the Philosophical Sciences and supersede those examples [of Aristotle], some of which were derived[y] from common definitions and others from conversations current at that time [of Aristotle] but since forgotten."[15]

8. We also heard him say, "It distresses me that the belief in the permanence of the first principle and in the permanence of its unity should be arrived at by means of motion and the oneness of the moved world, as if[z] the *Metaphysics* could yield its riches concerning God Almighty only in this way! This is to be regarded as distressing not on the part of the Modernists only, but also on the part of all their masters like them." He further said, "Had they comprehended the innermost ideas of the *Metaphysics* they would have been ashamed of this sort of thing and not felt compelled[aa] to maintain that the course to be adopted includes[bb] both the Physical approach and the Theological approach—something totally unfounded because this book [Aristotle's *Metaphysics*] is distinguished by the Theological approach alone."[16]

9. As a matter of fact, Avicenna himself had composed a separate commentary on this book, whose part on the *Alpha Elatton* alone contained approximately everything in the commentary imported from Baġdād. Furthermore, he did not include in it any problems whose Corollary Principles he had already Worked Out in Logic, Physics, or Mathematics. Nothing was repeated, and no exposition was lengthy but rather expressed as concisely as possible despite the inclusion of [all] the subjects [*al-maʿānī*].[17]

10. Frequently[cc] Avicenna used to say: "A commentator should provide all the premisses that are needed, and omit nothing but the obvious and the superfluous,[18] for the most incompetent commentator is he who

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[y] Reading *al-mūrada* with H: *mūrada* Mahdavī.

[z] Reading *ka-anna* with H; *li-anna* Mahdavī.

[aa] Reading *yuḥwi/ajū*, clearly indicated in H; *yaḥrujū* Mahdavī.

[bb] *Hāḏihi l-maʾāḫiḏ fihi* sic H.

[cc] *Wa-kaṯīran* L, Mahdavī; *wa-kaṯīr* H.

[15] See Chapters 3.3Ei and 5.2 for the implications of this passage for Avicenna's understanding of the philosophical method and of the historical contextuality of the philosophical praxis.

[16] See Chapter 6.3.

[17] In all likelihood this commentary formed part of Avicenna's early work, *The Available and the Valid*. See W3.

[18] Literally, "that whose omission cannot be concealed and whose mention is not obligatory/appropriate (*yabrudu*)."

uses in his commentary premisses more cryptic than, or as cryptic as, the premisses of whatever he is commenting upon. These commentaries which [purport to] bring us the truth conceal in fact the theses better than the original texts,[dd] while what they conceal[ee] most is errors."

Text 14. *On the Rational Soul*

On the Rational Soul (M122) is in all probability Avicenna's very last work. He refers in it to the *Compendium on the Soul*, which he wrote, he says, forty years previously, at the beginning of his career (§1; see W1). Fate appropriately decreed that Avicenna should start and end his career with a work on the human soul, the subject that focuses and motivates his philosophy.

This essay presents *in nuce* Avicenna's philosophical system, structured around the central concept of the rational soul. All the philosophical sciences with which Avicenna was most intimately concerned and which engaged his sustained scholarly attention are brought into mutual relationship: logic, the fruits of metaphysics and physics, ethics, and even medicine (see Chapter 6.2). It is an integrated theoretical construct reflecting an integrated view of the universe and man's position in it.

The text was translated from the edition of Ahwānī *Aḥwāl* 195-199. I have indicated my suggestions for improving the text in the notes.

On the rational soul

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

God bless our Master, Muḥammad, and his family, and grant them peace.

Make [my task] easy, O my gracious Lord!

Praise be to God alone.

1. Know that human beings alone, to the exclusion of all other living beings, posses a faculty highly capable of grasping the intelligibles. This faculty is sometimes called rational soul, sometimes "soul at peace,"[1] sometimes sacred soul, sometimes spiritual spirit, sometimes commanding[a] spirit, sometimes good word, sometimes word that unites and separates, sometimes divine secret,[2] sometimes governing light, some-

[dd] "The original texts:" *al-fuṣūṣ* L; *al-quṣūṣ* [!] H; *an-nuṣūṣ* Mahdavī. Cf. the use of the same word (*fuṣūṣ*) by Avicenna in T12, §3.

[ee] Reading *ḫafāʾihā* with H; *ḫafāʾan* Mahdavī.

[a] If the reading *amrī* is correct. Perhaps *taʾmūrī*, "spiritual self," is to be read.

[1] This is a reference to the Qurʾānic description of the soul that enters heaven (89.27-30): "O soul at peace,/ return unto thy Lord, well-pleased, well-pleasing!/ Enter thou among my servants!/ Enter thou My Paradise!" (Arberry's translation).

[2] Or perhaps "self:" *sirr*. Cf. A.-M. Goichon, "Le Sirr 'l'intime du cœur' dans la doctrine avicennienne de la connaissance," *Studia Semitica Ioanni Bakoš Dicata*, Bratislava 1965, 119-126.

times true heart, sometimes core of the self [*lubb*], sometimes understanding [*nuhan*], and sometimes brains [*hijan*]. It exists in every single human being, young or old, adolescent or adult, insane or sane, sick or sound.

2. At the beginning of its existence this faculty is devoid of the forms of the intelligibles, and from this point of view it is then called material intellect.

3. Next there come about in it the forms of the primary intelligibles, which are concepts whose truth is Ascertained with [the use of] syllogisms or [a process of] learning and acquisition. They are called the starting point of intellects, general notions, and innate primary knowledge, like, for example, the knowledge that the whole is greater than the part, and that a single body cannot occupy two places at the same time, or be simultaneously black and white, existent and non-existent.[3] Through these forms, the faculty is prepared[b] to acquire the secondary intelligibles either by means of reflection, which is an act of finding what <results from>[c] these primary intelligibles by [their] composition and combination [to form definitions and syllogisms], or by means of Intuition, which is the representation of the middle term in the faculty all at once and without thinking or considering. By "middle term" I mean the cause which makes assent to the existence or the non-existence of a thing necessary—i.e., the evidence which justifies the judgment—and this sometimes comes about following search and a desire to attain the intelligibles, and sometimes initially, without desire or search; and whenever the evidence is attained, so is invariably that for which the evidence is provided.[d]

4. Through these acquired intelligibles this faculty next assumes an aspect and a state by means of which it is ready to call to presence the intelligibles whenever it wishes without needing to acquire them. This aspect is called *habitus*, and the faculty, in this state and from this point of view, is called actual intellect. When the intelligibles are actually

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[b] Reading *wa-tatahayyaʾu bi-hāḏihi ṣ-ṣuwar* for *wa-yatahayyaʾu* (*yutahayyaʾu*?) *bi-hāḏihi l-qūwa* in the text.

[c] Reading *mā <yaḥṣulu> min* for *mā fī* in the text. As it stands, the text means, "finding out what these primary intelligibles contain by composition and combination," which makes no sense; the contents of the primary intelligibles are self-evident. For the emendation cf. *Najāt* 102.9-10: *fa-tartasimu fī l-ʿaqli l-maʿānī l-ūlā li-l-mutaṣawwarāt ṯumma yurakkibu minhā l-ḥudūd*: "the primary meanings of concepts are then imprinted on the intellect which then combines them to produce definitions [or terms of syllogisms]."

[d] Reading *wa-mahmā ḥaṣala d-dalīlu, ḥaṣala l-madlūlu lā maḥālata.*

[3] Cf. the same examples used by Avicenna in his very first work, T1, §2.

present in the faculty as being observed and represented[e] in it, then from this point of view it is called acquired intellect.[4]

5. This rational soul is a substance subsisting in itself, and is imprinted neither in a human body nor in any other corporeal entity. On the contrary, it is separable and abstracted from material and corporeal entities. It has a certain association with the human body as long as the person is alive, but this association is not like the relation of a thing to its receptacle; it is, rather, like the relation of a wielder of an instrument to the instrument. [This substance] comes into existence together with the body, not before, but it does not perish when the body perishes and dies; it survives, rather, as it was, except that <it attains, after>[f] its association with the body is severed,[5] either bliss and pleasure or misery and pain.

6. The bliss [of the soul][g] comes about when its substance is rendered perfect,[6] and this is accomplished when it is purified through knowledge of God and works for God. Its purification through works for God consists of (a) its being purged of vile and wicked qualities of character, (b) its rehabilitation from blameworthy attributes and evil and offensive habits by following reason and religious law, and (c) its being adorned with good habits, praiseworthy qualities of character, and excellent and pleasing traits by following reason and religious law.

7. Its purification through knowledge of God consists of its attainment a *habitus* it has, by means of which it is ready to call all the intelligibles to presence whenever it wishes without needing to acquire them, and thus to have all the intelligibles present in it in actuality, or in a potentiality that is as close to actuality as possible.[7] The soul then becomes like a polished mirror upon which are reflected the forms of things as they are

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[e] Reading *mušāhadatan mumaṯṯilatan*, as in the parallel passage from the *Išārāt* II.391.3-4.

[f] The text seems to be defective. For the words included in the angular brackets here Ahwānī provides the following: *illā annahu <taḥṣulu lahu ḥālatun tusammā ʿindamā* [!]> *tanqaṭiʿu ʿalāqatuhu ... saʿādatan*. I suggest *illā annahu <yanālu baʿda an> tanqaṭiʿa ʿalāqatuhu ... saʿādatan*. See also note 4.

[g] The text has the masculine pronoun (*saʿādatuhu*), presumably referring to the substance (*jawhar*) of the soul, but in the context only the soul can be meant.

[4] Cf. the very similar exposition of the subject in the passage from *Pointers and Reminders* translated below, Chapter 3.2, L11.

[5] I.e., after death. The text published by Ahwānī, as a matter of fact, adds, "that is, after the severance of the association through death" (*ay baʿda nqiṭāʿi l-ʿalāqati bi-l-mawt*). This could hardly have existed in the original, however, and it looks like a marginal scribal gloss incorporated into the main text.

[6] "To render perfect," *takmīl*, is naturally to be understood in the Aristotelian sense of *entelecheia*, "to bring out into full actuality."

[7] That is, to attain the stages of intellect *in habitu* and acquired intellect, respectively.

in themselves[8] without any distortion, and whenever it stands face to face with them having been purified through knowledge, there ensues [an automatic] practicing of the theoretical philosophical sciences.

8. Purification through works is accomplished by methods mentioned in books on Ethics and by assiduous performance of religious duties, both legal and traditional, such as observances relating to [the functions of] the body, one's property, and to a combination of the two. For performing what is pleasing to religious law and its statutes, and undertaking to submit to its commands, are beneficial in subjugating the soul that "incites to evil"[9] [and thus transforming it] into the rational soul which is "at peace,"[9] i.e., making the bodily faculties of the soul, the appetitive and the irascible, subservient to the rational soul which is "at peace."

9. Now it has become clear in the physical sciences that personal qualities and habits follow the temperament of the body,[10] in the sense that the dominant characteristics of a phlegmatic (a person whose temperament is dominated by phlegm) are sedateness, dignity, and forbearance, a choleric (he whose temperament is dominated by yellow bile) anger, and a melancholic (he whose temperament is dominated by black bile) ill disposition. Each one of these [humors], furthermore, is followed by other qualities of character which we shall not mention here. There is thus no doubt that temperament is subject to change, in which case qualities of character are also subject to change thereby; and it is for this reason that the performance of the exercises mentioned in books on Ethics is specified. Whenever a person's temperament is balanced, his qualities of character are easily refined; his balanced temperament is thus influential in this process. The unbalanced temperament, on the other hand, is that which is overpowered by one or two of its four elements (when, for example, it is hotter or drier than it ought to be). Since these four elements are [two pairs of elements that are] opposite to each other, the unbalanced temperament will be constituted of [the excess of] either one opposite [element all by itself] or two opposite [elements in combina-

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[8] Cf. the similar turn of phrase used by Avicenna to describe the contents of *The Easterners* in the Prologue to *The Cure*, T9, §4.

[9] The reference is again to a Qur'ānic verse, 12.53: "Surely the soul of man incites to evil" (Arberry's translation). For the "soul at peace" that follows see above, note 1.

[10] Galen wrote a book by this title, *That the Faculties of the Soul Are Consequent upon the Temperaments of the Body* (IV.767-822 Kühn), which was translated into Arabic and widely discussed in medical, physiological, and psychological writings. See Biesterfeldt *Galens Traktat*. "Temperament" here is to be understood in its traditional sense, i.e., the particular blending (*krasis*, *mizāj*) of the four humors (blood, phlegm, black bile, yellow bile) which were thought to determine a person's mental and emotional constitution. This theory lies behind the etymology of the word idiosyncrasy, i.e., one's own particular blend of humors. Cf. the words "phlegmatic," "choleric," and "melancholic" next explained by Avicenna in the text.

tion], that is, it will have [either an excess of heat alone or cold alone, etc., or] neither heat [alone] nor cold [alone] but [an excess of] an element intermediate between the two.[11] The closer a temperament is to a balanced state, the more is a person predisposed to develop excellent traits in both his knowledge and his works.

10. It has also become clear in the <Physical> sciences that the celestial bodies are not constituted from a mixture of these four elements but are totally lacking in these opposites. Furthermore, it is only the involvement with these opposites that hinders the reception of the divine effluence, by which I mean the inspiration coming from the Lord, occurring all at once and revealing some intellectual truth. The closer, therefore, a temperament is to a balanced state, the more is a person predisposed to receive this effluence. Since the celestial bodies are totally devoid of the opposites, they are receptive to the divine effluence; human beings, on the other hand, no matter how balanced their temperaments may be, are not free from flaws [due to the involvement with] the opposites. As long as the rational soul is associated with the human body, no corporeal entity [*jirm*] can be completely ready to receive[h] the divine effluence or to have perfectly revealed to it all the intelligibles. But when a person expends all his efforts to purify [his rational soul] through knowledge, acquires the propensity for contact with the divine effluence (i.e., with the intellectual substance which is the medium of the divine effluence and which is called "angel" in the language of Revelation and "active intellect" in philosophical terminology), has a balanced temperament, and lacks these opposites which hinder his reception of the divine effluence, then there comes about in him a certain similarity to the celestial bodies and he resembles in his purity the seven mighty ones, i.e., the seven celestial spheres. When the association of the soul with the body is severed through death, something which is designated with the expression "separation of the form from the receivers"—for the appellation "form" may be applied to the soul and the appellation "the receiver of the soul" may be applied to the body, even if the meaning of this "receiving" is unlike that of a receptacle "receiving" what occupies it, but is rather like that of a place where an activity occurs "receiving" the activity: the body "receives" the activity of the soul, and from this point of view it is possible (a) to call the body "receiver of the soul," (b) to call

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[h] Reading *la yasfū li-qabūli l-fayḍ.*

[11] The excess of a single element produces the simple unbalanced temperament, while the excess of one element formed from the combination of two opposite elements produces the composite unbalanced temperament. For a concise account of humoral physiology see M. Ullmann, *Islamic Medicine*, Edinburgh 1978, 55-64.

the soul "form," and (c) to designate the severance of the association between the two with the expression "separation of the form from the receivers"—when, then, this separation occurs after the soul has acquired excellent traits in its knowledge and works, and the obstacle that hindered it from receiving the divine effluence in its totality ceases to exist (the obstacle being the association of [the soul with the body, which consists of] its activity in the body), then the soul[i] will receive the divine effluence, will have revealed to it whatever was hidden from it before the separation, and there will come about it a similarity with the abstract intellects which are the principles of the causes of beings, since all the truths are revealed to these intellects. (You know that God Almighty first created an intellect, then by its means another intellect and a celestial sphere, then by means of the other intellect a third intellect and a second celestial sphere, and so on in the order we mentioned; the intellects, then, are the principles of the causes.)[j]

11. This, then, is what we wished to mention on this occasion in explanation of this divine word.[12] As for the demonstrative proof establishing that the rational soul is a substance, subsists by itself, is free of any corporeality, is not imprinted on any corporeal entity, survives after the death of the human body, and whether its condition after death is one of blessing or punishment, it involves a long and elaborate investigation and can be brought to light only after numerous premisses have been mentioned. As a matter of fact, I happened to write at the beginning of my career forty years ago a summary treatise[13] setting forth the knowledge about the soul and related matters by following the method of those who engage in philosophy through research;[14] whoever wishes to find out about the soul should study this treatise because it is appropriate for students who do research. But God Almighty "guides whomsoever He will"[15] to the way of those who engage in philosophy

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[i] The pronoun is again masculine, which could refer, strictly speaking, to *jins* or *jawhar*; the meaning, however, is clear.

[j] Ahwānī adds here three paraphrased quotations from the preceding text, presumably to provide substantiation for the argument of Avicenna presented here in parentheses. The addition is unwarranted.

[12] I.e., the rational soul; cf. the list of names for it given above, paragraph 1. Landauer 338.4 assumes the reference to be to metaphysics ("metaphy."?).

[13] The reference is to the *Compendium on the Soul* (W1), from which the passage in T1 is extracted. Cf. Landauer 336-39.

[14] "Those who engage in philosophy through research:" *ahl al-ḥikma al-baḥṯīya*, literally, "those of research philosophy;" i.e., those who use the method of logical demonstration, using syllogisms, as implied in the preceding sentence. They are opposed to the experiential philosophers, below, note 16. See the discussion in Chapter 3.2.

[15] A frequent Qurʾānic phrase which normally reads, "God guides whomsoever He will to a straight path" (2.142, 2.213, etc.; Arberry's translation).

through direct experience[16]—may He put us and you in the latter group! He is in charge of such a thing, capable of it!

Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds.

God bless the best among the best of mankind, our Master Muḥammad, the members of his family, the good and pure, and all his companions.

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[16] "Those who engage in philosophy through direct experience:" *ahl al-ḥikma aḍ-ḍawqīya*, literally, "those of experiential philosophy;" i.e., those who engage in philosophy through Intuition, as explained above, in paragraph 3. See the discussion in Chapter 3.2.

2.

AN INVENTORY AND RELATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF AVICENNA'S MAJOR PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS. THEIR ORGANIZATION AND CONTENTS IN RELATION TO THE ARISTOTELIAN TRADITION

Introduction

After a youth spent in tranquillity in Buḫārā, Avicenna led an itinerant and turbulent life. His literary output, which spanned a period of approximately forty years, was nevertheless immense. His works seem to exceed one hundred, although their precise number has yet to be determined; they are extant in hundreds of manuscripts, while an equally large number of writings attributed to him and extant in as many manuscripts is apparently spurious.

The transmission of Avicenna's works is extremely complicated. This is as much due to the peculiar way in which they were composed as it is to external factors affecting their preservation. His disciple and biographer, Jūzjānī, writes that Avicenna was very liberal with his works "and showed little interest in keeping copies [for himself]. ... These were widely dispersed and ... people who owned a copy of them Withheld them [from others]; as for him, it was not his habit to save a copy for himself, just as it was not his habit to make a copy from his archetype or transcribe [an archetype] from his rough draft: he would only either dictate or himself write the manuscript and give it to the person who had commissioned it from him" [T7, §§1-2]. Another aspect of Avicenna's method of composition which Jūzjānī does not mention but which is crucial for establishing the relative chronology of the works is that Avicenna frequently copied entire passages from earlier works in later ones. This fact is also significant in enabling us to estimate the works of which Avicenna had kept copies. "Moreover," to quote Jūzjānī again, "he suffered from successive misfortunes, and disasters destroyed his books" [T7, §2]. At the time of his death, the spread of Avicenna's books was thus in a rather chaotic state. Valiant efforts were made by successive generations of disciples and bibliographers, writing in the grand tradition of Arabic bibliography, to draw up accurate and complete lists of his works. In these lists, constantly new titles appear; some of these are obviously spurious, but others are just as obviously authentic: some are variant titles of works already known, others may be the lost commis-

sioned pieces Jūzjānī talked about which resurfaced in the libraries of the descendants of the original sponsors. All this information has to be assessed and harmonized with the additional information about the transmission of a work contained in the preserved manuscripts (scribal and owners' notes) as well as with the internal evidence of the works themselves.

The bibliographies of Avicenna's works by Anawati (1950), Mahdavī (1954), and Ergin (second edition, 1956), superseding the earlier one by Brockelmann (1937), and the early lists of Avicenna's works collected and rationalized by Gohlman (1974), manage, despite their inevitable imperfections, to bring this vast amount of source material under some kind of control and make it readily accessible.[1] Mahdavī's bibliography is by far the most useful. In addition to listing the extant manuscripts, the incipits and explicits, and contents of the works—information also provided by Anawati—Mahdavī discusses, at times extensively, their origin and date. In a brief appendix, Gohlman describes the difficulties inherent in dating Avicenna's works and presents some of them in a rough chronological order, grouping them under the headings of works written in Buḫārā (before 392/1002), in Gurgānj (392/1002-402/1012), in Jurjān (402/1012-405/1014), in Rayy (405/1014-15), in Hamaḏān (405/1015-415/1024), and in Iṣfahān (415/1024-428/1037).

Doubtless more manuscripts will still be discovered in the future, some of those already known will be reevaluated and reassigned to a different work or rejected, the extant lists of works will be edited and studied with greater detail and accuracy, a complete collection of testimonia for each work will be compiled, and the chronological order of all the works will be established with greater certainty. The task at hand, however, is to prepare, with the material already available, a critical and descriptive catalogue raisonné of Avicenna's works taking into consideration all of the factors decribed in the preceding paragraph. The purpose of this chapter is to present a first attempt at such an inventory for the major philosophical works of Avicenna.

For each work treated, I will discuss the occasion, date, and details of its composition, and wherever relevant, trace the history of its transmission. This will be followed by a description of its contents, which intends to give a clear picture of the relation of the work to its predecessors and successors, including information about passages copied, and, consonant with the aim of this study, to assess its position relative to the canon of Aristotle's writings.

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[1] For the references see above, Introduction to the book, note 2.

My selection of what I consider "major philosophical works" certainly includes works universally acknowledged as "major," but it is also based on a criterion dictated by the subject of this book, namely, the extent to which a given work by Avicenna contributes to our understanding of the way in which he received, modified, and transmitted the Aristotelian tradition, thereby transforming the history of philosophy. I have thus included titles which although they may not be considered as major absolutely, nevertheless constitute important landmarks in the transformation of the Aristotelian tradition at the hands of Avicenna. In presenting the particulars of the composition of most of these works and dating them, my main purpose has been to establish their relative chronology only because absolute dating could not be offered consistently. Apart from the works for which it has been possible to give absolute dates on the basis of external evidence, the remaining can be dated only on the basis of Avicenna's age when he wrote them; converting his age into absolute dates, however, would necessarily have to depend on his birthdate, and this is uncertain.[2] An investigation of Avicenna's birthdate and a detailed description of the events in his life and their dates are the subject of a much needed critical biography,[3] clearly beyond the scope of this study.

Each section below is introduced by the title of the work to be discussed, followed by the serial number of the work assigned to it in the bibliographies of A[nawati] and M[ahdavī]. Readers without Arabic may refer to Anawati's "Œuvre" in French, where the same numbers of the

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[2] The best exposition of the problems associated with the dating of Avicenna's year of birth is again Sellheim's review of Ergin, pp. 232-39, overlooked by Gohlman, as Ullmann notes in his review of the latter. Another study that discusses at some length the chronology of Avicenna's life and of the composition of his works is the dissertation by E. Panoussi, *La Notion de participation dans la philosophie d'Avicenne*, Université Catholique de Louvain 1967 (now stored at Louvain-la-Neuve), but the sources are used indiscriminately and erratically, and the conclusions reached are frequently different from my own (cf. W11 note 1). Panoussi, who also overlooked Sellheim's review, dates Avicenna's birth in 978 (p. 107). See now also Gutas "Avicenna's *Maḏhab*," Appendix.

[3] Biographies of Avicenna naturally abound, but none is completely satisfactory. Useful collections of all the traditional material, but with little critical analysis, are offered by the biographies written by three Iranian scholars: Z. Safa, *Le Livre du Millénaire d'Avicenne* [Collection du Millénaire d'Avicenne, no. 27], Tehran 1953, 1-53 (French translation of the first part of the author's *Sargoḏašt va taʾlīfāt va ašʿār va ārāʾ-ye Ebn-e Sīnā*, Tehran 1331); S. Nafīsī, *Zendegī va kār va andīše va rūzgār-e Pūr-e Sīnā*, Tehran 1333/1954; A. Riḍvānī, *Abū ʿAlī Sīnā*, Tehran 1344. Anawati once mentioned ("Œuvre" 413, note 1) that M. El-Khodeiri had undertaken to compile a detailed biography of Avicenna, a project apparently unfinished because of El-Khodeiri's death (see the obituaries in *MIDEO* 6[1959-61]533-60).—The available categories of sources, with a discussion of their relationship and the tasks of the future biographer, are analyzed by D. Gutas, "Avicenna: Biography," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, III. 67-68.

works have been used as those in his Arabic bibliography. The numbers after the full names of Anawati and Mahdavī refer to the pages in their works.

Work 1. *Compendium on the Soul* (*Maqāla fī n-nafs ʿalā sunnat al-iḫtiṣār*) [M120, A102]

Avicenna began his career as an author, at the age of seventeen, with a short treatise on the soul in ten chapters, dedicated to the Sāmānid ruler in Buḫārā, Nūḥ b. Manṣūr.[1] Avicenna refers to it in his introduction simply as "a treatise on the soul after the fashion of compendia," but it has been given various titles in the bibliographical and manuscript traditions in order to distinguish it from the numerous works which he wrote on the subject. I have labeled it his "Dissertation" because it was written when he had completed what can be called his "graduate" education.[2]

The date of its composition was established quite convincingly by Landauer, who was the first to edit and translate it in German.[3] The most compelling argument Landauer adduces is based on the internal evidence provided by Avicenna's last treatise, *On the Rational Soul*:

> ... The demonstrative proof establishing that the rational soul is a substance, subsists by itself, is free of any corporeality, is not imprinted on any corporeal entity, survives after the death of the human body, and whether its condition after death is one of blessing or punishment ... involves a long and elaborate investigation and can be brought to light only after numerous premisses have been mentioned. As a matter of fact, I happened to write at the beginning of my career forty years ago a summary treatise setting forth the knowledge about the soul and related matters by following the method of those who engage in philosophy through research; whoever wishes to find out about the soul should study this treatise because it is appropriate for students who do research [T14, §11].

The list of the subjects given in this passage as treated by Avicenna in the earlier treatise corresponds quite accurately with chapters 9 and 10 (in the table of contents given below); particularly significant is Avicenna's mention of the "demonstrative proofs" (*barāhīn*) used to establish that the soul is a substance, because in chapter 9 of the *Compendium* Avicenna makes a point to present demonstrative syllogisms, as

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[1] A readily available survey of the Sāmānid dynasty in Ḫurāsān and Transoxania (204/819-395/1005) is the article "The Sāmānids" by R. N. Frye in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Cambridge 1975, IV.136-161. A brief chronology of the house is also offered by C. E. Bosworth, *The Islamic Dynasties*, Edinburgh 1967, 101-102.

[2] See Chapter 3.1.

[3] Landauer 336-39. Landauer's arguments are reproduced in English by van Dyck 18-19.

opposed to mere "arguments" (*ḥujaj*) presented elsewhere.[4] By Avicenna's own admission, therefore, his first work was on the soul and its contents fit those of the *Compendium*. Next, having correctly noted that the dedication to the Prince in the *Compendium* is written with an obsequiousness unparalleled in the other writings of Avicenna, Landauer infers that it must have been dedicated to the first ruler with whom Avicenna had ever had dealings, namely Nūḥ b. Manṣūr. His inference is corroborated by Alpago's Latin translation of the *Compendium* which states at the very beginning that the work was dedicated "to Nūḥ, the King of Ḫurāsān."[5] Avicenna states in his Autobiography that he became proficient in medicine when he was sixteen (T3, §7) and that he was subsequently summoned to Nūḥ's court to treat him; assuming the traditional date of Avicenna's birth (370/980) to be correct, Landauer calculates that this could have taken place at the earliest in 386/996. Since forty lunar years after Nūḥ's death (387/997) brings us to the year 427, well within Avicenna's lifetime (he died in 428/1037), Laundauer concludes that the *Compendium* must have been written between 996 and 997.

Two minor objections can be raised to Landauer's calculations. First, the "forty years" mentioned by Avicenna in his *On the Rational Soul* need not be taken literally, and second, the year of his birth has still to be established with certainty. However, these objections affect only the absolute dating of the *Compendium* between the years 996-997; the relative chronology still stands, for there can be very little doubt, for the reasons already stated, that the *Compendium* was indeed Avicenna's first work. In addition to Avicenna's testimony in his *On the Rational Soul* and Landauer's arguments, it can also be mentioned that Avicenna's unique theory of Intuition (*ḥads*), present in all his writings on the soul, had not yet developed in the *Compendium*.[6]

It may be possible to ascertain with greater precision the age in which Avicenna wrote this work. Two considerations are of relevance: (a) The description of metaphysics in the *Compendium* is heavily indebted, even in its very wording, to that in Fārābī's *On the Purposes of the Metaphysics*.[7] In the Autobiography Avicenna mentions that after he was sixteen, he

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[4] For the difference between argument and proof in Avicenna see below, Chapter 3.3A and L18.

[5] *Ad Nuch regem Corrasan*, Alpago 1. Alpago manifestly found this dedication in the Arabic manuscript from which he was translating. The wording of the dedication, however (if *rex Corrasan* translates *malik Ḫurāsān*), indicates that it could not have been contemporary with Avicenna because he refers to the ruler as *amīr*. It would seem that a later scribe or owner either made the same calculations as Landauer or, less plausibly, had access to independent information to this effect.

[6] See the texts on this subject and the discussion in Chapter 3.2.

[7] See T1, §3.IV, and Chapter 6.1 for a discussion.

spent a year and a half studying all the parts of philosophy again, and that metaphysics was the last subject he mastered, with the help of Fārābī's book (T3, §§8-9). He was thus about seventeen and a half when he discovered Fārābī's book and he could accordingly have written the *Compendium* only after that time. (b) In the introduction of the *Compendium* Avicenna says that after "industrious scrutiny of the books of learned men (*kutub al-ʿulamāʾ*)," he found out that the subject of the faculties of the soul was among the hardest; a paragraph later he repeats that he "had read in the books of the ancients (*kutub al-awāʾil*)" how they undertook to study the soul upon being inspired from the saying "know thyself and thou shalt know thy Lord" inscribed on the Temple of Asclepius.[8] This implies wide reading which, given that the *Compendium* was written approximately forty years before Avicenna's death, most likely took place in the royal library, as described in the Autobiography. At about the same time that he discovered Fārābī's book, Avicenna was summoned to the royal court to help the physicians cure the ailing Nūḥ b. Manṣūr. He was successful and was enrolled in Nūḥ's service. Then, he continues,

> One day I asked his permission to enter [the physicians'] library, look through it, and read its contents. He gave me permission... . I looked through the catalogue of books by the ancients (*kutub al-awāʾil*) and requested those which I needed. I saw books whose very names are unknown to many and which I had never seen before nor have I seen since. I read those books, mastered their teachings, and realized how far each man had advanced in his science. So by the time I reached my eighteenth year I had completed my study in all these Philosophical Sciences [T3, §§10-11].

The *Compendium* presupposes—and reflects—the learning acquired during the approximately six months spent in the royal library, a period of study which I have labeled Avicenna's "graduate education" (Chapter 3.1). The result was the treatise on the soul, dedicated to Nūḥ apparently in gratitude for the favor of allowing him to visit the library, and written between the ages of seventeen and a half and eighteen.

The contents of the work are listed by Avicenna in a table which he provides at the end of his introduction. The chapter headings presented there are fuller and more descriptive than they are in their respective places within the text; I translate them therefore from the table of contents and mark significant variations in the notes.[9]

> Introduction and dedication; table of contents.
>
> 1. Establishing [the existence of] the faculties of the soul, with whose detailed presentation and explanation I begin.

[8] Landauer 340.11-13, 341.1-4.

[9] The table of contents (Landauer 341-42) is also given by Anawati *Muʾallafāt* 160-61 and Mahdavī 243.

2. Primary division[a] of the faculties of the soul; absolute [generic][b] definition of the soul.

3. None of the faculties of the soul originates from the mixture of the four elements; instead they come upon it from without.

4. Detailed statement of the vegetative faculties; mention of the need for each one of them.

5. Detailed statement of the animal faculties; mention of the need for each one of them.

6. Detailed statement of the external senses[c]; how they perceive; differences of opinion concerning vision.[d]

7. Detailed statement of the internal senses and of the faculty that moves the body.

8. The stages of the human soul from inception to perfection [partial translation in T1, above].

9. That the rational[e] soul is a substance:[f] presentation of necessary[g] demonstrative proofs following the method of logic.

10. Presentation of the argument for the existence of an intellectual substance separable from corporeal entities, which functions like a source for the rational faculties[h] or like light for vision; declaration that the rational souls remain united with it after the death of the body,[i] secure from corruption and change: it[j] is what is called 'universal intellect.'[k]

Avicenna's choice of a subject for his very first work is indicative of the direction which his philosophical thought was to take throughout his life. The study of the human soul, and particularly its rational part according to the Aristotelian division, to which he repeatedly reverted in numerous works throughout his career, constitutes the cornerstone of his philosophy. The reason for this is that the study of the rational soul provides

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[a] "Primary division" (*bi-l-qisma al-ūlā*) is the correct reading in the body of the text (Landauer 344; cf. *al-aqsām al-uwal*, Landauer 345.6-7); the table of contents has, "division of the primary faculties of the soul," *taqsīm al-quwā n-nafsānīya al-ūlā*.

[b] For "absolute" Avicenna has *ʿalā l-iṭlāq*, which he interprets in the chapter itself as follows: "Definition of the universal [*kullīyā*] soul, i.e., the absolute [*muṭlaqa*] and generic [*jinsīya*] soul" (Landauer 345.7-8).

[c] The chapter heading in the treatise has instead "the five senses" (Landauer 353).

[d] The chapter heading omits the last phrase (Landauer 353).

[e] The chapter heading omits "rational" (Landauer 365).

[f] The chapter heading in the treatise adds, "and does not need the body to subsist" (Landauer 365).

[g] The chapter heading omits "necessary" (Landauer 365).

[h] The chapter heading has instead, "the human souls" (Landauer 370).

[i] "Declaration ... body:" the chapter heading reads, "establishing that when souls separate from corporeal entities they are united with it" (Landauer 370).

[j] I.e., the intellectual substance. Landauer's text and the table of contents given by both Anawati *Muʾallafāt* and Mahdavī read *wa-hiya*, the feminine pronoun, which in the context would have to be understood as referring to the "rational souls." If this is the reading of some manuscripts, it is wrong; it should be emended to read *wa-huwa*, as in the body of the tenth chapter itself, *wa-huwa l-musammā bi-l-ʿaql al-kullī* (Landauer 371.18-19).

[k] The chapter heading omits everything after "body."

access to all the philosophical sciences as classified in the Aristotelian tradition: the focus of this study is epistemology (i.e., the acquisition by the rational soul of the intelligible forms), which leads to a study of ontology (i.e., the totality of the intelligible forms constitutes ontology), and the different aspects of ontology are studied in the various sciences of the Aristotelian canon. Thus epistemology reproduces ontology, and ontology reflects epistemology, i.e., by studying how one knows and what one knows, one studies the Aristotelian sciences, i.e., all philosophy, or as we shall discuss later, all knowledge: Logic, the instrument for further study; the theoretical sciences, Physics, Mathematics, and Metaphysics; and the practical sciences, and particularly Ethics, which render the rational soul pure enough to receive the intelligible forms.[10]

This direction which Avicenna's philosophy was to take is dramatically illustrated already in the *Compendium*, Chapter 8, translated above as Text 1. While discussing "the stages of the rational soul from inception to perfection," Avicenna describes the path which the intellect has to traverse in order to progress from the stage of pure potentiality to that of total actuality. This path is nothing else but the philosophical sciences as classified in the Aristotelian tradition, and it constitutes a blueprint, or an outline, of the comprehensive works he was to write in the future.

How did Avicenna come to treat of this subject, and why did he treat it in this way? In the introduction of the *Compendium* he merely says that he decided to write on this aspect of the philosophical sciences because he found "the researches on the faculties of the soul [were] among the most recalcitrant to having their Validity Determined[l] by thought, and the most blind[m] in their methods (Landauer 340.12-13)." This is not very illuminating; Avicenna took issue with the Aristotelian tradition on a number of crucial subjects (as we shall discuss below, Chapter 6), and for any one of them he could have said that they could not be easily ascer-

[l] To Determine Validity: *taḥṣīl*. In a long footnote Landauer (373 note 3) showed that the form *ḥaṣṣala* was used in the Graeco-Arabic translations to render *horizō*, and hence *muḥaṣṣal* = *hōrismenos*. Additional evidence, with full consideration of all the lexicographical data, was presented by W. Kutsch in his "Muḥaṣṣal — Ġayr Muḥaṣṣal," *Mélanges de l'Université Saint Joseph* 27 (1947-48) 169-76. Kutsch had overlooked Landauer's note. From this it becomes clear that the meaning for *taḥṣīl* = "études, connaissances, savoir, sagesse" given by Dozy derives from the original concept of "determining, discriminating." The expression frequently used by Avicenna (and others), *al-muḥaṣṣil min al-ḥukamā'*, thus means "a philosopher who has ascertained, Verified, and Determined the Validity of the facts for himself." See Chapter 3.3A.

[m] For "most blind of the researches" Avicenna uses *a'mā-hā*, an example of the elative use of a color adjective. Cf. Reckendorf *Verhältnisse* 116 and see the references in M. Ullmann, *Arabische Komparativsätze*, Nachr. d. Akad. d. Wiss. in Göttingen, 1985, Nr. 7, p. [3], note 2.

[10] This subject is discussed fully below, Chapter 3.2.

tained. One inference that might conceivably be drawn from his statement is that he found the methods of previous researches defective because he himself had a good idea about how to proceed, and the organization of the *Compendium* informs us about it. In general, Avicenna follows the order of the discussion in Aristotle's *De Anima*, but for the most part the organization and specific treatment of individual questions are relatively unprecedented in the extant Aristotelian tradition. The history of the discussions on the soul in the late Greek tradition is poorly documented,[11] while in the Arabic tradition up to the time of Avicenna there is nothing that is extant which might be considered as its predecessor, especially with regard to structure. This is an area where fruitful research can be conducted in the future to assess the extent of Avicenna's digression from tradition (or, affirmatively put, originality) in his maiden literary effort.

Work 2. *The Compilation* or *Philosophy for ʿArūḍī* (*al-Majmūʿ*; *al-Ḥikma al-ʿArūḍīya*) [A10, M62]

In his Autobiography (T3, §12) Avicenna says that a neighbor of his in Buḫārā, a certain Abū-l-Ḥasan known as 'the Prosodist' (al-ʿArūḍī), commissioned him to write a comprehensive work on philosophy. The youthful Avicenna complied, and thus was born the first medieval philosophical summa which can be said to have signaled the beginning of scholastic philosophy. The work was his first attempt to treat in a systematic fashion and within the confines of a single book all the branches of theoretical philosophy according to the Aristotelian classification, as already outlined in the *Compendium on the Soul.*[1] This "habilitation," as I have labeled it (Chapter 3.1), which lends credence to Avicenna's stylized account of his philosophical studies, actualized the entire philosophical curriculum latent in the classification of sciences since late Alexandrian times, and established a precedent for all subsequent philosophical summae, both by Avicenna himself and his successors, and both in the East and in the West.

The work fortunately survives. It is extant in a unique, though incomplete, manuscript, Uppsala 364.[2] The manuscript is undated, but

[11] Our knowledge of both the Greek and Arabic discussions on the theory of the soul is well summarized in the various essays and texts in Gätje's *Psychologie*.

[1] Viz. Logic, Physics, and Metaphysics, with the exception of the four mathematical sciences as Avicenna himself notes. Cf. F. E. Peters, *Aristotle and the Arabs*, New York 1968, 105. *The Compilation* does not, of course, cover "only the first part of the Aristotelian *corpus*," as Peters states.

[2] Some parts of the work, most likely from the section on Logic, are apparently also preserved in MS Istanbul, Nuruosmaniye 4894, ff. 39v-57v. Anawati, who provides this

the prevalent opinion is that it was written in the seventh/thirteenth century. From two marginal annotations referring to readings "in the author's autograph," it becomes apparent that there was at least one intermediary between the Uppsala MS and the copy Avicenna gave to ʿArūḍī.[a] This is also indicated by the frequent lack of rubrics in the text; especially noteworthy is the absence of a heading to introduce the chapter on the soul.[3] If the scribe of the Uppsala MS were copying directly from Avicenna's autograph, which must have included the heading, he would certainly have reproduced it, as he did with the rest. The text thus seems to have been subjected to some deformation in the process of transmission, and the future editor of *The Compilation* will have to take into consideration and define more precisely the role of the intermediary copy (or copies).

At the very end of the work there is a note (f. 84r): "Avicenna wrote this book in the year 391"/1001.[4] This note is either by Avicenna himself, put in the third person by a scribe, or by a subsequent scribe, calculated on the basis of Avicenna's statement in the Autobiography (T3, §12) that he was twenty-one years old when he completed *The Compilation*, and of Bayhaqī's report (39.3/52.6) that Avicenna was born in 370/980. The second alternative seems more likely, because although Avicenna does date his achievements and works (see the Autobiography in general and T14, §11), it does not seem that he started this practice as early as his twenty-first year: his theory of Intuition, which is the reason for his preoccupation with precise dating, developed later.[5] Furthermore, the marginal annotations indicating which passages Avicenna crossed out imply that the scribe was interested in presenting as detailed

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[a] The two annotations referring to passages marked in the text read as follows: "The passage between the marks had been stricken out of the author's autograph" (f. 73v: *mā bayna l-ʿalāmatayni kāna maḍrūban ʿalayhi fī aṣli l-muṣannif*); and "The passage between the marks is a gloss. It was thus found in the author's autograph" (f. 74r: *mā bayna l-ʿalāmatayni ḥāšiya; kaḏā wujida bi-ḫaṭṭi l-muṣannif*). From the way these notes are written it is clear that the scribe was copying similar annotations in his archetype. Cf. Mahdavī 77.

information ("Le Manuscrit Nour Osmaniyye 4894," *MIDEO* 3 [1956] 382), makes unfortunately only this brief remark, without adding any details: "A partir d'ici [scil. f. 39v], même texte que la *ḥikmal-ʿarūḍiyya* mais incomplet." As Mahdavī 223 suggests, these are in all likelihood passages copied by Avicenna in a later work. The question has to be investigated further.

[3] The end of the fifth chapter of the Physics ("On Compounds," *fī l-murakkabāt*) runs directly into the beginning of the sixth ("On the Soul," *fī n-nafs*) without any indication of a break: f. 78r15, corresponding verbatim to *Najāt* (*The Salvation*) 256.12-15: *li-t-taḥlīl wa-qad yatakawwanu...* .

[4] Cf. Mahdavī 76 and 80.

[5] See below, Chapter 3.2 and 3.4.

information about Avicenna's work as possible; it is thus more likely that it was this scribe (an editor?) who wrote the note at the end of the work.

The MS has preserved only a partial text. Numerous folios are missing, and in one instance, four folios (ff. 2-5) have been bound out of place. The contents of the work, in the proper order and with indications of the missing parts, are the following:[6]

A. LOGIC

Ff.	1v:	Introduction. The need for logic. [Eisagoge, Categories (?) and part of De Interpretatione are missing.]
	6r-v:	from De Interpretatione. [The last part of De Interpretatione, Prior Analytics, and the beginning of Posterior Analytics are missing.]
	7r-10r:	Posterior Analytics.
	10r-31r:	Topics.
	31v-34r:	Sophistici Elenchi (copied in *The Salvation*).
	34r-45r:	Rhetoric (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* Bk. I).[7]
	48v14-50r ult.:	Natural dispositions and affections of the soul (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* II.i-x).[8]
	45v-48v:	Poetics.[9]

B. PHYSICS

Ff.	50v-78r:	Physics; Meteorology (copied in *The Salvation*).
	78r-81v:	De Anima (the first page copied in *The Salvation*; the two texts then diverge. *The Salvation* reproduces the text on the soul from the treatise on *The State of the Human Soul*; see below, W5).

[6] Here only the major divisions of the work are given. The Arabic titles of the sections can be found in Mahdavī 77-78.

[7] The section on Rhetoric was edited by M. Silīm Sālem, *Ibn Sīnā, Kitāb al-majmūʿ aw al-ḥikma al-ʿarūḍīya fī maʿānī Kitāb Rīṭūrīqā*, Cairo 1950. (I have not seen this publication.) Cf. J. Langhade and M. Grignaschi, *Al-Fārābī, Deux ouvrages inédits sur la Réthorique* [*sic*], Beirut 1971, p. 24.

[8] Edited, with a brief introduction and translation into French by D. Remondon, *Al-aḫlāq wa-l-infiʿālāt an-nafsānīya*, *Miscellanea* [Mémorial Avicenne IV], Cairo (Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale) 1954, pp. 19-29.

[9] Edited by M. Silīm Sālem, *Ibn Sīnā, Kitāb al-majmūʿ aw al-ḥikma al-ʿarūḍīya fī maʿānī Kitāb aš-Šiʿr*, Cairo 1969.

C. METAPHYSICS

(a) Universal Science: Being-as-such

Ff.	[1. On being. Missing.]
2r-3r4:	[2.] The order of being. Unity (copied in *The Salvation*).
3r5-ult.:	3. Potentiality (copied in *The Salvation*).
3v1-14:	4. Acting.
3v15-4r12:	5. Necessity and Possibility.
4r13-4v4:	6. Pre-existent and created.
4v5-12:	7. The universal.
4v13-16:	8. Perfection and imperfection (copied in *The Salvation*).
4v16-5r5:	[8.i] The four causes as principles.
5r6-5v15:	9. Priority and posteriority (copied in *The Salvation*).
5v15-ult.:	[9.i: essential creation] (copied in *The Salvation*).
	[10. Kinds of unity and plurality. The end is missing.]

(b) Theology: Natural Theology

	[The necessary existent and its aspects; missing.]
82r-84r:	The necessary existent is immutable, intellect in actuality, one. The world emanates from it.

The above reconstruction needs a word of explanation. Placing the four folios (ff. 2-5) containing the universals, i.e. the categories and consequents of being, under Metaphysics may beg the question. As we shall see later (Chapter 6.4), the subject of the classification of the categories under Logic or Metaphysics was of great importance to Avicenna, and deciding the matter for him on the basis of his later works may not correspond to his earlier position and thus prejudice our interpretation of the development of his thought. This possibility, however, is precluded by a reference in the text contained in these four folios to the logical part of the same work: "You [i.e. the reader] have understood the difference between the concomitant and the essential in the Logic" (f. 2v12 = *Najāt* 340-1); these folios, therefore, do not belong to it. Moreover, Avicenna followed the example of Fārābī's essay *On the Purposes of the Metaphysics* already in the *Compendium on the Soul* (W1) and classified the discussion of the Categories under Universal Science (T1, §3 IV A.i.); in *The*

Compilation for ʿArūḍī, he also adhered very closely to Fārābī's description of the contents of the Universal Science.[10] The enumeration of the sections in C.a, finally, are those of the MS itself, where we read, "section three, four, etc., of *one.*"[b] This "one" apparently refers to the first part of the chapter on Metaphysics, much like the division of the chapter in *The Salvation*. The misplaced folios thus do belong to the Metaphysics and, by a reasoning the reverse of that which led Avicenna to discuss the categories under Metaphysics, they were placed, by a knowledgable owner or binder, at the beginning of the work, where the categories would normally be discussed. In all probability this person was helped in this regard also by the explicit mention of the categories in the first sentence of the section on acting: " 'Acting' applies to what is meant by one of the ten categories... ."[11]

There is, however, a further problem. In view of the many textual correspondences between this work and *The Salvation*, the question is raised—and it *was* raised by Anawati—whether the MS consists in effect of "fragments of *The Compilation* itself and *The Salvation* arbitrarily joined together by a scribe."[12] If this is indeed the case, then most of the argument presented in the preceding paragraph is vitiated. But closer scrutiny and a comparison of the two texts invalidate this hypothesis. Two examples should suffice. a) In Chapter C.a of *The Compilation*, sections 2 and 3 and then 8 and 9 are copied verbatim, and in that order, in *The Salvation*; the intermediary sections, however, are instead elaborated and improved upon in the later work. If the scribe of the Uppsala MS was copying for some purpose from the two books (one has to ascribe to him some discriminating purpose; otherwise he would have copied only one of them), it would be difficult to explain his procedure of first copying from *The Salvation* (sections 2-3), then switching to a manifestly more primitive text (sections 4-7), and then reverting to *The Salvation* (sections 8-9). b) More telling are the numerous instances where Avicenna changes the wording of a passage or, more particularly, substitutes one argument for another. For example, in the section of the Physics of *The Salvation* entitled, "Proof that the originating (*mubdiʿa*) motion is one in number and circular," Avicenna copies verbatim the introductory paragraph from *The Compilation* (ff. 71r12-71v1 *ʿArūḍīya* = 226.14-227.3 *Najāt*), then substitutes a different and longer argument for

[b] *Faṣl ḥāʾ, dāl*, etc., *min alif*, with circumflexes above the letters. Mahdavī 7 suggests that the *alif* here is an abbreviation for *Ilāhīyāt* (Theology), but this improbable.

[10] Cf. the entries in C.a, above, with Fārābī's explanation in his essay, L45, §4.

[11] F. 3v2, at the top of the page.

[12] G. C. Anawati, "La *Ḥikma ʿarūḍiyya* d'Ibn Sīnā," in *Proceedings of the Twenty-second Congress of Orientalists*, ed. Z. V. Togan, Leiden 1957, p. II.176.

the one in *The Compilation* designed to prove that motion in a straight line cannot be continuous (f. 71v1-6 *ʿArūḍīya* ≠ 227.3-17 *Najāt*), and then continues with the rest of the section, copying again verbatim from *The Compilation* (f. 71v6ff. *ʿArūḍīya* = 227.17ff. *Najāt*). A scribe copying arbitrarily would have no reason to alter the text in precisely this fashion. The Uppsala MS thus contains what is extant of *The Compilation*, and Avicenna copied himself quite extensively, years later, in *The Salvation*. This fact provides striking confirmation of his statement in the Autobiography that, "at that time [i.e., in his youth] my retention of Knowledge was better, but today my grasp of it is more mature; otherwise the Knowledge is the same, nothing new having come to me since," (T3, §11) and affords a valuable opportunity to study, by comparing the variations between the two texts, precisely where his more mature grasp lies.

A final question with regard to the order in which *The Compilation* was written (i.e. in which it was intended to be read) concerns the section on "Natural dispositions and affections of the soul" (ff. 48v-50r) which, though naturally belonging to the Rhetoric (it is a summary of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* II.i-x), follows in the MS immediately upon the end of the entire part on Logic where Avicenna explicitly says, "Let this be enough about our purpose to abridge the *Organon* (*manṭiq*)."[13] Because it begins in the middle of the page, there can be no question of misplaced folios in the MS; it has therefore to be assumed either that Avicenna intended it to be placed there,[14] or that the misplacement occurred in the intermediary copy (or copies, as discussed above). The former alternative, however, cannot be maintained for at least three reasons: a) The Arabic title of the section is, *fī l-aḫlāq wa-l-infiʿālāt an-nafsānīya*. Now the word *aḫlāq* ("natural disposition") in Arabic is also used to render "ethics," and it might be thought that Avicenna intended by this brief section to treat, after logic, first practical philosophy (ethics) and then theoretical philosophy (physics and metaphysics, omitting, as noted, mathematics). But Avicenna's opening sentence in this section makes it clear that he is still discussing a subject that belongs to logic, and indeed, to Rhetoric: "The most powerful means of eliciting assent and the one most appropriate to rhetoric is first a demonstrative statement and second provoking the following affections" [of the soul, i.e., emotions].[15] This statement, which is a summary of that in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* II.i (1377b, ff.), and is followed by a discussion of the emotions listed by Aristotle, is directly related to Avicenna's paraphrase, in his earlier section on the Rhetoric

[13] F. 48v11. See the reproduction of the lower half of this folio in Remondon 26.
[14] Through "a weakness in his composition," suggests Remondon 19-20.
[15] F. 48v; cf. Remondon 23 and 27.

itself (ff. 35r6-35v4), of Aristotle's argument about the means of persuading an audience (*Rhetoric* 1356a1, ff.). Anyone reading Avicenna's paraphrase in the Rhetoric section could hardly fail to associate the section on "Natural dispositions and affections of the soul" with it, given the latter's opening sentence. Furthermore, in the extant works of Avicenna on ethics, there is no corresponding discussion of the subjects treated in this section, something which would have been expected on the basis of the relatively invariable structure of his philosophical works. b) By the same token, it is also highly unlikely that, had Avicenna intended this section as a brief treatment of ethics or practical philosophy, he would have placed it between logic and physics in a book which dealt with theoretical philosophy.[16] c) In *The Cure*, finally, where rhetoric is treated extensively, the discussion of emotions corresponding to the second book of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* occurs in its proper place, not at the end of the entire logic. It thus appears that the section on "Natural dispositions and affections of the soul" of *The Compilation*, originally composed as a part of Avicenna's treatment of rhetoric, was misplaced in the process of transmission at the end of the entire section on logic.

Avicenna wrote *The Compilation* apparently according to the specifications required by ʿArūḍī. At the end of both the part on Logic and the part on Metaphysics (the end of the part on Physics is lost) he says: "I composed this book for Abū-l-Ḥasan Aḥmad ibn-ʿAbd-Allāh al-ʿArūḍī upon his request and *in the way in which* he requested it."[c] If, judging by the name alone—al-ʿArūḍī, the Prosodist—his patron was a man of letters, this might explain the disproportionately extensive coverage of the Topics, Sophistics, Rhetoric, and Poetics, all subjects of interest to such a person.[17] By the same token, it becomes relatively difficult to estimate what percentage of the work is missing. In view of Avicenna's habit of copying from his previous works, however, the lost parts may be recovered in some of his later essays. This will have to be determined by future research on this, the first scholastic philosophical compendium.

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[c] Ff. 48v, 84r; Mahdavī 78, 80: *ʿamilnāhu li-mā arādahu* (*iltamasa*) *wa-ʿalā l-wajhi llaḏi arādahu* (*iltamasa*).

[16] For a discussion of Avicenna's writings on practical philosophy see Chapter 6.2.

[17] These subjects cover 39ff. (ff. 10-48) in the MS, as compared to 32ff. for the entire Physics, including the section on the soul. Although the latter section is not complete, judging from the advanced stage of the discussion where it breaks off, hardly more than a folio or two from it can be missing. Even more indicative is a comparison between the section on poetics (4ff.) and that on the soul (5 or 6ff.), with the corresponding ones in *The Cure*, where both subjects are given their fullest treatment. In the Cairo edition of *The Cure*, Poetics covers 53 pages (*aš-Šifāʾ*, *al-Manṭiq*, *aš-Šiʿr*, ʿA. Badawī, ed., Cairo 1966) while the De Anima section is over four times its size, covering 233 pages (*aš-Šifāʾ*, *aṭ-Ṭabīʿīyāt*, *an-Nafs*, G. C. Anawati and Saʿid Zayed, eds., Cairo 1974). *The Salvation* has only five small pages on the Topica, copies the Sophistics from *The Compilation*, and omits Rhetoric and Poetics altogether.

Work 3. A Precursor of *The Cure* and *Fair Judgment: The Available and the Valid* [*of Theoretical Philosophy*] (*al-Ḥāṣil wa-l-maḥṣūl*) [A and M omit] and *Piety and Sin* [*in Practical Philosophy*] (*al-Birr wa-l-iṯm*) [A249, M10]

After having mentioned in the Autobiography that he completed *The Compilation* for ʿArūḍī when he was tweny-one, Avicenna says that another neighbor of his, Abū-Bakr al-Baraqī,

> asked me to comment on the books on Philosophy and so I composed *The Available and the Valid* for him in about twenty volumes, and I also composed a book for him on Ethics which I called *Piety and Sin*. These two books exist only in his possession because he never lent them to anybody to copy from them [T3, §13].

Avicenna thus wrote these books in his twenty-second or twenty-third year when he was still in Buḫārā. This is echoed in the anonymous Longer Bibliography, which says that he wrote them "in his come city ... in the early part of his life" (*bi-baladihi ... fī awwali ʿumrihi*), adding that the two parts of the work existed only in one copy, the original, in the possession of Baraqī.[1] This explains the very poor survival record of the work.

We are best informed about the fate and contents of the part on Ethics, *Piety and Sin*. Jūzjānī mentions in the Biography that it was in two volumes;[2] this would indicate, especially in view of Avicenna's silence on the matter, that the disciple had seen it, or at least had heard of it. Furthermore, a copy was also extant well over a century after Avicenna's death, and it was reportedly seen by Bayhaqī himself: "In the year 544[/1149-50] I saw [a copy of] it, in an ugly and crowded hand, in the possession of the Imām Muḥammad al-Ḥāriṯān as-Saraḫsī."[3] It is possible that Bayhaqī had correctly identified the work he had seen, because a few pages said to belong to *Piety and Sin* are extant in some manuscripts,[4] although in this case it would be difficult to account for the loss of the entire work. In any case, there seems to be little doubt that the book was in circulation also outside Baraqī's library and perhaps even among Avicenna's disciples, because he refers to it as if it were widely available in a passage from *The Cure* where he also informs us about its contents. At the end of the Metaphysics, after discussing the celestial

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[1] Gohlman 93.

[2] Biography, Gohlman 47; this is also echoed in the Longer Bibliography, Gohlman 93.

[3] Bayhaqī 44/57; cf. Gohlman 123-24, notes 37 and 38.

[4] From the folio numbers of the manuscripts listed by Anawati and Mahdavī it appears that only about ten to twenty pages, depending on the size of the manuscript, are extant.

influences on the world and the concept of providence, Avicenna continues:

> Know that most of the matters which the masses [*al-jumhūr*] are sure about, resort to, and profess are true; it is only those who act as if they were philosophers who reject them out of ignorance of their causes and reasons. As a matter of fact, we wrote on this subject the book *Piety and Sin*. You should study carefully the exposition of these matters there, count as true the stories about divine punishments descending upon corrupt cities and tyrants, and consider how truth emerges victorious. You should also know that the reason for praying, almsgiving, etc.,[a] as well as the existence of wrongdoing and sin, is only from There, for the first principles of all these matters are ultimately reducible to nature, will, and chance. ... When matters are resolved into their constituent components, they are [found to be] dependent on the first principles that cause them,[b] which descend from God.[5] (L1)

It would thus seem that Avicenna treated Ethics in this book in the context of the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul, as will be discussed below in Chapter 6.2. Whether he also treated in it Ethics, Oeconomics, and Politics according to the Aristotelian classification and discussion of these subjects cannot be decided at present.

The information about the fate and contents of the theoretical part of the book, *The Available and the Valid*, is even more sparse. Other than Avicenna's statement, repeated in the anonymous Longer Bibliography (Gohlman), that Baraqī possessed the original and unique copy, the only report about its fate is provided by Bayhaqī: "There was a copy of it, now lost, in the library in Būzajān."[6] It would appear that no other copies were ever available; no manuscript identified as containing any part of the work has so far been located.

In this connection one further report is of interest. In the Biography, Jūzjānī reports the following about the evening sessions of Avicenna and his disciples while in Hamaḏān, before Šams-ad-Dawla's death in 412/1021: "Every night pupils would gather at [Avicenna's] house, while by turns I would read from *The Cure* and someone else would read from *The Canon* [*of Medicine*]."[7] In some later manuscripts of Bayhaqī's *Tatimma*, which reproduces this report from Jūzjānī, the text appears augmented as follows: "... while by turns Abū-ʿUbayd [al-Jūzjānī]

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[a] Reading *wa-ġayri ḏālika* with *Najāt* instead of *ġayru ḏālika* in the *Šifāʾ*.
[b] *Najāt* reads *ilā mabādiʾ wujūdiha* for *ilā mabādiʾ ʾiyābiha* in the *Šifāʾ*.

[5] *Aš-Šifāʾ*, *al-Ilāhīyāt*, S. Dunyā *et al.*, eds., Cairo 1960, 439.6-17 = *Najāt* 496.1-15; French translation by G. C. Anawati, *La Métaphysique du Shifāʾ*, *Livres VI à X*, Paris 1985, 172-173.
[6] Bayhaqī 44/57.
[7] Gohlman 55.

would read from *The Cure*, al-Maᶜṣūmī from *The Canon*, Ibn-Zayla from *Pointers and Reminders*, and Bahmanyār from *The Available and the Valid.*"[8] This is clearly a fabrication, if only because *Pointers and Reminders* had not yet been written at the time when the evening sessions were held. What it does indicate, however, is that somebody after the twelfth century wanted to associate the names of the closest pupils of Avicenna with reading and, implicitly, having a special interest in particular works of the master. *The Cure*, *The Canon*, and *Pointers and Reminders* were all by then famous works, widely circulated and studied. What is curious is why *The Available and the Valid* should have been mentioned as being read by Bahmanyār, if by then it was lost and virtually unknown. The association of the first three works with the specific names seems to be based on the following rationale: Jūzjānī was clearly connected in posterity with *The Cure* because by his own account he had urged Avicenna to write it and then provided a special introduction to it (T7); Maᶜṣūmī was known as the scientist among Avicenna's pupils: it was he who was entrusted with answering Bīrūnī's objections to Avicenna's physical and astronomical theories; Ibn-Zayla, finally, was known as the exegete of the more allusive works of Avicenna, largely because of his commentary on *Ḥayy ibn-Yaqẓān*. Bahmanyār was known as the author of a large summa of Avicennan philosophy, entitled *Validated Knowledge* (*K. at-Taḥṣīl* or *at-Taḥṣīlāt*),[9] and it would seem that the association with Avicenna's *The Available and the Valid* (*Al-Ḥāṣil wa-l-maḥṣūl*) was made on the basis of the similarity of the titles. Now this similarity may either be purely accidental and struck the fancy of the person who interpolated the names of Avicenna's pupils in Bayhaqī's manuscripts, or it may indeed reflect a bibliographical fact that Bahmanyār actually based his work on *The Available and the Valid* which may have been available to him. The question cannot be resolved without further investigation into the transmission of *The Available and the Valid* and the works of Bahmanyār, which cannot be undertaken at this stage; it would seem, however, premature to dismiss this work by Avicenna as completely lost.

As for the contents of the work, only some reasoned conjectures can be offered in the absence of any concrete evidence. The title, which itself presents some problems of interpretation, may be indicative of the contents. Achena/Massé seem to be the only scholars who expressed some doubts about its precise translation, placing a question mark after their suggested version, "*La Somme et le produit?*" The other translations that

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[8] Bayhaqī 49/62; cf. Gohlman 128 note 71.

[9] The book was recently edited under the title *At-Taḥṣīl* by Mortaḍā Moṭahharī, Tehran 1349/1971. The title may also mean, according to Bahmanyār's introduction, *The Digest*.

have been offered include *Buch des Resultats und des Ergebnisses* (Kraus), *The Import and the Substance* (Arberry and Afnan), *The Sum and Substance* (Gohlman), and *La somme et ce qu'il en demeure* (Goichon).[10] Only Goichon's suggestion seems to point to the right direction. If one were to judge from *maḥṣūl*, which can be taken to be synonymous with *muḥaṣṣal* and hence mean "determined, verified, or Validated [philosophy, knowledge, theories or ideas]," it might be possible to interpret *al-ḥāṣil* to mean "the sum total of actually existing or proffered [philosophy, knowledge, theories, or ideas]." If this interpretation is correct, it would mean that by the title Avicenna wanted to present a description of the book's contents: it presented theoretical philosophy as it was actually transmitted in the Aristotelian tradition and available in his time (*al-ḥāṣil*), and then proceeded to comment upon this tradition (note his words in the Autobiography: Baraqī "asked me to *comment* [*šarḥ*] on the philosophical books") and to discuss and Determine its Validity, and offer an Ascertained version, its reformulated substance and extract (*al-maḥṣūl*).[11]

Since we do not possess the introduction of the work, in which the meaning of the title may have been explained, there cannot be certainty about this interpretation; it is consonant, however, with the tendency of Avicenna displayed in his later works: in *The Cure* he did not wish to discuss all the philosophical theories but merely to present those which seemed right to him, i.e., he wanted to pesent only the *maḥṣūl* part of the earlier work; in the *Fair Judgment* (W10) he reverted to the structure of *The Available and the Valid* and presented the transmitted theories (*ḥāṣil*) and judged between them and his own verified reformulations (*al-maḥṣūl*); in other words, in the *Fair Judgment* he judged fairly between the *ḥāṣil* and the *maḥṣūl*. Perhaps it is not entirely accidental that the *Fair Judgment* is also said to have been in twenty volumes, just like *The Available and the Valid*.

There are two more references suggesting that *The Available and the Valid* may have been in commentary format. One is provided by the famous Avicenna/Bīrūnī correspondence. In his response to Bīrūnī's fifth question, Avicenna refers the reader to his own exegesis of the first book of the *Metaphysics*.[12] This correspondence took place around the year

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[10] Goichon explains, "*La Somme et ce qu'il en demeure*[,] comme l'or dégagé du minera[l];" review of Gohlman in *Arabica* 24 (1977) 98.

[11] For the meaning of the root *ḥ/ṣ/l* and its derivatives see the references in note 1 to Work 1, above.

[12] Abū Reyḥān Bērūnī va Ebn-e Sīnā, *Al-As'ila wa-l-ajwiba*, S. Ḥ. Naṣr and M. Moḥaqqeq, eds., Tehran 1352/1974, 23.13-14: [... *fī*] *tafsīrinā li-l-maqālati l-ūlā min Kitāb Mā ṭāfūsīqā fī Mā baʿda ṭ-ṭabīʿīyāt*.

390/1000, and whatever the precise age of Avicenna at that time, he had written nothing more substantial than *The Available and the Valid* and certainly nothing that could be referred to with greater probability as a commentary on the *Metaphysics*.[13] The second is a reference to "a separate commentary [by Avicenna] on [Aristotle's *Metaphysics*], whose part on the *Alpha Elatton* alone contained approximately everything in the commentary [by Abū-l-Faraj Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib] imported from Baġdād" (T13, §9). Since the letter of Avicenna's disciple from Rayy in which this report occurs deals with the *Fair Judgment*, the phrase "separate commentary" cannot refer to the Metaphysics part of that book; and since none of the extant works of Avicenna deals with the *Metaphysics*, and especially Book *Alpha Elatton*, as extensively as described above, it is very likely that the disciple is referring to that part of *The Available and the Valid*.

In general, then, it appears that the entire work was intended to be a summa in the form of a running commentary on the philosophical sciences, as classified in the Aristotelian tradition, in two parts: the first part, *The Available and the Valid*, dealt with Logic and theoretical philosophy (Physics, Mathematics, and Metaphysics) in about twenty volumes; the second, *Piety and Sin*, dealt with practical philosophy (the punishment and reward of the rational soul, and perhaps also including Oeconomics and Politics in addition to Ethics) in two volumes. It thus represented the culmination of the process initiated by the *Compendium on the Soul* in which the plan of such a summa was first conceived and outlined, and continued by *The Compilation* in which the summa was executed in a summary fashion, almost as a first draft. *The Available and the Valid* was in this sense a real precursor of the later *The Cure*—and perhaps also thereby explains Avicenna's diffidence in undertaking to write the later work—as well as of the *Fair Judgment*, and closes his first period of literary activity.

Work 4. *The Provenance and Destination* (*al-Mabdaʾ wa-l-maʿād*) [A195, M106]

Jūzjānī says in the Biography (44.6-7) that Avicenna wrote this treatise in Jurjān for his benefactor, a certain Abū-Muḥammad aš-Šīrāzī, who is described as an "amateur of these [philosophical] sciences."[1] The date

[13] The correspondence is mentioned by Bīrūnī himself, who refers to Avicenna as "the excellent youth" (*al-fatā al-fāḍil*). See E. Sachau, *Chronologie orientalischer Völker von Albērūnī*, Leipzig 1878, repr. 1923, p. 257.3-5 (text), and his Introduction, p. xxxv (= *The Chronology of Ancient Nations*, London 1879, p. 247, trans.); cf. Mahdavī 11-12.

[1] This person, to whom Avicenna refers in his dedication as Abū-Aḥmad Muḥammad (or simply Abū-Muḥammad in the Istanbul MS Ahmet III 3268, Nūrānī 1 and Mahdavī 212) ibn-Ibrāhīm al-Fārisī, is not otherwise known. See Gohlman 126, note 54, and 139, note 3; Nafīsī *Pūr-e Sīnā* 127, no. 3.

of composition is therefore approximately 403/1013, shortly after Avicenna's arrival in Jurjān and initial meeting with Jūzjānī.[2]

Thematically the subjects of the Provenance and the Destination belong to the De Anima and Metaphysics parts in the classification of the philosophical sciences and constitute their essential doctrines, what Avicenna calls in his introduction to the work the "fruit" (*ṯamra*) of Physics and Metaphysics. Avicenna himself classified them in the Metaphysics and treated them in that section of it which I have called the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul (Chapter 6.2). This monograph marks a transition period in Avicenna's literary activity. With it he began to formulate his theories on these subjects in his own words and to strike a largely independent course from the transmitted Aristotelian models.

The work is divided into three parts, described by Avicenna in his Introduction (T4). The first two, dealing with the first principle and the emanation of being from it (pp. 2-90 Nūrānī, ff. 119r-177r in the Milan manuscript Ambrosiana 320 Hammer), were copied verbatim, with only some omissions, rearrangement, and additions, in the Metaphysics parts of both *The Cure* and *The Salvation*. They constitute most of the second chapter (*maqāla*) of the Metaphysics of *The Salvation* (pp. 366-464 *Najāt*), as well as most of books 8 and 9 of *The Cure* (pp. 355-413 *Ilāhīyāt*). The subject of the third part of *The Provenance and Destination*, the survival of the human soul, was treated more extensively by Avicenna in *The State of the Human Soul*, and it was this work that was later incorporated in *The Cure* and *The Salvation* (see next Work, W5).

Work 5. *The State of the Human Soul* (*Ḥāl an-nafs al-insānīya*) [A77, M121]

This treatise, written for a number of unspecified friends, is known in the manuscript tradition under a wide variety of titles.[1] At the cost of adding yet another title, I have decided to call it in the way in which Avicenna himself describes it in his introduction: "it contains the marrow [of the theory] about the state of the human soul arrived at through demonstrative proofs."[2] In some manuscripts it is entitled *The Destination*, or *The Small Treatise on Destination* (*al-Maʿād*, *al-Maʿād al-aṣġar*), in which case it could be identified with *The Destination* which Jūzjānī says (Biography 50.1) Avicenna wrote in Rayy while in the service of the Būyid Majd-ad-Dawla. If this is so, then the treatise was written approximately in 404/1014. Were this identification to be inaccurate, however,

[2] The chronology of Avicenna's life after his arrival in Jurjān is discussed below, W6.

[1] According to Mahdavī, Anawati *Muʾallafāt* lists this treatise under five separate numbers. For the different titles see Mahdavī.

[2] In the edition by Ahwānī *Aḥwāl* 45.4-5.

there could still be very little doubt about its date of composition. It belongs to the same transition period of Avicenna's literary output as the preceding work, and acts as its complement. Just as *The Provenance and Destination* established the version of Avicenna's doctrine of the "fruit" of Metaphysics with which he was most content, so also *The State of the Human Soul* established the version of his doctrine of the "fruit" of Physics, i.e., his theory of the soul; and just as the former treatise was copied extensively in the Metaphysics part of *The Cure* and *The Salvation*, so also this one was copied in the De Anima parts of both works.

The treatise contains sixteen chapters, which correspond as follows to the text in *The Salvation*:[3]

The State of the Human Soul	*The Salvation (Najāt)*
Introduction: contents of the treatise.	
1. Definition of the soul.	
2. Brief description of the faculties of the soul.	258-272; 274-275
3. Various functions of the perceptive faculties of the soul.	275-279
4. The faculties can perceive particular forms only by means of an organ.	279-285
5. The faculties cannot perceive universal forms by means of an organ; the faculties do not subsist through a body.	285-292
6. How and when the soul uses the body; how it dispenses with the body, or rather, how the body harms it.	297-299
7. The soul does not need the body in order to subsist.	292-297
8. The soul comes into existence along with the body.	300-302
9. The survival of the soul.	302-309
10. Metempsychosis does not exist.	309-310
11. All the faculties belong to a single soul.	313-315
12. The actualization of the theoretical intellect.	315-316
13. On prophecy.	
14. The purification of the soul.	273
15. Eschatology (happiness and misery of the soul after death).	
16. The occasion of this treatise (T5).	

[3] The chapter headings are given in paraphrase only; cf. the contents of the *Compendium on the Soul* listed above, W1. For the correspondences between *The Salvation* and *The Cure* see the tables in A.-M. Goichon, *La distinction de l'essence et de l'existence d'après Ibn Sīnā*, Paris 1937, 499-500.

Work 6. *The Cure* (*aš-šifāʾ*) [A14, M84]

a. Occasion of composition and contents

Jūzjānī offers two slightly divergent accounts of the genesis of *The Cure*. The earlier one occurs in the Introduction which he wrote for the work right after its completion (as I will argue below in Section c); the later one is found in the Biography which he wrote after Avicenna's death. A juxtaposition of the two texts will best bring out their differences.

Introduction (*T7, §3*)	*Biography* (*54.1-5*)
The hope of ever obtaining his lost works having dimmed, we asked him to rewrite them and he said, "I have neither the time nor the inclination to occupy myself with close textual analysis and commentary. But if you [pl.] would be content with whatever I have readily in mind [which I have thought] on my own,	(L2) Then I asked him myself to comment on the books of Aristotle, but he brought up that he had no leisure at that time. "But if you [sing.] would like me to compose a book in which I will set forth what, in my opinion, is sound in these [philosophical] sciences, without debating with those who disagree or occupying myself with their refutation, then I will do that."
then I could write for you [pl.] a comprehensive work arranged in the order which will occur to me." We readily offered our consent to this and urged that he start with Physics.	I was pleased with this and he began with the Physics of a book which he called *The Cure*.

The two accounts emphasize different aspects of what is, essentially the same story, and are therefore complementary despite their apparent divergences. The only real difference is the shift in the Biography to the first person: in view of the discussion in Section c, below, it would seem that Jūzjānī wanted to take all the credit for urging Avicenna to write *The Cure* after he had seen that the other disciples who may have initially participated with him in their request preferred the later works of Avicenna.

The initial request was for Avicenna to rewrite the works which were inaccessible to his disciples in Hamaḏān because they were either lost or extant in single copies in the possession of individuals in Buḫārā and other cities visited by Avicenna in the course of his lengthy travels. This is clear from Jūzjānī's Introduction. The words in which Avicenna's reply is couched, as cited in the same document, suggest that what he was being asked to do in order to rewrite these books was to engage in "close textual analysis and commentary", the implication being that this was

also the format of the earlier works. What is implied in the Introduction is stated explicitly in the Biography, where the same request is presented this time as Jūzjānī asking Avicenna "to comment on the books of Aristotle." Avicenna's reply in the Biography again makes explicit what engaging in "close textual analysis and commentary" entailed: "debating with those who disagree or occupying [oneself] with their refutation." The one work written before *The Cure* that was comprehensive enough to fit the description of a commentary on "the books of Aristotle" and detailed enough to contain debates and refutations of opponents was, as suggested above in W3, *The Available and the Valid.* Clearly, then, Avicenna was unwilling to rewrite a similar work, partly for the reasons stated in T7, and partly because he wished to abandon the commentary format as employed from the time of the Alexandrian commentators to his own times. Instead he proposed to write a running exposition of the Philosophical Sciences as reconstructed according to his own opinion. This decision inaugurates the mature period of his literary activity, which saw the composition of his classic summae of philosophy: *The Cure*, *The Salvation*, and the *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla.*

The overall plan of *The Cure* follows exactly the order of the philosophical sciences as classified in the Aristotelian tradition and as already presented by Avicenna himself in the *Compendium on the Soul*, *The Compilation*, and doubtless in *The Available and the Valid.* The variation in the order mentioned by Avicenna occurs, if at all, in the internal arrangement of each one of these sciences, and will have to be studied in detail in the future. The following are the contents of the work:

I. Logic
   1. Eisagoge; 2. Categories; 3. De Interpretatione; 4. Syllogism (Prior Analytics); 5. Demonstration (Posterior Analytics); 6. Dialectic (Topica); 7. Sophistics; 8. Rhetoric; 9. Poetics.
II. Physics
   1. Physica; 2. De Caelo; 3. De Generatione et Corruptione; 4. Meteorology; 5. Mineralogy [Meteorology IV (?); cf. T1, note 8]; 6. De Anima; 7. Botany; 8. Zoology.
III. Mathematics
   1. Geometry [Euclid's *Elements*]; 2. Astronomy [Ptolemy's *Almagest*]; 3. Arithmetic [Nicomachus' *Introduction*]; 4. Music [Ptolemy's *Harmonics*].
IV. Metaphysics [cf. Chapter 6.1].

It has become a commonplace to refer to *The Cure* as an "encyclopaedia;" it is obvious from the above tabulation, however, that

this is at best misleading. In contemporary terminology, an encyclopaedia is a collection of unrelated and disparate articles on some or all branches of knowledge; it does not have the organic unity and coherent approach of a summa like *The Cure*. Avicenna himself calls it a "compendium" (*jumla*; T9, §1), while in modern Arabic the word for encyclopaedia is "round, or course, of knowledges" (*dāʾirat al-maʿārif*), literally translating the Greek.

b. Dates of composition

The dates of the composition of *The Cure* can be established with relative certainty. The sources available in this regard are primarily the two reports by Jūzjānī in his Introduction to *The Cure* (T7) and in the Biography, and secondarily the incidental chronological references provided by Avicenna himself in the work. Jūzjānī mentions no specific dates but only refers to political events corresponding to the various stages of the composition of *The Cure*. For the most part it is possible to date these events with precision.

The absolute chronology of Avicenna's life can be followed beginning with the first specific date that can be established, the death of Qābūs ibn-Vušmagīr, the Ziyārid ruler of Jurjān. This took place in the winter months of 403, i.e., approximately between January and March of 1013.[1] After the death of Qābūs, Avicenna says in the Autobiography, "I departed for Dihistān, where I fell very ill. I returned to Jurjān, and there I became associated with Abu-ʿUbayd al-Jūzjānī (T3, §15)." Avicenna then went to Rayy where he remained until the Būyid "Šams-ad-Dawla arrived after the killing of Hilāl ibn-Badr ibn-Ḥasanwayh and the rout of the troops of Baġdād" (Biography 50.1-3). The battle between Šams-ad-Dawla and Hilāl, and the latter's death occurred in Ḏū-l-Qaʿda 405/April 1015.[2] From Rayy Avicenna departed for Qazwīn and from there to Hamaḏān, where he met Šams-ad-Dawla and accompanied him in his expedition against the ʿAnnāzids at Qarmīsīn (Biography 50.3-52.2). Given the number and the duration of the events that transpired between Hilāl's death and the expedition against the ʿAnnāzids, the latter could hardly have taken place before mid-406/Winter 1015-16.[3] Avicenna then returned to Hamaḏān and served

[1] See the article "Ḳābūs" by C. E. Bosworth in *EI*2, V.358, where all the literature is referred to. Cf. Gohlman 125, note 51.

[2] H. Busse, *Chalif und Grosskönig*, Beirut 1969, 89. Cf. Gohlman, 127 notes 62 and 63.

[3] See the article "ʿAnnāzids" by V. Minorsky in *EI*2, I.512b, where the reference to the "autobiography" of Avicenna should be to the Biography. Cf. Gohlman 128, note 69.

as the vizier of Šams-ad-Dawla. Jūzjānī mentions both in the Biography (54-56) and in his Introduction (T7, §§3-4) that Avicenna started writing *The Cure* before Šams-ad-Dawla's death, which is known to have taken place in 412/1021-22.[4] Avicenna thus began on his magnum opus some time between 406/1016 and 412/1021. With the information available it is impossible to establish the date with greater precision; it may not be idle to suggest, however, that given the order in which the events are narrated in both of Jūzjānī's accounts, Avicenna started to work on *The Cure* not too long before Šams-ad-Dawla's death, about 411/1020.

Avicenna continued working on *The Cure* in Hamaḏān until the capture of the city by the Kākūyid ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla in 414/1023-24[5] and shortly after it. "Some time" later (*zamān*, Biography 62.2), he decided to move to Iṣfahān, where he was received with honors by ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla. He completed the remaining parts of *The Cure* there, and wrote the last two books "in the year in which ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla headed for Šābūr-Ḫwāst, en route" (Biography 66.3-4). The events surrounding Šābūr-Ḫwāst that engrossed ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla's attention are in all likelihood those associated with the Kurdish rebellions in 417-18/1026-27; ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla may have headed for Šābūr-Ḫwāst in connection with the battle at Nihāwand where he routed the rebels in 418/1027.[6] An earlier recorded expedition to Šābūr-Ḫwāst by ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla took place right after he had captured Hamaḏān in 414/1024, when Avicenna was still in Hamaḏān; whereas a later one took place in 421/1030, when Avicenna was already engaged in writing other works of a similar nature as that of *The Cure*, specifically the *Fair Judgment* (W10).[7] *The Cure* was thus completed at the latest by 418/1027.

On the basis of these dates in Avicenna's career and the details about the composition of the work provided by Jūzjānī, it is possible to offer the following chronological table:

406-412/1016-1021, possibly about 411/1020: Avicenna begins writing *The Cure* in Hamaḏān at the request of Jūzjānī. Begins with Physics 1; writes approximately twenty folia.
412-414/1022-1024: in Hamaḏān, writes:

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[4] See C. E. Bosworth, "Dailamīs in Central Iran: the Kākūyids of Jibāl and Yazd," *Iran* 8 (1970) 74; cf. Gohlman 128, note 73.

[5] Bosworth "Dailamīs" 74-75; cf. Gohlman 131, note 80. The year 414 A.H. fell between 26 March 1023 and 15 March 1024. Since Ibn-al-Aṯīr (C. J. Tornberg, *Ibn-el-Athiri Chronicon*, Leiden 1863, IX.232) mentions that in the course of the operations some three hundred soldiers of ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla died because of the extreme cold, I would guess the conquest of the city to have taken place in late 414, or early 1024.

[6] Bosworth "Dailamīs" 75.

[7] Cf. Gohlman 132, note 89.

Logic 1 (Eisagoge); Physics 1 (completed); Physics 2; Physics 3;
Physics 4; Physics 5; Physics 6; Metaphysics; entire, in twenty days.
414/1024: in Hamaḏān, writes,
Logic 2; Logic 3; Logic 4; Logic 5; Logic 6 (?);
414-418/1024-1027: in Iṣfahān, writes,
Logic 7; Logic 8; Logic 9; Mathematics 2;
adds to the completed work,
Mathematics 1; Mathematics 3; Mathematics 4;
418/1027: en route to Šābūr-Ḫwāst, writes,
Physics 7; Physics 8.

The Cure was thus composed intermittently during a period of approximately eight years, from 1020 to 1027. The age of Avicenna at this time is again elusive. Jūzjānī offers two numbers, but they are mutually contradictory. In the Introduction to *The Cure* he says that Avicenna was "approximately thirty-two years old" when they met in Jurjān (T7, §2); since this took place relatively shortly after the death of Qābūs, the year must have been 404/July 1013-July 1014. However, in the same Introduction Jūzjānī also specifies that Avicenna was forty years old when he completed *The Cure* (T7, §6), i.e., in 418/1027. This is clearly impossible since between the year of their meeting (404) and the year of the completion of *The Cure* (418) there elapsed about fifteen years, not eight, as suggested by Jūzjānī's account.[8] His numbers are therefore wrong.

Assuming that Jūzjānī did not intentionally provide false information, the inaccuracies can perhaps be explained as errors of calculation starting with the figures Jūzjānī knew best. The year of Avicenna's death is firmly established as 428/1037.[9] Jūzjānī can also be trusted to have known the number of years he had been with Avicenna, which he says in the Biography (68.3) to have been twenty-five. Since he calculated that Avicenna lived to be fifty-eight (Biography 88.4-6), his conclusion that Avicenna was thirty-two when they met is thereby explained and is consistent with the other figures he provides. His statement that Avicenna was forty when he completed *The Cure*, on the other hand, is clearly either an error of calculation on Jūzjānī's part or possibly due to the erroneous transmission of the number (forty-eight?) in the transmission of the manuscripts.[10]

[8] Gohlman 133, note 89, fails to see the discrepancy when he cites these numbers. If Avicenna was forty in 421/1030, as he suggests, then he must have been born in 380/990, something which is clearly contradictory to the date of birth which is given by Jūzjānī (i.e., 370/980; Biography 89) and not disputed by Gohlman.

[9] See the references to the sources in Gohlman 137, note 113.

[10] The editor of *The Guidance* (*al-Hidāya*, Cairo 1974), Muḥammad ʿAbduh, comes to grips with the problem and tries to save Jūzjānī's figures by suggesting (pp. 14-15) that

The incidental information which Avicenna himself provides in *The Cure* enables us to come tantalizingly close to establishing a precise chronology for the composition of the different parts of the work, but in fact it merely corroborates the general framework described above. In the Prior Analytics part of the Logic of *The Cure* he says that he came across a book on conditional propositions and syllogisms "about eighteen years after we had figured out this part of the Philosophical Sciences."[11] The period of his youth referred to here must be that when he was between sixteen and seventeen and a half: the word he uses here, "figured out" (*istaḫrajnā*), fits very well with his description in the Autobiography, "So I continued until all the Philosophical Sciences became deeply rooted in me and I understood them as much as is humanly possible. Everything that I knew at that time is just as I know it now; I have added nothing more to it to this day" (T3, §8). Avicenna thus came across this book when he was at least thirty-four or thirty-five, and when he was writing the Prior Analytics of *The Cure*, i.e. in 414/1024, he was older than that, something which is consistent with the chronology described above. More relevant is another dated reference Avicenna makes in the Meteorology section of the Physics of *The Cure* where he says that he saw a halo around the sun in 390-391[/1000-1001] and then again approximately twenty years later.[12] Even if the traditional date of his birth is accepted (370/980), this would make him over forty years old when he was composing the Meteorology part of *The Cure* in 412-414/1022-24. Jūzjānī's statement that Avicenna was forty when he completed the work is thus false and can be discounted; that he was thirty-two when they met has still to be verified, although it is consistent with the other figures that Jūzjānī provides.

c. The Date and Purpose of Composition of Jūzjānī's Introduction and Avicenna's Prologue to The Cure

The questions of the time and purpose of composition of Jūzjānī's Introduction to *The Cure* and its relation to his Biography need special

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what perhaps Jūzjānī meant by the number "forty" was to indicate the age at which Avicenna started on *The Cure*, not when he completed it. Jūzjānī's text, however, is very explicit.

[11] *Aš-Šifāʾ, al-Manṭiq, al-Qiyās*, S. Zayed, ed., Cairo 1964, 356.9-10: *wa-baʿda an kunnā staḫrajnā hāḏā l-juzʾa mina l-ʿilmi bi-qarībin min ṯamāniya ʿašra<ta> sanatan...* . The translation by Shehaby 159 is inaccurate ("nearly 18 years ago"), for it implies that Avicenna was thirty-four or thirty-five when he was writing the *Qiyās*, which is clearly impossible.

[12] *Aš-Šifāʾ, aṭ-Ṭabīʿīyāt, al-Maʿādin*, ʿA. Montaṣir, S. Zayed, ʿA. Ismāʿīl, eds., Cairo 1964, 49.13-16. Similar but less precise chronological references are found also in other parts of the same book. See the quoations assembled by Mahdavī 125, note 1.

consideration. Jūzjānī himself says that he wrote the Introduction for the following purposes (T7): 1) To explain that Avicenna chose to write *The Cure per modum expositionis* rather than as a textual commentary on Aristotle because he had no time; 2) to explain that the reason that the Logic of *The Cure* follows the order and arrangement of Aristotle's *Organon* while the Physics and Metaphysics do not follow the order of Aristotle's corresponding books is that Avicenna wrote the former in leisure and with full access to books while the latter he wrote from memory; 3) to glorify Avicenna for his extraordinary abilities to write from memory something which in the Cairo edition of *The Cure* takes hundreds of pages.

These three points address the following problems and imply the following chronological context: No. (1) is an answer to those who were requesting from Avicenna commentaries on the text of Aristotle and who were not content with his works *per modum expositionis* which were then available, including *The Cure*. This situation could have existed only before the compilation of the *Fair Judgment* which addressed itself precisely to these requests. Jūzjānī's explanation, therefore, is temporally relevant only to the period before the compilation of the *Fair Judgment*, for if it were written afterwards one would have expected a reference to it, perhaps together with the account of its loss, as in the Biography (80.5-7; see below the discussion on W10).

Jūzjānī's attempt in No. (2) to claim that Avicenna wrote the entire Metaphysics and Physics 1 (?) through 6 "without having available any book to consult" is at the very least disingenuous. A comparison of the two accounts in the Introduction and the Biography is again edifying:

Introduction (T7, §4)	*Biography 58.2-8*
He voluntarily applied himself with great earnestness to [the] composition [of *The Cure*],	The Master wrote down the main topics [of *The Cure*] in approximately twenty octavo quires. He worked at this for two days until he had written down the main topics without the presence of a book or source to consult, but from his memory and by heart. Then he left these quires before him, took paper, and he would examine each topic and write the commentary on it. He would write fifty folia every day, until he had completed the entire Metaphysics and Physics (except the two books on Zoology and Botany).
and in a period of twenty days he finished Metaphysics and Physics (except the two books on Zoology and Botany), without having available any book to consult, but by relying solely upon his	

natural talents. He also started on Logic and wrote the opening address and associated material.	He began on Logic and wrote one part it.

Jūzjānī's remark in the Introduction that Avicenna wrote by heart the entire Physics and Metaphysics appears to be willfully inaccurate for two reasons: first, in the Biography he himself transfers that remark, more credibly, to the drafting of the outline only which Avicenna wrote prior to the actual composition of these books, and second, he fails to mention the fact, doubtless well known to him, that entire chapters in at least the De Anima and Metaphysics parts of *The Cure* were copied verbatim from earlier works, in particular *The Provenance and Destination* and *The State of the Human Soul*. Even if one were to grant Avicenna prodigious mnemonic powers, it is hard to believe that he could have reproduced from memory every single word of scores of pages originally written over a decade before.

It thus seems quite certain that Jūzjānī in this instance is deliberately exaggerating a point—if not falsifying the facts—in an attempt to answer Avicenna's Peripatetic critics (actual or potential) who would have expected him to follow, albeit *per modum expositionis*, the order and the contents of the Aristotelian canon of writings. The justification offered here by Jūzjānī is again temporally tenable only for the period before the composition of Avicenna's later works, *The Easterners* and particularly *Pointers and Reminders*, which were written in Iṣfahān when Avicenna had both the time and the freedom to consult all the books that could have been physically available to him. If Jūzjānī were to offer the same explanation after their composition, it would have been immediately rejected on the grounds that in these later works Avicenna still followed the order and the arrangement of *The Cure* (and deviated even more from Aristotelian patterns).

The glorification of Avicenna in No. (3) and in paragraph 1 of Jūzjānī's Introduction in general ill accords with both the relatively more subdued tone in the Biography, which was written after Avicenna's death, and the openly critical attitude toward his master evident in later works. A good example is provided by his comments in the abridgment of an astronomical work of his entitled, *On the Nature of the Construction of the Spheres*. In his introduction Jūzjānī says that he had been baffled for a long time by the concept of the equant sphere and did not know if the reason that there was no explanation available anywhere was because

> they (i.e. the astronomers) niggardly held it back from others, or it escaped them altogether, as in the case of [Avicenna], may God have mercy on his soul. When I asked him about this problem, he said: "I came to understand this problem after great effort and much toil, and I will not teach it to

> anybody. Apply yourself to it and it may be revealed to you as it was revealed to me." I suspect that I was the first to achieve these results.[13]

The above considerations thus indicate that the tenor of Jūzjānī's Introduction is apologetic with a laudatory dimension, and that its main thrust is to defend Avicenna's Peripatetic orthodoxy. Such a depiction of Avicenna's relationship to the Aristotelian tradition could not have been maintained after, nor was it indeed maintained by Avicenna himself in the Prologue to *The Cure* and the Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8). It is therefore fair to assume that Jūzjānī's Introduction antedated both of them.

Three further considerations support this assumption. First, a comparison between Jūzjānī's Introduction and Biography indicates that in the latter he gives essentially the same account of the history of the composition of *The Cure*, but with some major differences: the Biography is for the most part more detailed in the narration of events, making the corresponding parts of the Introduction superfluous;[14] the Biography is relatively more specific in referring to the particular names of the personalities involved in the events, suggesting that the reticence or vagueness of the Introduction in this regard may be due to the concern lest these personalities be offended;[15] and the Biography, finally, is manifestly free of any attempt to claim Peripatetic orthodoxy for Avicenna,[16] reflecting the philosopher's later position, as discussed in the next preceding paragraph under No. (2). All these differences indicate that the Biography was written after the Introduction.

Second, there is the matter of the benedictory formula after the name of Avicenna in Jūzjānī's Introduction (T7, §1). Certain manuscripts of

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[13] G. Saliba, "Ibn Sīnā and Abū ʿUbayd al-Jūzjānī: The Problem of the Ptolemaic Equant," *Journal for the History of Arabic Science* 4 (1980) 380. (I am grateful to George Saliba for drawing my attention to his article and to this passage.) See *GAS* VI.281, note 2, for a differently worded account of the same conversation between the two men by Quṭb-ad-Dīn aš-Šīrāzī, presumably extracted from Jūzjānī's longer work. It is very likely that similar statements will come to light when Jūzjānī's extant works are studied.

[14] See my references to the Biography in the notes to the translation of Jūzjānī's Introduction, T7.

[15] Cf. for example, "the notables of that state" (T7, §5), as opposed to the specific mention of Tāj-al-Mulk in the Biography (58.8); particularly striking is the absence of any mention of ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla in the Introduction, presumably in order not to involve him explicitly in the events surrounding Avicenna's imprisonment in Fardajān and his subsequent move to Iṣfahān. If this argument is valid, then by the same reasoning the Biography, in which ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla is mentioned, must have been written after the latter's death in 433/1041.

[16] It is indicative that the Biography not only does not say that Avicenna wrote the Physics and Metaphysics from memory, but also omits the claim made by the Introduction (T7, §6) that the Logic follows the order of the *Organon* because Avicenna had access to books. Such a claim could not have been made in the Biography in view of Avicenna's later works.

the work have, "may God perpetuate his days," an indication that Avicenna was alive at the time of writing, while others have instead, "May God have mercy on his soul;" the Latin translation omits the phrase entirely. Scribes of Arabic manuscripts were notoriously free with the use of such formulae and can hardly be relied upon to reproduce the exact words originally used by the author, but the former formula wishing Avicenna a long life is by the nature of things the *lectio difficilior* and to be preferred in this case.

Third, there is the matter of Jūzjānī's misinformation at best, or patent lie at worst, concerning Avicenna's writing from memory: large parts of the Metaphysics are copied verbatim from *The Provenance and Destination*, and it is rather inconceivable that Avicenna should have had the text by heart. The only reason for this that I can suggest is that Jūzjānī wanted to gloss over Avicenna's blatant "innovations" in the hope that in a future work he could perhaps write an exposition of Aristotle's system. It is not unlikely that the *Fair Judgment* owes its genesis to such an insistence by Jūzjānī.

Jūzjānī therefore wrote the Introduction to *The Cure* before the Biography, when his master was still alive, and apparently even before Avicenna wrote any of the later comprehensive philosophical works, or summae. I would even argue that Jūzjānī wrote the Introduction immediately upon the completion of *The Cure*. In it he represents himself as the instigator and constant goad of the project, and if this was indeed the case, he must have considered it his right to introduce the finished product and could hardly have tarried to do so. What he originally envisaged the work to be (an exposition of Aristotle's philosophy) and the actual work he received at the end (Avicenna's version of Aristotle's philosophy) were apparently two different things, and this would explain the apologetic tenor of the Introduction. However the case may be, the fact remains that Jūzjānī prized *The Cure* above all of Avicenna's works: apart from the inevitable inclusion of *The Easterners*, *Fair Judgment*, and *Pointers and Reminders* in the list of Avicenna's books in the beginning of the Biography, he nowhere mentions the circumstances surrounding their composition, despite the fact that they were works about which such bibliographical information was sorely needed. This casts an interesting light on Jūzjānī, and will have to be taken seriously into consideration in an appraisal of his own work and his relation to Avicenna.

For his part, it appears that Avicenna at a later stage, after he had written *The Easterners*, thought Jūzjānī's Introduction to *The Cure* inadequate, if not misleading. To eliminate its apologetic impression and to answer to its implication that Avicenna was an anti-Aristotelian despite himself, i.e., because he could not help it due to objective conditions, he removed

all references to the "extenuating" circumstances adduced by Jūzjānī: the lack of free time, the unavailability of books, the imprisonment, etc. Instead, he presented both the organization and contents of the book as being solely due to his deliberate plan. He says explicitly in the Prologue (T9, §2; emphasis added), "There is *nothing of account* to be found in the books of the ancients *which we did not include in this book* of ours;" i.e., there are no omissions of significant theories due to the unavailability of sources, as Jūzjānī implied (the statement at the end of §1 of the Prologue, "excluding only ... what escaped my memory and did not occur to my thought," is a general disclaimer dictated by scholarly prudence and does not appear to have any specific reference); "if it is not found in the place where it is Customary to record it, then it will be found in another place which *I thought more appropriate for it*;" i.e., the displacement, or rather, the deviation from the axiomatic arrangement of subjects in the Aristotelian canon is deliberate and not due to the lack of sources to consult; "to this I added some of the things which I perceived through *my own* reflection and Validated through *my own* theoretical analysis, *especially in Physics and Metaphysics*," i.e., the two subjects which Jūzjānī specifically singles out repeatedly (T7, §§4, 7) as being organized differently from the works of Aristotle because of the lack of books. Avicenna here expressly rejects Jūzjānī's interpretation and states that the different organization (and contents) are due to his own research. "And even in logic, if you will," is again directed specifically against Jūzjānī's account in the Introduction (T7, §§6, 7) that the part on Logic followed the *Organon* because of the availability of books. Avicenna of course does follow a course "parallel to the order of Aristotle's books [on logic]" as he himself says in the Prologue (T9, §5), but this has nothing to do with the availability of books, and the outward conformity to the Aristotelian canon does not, as Jūzjānī implies, bespeak a corresponding internal congruence: should one look more closely—and that is the thrust of the parenthetical, "if you will"—there is a disparity between the Aristotelian tradition on logic and his own in substance as well (see Chapter 6.4 and 6.5).

Avicenna thus presents himself in the Prologue to *The Cure* not as an anti-Aristotelian despite himself, as Jūzjānī would have it, but as a conscious reformer of the Aristotelian tradition, an attitude which is also apparent in the Introduction to *The Easterners* and shared by other disciples of his like Bahmanyār.[17] The Prologue itself was added to the completed *The Cure* in response to Jūzjānī's previous Introduction, and

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[17] Bahmanyār describes the contents of his *Taḥṣīl* (p. 1) as "the gist of the philosophy which Avicenna revised" (*lubāb* [*sic lege pro kitāb*] *al-ḥikma allatī haḏḏabahā š-Šayḫ*).

it was written in all probability shortly after *The Easterners*, to which it refers as a work of equal importance as *The Cure* and hence presumably very much in circulation—or at least available at the time, as opposed to Avicenna's later references to it as having been withdrawn from circulation (T11; §1).[18]

Work 7. *The Salvation (an-Najāt)* [A23, M118]

Jūzjānī says in the Biography (66.4) that Avicenna wrote *The Salvation* en route to Šābūr-Ḫwāst right after completing the last books of *The Cure*. This information is also repeated in the anonymous Longer Bibliography (96.1-2). According to the chronology established for *The Cure* in the preceding section, *The Salvation* was thus written in 417/1026 or 418/1027.

This work also was a commissioned piece. In his brief introduction Avicenna mentions that a group of unspecified friends asked him to compile a book that would include the indispensable minimum of philosophical knowledge necessary for a person to acquire in order to be counted among the educated elite. In particular, they asked him to include only the Fundamental Principles of Logic and Physics, as much information from Geometry and Arithmetic as is necessary for one to deal with mathematical proofs, practical information from Astronomy related to calendars and *zīj*es, Music, and Metaphysics. This last section, which was to be written in as clear and concise a manner as possible, was also to contain information about the Destination, or place of return, of the human soul, and about personal ethics in order for one "to attain salvation from drowning in the sea of errors."[1]

Avicenna granted their request and compiled *The Salvation* practically without composing a single line anew. As Jūzjānī informs us (Biography 74.9-76.1), for the Logic he used *The Shorter Summary on Logic* which he had written in Jurjān, i.e., approximately around 404/1013-14. A comparison of the remaining parts of *The Salvation* with other works of Avicenna indicates that for the Physics he copied the corresponding chapters from *The Compilation* or the *Philosophy for ʿArūḍī*, which he had

[18] Goichon ("Nouvauté" 44.13-17) was the only scholar to have sensed that the Prologue to *The Cure* must have been written after the work itself, "vers la fin de sa vie." Although she proffered no arguments ("bien que nous n'ayons trouvé nulle part cette hypothèse") she deserves credit for being aware of the problem. Panoussi 137 also makes a statement to that effect ("nous savons que notre auteur a écrit l'introduction de *aš-Šifā* [*sic*] après avoir rédigé sa *philosophie orientale*"), but since he does not say how he knows this, it must be assumed that he is following tacitly Goichon. S. van Riet, finally, in her "Données" makes no mention of the matter.

[1] *Najāt* 2-3; Mahdavī 226-227.

written when he was twenty-one in Buḫārā, except for the De Anima, for which he used the chapter from *The State of the Human Soul*. Most of the Metaphysics, finally, is copied verbatim from *The Provenance and Destination*. After putting together these various earlier compositions of his, obviously in a very short time, Avicenna did not complete his editorial patchwork. Jūzjānī remarks that the reason for this was that "he was hindered by some obstacles," and therefore he, Jūzjānī, assumed the responsibility of completing the work. He says that he added the chapters on Geometry, Astronomy, and Music from earlier works by Avicenna found in his own possession, but that since he could find nothing appropriate for Arithmetic, he took it upon himself to abridge Avicenna's larger work on Arithmetic and include it in *The Salvation*. He also wrote a very brief preface to the part on Mathematics, from which the above information is derived.[2]

Jūzjānī's explanation of Avicenna's omission of the mathematical part again seems to be apologetic. After completing *The Cure*, Avicenna never wrote another mathematical part for any of his summae: neither *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* (W8), nor *The Easterners* (W9), nor *Pointers and Reminders* (W11) has one. As a matter of fact, even before *The Cure* Avicenna frequently omitted this part in similar works such as *Elements of Philosophy* (*ʿUyūn al-ḥikma*, A15, M93) and *The Guidance* (*al-Hidāya*, A24, M130). Avicenna states the reason in *The Easterners*: Mathematics, he says, and most of the practical sciences (Ethics, Oeconomics, Politics), are not areas in which philosophers have disagreed (Testimonium 16 in W9 below). This means that Avicenna did not find any major conflicts between his views on these subjects and those transmitted in the Aristotelian tradition. The standard books on these subjects were for the most part sufficient, and after treating them himself in several monographs and extensively in *The Cure*, he found no need for repeated expositions and successive elaborations, as he had for the other subjects. Jūzjānī's excuse that Avicenna was diverted by other engagements from incorporating these subjects in *The Salvation* thus appears another attempt to excuse Avicenna's deviation from traditional practice and to justify his Aristotelian orthodoxy.

The Salvation, both the parts compiled by Avicenna and those added by Jūzjānī, is a composite piece of work bringing together earlier compositions by Avicenna, written at various stages of his career. It is *not* a summary or abridgment of *The Cure*, as frequently stated,[3] but rather both

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[2] Jūzjānī's preface is given in Mahdavī 234-235.

[3] Thus, for example, Afnan (*Avicenna* 71), M. Fakhry (*A History of Islamic Philosophy*, New York 1970, 150), and S. Pines ("Philosophy," *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Cambridge 1970, II.806), to name but three of the most readily accessible treatments in English.

it and *The Cure* copy passages from earlier works by Avicenna, notably *The Provenance and Destination* and *The State of the Human Soul*. It is these passages, incorporated in the De Anima and Metaphysics parts of *The Cure* and *The Salvation*, that Goichon identifies in her tables of concordance, *Distinction* 499-503. The bibliographical usefulness of *The Salvation* lies in enabling us to trace the evolution of Avicenna's thought on all these subjects by comparing its texts with that of chapters from works written almost thirty years previously.[4]

Work 8. *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla (Dānešnāme-ye ʿAlāʾī)* [A11, 13; M72]

This work was written in Persian at the express request of the Kākūyid ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla during Avicenna's stay in Iṣfahān. Since Avicenna lived in Iṣfahān from 414/1023 until his death in 428/1037, it could have been written any time during this long period. Mahdavī (101) may be right in suggesting the earlier rather than the later years of this period as the date of composition; since it so closely resembles *The Salvation* in both scope and execution, I would also place it around 418/1027. It may be possible to arrive at a more precise relative date after its doctrinal points have been compared with those in other works in order to detect shifts in emphasis.

Avicenna says in the introduction that ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla specifically asked him to set down in as abridged a manner as possible the Fundamental Principles and major points of five sciences, Logic, Physics, Astronomy, Music, and Metaphysics. Avicenna, in fact, actually wrote only three, omitting the two parts of Mathematics (Astronomy and Music), and changed the order of presentation of the rest into Logic, Metaphysics, and Physics.[1] This change of order foreshadows the new arrangement Avicenna was later to follow in *The Easterners* (W9).

Jūzjānī completed the work by adding the part on Mathematics and including not only Astronomy and Music, as Avicenna was asked and had intended to do, but also Arithmetic and Geometry. This entire part, as a matter of fact, is largely a Persian translation of the corresponding parts Jūzjānī had added to *The Salvation*. In his brief preface to this part, which is almost verbatim identical with the one he had written for *The Salvation* (W7), he explains that he decided to complete the work because the part Avicenna himself had written was lost.[2] This explanation also can be discounted because, as in the case with *The Salvation* (W7), it appears to be apologetic in nature.

[4] See, for example, the remarks made above (W1) about some of the specific differences in wording and arrangement between *Philosophy for ʿArūḍī* and *The Salvation*.

[1] Mahdavī 102 = Achena/Massé I.21-22.
[2] Mahdavī 110 = Achena/Massé II.91-92.

Work 9. *The Easterners* (*al-Mašriqīyūn*) [A12 and 41, M63 and 160]

The questions of the nature and date of composition, transmission and survival of this book are complex and have been complicated even further by hasty scholarship. For a sober assessment, it is necessary to collect and sort out all the pertinent facts; these include statements by Avicenna and later philosophers, as well as the evidence provided by the extant parts of the work itself.[1]

a. Testimonia

I. Statements by Avicenna.

Avicenna mentions "Eastern" matters and the "Easterners" in all his currently known writings as follows:

A) Eastern philosophy (*al-ḥikma al-mašriqīya*), 7 times:

[1] *The Cure*, 1 time (T9, §4):

> I also wrote a book other than these two [*The Cure* and the *Appendices*], in which I presented philosophy as it is in itself and as required by an unbiased attitude which neither takes into account in [this book] the views of colleagues in the discipline, nor takes precautions here against creating schisms among them as is done elsewhere; this is my book on Eastern philosophy [*wa-huwa kitābī fī l-falsafa al-mašriqīya*]. ... Whoever wants the truth [stated] without indirection, he should seek [this] book.

[2] Commentary on the *Theologia*, 6 times (Badawī *Arisṭū* 43.10, 43.19, 53.19, 58.9, 61 ult., 72.12):[2]

> [In all these passages Avicenna says that the answer to the problem discussed should be sought "in the Eastern philosophy" (*ʿalā/min/fī l-ḥikma al-mašriqīya*), without prefixing the word *kitāb* (book) to "Eastern philosophy." In one instance only (53.18-19) he says that the subject is discussed "in the books and in the Eastern philosophy."]

B) Eastern questions (*al-masāʾil al-mašriqīya*), 1 time:

[3] Letter to an Anonymous Disciple (T11, §1):

> You expressed sorrow for the loss of *Pointers and Reminders*, but I think that a copy of this book has been preserved. As for the Eastern questions, I had packed them up—no, most of

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[1] Most of the available evidence has been collected in the useful discussion by Mahdavī 80-88.

[2] These passages are identified by G. Vajda "Les notes d'Avicenne sur la «Théologie d'Aristote»," *Revue Thomiste* 51 (1951) 348, and the subjects they deal with are listed in notes 2-7.

them—[as they were] in their quires so that no one would look at them, and I had also written down on slips of paper some passages from the *Throne Philosophy*; it is these which got lost. They were not voluminous, however (although they did treat many subjects and were quite comprehensive), and it would be easy to rewrite them. But yes, the *Fair Judgment*, on the other hand, had to be extensive, and rewriting it would require work.

C) Eastern Fundamental Principles (*al-uṣūl al-mašriqīya*), 1 time:

[4] Letter to an Anonymous Disciple (T11, §4):

The invariable element in animals may be [a subject] more amenable to a clear exposition; as a matter of fact, I dealt with it thoroughly in the Eastern Fundamental Principles by first raising doubts and then solving them. In the case of plants, however, a clear exposition [of the same subject] is more difficult.

D) Eastern demonstrative proof (*al-burhān al-mašriqī*), 1 time:

[5] *Discussions* §107 (Badawī *Arisṭū* 145.11):

The two Eastern demonstrative proofs that it is impossible for the intellectual faculty to be corporeal, in written form: [This is all that is extant in the *Discussions*.]

E) The Easterners (*al-mašriqīyūn*), 46 times:

[6] Letter to Kiyā, 1 time (T12, §3):

I had composed a book which I called *Fair Judgment*. I divided scholars into two groups, the Westerners and the Easterners, and I had the Easterners argue against the Westerners until I intervened to Judge Fairly when there was a real point of dispute between them.

[7] Introduction to *The Easterners*, 1 time (T8, §2):

It is not unlikely that the Easterners may have another name for [logic].

[8] *Commentary on Book Lambda*, 1 time (Badawī *Arisṭū* 33.18); *Discussions* 333[bis],[3] 1 time (Badawī *Arisṭū* 193.8); *Marginal Notes on De Anima*, 42 times (Badawī *Arisṭū* 75-116, passim):

[In all these passages either from the *Fair Judgment* or related to it (see W10), there are three kinds of references to the Easterners: a) they are either quoted directly or in paraphrase; b) they are referred to in general for the completion of an argument or for the solution of a problem (e.g.,

[3] This passage in the *Discussions* is actually a quotation from the *Commentary on Book Lambda*: "Avicenna mentioned in a passage that ... (= Badawī *Arisṭū* 25.2-7) and found that the discussion on this subject is best listened to from the Easterners."

Badawī *Arisṭū* 33.18, 86.16, 100.12, 193.8); c) references are made to the books of the Easterners (Badawī *Arisṭū* 83.11, 96.16, 110.18, 116.13).]

II. Statements By Others

[9] Biography 46.10:

Some of the Eastern philosophy, one volume.[4]

[10] Longer Bibliography, Gohlman 102.3-4:

The book *Eastern Philosophy*, which is not extant in its entirety.

[11a] Bayhaqī (d. 1174), *Tatimma* 56/68:

As for the complete *Eastern Philosophy* and the *Throne Philosophy*, the Imām Ismāʿīl al-Bāḫarzī said that they were in the libraries of Sultan Masʿūd ibn-Maḥmūd at Ghazna. [They remained there] until the libraries were put to fire by the Ġūrid and Oġuz troops of the king of Jibāl, al-Ḥusayn [Jehān-sūz] in the year 546[/1151].

[11b] Ibn-al-Aṯīr (d. 1233), *al-Kāmil* IX.297 (Tornberg), *s.a.* 425/1034:

After Abū-Sahl [al-Ḥamdūnī] captured Iṣfahān, he pillaged the treasuries and possessions of ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla. The books of Avicenna, who was in the service of ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla, were seized and carried to Ghazna where they were placed in libraries. [They remained there] until the libraries were put to fire by the troops of the Ġūrid al-Ḥusayn ibn-al-Ḥusayn, as we shall mention.[5]

[12] Ibn-Ṭufayl (d. 1185), *Ḥayy ibn-Yaqẓān* 3.4-4.3, 14.9-15.1 (Gauthier):[6]

You have asked me, noble friend, ... to make you privy to the secrets of Eastern philosophy which Avicenna mentioned, saying that "whoever wants the truth without indirection should seek" [this philosophy] and try earnestly to acquire it.

...

As for the books of Aristotle, Avicenna undertook in *The Cure* to interpret their contents, proceeding according to Aristotle's doctrine and following the method of his philosophy. In the beginning of the book, Avicenna stated explicitly

[4] This information is repeated twice by the Ottoman bibliographer Bağdatlı Ismāʿīl Paşa, *Hadīyat al-ʿārifīn*, Kilisli R. Bilge and İbnülemin M. K. Inal, eds., Istanbul 1951, I.309.5-6.

[5] Ibn-al-Aṯīr does not give any more details on the subject in his account of the sack of Ghazna, Vol. XI.108-109, Tornberg.

[6] L. Gauthier, *Hayy ben Yaqdhân*, 2nd ed., Beirut 1936.

that in his opinion the truth is something else, that he wrote *The Cure* according to the doctrine of the Peripatetics only, and that "whoever wants the truth without indirection" should seek his book on Eastern philosophy.

[13] Suhrawardī Maqtūl (d. 1191), *al-Mašāri*ᶜ *wa-l-muṭāraḥāt* 195 (Corbin):[7]

The quires [*karārīs*] which Avicenna attributed to the Easterners are extant separately in unbound form.[a] Although he attributed these quires to the East [Ḫurāsān], they are the same as the precepts of the Peripatetics and common philosophy. The only difference is that he occasionally altered the form of expression, or proceeded in certain Corollary issues in a somewhat independent way which, however, neither deviates from his other books to any appreciable degree, nor establishes the Fundamental Principle of the East which was founded at the time of the sages in the era of Chosroes. This Fundamental Principle is the exalted subject and the philosophy of the elite [i.e., as opposed to the "common" philosophy of the Peripatetics].

[14a] Averroes (d. 1198), *Tahāfut at-tahāfut* 421.7-8 (Bouyges):[8]

[The followers of Avicenna] said that this is the view [about the necessary existent] which he set forth in his Eastern philosophy and that he called this philosophy Eastern only because it is the doctrine of the people of the East [Ḫurāsān].

[14b] --------, *Quaestiones in Physica* I.80-81 (Tunik):[9]

Among those who hold this opinion are many of the recent philosophers whom we have encountered from among those who follow the doctrine of Avicenna. They think this is the opinion of Avicenna, and that it is the opinion to which he inclined in the Eastern philosophy, namely, that there is no being here, which is incorporeal, subsisting in itself, separate from the [celestial] bodies which is a principle of those bodies and what exists in them, as was the opinion of the

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[a] A variant manuscript reading has "incomplete" (*ġayr tāmma*) for "in unbound form" (*ġayr multaʾima*). Corbin, *Opera I* 195, rightly prefers the latter, the *lectio difficilior*.

[7] H. Corbin, *Šihābaddīn Yaḥyā as-Suhrawardī. Opera Metaphysica et Mystica* I [Bibliotheca Islamica 16a], Leipzig/Istanbul 1945.

[8] M. Bouyges, *Averroès. Tahafot at-tahafot* [Bibliotheca Arabica Scholasticorum, Série Arabe III], Beirut 1930; cf. the English translation by S. van den Bergh, *Averroes' Tahafut al-Tahafut*, London 1954, I. 254.

[9] H. C. Tunik, *Averroes Quaestiones in Physica*, Radcliffe Diss., April 1956. I am grateful to A. Sabra of Harvard University for drawing my attention to this dissertation.

Peripatetics. In spite of all this they think that this is the opinion of the Philosopher, and that what is to be found in his books is only by way of that concealment which was the custom of the ancient philosophers, who assumed it because of the prevalent lack of understanding.[10]

[15] Ibn-Sabʿīn (d. 1270), *Budd al-ʿārif* 129 (Massignon):[11]

As for Avicenna, he engages in misrepresentation[12] and sophistry, and makes a lot of noise but is actually of little use: whatever he has written is good for nothing. He claims to have attained the Eastern philosophy, but had he really attained it he would have been enveloped by its breeze, whereas he is in a fiery hole. Most of his books are compilations deriving[b] from the books of Plato; what they contain of his own thought, on the other hand, is wrong, and what he has [himself] to say is unreliable. *The Cure*, which is his greatest book, is full of fumblings and opposes Aristotle, although his opposition to Aristotle is one of the reasons for which he is praised because he brought to light what Aristotle had concealed.[10] His best work on Theology is *Reminders and Pointers* [*sic*] and what he expressed symbolically in *Ḥayy ibn-Yaqẓān*—with the reservation that everything that he mentioned in these books derives from concepts in Plato's *Laws*[c] and the sayings of the Ṣūfīs. Avicenna proceeded in this [symbolic and allusive] fashion for the sake of drilling[d] and research in philosophy,[13] two areas in which he is neither to be relied upon nor listened to.

[16] Ḥājjī-Ḫalīfa (d. 1657), *Kašf aẓ-ẓunūn* I.685 ult.:[14]

Eastern Philosophy by Avicenna.

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[b] "Compilations deriving:" read *muʾallafatun wa-mustanbaṭatun* for *muwallafuhu wa-mustanbaṭuhu* ("livres et théories" [!]) in Massignon.

[c] Read *Nawāmīs*.

[d] The text should read, *wa-rakiba šibha ḏālika li-t-tamarrun* for *wa-rakkaba šibha ḏālika li-t-tamaddun* in Massignon, who translates, "Il les a combinées par esprit d'acculturation," and notes for "acculturation," "*tamaddun*: première apparition de ce terme qui signifie aujourd'hui 'civilisation' [!]."

[10] These remarks are based on Avicenna's own statements. See below, Chapter 5.3.

[11] Text quoted in L. Massignon, *Recueil de textes inédits concernant l'histoire de la mystique en pays d'Islam*, Paris 1929. Translated by L. Massignon in "Ibn Sabʿīn et la critique psychologique dans l'histoire de la philosophie musulmane," *Mémorial Henri Basset*, Paris 1928, p. 126.

[12] I.e., misrepresentation in the sophistical sense of making something wrong seem right. The term *tamwīh* was used in the translation literature as a synonym for *safsaṭa*, sophistry. The word does not mean "illusion" (Massignon).

[13] This remark also is based on Avicenna's statements. See below Chapter 8.2 and 8.3.

[14] *Keşf-el-zunun*, Ş. Yaltkaya and Kilisli R. Bilge, eds., Istanbul 1941.

III. Internal Evidence

[17] Contents of the work (*Mašriqīyūn* 8.8-13):

We do not intend to present in this book all the parts of theoretical and practical philosophy, but we wish to present only the following kinds of sciences: the instrumental science [i.e., Logic], the universal science [i.e., the first part of Metaphysics], Theology [i.e., the second part of Metaphysics], the fundamental part of Physics, and only as much of the practical science as is needed by the seeker of salvation. As for Mathematics, it is not a science about which there is disagreement, and the amount of it which we presented in *The Cure* is exactly what we would have presented here had we occupied ourselves with it—and similarly with the kinds of practical science which we did not present here.

[18] Manuscripts of the work.

There are extant at least one and possibly two portions of the work.

[18a] Logic. This is preserved in the following manuscripts:[15]

1. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub Ḥikma 6M.[16] The title is given as "From *The Book of the Easterners*" (*min Kitāb al-mašriqīyīn*).
2. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub Ḥikma 213. This is copied directly from the preceding manuscript.
3. Istanbul, Ayasofya 4829, ff. 30v-44r (Anawati 112, Mahdavī 93).
4. Istanbul, Ayasofya 4852, ff. 34v-80r (Anawati 112, Mahdavī 93).
5. Mašhad, Riḍawī I, 1/85 (Mahdavī 93).
6. Tehran, Malik 2014 (Mahdavī 93).

[18b] Physics. This part, possibly a summary from *The Cure*, is preserved in the following manuscripts:

7. Istanbul, Ayasofya 2403, ff. 1-127 (Anawati 27, Mahdavī 270).[17]
8. Istanbul, Nuruosmaniye 4894, ff. 373v-425r (Anawati 27, Mahdavī 270).[18]

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[15] I have been able to examine only the first two of the MSS listed below. For the rest I am relying on information in the literature.

[16] See Gutas "Avicenna's Library."

[17] The contents of this manuscript are listed by G. C. Anawati, "Un manuscrit de la Hikma Mashriqiyya d'Ibn Sina," *MIDEO* 1 (1954) 164-165.

[18] The contents of this manuscript are listed by G. C. Anawati, "Nour Osmaniyye" 381-386. From the available information it is not clear whether this manuscript contains only the Physics part or both the Logic and the Physics.

9. Oxford, Bodleian Pococke 181 (= Hebrew 400 Uri = 1334 Neubauer); (Anawati 27, Mahdavī 270).
10. Leipzig 796 (DC 196), ff. 4r-96v: K. Vollers, *Katalog der Islamischen ... Handschriften der Universitäts-Bibliothek zu Leipzig*, Leipzig 1906, pp. 256-57.

b. Title of the Work

The title of the work is problematical. The question is whether the phrase "Eastern Philosophy" mentioned by Avicenna only seven times in all his extant works [Testimonia 1 and 2 above] refers to a title or is a mere designation of the kind of philosophy involved, i.e., "Eastern" as opposed to "Western" or even, perhaps, "Peripatetic." The occurrence of the phrase in the Prologue to *The Cure* is clearly a designation of the subject of the book: "this is my book *on* (*fī*) Eastern philosophy" [Test. 1]. The wording leaves little room for doubt, unless one were to suppose that the title was *On Eastern Philosophy* (*Fī l-falsafa al-mašriqīya*), something which is not attested anywhere else. This is further corroborated by the fact that both Ibn-Ṭufayl [Test. 12] and Averroes [Test. 14], who apparently had access only to *The Cure*, understood the phrase to be a designation of Avicenna's philosophy.[19] Finally, it is to be noted that the phrase says, "Eastern *falsafa*," not "Eastern *ḥikma*" as in the references in the Commentary on the *Theologia*. If the phrase is to refer to the title, it has to be either one or the other; and since the wording speaks against it, the title of the work was not *al-Falsafa al-mašriqīya*.

The six references in the Commentary on the *Theologia* from the *Fair Judgment* are more ambiguous; the phrase could refer either to a title or to the type of philosophy. The second alternative seems to be more likely. In the one instance in which Avicenna refers to "the books" and the "Eastern philosophy" [Test. 2], it is clear that he is juxtaposing two traditions since by "books" in such contexts Avicenna always meant books in the Aristotelian tradition.[20] He is therefore referring the reader here both to the Peripatetic philosophy and the Eastern philosophy.

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[19] Ibn-Ṭufayl's reference to the Prologue is evident from his verbatim quotation of it. Averroes does not refer to the Eastern philosophy in the context of the Prologue of *The Cure*, of which he was certainly aware, but as reported from a number of followers of Avicenna in Spain. The fact that these followers are misrepresenting Avicenna's Eastern philosophy indicates that Averroes did not have access to any book by Avicenna under that title. Furthermore, he understands the phrase to be a designation of Avicenna's philosophy because he quotes it as "*his* Eastern philosophy" (*fī falsafatihi l-mašriqīya*) and not with the precise title [Test. 14a].

[20] See, for example, the Autobiography (T3), §6, last sentence, and the quotation from the Preface to the Physics of *The Cure* in Chapter 5.2, L38.

More significant, however, is the fact that in two other passages where he would have been expected to refer to the book by its title, he uses two variant phrases. In his letter to an anonymous disciple, written, as we shall next discuss, at least five years after the loss of the *Fair Judgment*, he talks about his books that were considered lost and refers to three of them by title; to what he had written on Eastern philosophy, on the other hand, he refers by the phrase "Eastern questions" [Test. 3]. Further on in the same letter he calls it a discussion on "Eastern Fundamental Principles" [Test. 4]. Neither of these can be the title of the book because again there is no attestation for them.

Jūzjānī also does not refer to the book by its title. In the first part of his bibliography in which he lists Avicenna's books (Biography 46.2-12), he puts before each title the word *kitāb* with the sole exception of the Eastern philosophy. What he says [Test. 9] seems to mean, "some texts about Eastern philosophy, totalling one volume." Suhrawardī, who had access to the same part on logic extant today,[21] reflects the same vagueness about the work for which he does not seem to have a title either: "The quires which Avicenna attributed to the Easterners" [Test. 13]. Suhrawardī's designation, finally, is corroborated by the title in the oldest extant manuscript containing the part on logic: "From *The Book of the Easterners*" [Test. 18a].

The only two sources which make a title out of "Eastern Philosophy" are the Longer Bibliography [Test. 10], which calls it *The Book of Eastern Philosophy*, and Bayhaqī [Test. 11a] who, although he does not use the word *kitāb*, clearly understands it as a title. In view of the overwhelming evidence discussed above, it would seem that in both cases it can be assumed that the designation of the type of philosophy contained in those texts was transformed into a title for the book by the two authors themselves.

In sum, we have little information about the title of the book. It is relatively certain, however, that it was not *Eastern Philosophy*: neither *al-Falsafa al-mašriqīya* nor *al-Ḥikma al-mašriqīya*; it is much more likely that the title was *The Easterners*, since the weightiest evidence is provided by the Cairo MS Ḥikma 6M and Suhrawardī's statements.[22] What is surprising, however, is not so much that we are little informed in general about the title of the book, but that we are little informed about it from Avicenna himself. The significance of this will be discussed below (Section e).

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[21] See the references given in Mahdavī 81-83.

[22] As noted by Nallino (459, n. 2), the title *Manṭiq al-mašriqīyīn* (*Logic of the Easterners*) is an invention of the publisher of the volume; it does not occur in the manuscript. See Gutas "Avicenna's Library" and the introduction to T8, above.

c. The Date of Composition

In a preceding section (W6) we saw that Avicenna wrote the Prologue to *The Cure* shortly after he had written both *The Cure* and *The Easterners*, in that order. In that Prologue he also makes no mention of the *Pointers and Reminders*, something which would have been quite inconceivable had it been already written, for the *Pointers and Reminders* presents philosophy "as it is in itself," without any regard to Aristotelian conventions, even more so than *The Easterners* does. Similarly, in the Introduction to *The Easterners*, where he brings into mutual relationship, as he had done in the Prologue to *The Cure*, these two works with the *Appendices*, Avicenna makes no mention of *Pointers and Reminders*. It is equally difficult to imagine that Avicenna would not have mentioned the *Pointers*, had it been written, in the introduction to a work which was, just like the *Pointers* (T10, §§5-6), addressed to his closest disciples (T8, §7). Furthermore, as already mentioned at the end of W6, the Prologue refers to Avicenna's work on Eastern philosophy as readily available and in circulation, whereas in the letter to an anonymous disciple, written after 425/1034, Avicenna says that even before then he had put the texts on Eastern philosophy away "so that no one would look at them" [Test. 3]. This would also indicate the posteriority of *Pointers and Reminders* since it suggests that it supplanted *The Easterners*. The order of composition, therefore, is, *The Cure*, *The Easterners*, the Prologue to *The Cure*, *Pointers and Reminders*.

As for the chronology of the composition of these works, the two termini are 418/1027, the year when *The Cure* was completed, and 425/1034, the year when Avicenna's books, including both the Eastern texts and *Pointers and Reminders* [Test. 3], were pillaged en masse and transported to Ghazna [Test. 11]. Avicenna's letter to the anonymous disciple (T11) thus also establishes the *terminus ad quem* of the composition of *Pointers and Reminders*. The identification of the loss referred to by Avicenna in this letter with the pillage of Abū-Sahl mentioned by Ibn-al-Aṯīr is not absolutely certain, but neither is it subject to serious doubt. The very fact that Avicenna is corresponding with a disciple about the loss of his books implies that it was an event that "made the headlines;" there is therefore enough justification to assume that it attracted the attention of historians like Ibn-al-Aṯīr.

There remains to consider the relative place in this chronological sequence held by the *Fair Judgment*, which was composed in 420/1029 and lost in Muḥarram 421/January 1030 (W10). The question is whether it antedates *The Easterners* or not. Since there is no independent evidence for the composition of *The Easterners*, the argument can only be based on the

sequence of tendencies exhibited by Avicenna in these works. The Prologue to *The Cure* again plays a pivotal role in establishing this sequence. It seems quite certain, from the earlier discussion (W6), that both *The Cure* and *The Easterners* were already in existence when the Prologue was written. The Prologue, however, also clearly implies the *Fair Judgment*, because it juxtaposes two ways of stating the same truth—one, the Eastern way, without indirection, and the other, in the Peripatetic mold, indirect and more expansive (T9, §4). If this implication was actual, i.e., if the *Fair Judgment* had already been written, we should have expected to see it mentioned in the Prologue; its absence indicates that the implication was potential and perhaps even the prime mover behind the composition of the *Fair Judgment*. Having made the juxtaposition in the Prologue, Avicenna was asked, or himself felt compelled, to explain himself, and hence the division of "scholars into two groups, the Westerners and the Easterners" (T12, §3), and the resulting commentaries. The most probable reconstruction of the chronologial sequence of the composition of Avicenna's later works is thus the following:

418/1027:	*The Cure* completed
	Jūzjānī writes his Introduction (T7)
418-420/1027-1029:	*The Easterners*
	Prologue to *The Cure* (T9)
420/1029:	*Fair Judgment*
421-425/1030-1034:	*Pointers and Reminders*

d. Contents and Transmission

Avicenna intended to include the following sections in this book, in the order given below [Test. 17]:

1. Logic
2. Metaphysics
    a. Universal Science
    b. Theology
3. Physics (partial)
4. Ethics (partial)

The inversion of the order between Physics and Metaphysics follows the precedent set in the *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* (W8). Putting Logic and the Universal Science in close proximity is consistent with Avicenna's view of their substantive relationship (Chapter 6.1, 6.4).

The history of the transmission of the text is apparently complicated and cannot be discussed without a study of the available manuscripts. From

the evidence presented above, it would seem that Avicenna had stored most of the book, and that it was these parts that were pillaged [Test. 3], taken to Ghazna, and burned in 545/1150-51 [Test. 11b]. If this is true, then it would mean that the sections that were not stored were those that survive today, namely the part on Logic from beginning to the section corresponding to the Prior Analytics (and possibly the first six sections of the part on Physics [Test. 18], if these are not summaries of *The Cure*).[23] On the other hand, Bayhaqī reports that *The Easterners* in its entirety was carried to Ghazna and lost [Test. 11a]. If this is the case, then the parts that are now extant must have been copied earlier by Avicenna's disciples; and by the same token, it might be possible to identify in the future other passages from the book that may have survived either in direct or indirect transmission.

The extant part on Logic seems to be all that was known of this book to subsequent philosophers; this is the part to which Suhrawardī refers as Avicenna's Eastern "quires" [Test. 13], and other quotations have been traced to it.[24] As for the part on Physics, it is said to be a summary of the corresponding sections in *The Cure*, though nothing precludes, at this stage, its actually belonging to the Eastern texts. The question has to be studied further on the basis of the manuscripts.[25] Avicenna, finally, never rewrote the work after it was lost.

e. The Place of Eastern Philosophy and the Easterners in the Development of Avicenna's Philosophy

Starting with his very first works, *The Compilation* (W2) and *The Available and the Valid* (W3), and continuing with the works of his transition period, *The Provenance and Destination* (W4) and *The State of the Human Soul* (W5), Avicenna began increasingly to follow a course independent

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[23] The part on logic was printed, from MS Cairo Dār al-Kutub Ḥikma 6M, in *Manṭiq al-mašriqīyīn*. The text presented there is very defectively copied from the manuscript. The contents of the part on Physics from MS Istanbul Aya Sofya 2403 are listed by Anawati "Hikma Mashriqiyya." See also the references in Anawati *Muʾallafāt* 27.

[24] See the references in Corbin *Opera I* 195 and Mahdavī 81-83.

[25] Mahdavī 270-271 notes that there is correspondence of contents and order of chapters with *The Cure*, as well as direct quotations from it. Assessments by others, on the other hand, are based merely on the misconception that the Eastern philosophy must be different in content from Avicenna's other works on physics, which it is not. See, for example, Corbin *Opera I* xxxix: "...rien dans le texte même ne vienne expliquer expressément ce titre [*al-ḥikma al-mašriqīya*]. L'ouvrage contient ... un examen de tout le contenu habituel de la Physique." This is echoed by Fakhry *History* 151, note 92: "A book entitled *Oriental Philosophy* exists in manuscript form (see, e.g., Ayasofia Ms, No. 2403, and Oxford, Pococke 181) but differs little in content or arrangement from his other conventional works." For similar assessments by earlier scholars see Anawati *Muʾallafāt* 27.

from the transmitted formats of exposition and discussion in the Graeco-Arabic Aristotelian tradition. The former set of works broke with tradition by being not commentaries or detailed discussions of a specific issue, but comprehensive expositions of all the philosophical sciences according to the Aristotelian classification; the latter combined under the rubric of Metaphysics subjects previously discussed separately in De Anima and Metaphysics—the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul. In the Prologue to *The Cure* (W6) Avicenna portrayed himself as a conscious reformer of the Aristotelian tradition, effecting a synthesis between its verifiably true contents and his own elaborations. The texts on Eastern philosophy and the Easterners represent a further, but temporary, stage of this development.

Avicenna had a progressive concept of philosophy, according to which philosophers revised and superseded the achievements of their predecessors (Chapters 4-5); as for himself, he was conscious both of his growing independence from Peripatetic models of presentation—the "indirection" he mentions in the Prologue to *The Cure* [Test. 1]—and of his development of Peripatetic philosophy through his Discovery and Verification of Fundamental and Corollary Principles. It seems clear that as Avicenna was writing *The Cure*, he became forcefully aware that many of the issues dealt with in the praxis of philosophy were discussed merely for historical reasons, i.e., because they had traditionally formed a part of the discussion, not because they had any intrinsic or real value. In the close to thirty years of philosophical work that preceded the completion of *The Cure*, Avicenna developed an approach, or perhaps, more accurately, a philosophical *modus operandi*, which vested him with authority in philosophical matters—witness Jūzjānī's reasons for seeking him out and his acquiescence to the composition of *The Cure* in the form desired by Avicenna (T7, §§1, 3). This approach presented a synthesis, on the basis of concerns current in his own time and place, of thirteen centuries of philosophical praxis. Although this synthesis frequently accommodated the historical aspect of many questions treated, its significance, or rather, its *raison d'être*, resided precisely in the treatment, within the larger framework of the tradition itself, of essential issues that were of relevance to Avicenna in his specific setting. It was therefore inevitable that the disparity between the historical and essential aspects of this synthesis would be felt, and it was this, the essential, aspect of his work as a whole (what Avicenna calls in the Introduction "the fundamental elements of true Philosophy," *ummahāt al-ʿilm al-ḥaqq*, T8, §6) that Avicenna wished to designate by a different name in order best to project this disparity.

The name that Avicenna chose reflected appropriately his background in the *Mašriq* (East) of the Islamic world, i.e., Ḫurāsān, and the tradition of philosophy he generated was accordingly the Eastern philosophy, that is, the Ḫurāsānī school of Aristotelian philosophy.[26] This is precisely how certain philosophers in Spain who claimed to be Avicenna's followers understood it, and they communicated this understanding to Averroes [Test. 14]; but most significant of all, this is also how it was understood by the founder of Illuminationism, Suhrawardī, who described accurately, but perhaps with a certain understatement of Avicenna's achievement, the disparity in Avicenna's synthesis: "The only difference is that he occasionally altered the form of expression, or proceeded in certain Corollary issues in a somewhat independent way" [Test. 13]. To claim that Avicenna was the precursor of Suhrawardī in this direction, i.e., in the understanding of Eastern philosophy, first, contradicts Suhrawardī himself, and second, implies that Avicenna thought of Eastern philosophy as establishing "the Fundamental Principle of the East which was founded at the time of the sages in the era of Chosroes" [Test. 13]. This is decidedly not the case.

What is striking about Eastern philosophy and the Easterners, on the other hand, is that Avicenna stopped referring to them after a certain point, probably around 422/1031. There is not a single mention of them either in *Pointers and Reminders*, which, significantly, refers to *The Cure*, or in what is most probably his very last work, *On the Rational Soul* (T14), which deals with the subject Avicenna considered most significant. Even more to the point, there is no reference to them, or a discussion of any

[26] The geographical reference of *mašriq* and *mašriqīya* (East, Eastern) has already been indicated, perhaps not forcefully enough, by Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 15-16, note 6. The point needs emphasizing: *Mašriq* means Ḫurāsān. Among the many references that could be cited in addition to those offered by Pines, three are most relevant and explicit. a) The geographer Maqdisī discusses Ḫurāsān under the clime of *al-mašriq* (*Aḥsan at-taqāsīm*, M. J. de Goeje, ed., Leiden 1906, 260ff.). b) ʿĀmirī, himself from Ḫurāsān and working in Buḫārā at the very moment when Avicenna was astounding his elders with his competence in the Qurʾān and literature, identifies *al-Mašriq* with Ḫurāsān in his comparison of ʿIrāqīs and Ḫurāsānīs: "The best thing for a man is to be an Easterner [*mašriqī*] in substance and an ʿIrāqī in form, for in this fashion he combines the solidity of Ḫurāsān with the elegance of ʿIrāq, avoiding the uncouthness of Ḫurāsān and the frivolity of ʿIrāq;" quoted in *The Muntakhab Ṣiwān al-ḥikmah of Abū Sulaimān as-Sijistānī*, D. M. Dunlop, ed., The Hague 1979, lines 2844-2846; translated in E. K. Rowson, *Al-ʿĀmirī on the Afterlife*, Diss. Yale 1982, 9; see also Rowson's references on p. 60, note 13. c) The same identification is also made in the anonymous chronicle of the ʿAbbāsid revolution, written in the 11th, i.e., Avicenna's century. The ʿAbbāsid Muḥammad ibn-ʿAlī is reported to counsel his Kūfan activist (*dāʿī*), Bukayr ibn-Māhān, for the preparation of the revolution with the following words: "You have done right [to wait for the proper time to rise up]; you should [first] go into Ḫurāsān because our political power is Eastern [*fa-inna dawlatana mašriqīya*; cf. F. Rosenthal s.v. "Dawla" in *EI*2 II.178];" *Arabskii Anonim*, ed. P. Griyaznevitch, Moscow 1967, f. 250v, 9.

text belonging to them, in his voluminous comments and responsa which he labelled the *Appendices* and which are extant in the collections made by his disciples known as the *Discussions* and *Notes* (W12). The few passages from the *Discussions* in which they are mentioned are either fragments from the original *Fair Judgment*, or from personal letters incorporated in the *Discussions* in the process of transmission. The only exception is the mention of the "two Eastern proofs" [Test. 5], which, however, is nothing but a section heading that may have preceded another excerpt from the *Fair Judgment*. It is true that most of these texts were lost and Avicenna could not easily refer to them, but what is significant is that he stopped mentioning the Easterners even as a concept.

The reason for this appears to be that Avicenna's designation of his own revision and extrapolation of Aristotelian philosophy as Eastern did not meet with great approval, or that the concept itself did not generate any interest among his colleagues and disciples, and he decided to abandon the idea. It is true that, following a course of Withholding Knowledge from those not prepared to receive it—an idea current in both the Aristotelian and Islamic traditions (see Chapter 5.3)—he did not make the Eastern texts readily available to his companions (as he says in a letter, he had packed most of the Eastern texts away "so that no one would look at them" [Test. 3]); but it is also obvious that enough portions of them circulated among his closest disciples to ensure that the concept of Eastern philosophy did become known to those for whom it was intended (those who were to Avicenna like himself, T8, §7): witness the survival, despite the adverse historical circumstances [Test. 3, 9-11], of these very texts.

Furthermore, judging from Avicenna's own lack of insistence, it appears that he himself considered the matter so unimportant as to relinquish the notion. When he came to write *Pointers and Reminders*, a book in which he attained the highest degree of independence from Aristotelian models of presentation, he desisted from any mention of the Easterners. What he presented there was neither Peripatetic nor Eastern philosophy but, as he claimed, just the truth and philosophical points: "Dear Friend: I have churned for you in these Pointers the cream of truth (*al-ḥaqq*) and have fed you choice morsels of philosophy (*ḥikam*) in pithy sayings" (T10, §6).

In this light, the much debated question about the identity of the Easterners and Avicenna's meaning by it loses its mystery, for it becomes clear that infinitely more has been made of the Easterners in contemporary Western scholarship than among Avicenna's immediate circles. Jūzjānī makes no mention of it other than dutifully to refer to the Eastern texts [Test. 9] and as far as I am aware nothing has come to light in the

little that has become available from the works of Avicenna's disciples. It is true that, as discussed in W6, Jūzjānī had more orthodox Aristotelian inclinations and hence one would expect him to downplay the importance of the concept of the Easterners, but had it been a real issue in the last decade of Avicenna's life, or had Avicenna himself defended it strenuously and incontrovertibly, it is impossible to assume that it should have left no traces in the literature. Jūzjānī is not alone in this regard. In his memoirs, the disciple from Rayy recounts the genesis and execution of the *Fair Judgment* in terms similar to those of Avicenna himself (T12), but leaves completely aside any mention of Easterners or Westerners. What Avicenna did in that book, the disciple says, was to examine "all divergences of exegesis" by *anonymous* exegetes of the books of Aristotle (T13, §2), not by "Westerners" and "Easterners." Bahmanyār, finally, in the introduction to his *Taḥṣīl*, which he describes as the "gist of the philosophy which Avicenna revised" (p. 1), mentions that he will follow the arrangement of Avicenna's *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* and that he will include in it subjects (*maʿānī*) from Avicenna's published (*ʿāmma*) works as well as matters which they discussed in their conversations. "To this," he says, "I will add the Corollary Principles which I have Validated through my theoretical analysis and which are analogous to Fundamental Principles." There is not a single word about Eastern philosophy.

Subsequent philosophical tradition in Islam is just as mute about an Eastern philosophy of Avicenna. Apart from the testimonia collected above, which are in any case mostly of a bibliographical nature, there is hardly any mention of the subject.[27] Perhaps the single most misleading factor for Western scholarship has been Ibn-Ṭufayl's statement that in Avicenna's opinion "the truth is something else" (*al-ḥaqq ʿindahu ġayru ḏālika* [Test. 12]), i.e., something other than Aristotle's doctrine. This is patently wrong because no native speaker of Arabic would derive this sense from Avicenna's Prologue to *The Cure* (T9, §4). The problem here, however, is Ibn-Ṭufayl's, not Avicenna's, and the question is to find out why Ibn-Ṭufayl chose, perhaps deliberately, to misinterpret Avicenna's Prologue, not to account for Avicenna's "other truth" by dubbing it

[27] The two instances on the basis of which Goichon ("Philosophie" 29) seriously raises the question whether it was customary during Avicenna's lifetime or shortly thereafter to call his philosophy "Eastern" do not bear closer scrutiny. The fact that Niẓāmī ʿArūḍī calls Avicenna "the philosopher of the East" (*ḥakīm al-mašriq*; *Chahār maqāla*, M. Qazwīnī, ed. [E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Series 11], Leiden/London 1910, 71.15) certaintly means "the philosopher of Ḫurāsān," as Pines already mentioned (see note 26 above). As for the title in the MS Ayasofya 2403 (and the other manuscripts listed in Test. 18b), it may indeed refer, as already suggested, to a work belonging to the Eastern texts. See above, end of section (d), and note 25.

"Oriental". Mehren nevertheless was misled by Ibn-Ṭufayl, and by choosing to use his subtitle as his own, he gave printed legitimacy to the myth of Avicenna's mystical oriental philosophy (see the introduction to T9).

In the terms in which it has gained notoriety in contemporary scholarship, therefore, the *concept* of Avicenna's Eastern philosophy is a non-issue.[28] In the context of Avicenna's own work its significance lies in displaying his attitude toward his work during a specific and limited period of his career; this attitude is by no means unique, however, because variants of it are observable in other stages of Avicenna's philosophical activity (Chapter 7). As for the *texts* on Eastern philosophy and the Easterners, the loss of most of them, and especially of the *Fair Judgment*, is deplorable only to the extent that we have been deprived of the opportunity to admire more instances of the acuity and perspicacity with which a great mind confronted another through the encrustations of thirteen centuries of philosophical history (for examples see Chapter 8.4). In substantial terms nothing has been lost except variant reformulations of positions taken in other works, extant, but sadly, neglected.

Work 10. *Fair Judgment* (*al-Inṣāf*) [A6, M35] and *Marginal Notes on De Anima* (*at-Taʿlīqāt ʿalā ḥawāšī Kitāb an-nafs*)

Avicenna's commentaries on the text of Aristotle's works and the Ps.-Aristotelian *Theologia Aristotelis* (Plotinus, *Enneads* 6-9), known under the general title of *Fair Judgment* given to them by their author, are extant only in relatively few fragments. These commentaries share the characteristic of frequently referring to the Easterners, a subject which had become, even by the time of their publication almost forty years ago,

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[28] The history of Western scholarship on the "Oriental" philosophy of Avicenna is a comedy of errors that deserves separate treatment. Among the handful of serious studies, the most sober and best documented assessment was that by Pines, although he still thought that Avicenna was referring to an ancient, but imaginary, tradition, and could only explain it by assuming Avicenna to be playing games ("Philosophie Orientale" 29, 32). For the most part, however, the interpretations that have been offered in the last two centuries range from the ridiculous (Massignon's discovery of the oriental philosophy in the symbolic letters of Avicenna's *Nayrūzīya*, "Avicenne et les influences orientales," *La Revue du Caire* 141 [1951] 10-12) to the phantastic (Nasr's *philosophia perennis*), and tell more about their authors than about Avicenna. As a matter of fact, the theories and approach of H. Corbin have spawned an independent school of "Oriental" philosophy which does not even claim to deal in particular with Avicenna. The latest representative of this school is, I believe, a book by Corbin's hierophant, Christian Jambet, with the title, *La logique des Orientaux. Henry Corbin et la science des formes*, Paris 1983. The fullest treatment to date of the history of such interpretations is given in Panoussi's dissertation, pp. 23-38, from where it is abstracted by R. Macuch, "Greek and Oriental Sources of Avicenna's and Sohrawardi's Theosophies," *Graeco-Arabica* [Athens] 2 (1983) 9-22.

a scholarly cause célèbre. Because there already existed an area of debate for which they provided fresh information, they have been considered almost exclusively in this connection and used in the further clarification of the question of the Eastern philosophy. As a result, the fundamental, and procedurally prior, issue of the transmission of these fragments received only incidental attention. Here I will concentrate on this issue since the question of the Easterners was discussed in the preceding Section (W9).

Fragments of this work are extant both in direct and in indirect transmission. We are able to derive information about its direct transmission both from internal and external evidence, that is, from the manuscripts themselves in which it has been preserved and from the reports about its fate by Avicenna and later authors. The indirectly transmitted fragments are recovered from passages quoted by later authors.

a. Testimonia

I. Statements by Avicenna.

[1] Letter to an Anonymous Disciple (T11, §1):

> You expressed sorrow for the loss of *Pointers and Reminders*, but I think that a copy of this book has been preserved. As for the Eastern questions, I had packed them up—no, most of them—[as they were] in their quires so that no one would look at them, and I had also written down on slips of paper some passages from the *Throne Philosophy*; it is these which got lost. They were not voluminous, however (although they did treat many subjects and were quite comprehensive), and it would be easy to rewrite them. But yes, the *Fair Judgment*, on the other hand, had to be extensive, and rewriting it would require work.

[2] Letter to Kiyā (T12, §3):

> I had composed a book which I called the *Fair Judgment*. I divided scholars into two groups, the Westerners and the Easterners, and I had the Easterners argue against the Westerners until I intervened to Judge Fairly when there was a real point of dispute between them. This book had contained approximately twenty-eight thousand questions. I commented clearly on the difficult passages in the original texts up to the end of the *Theologia Aristotelis*, despite the fact that the *Theologia* is somewhat suspect, and I talked about the oversights of the commentators. I wrote it in a short period

of time—[a work] which, had it been transcribed clearly, would have comprised twenty volumes. Then it was lost in the course of some rout, since there was only the first draft. Investigating it and these controversies was a pastime; after completing something I am working on [at present], I will occupy myself with rewriting it, although even thinking about rewriting is oppressive. But it had contained an exposition of the weakness of the Baġdādīs, and of their deficiency and ignorance. At the present moment it is impossible for me [to rewrite it]: I do not have the free time for it.

II. Statements by Others.

[3] Memoirs of a Disciple from Rayy (T13, §2):

In the year when the horsemen of the late Sultan overran these lands, Avicenna was prompted for some reason to occupy himself with a book which he called *Fair Judgment*. It contained commentaries on all the books of Aristotle, among which he even included the *Theologia* [*Aristotelis*], about whose contents he brought out matters that had never been taken into account. He examined all divergences of exegesis and Judged every question and every philosopher by bestowing Fairly praise or blame, and appreciation or deprecation. God only knows the number of problems and solutions, and Corollaries based on Fundamental Principles, which resulted, although the period [in which the book was composed] was from the middle of the month of Dey to the end of the month of Ḫordād in [less than] a year. It came to more than six thousand folios written in a cursive hand and ten thousand folios written in a print hand; it relieved him, however, of what he needed to communicate, and left him manifestly cheered. The number of issues he discussed as lemmata about which he traced where previous statements were wrong, mistaken, deficient, or corrupt was over twenty-seven thousand. But before all this was transcribed into a clean copy, he was hindered by a military rout in which all his belongings and books were carried off at the gate of Iṣfahān. When he returned to Rayy, he was urged to rewrite all that, but he found this repugnant, since doing all over again something that has just been completed is onerous.

[4] Biography 80.5-7:

The Master also wrote *Fair Judgment*, but on the day when Sultan Masʿūd arrived at Iṣfahān, his troops plundered the

Master's baggage. The book was among them, and no trace of it has been found.

[5] Biography 46.5, in the catalogue of Avicenna's books:
Fair Judgment, twenty volumes.[1]

[6] Longer Bibliography, No. 5 (Gohlman 92.5-7):
Fair Judgment, twenty volumes. Avicenna commented in it on all the books of Aristotle and Judged Fairly between the Easterners and the Westerners. It was lost during Sultan Masʿūd's plunder.

[7] Longer Bibliography, No. 81 (Gohlman 108.5-6):
Commentary on Aristotle's *De Anima*. It is said to be from the *Fair Judgment*.

[8] Bayhaqī *Tatimma* 56.1-4/67.15-68.2:
Then al-ʿAmīd Abū-Sahl al-Ḥamdūnī along with a group of Kurds [troops] plundered the personal effects of the Master, among which were also his books. Of the *Fair Judgment* only some parts were [later] found, but then ʿAzīz-ad-Dīn al-Fuqqāʿī az-Zanjānī[2] claimed in the year 545[/1150-51] that he had bought a copy of it in Iṣfahān and taken it to Marw. God knows best.

[9] Suhrawardī Maqtūl, *al-Mašāriʿ wa-l-muṭāraḥāt* 360.5-6 (Corbin *Opera I*):
The author of *The Cure* mentions in the surviving parts of a draft of his called *Meting and Obtaining Fair Judgment* (*al-Inṣāf wa-l-intiṣāf*)... .

[10] Ḥājjī Ḫalīfa, *Kašf aẓ-ẓunūn* I.183 (Yaltkaya):
Meting and Obtaining Fair Judgment, by Avicenna, who died in 428[/1037].[3]

[11] Muḥammad ad-Daylamī, *Maḥbūb al-qulūb* 120 (Lithograph Bombay 1317):
The philosopher Alexander of Aphrodisias: ... All the Peripatetics, and especially Avicenna in the *Fair Judgment*, honor and praise him.

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[1] This information is repeated by Bağdatlı Ismāʿīl Paşa in the *Hadīyat al-ʿārifīn* I.308.

[2] Weisweiler "Fürstenbibliotheken" 62 identified this person as the donor of a pious foundation for the ʿAzīzīya library in Marw (from Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān* IV.509, who also gives the *nisba* as Zanjānī instead of Rīḥānī in Bayhaqī).

[3] Ḥājjī Ḫalīfa gives *al-Inṣāf wa-l-ittiṣāf* for the title, but since it appears that he had no source for this information other than Suhrawardī [Test. 9], the latter's version is to be preferred.

III. Manuscripts of the Work.

[All the manuscripts of the work currently known, with two exceptions, are preserved in Cairo. The single most important among them is the Dār al-kutub Ḥikma 6M[uṣṭafā Fāḍil]. It is by far the oldest and the best and, by all appearances, the archetype from which most, if not all, of the rest derive.[4] The information which this manuscript provides about the contents and survival of the work will be discussed below in Section c.]

b. Dates of Composition and Loss

The point of reference for the establishment of these dates is the Ghaznavid Masʿūd ibn-Maḥmūd's attack on Iṣfahān. Three independent sources provide complementary information in this regard. Avicenna notes in the Letter to Kiyā [Test. 2] that he wrote the book in a short period of time. The anonymous disciple from Rayy specifies in his letter [Test. 3] that the *Fair Judgment* was written between the tenth and the (following) third Persian months, from Dey to Ḫordād, of the year in which "the horsemen of the late Sultan overran these lands." "These lands" must be taken to refer to the area in northern Iran known as Jibāl, which included both Rayy, the assumed domicile of the author of the letter, and Iṣfahān, Avicenna's center of operations for approximately the last twelve years of his life. Although the history of these lands during this time is quite complicated and replete with military incursions, the one campaign which qualitatively distinguishes itself from the rest is the Ghaznavid Maḥmūd's occupation of the area, and particularly of Rayy, in the spring of 420/1029.[5] Now for the year 1029, according to the Persian calendar, the end of the third month, or the 30th of Ḫordād 398, corresponded to the 7th of June, while the middle of the previous tenth month, or the 15th of Dey 397, corresponded to the 19th of December of 1028.

The assumption of this date as the year of composition of the book well accords with the developments next reported in our sources. Least explicit of all is Avicenna himself who says in the Letter to Kiyā [Test. 2] that the first draft of the work, the only copy available, "was lost in the course of some rout." The disciple from Rayy adds [Test. 3] that before Avicenna could transcribe his first draft into a clean copy, it was carried off in an incident near, or "at the gate of Iṣfahān" (*ʿalā bāb*

[4] See Gutas "Avicenna's Library."

[5] Detailed events and references are given by Bosworth "Dailamīs" 76.

Iṣfahān).[6] In the biography of Avicenna, Jūzjānī gives further details about the same incident: "On the day when Sultan Masʿūd arrived at Iṣfahān, his troops plundered the Master's baggage" [Test. 4]. After occupying Rayy, Sultan Maḥmūd sent his son, Masʿūd, to subjugate the local princes in the area. Masʿūd first turned westwards toward Daylam and Azerbayjan, and after his successes there, headed south and entered Iṣfahān in Muḥarram 421/January 1030.[7] ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla, the ruler of Iṣfahān, was forced to evacuate the city, and Avicenna, his vizier and physician, who accompanied him in all his travels, doubtless went along with him. The *Fair Judgment* must have been lost during this exodus.

ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla and his entourage retreated southwards to Ḫūzistān. Barely three months later, however, in Jumādā I 421/May 1030, Maḥmūd died in Ghazna and Masʿūd had to leave Jibāl and travel east in order to tend to the question of succession. Availing himself of this temporary destabilization of the situation, ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla moved north again and even occupied Rayy during the same year.[8] Continuing with the assumption that the physician accompanied his master wherever he went, Avicenna must have been in Rayy later that year. It was during this stay that his disciples in Rayy urged him to rewrite the *Fair Judgment*, and it is these meetings and discussions which the disciple from Rayy is recounting in his memoirs. Avicenna himself was later to refer to this sojourn in Rayy (T11, §7), something which Jūzjānī leaves totally unmentioned in the Biography.

On the basis of a report by the historian Ibn-al-Aṯīr, Gohlman suggested that the attack on Iṣfahān referred to by Jūzjānī in the Biography (and hence the loss of the *Fair Judgment*) is not that which took place in Muḥarram 421/January 1030, but rather the later one which occurred in 425/1034.[9] Ibn-al-Aṯīr's testimony is important about the fate of Avicenna's *Nachlass*.[10] Gohlman identifies the transferral of Avicenna's books from Iṣfahān to Ghazna by Masʿūd's commander, Abū-Sahl al-Ḥamdūnī, with the pillage near Iṣfahān of Avicenna's saddle bags containing the *Fair Judgment*. This identification cannot be maintained for a number of reasons. First, there is the inherent dissimilarity in the details

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[6] The expression *ʿalā bāb Iṣfahān* may also mean "at the court of Iṣfahān", in which case it will have to be assumed that Masʿūd's troops had entered Avicenna's quarters in the palace.

[7] Bosworth "Dailamīs" 76.

[8] Bosworth "Dailamīs" 77; G. C. Miles, *The Numismatic History of Rayy*, New York 1938, 187-9; cf. Gohlman 135 n. 106.

[9] Gohlman 135-36, n. 106; 136, n. 108. Before Gohlman, both Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 5 and Weisweiler "Fürstenbibliotheken" 62 had suggested the year 1034 as the date of the book's loss.

[10] Testimonium 11, W9. Cf. the account in Bosworth "Dailamīs" 77-78.

of the two incidents: one talks about the wholesale transportation of Avicenna's books from ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla's treasuries and libraries in Iṣfahān to Ghazna, the other describes the incident of the plunder of Avicenna's saddlebags near Iṣfahān. Second, Jūzjānī is quite specific in the Biography that the incident occurred "on the day when Sultan Masʿūd arrived at Iṣfahān." This happened only in 421/1030; in 425/1034 the battle against Iṣfahān was directed by Abū-Sahl while Masʿūd himself was in Ghazna. Third, and perhaps most important, is the report about Avicenna's visit to Rayy *after* the loss of the book. During the sack of Iṣfahān in 425/1034, Avicenna was sick with colic, as described in detail by Jūzjānī [Gohlman 83-87]. He was obliged to flee south to Īḏāj with ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla[11] in that state, where apparently his condition deteriorated. He was *carried* back to Iṣfahān when the situation there stabilized, and he recuperated sufficiently to resume his administrative duties [Gohlman 87]. In the letter to Kiyā [T12, §4], he informs his addressee that he had been sick for a year and some months; this would date his (partial) recuperation sometime in 427/1036. He never fully recovered, and after a number of relapses he died the following year [Gohlman 87-89]. Between 425/1034 and his death in 428/1037, there are thus few opportunities when he was physically well enough to undertake the journey; in addition to that, he could not have abandoned Iṣfahān for political reasons as well. ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla was in Iṣfahān, as a matter of fact, preparing an attack against the Ghaznavid garrison in Rayy, the attack which took place in 429/1037-38 shortly after Avicenna's death.[12] Avicenna must have therefore visited Rayy before his sickness (and Abū-Sahl's attack on Iṣfahān) in 425/1034, and the only time it was politically feasible for him to do so after the loss of his book was, as mentioned above, in the company of ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla in 421/1030.

To recapitulate: The *Fair Judgment* was drafted approximately between 19 December 1028 and 7 June 1029, and this first draft was destroyed by Masʿūd's soldiers who pillaged Avicenna's saddlebags in January 1030.

c. Contents and Survival of the Work

The *Fair Judgment* was a detailed commentary on the Aristotelian corpus, including the *Theologia Aristotelis*, in which Avicenna came to grips with the very texts and did not merely present their teachings in his

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[11] Cf. Bosworth "Dailamīs" 77-78.
[12] Bosworth "Dailamīs" 78-79.

own words. There is sufficient testimony to this effect both from Avicenna himself [Test. 2] and others [Test. 3], as well as from the extant portions of the work. In a way it was the counterpart of *The Easterners*. There he presented his own revision of philosophy in the Aristotelian tradition without taking "into account ... the views of colleagues in the discipline" [T9, §4]; here he juxtaposed the transmitted texts with his elaborations.

The work was long. The disciple from Rayy says [Test. 3] that in a cursive hand (presumably Avicenna's or his scribe's) it came to six thousand folios, which means, considering that it was written in about six months, that Avicenna composed an average of thirty-three folios each day. This may or may not be realistic, but in the absence of any other information it is pointless to speculate on the matter.

The extant portions of the *Fair Judgment* survive in a manuscript that can be dated to the first half of the 6th/12th century and which appears to have served as the archetype of all subsequent copies now known. The scribe of the manuscript, ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq as-Ṣiġnāḫī, was a third generation student of Avicenna and an expert bibliographer of his works.[13] His testimony on this matter can be trusted, and the information he provides in the manuscript about the transmission of the *Fair Judgment* accordingly merits special attention.

There are four texts in ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq's manuscript which may be considered to have belonged to the *Fair Judgment*. These are, in the order in which they occur therein, a commentary on Book *Lambda* of the *Metaphysics*, two recensions of a commentary on the *Theologia Aristotelis*, and a commentary on *De Anima*.

i) *Metaphysics*. The title of the commentary on the *Metaphysics* reads as follows: "From the book *Fair Judgment*: Commentary on Book *Lambda*, by Avicenna."[a] ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq here explicitly ascribes the text to Avicenna and indicates that it is an extract from *Fair Judgment*. In actual fact, however, the text is reported in the third person: most of the major sections begin with the introductory phrase, "He [Avicenna] said," and in one case a comment by Avicenna is preceded by the descriptive phrase, "[Avicenna] criticized Aristotle and the commentators and said" (23.21). This means that the text as we now have it was copied by ʿAbd-

[a] F. 138v, 1: *wa-min kitāb al-inṣāf, šarḥ ḥarf kitāb* [*sic*] *al-lām li-š-šayḫ ar-raʾīs Abī ʿAlī Ibn Sīnā* = Badawī *Arisṭū* 22. Badawī tacitly transposes the order of the words to read, *kitāb ḥarf*. All the references in parentheses after the citations in what follows are to Badawī *Arisṭū*.

[13] See his brief biography by Bayhaqī 124-125/130-131 = Meyerhof "Tatimma" 178, and cf. Gutas "Avicenna's Library."

ar-Razzāq not directly from Avicenna's draft but from an extract made by a disciple, who provided the editorial introductory phrases.

ii) *Theologia Aristotelis*. The commentary on the Ps.-Aristotelian *Theologia* is extant in two partially overlapping recensions. ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq entitles them respectively as follows: "Commentary on *Theologia*, from *Fair Judgment*, on the authority of Avicenna;" "Exegesis of the Book *Theologia*, from *Fair Judgment*, on the authority of Avicenna."[b] The use of the preposition *ʿan* ("on the authority of") in the titles by ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq is significant. The preposition, borrowed from the terminology of the criticism of the traditions of the Prophet (*ḥadīṯ*), indicates that the two recensions ultimately derive from the text of Avicenna through an unspecified number, in this case, of intermediary transmitters. ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq found the two recensions to be slightly divergent in their wording and did not know which one, if either, represented Avicenna's very words; he therefore used the preposition to alert the reader to this fact. This being the case, the extant texts of the two recensions may be disciples' notes taken down from a lecture given by Avicenna, or copies from Avicenna's original draft by two different disciples, or possibly copies of each other at some unspecified remove. Their precise relationship will have to be determined by the future editor.

iii) *De Anima*. ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq gives the following title for this commentary: "Notes by Avicenna in the Margins of Aristotle's *De Anima*."[c] This title, in which ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq does not mention the *Fair Judgment* at all, can only be interpreted literally. Even if we had no knowledge of ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq's bibliographical expertise, it would be difficult to explain why anybody would invent such a title. The inference, then, seems to be that Avicenna wrote these comments in the margins of his own copy of Aristotle's *De Anima*, and that this copy subsequently passed in the hands either of one of his disciples or of ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq, who transcribed these notes cleanly and consecutively, omitting the Aristotelian text. The transmission of these glosses thus differs qualitatively from that of the preceding two parts from *Fair Judgment*: they are the *ipsissima verba* of Avicenna, copied from his own manuscript (indicated by ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq's express *min kalām aš-šayḫ*), while the latter are transmitted through the editorial filter of disciples' notes (indicated by the introductory phrase inserted in the commentary on

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[b] F. 142r, 15: *fī šarḥ Uṯūlūjiyā, min kitāb al-inṣāf, ʿan aš-šayḫ ar-raʾīs Abī ʿAlī al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Sīnā* (cf. Badawī *Arisṭū* Introduction (46).1-2); f. 146r, 7: *Tafsīr kitāb Uṯūlūjiyā, min al-inṣāf, ʿan aš-šayḫ ar-raʾīs Abī ʿAlī Ibn Sīnā* = Badawī *Arisṭū* 37.

[c] Literally, "Notes in the Margins of Aristotle's *De Anima*, from what Avicenna said," f. 154r, 1: *at-taʿlīqāt ʿalā ḥawāšī kitāb an-nafs li-Arisṭāṭālīs, min kalām aš-šayḫ ar-raʾīs Abī ʿAlī Ibn Sīnā* = Badawī *Arisṭū* 75.

Lambda and the preposition ᶜ*an* in that on *Theologia*). The *Marginal Notes on De Anima*, therefore, are *not* part of the *Fair Judgment*, at least as far as ᶜAbd-ar-Razzāq knew, and it is doubtful that we will ever have any additional information that will be more authoritative.[14] These marginal notes were written either immediately before the *Fair Judgment* (and after *The Easterners*, to which Avicenna repeatedly refers) and directly occasioned the *Fair Judgment* by whetting the appetite of Avicenna's students for a similar but more extensive composition, or immediately afterwards, in compensation for its loss. I would tend to favor the former alternative, if only because the political situation immediately following the incursion of the Ghaznavids in the area, as described above in Section (b), was little conducive to such activities; but there can be no certainty in this area.

The evidence provided by ᶜAbd-ar-Razzāq's manuscript of the *Fair Judgment* thus leads to the following conclusions. The only parts of the work available to him were the commentary on *Metaphysics Lambda* and two recensions of a commentary on the *Theologia Aristotelis*. He had access to these parts not in Avicenna's original draft or a manuscript copied from it, but indirectly in the form of notes and extracts by a disciple or disciples, made from Avicenna's original draft or his lectures. In contradistinction to this, he had direct access to the marginal glosses which Avicenna himself made to the *De Anima*, independently of the *Fair Judgment*. It is very likely that he owned the very manuscript used by Avicenna.

The fragments saved from extinction by ᶜAbd-ar-Razzāq also found their way in the writings of subsequent authors. Mahdavī cites numerous

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[14] Pines "Philosophie Orientale" 10 note 3, and Finnegan "Porphyrius" 196 assumed that the *Marginal Notes* were part of the *Fair Judgment*, while Frank "*De Anima*" 235 and note 4 cogently argued that they are, in fact, marginalia.—Three other mentions of a commentary on *De Anima* by Avicenna do not, upon closer inspection, appear to refer to the *Marginal Notes*. First, Avicenna himself says in the *Aḍḥawīya Treatise on the Destination* (F. Lucchetta, *Avicenna, Epistola sulla vita futura*, Padova 1969, 153) that he discussed the substantiality of the soul in numerous treatises, "and especially in our commentary (*šarḥ*) on Aristotle's *De Anima*." This would seem to be a reference, following Avicenna's practice early in his career (see Chapter 7), to one of his many treatises on the soul, or perhaps to the De Anima part of *The Available and the Valid* (see W3). It is unlikely that Avicenna would refer, especially late in his life, to his marginal notes in his copy of *De Anima*, which never seem to have circulated independently in his lifetime, as a "commentary." Second, the Longer Bibliography lists a commentary on *De Anima* which was "said to be from the *Fair Judgment*" [Test. 7]. An analysis of the method with which the Longer Bibliography was compiled should indicate how this is to be understood, i.e., whether the compiler actually had in front of him a manuscript of a commentary by Avicenna, or he was deriving the information perhaps from the very *Aḍḥawīya* passage and assuming that it belonged to the *Fair Judgment*. I think that the second alternative is more likely. Finally, there is an Istanbul manuscript which contains a Persian *Šarḥ Kitāb an-nafs li-Aristū* (Ahmet III 3447, ff. 709v-736r), attributed to Avicenna. According to Mahdavī 279 (A87 = M177), this is a Persian translation of Aristotle's work.

such references. To these should be added Šahrastānī's *Religions and Sects*, which copies almost the entire surviving parts of the commentary on the *Metaphysics Lambda.*[15] The fact that all the identified fragments from the *Fair Judgment* quoted in later authors are also those extant in ᶜAbd-ar-Razzāq's manuscript would tend to indicate that it was solely responsible for their survival. For the reasons given by Avicenna himself [Testimonia 1, 2, 3], he never rewrote the *Fair Judgment*. The copy said to have been bought by Zanjānī in Iṣfahān in 1150 [Test. 8], if not the freshly written manuscript of ᶜAbd-ar-Razzāq itself, would appear to have been an early transcription of it.

Work 11. *Pointers and Reminders* (*al-Išārāt wa-t-tanbīhāt*) [A3, 239, M27]

The *Pointers and Reminders* is Avicenna's last philosophical summa, written sometime between 421-425/1030-1034.[1] It marks the culmination of his philosophical career because it achieves the greatest possible extrapolation from Aristotelian models of presentation, surpassing the stage reached during his period of Eastern philosophy, and it provides a concrete and magnificent example of his concept of the praxis of philosophy which proceeds by Deriving Corollaries on the basis of Fundamental Principles through the help of Intuition. As he says in the Prologue to the first part on Logic,

> O you who are zealous to Ascertain the truth: I have exposed to you in these Pointers and reminders Fundamental Principles and essential elements of philosophy; if sagacity takes hold of your hand [to guide you], it will become easy for you to Derive Corollary Principles from the former and work out the details of the latter [T10, §2].

Avicenna chose to write the entire work by using the indicative method (Chapter 8.3) in order to ensure that the knowledge it contains is Withheld from those unworthy to receive it (Chapter 5.3); in this respect also the work constitutes the culmination of a tendency long developing in the Aristotelian tradition. Again, as he says in the Prologue to the second part on Physics and Metaphysics,

> What follows are Pointers to Fundamental Principles and reminders of essential elements. Whoever finds them easy will be able to gain insights

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[15] Šahrastānī presents the entire text as "the theory of Aristotle" (*raʾy Arisṭūṭālīs*), *al-Milal wa-n-niḥal*, W. Cureton, ed., London 1846, 312.19-320.4.

[1] The Longer Bibliography (Gohlman 97) says that it is his last work, and this is clearly borne out by the analysis given above under W9c. Panoussi (p. 133) prefers to credit the fabricated story in Bayhaqī's *Tatimma* (above, W3, and note 8) and concludes that it was written between 1016 and 1024.

> through them, while he who finds them difficult will not benefit even from the most obvious of them. We rely on God for success. Here I repeat my admonition and restate my request that the contents of these parts be Withheld as much as possible from those who do not meet the conditions I stipulated at the end of these Pointers [T10, §§4-5].

This method depends on providing hints and guidelines to the student, rather than ready-made arguments, who is then expected to elaborate the entire theory on his own. This is what the two words of the title, Pointers and reminders, refer to.[2] In addition to these words Avicenna also used, though not as frequently, a number of others in order to describe as best as possible the nature of each statement. When a theory, for example, is to be censured, the statement introducing it is labelled *taḏnīb*; when a statement completes a preceding one it is called a *takmila*, etc.

The arrangement of the contents of the work still follows the traditional order of Logic, Physics, Metaphysics, although Physics and Metaphysics are grouped together to form the second part. Each part contains ten chapters. Those of Logic are called *nahj*, "method," and those of Physics and Metaphysics are called *namaṭ*, "form" (i.e., kind of subject matter or exposition).[3]

Because of its succinctness, the work was felt to be in need of oral exposition and hard work in order to be understood even during Avicenna's lifetime;[4] in subsequent philosophical tradition it was subjected to repeated commentaries.[5] It appears that it was responsible, more than any other work by Avicenna, first, for keeping interest in philosophy alive if only because it challenged the talents of the best commentators, and second, for establishing as normative the tripartite form of presentation of philosophy as Logic, Physics, and Metaphysics. It seems ironical, though perhaps true, that what Avicenna wished to accomplish through external means by giving a new name, Ḫurāsānī or Eastern, to his revision of the Aristotelian tradition was finally achieved through the inherent power and fascination of the *Pointers and Reminders*.

Work 12. *Appendices* (*Lawāḥiq*): *Notes* (*at-Taʿlīqāt*) [A8, M49] and *Discussions* (*al-Mubāḥaṯāt*) [A19, 257, M105]

Avicenna conceived of the work which he consistently called in all his writings *Appendices* (*Lawāḥiq*) in the course of his composition of *The Cure*.

[2] See Chapter 8.3. Cf. Goichon *Directives* 68-69 for a discussion of these terms. In the *Pugio Fidei* of Raymond Martin, the title appears in Latin as *Liber Inuitationum et excitationum*: M. T. d'Alverny, "Notes sur les traductions médiévales d'Avicenne," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age* 27 (1952) 358.

[3] See Goichon *Directives* 247 note 1, and the explanation of Faḫr-ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī mentioned there.

[4] This is stated in a passage from a letter preserved in the *Discussions*; see Mahdavī 203.

[5] See the list given in M27.

Since his intention in *The Cure* was to provide an expository summa of the philosophical sciences in his own words, as already discussed (W6), it appears that he initially envisaged the *Appendices* as a kind of notebook which would include what *The Cure* could not, namely his comments on the Aristotelian texts themselves. His brief reference to the *Appendices* in his Epilogue to the Sophistics part of *The Cure* (T6, §7), written around 414/1024, seems to point to that direction. It is probable that in this way he also hoped to satisfy the requests of his companions who would rather see *The Cure* itself take this form (cf. W6).

Subsequently Avicenna's attitude toward the *Appendices* evolved to the point where he considered it a commentary on *The Cure* itself (see the discussion in Chapter 7). In the Prologue to *The Cure*, written well after that work was completed, he described as follows their mutual relationship:

> Then I thought it appropriate that I should write another book to follow this one [*The Cure*]. I have called it *Appendices*, and it will end with my life, finding its termination in whatever will have been completed every year. It is like a commentary to this book, Providing Corollaries to its Fundamental Principles and elaborating upon its briefly expressed concepts [T9, §3].

Despite Avicenna's definite description of the work and his explicit mention of the title, paradoxically no work by him has been preserved under this title.[1] There exist instead two collections of material that meet Avicenna's description, and they have been transmitted under the titles of *Notes* (*Taʿlīqāt*) and *Discussions* (*Mubāḥaṯāt*).

The transmission of both works is extremely complicated, given their nature. It can be properly understood only after a detailed study and comparison of the numerous manuscripts in which they are extant. Here only the major issues and problems can be stated.

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[1] This fact appears also to have puzzled Avicenna's bibliographers and scribes of the manuscripts of his works. Among the former, Jūzjānī does not mention such a book, or that he ever saw it, while the Longer Bibliography lists it only on the authority of Avicenna's statements: "The *Appendices*, mentioned in Avicenna's writings as a commentary on *The Cure*" (Gohlman 90.5). Among the latter, the scribe of the Leiden manuscript 184 Golius, copying Avicenna's essay *On the Construction of Astronomical Instruments* (*aṭ-Ṭarīq fī ttiḫāḏ al-ālāt ar-raṣdīya*, A164, M1), says that this essay should be considered as an appendix to the Astronomy of *The Cure* and therefore as part of the *Appendices* (*wa-sabīluhā* [*ay hāḏihi l-maqāla*] *an tuḍāfa ilā lawāḥiq ʿilm al-Majisṭī min kitāb al-Lawāḥiq*). See E. Wiedemann, "Avicennas Schrift über ein von ihm ersonnenes Beobachtungsinstrument," *Acta Orientalia* 11 (1926) 86, and also 83 [repr. in his *Gesammelte Schriften zur arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, D. Girke and D. Bischoff, eds. (Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften, B/1,2), Frankfurt/M 1984, II.1122 and 1119]. By this reckoning, however, every separate essay by Avicenna on a discrete subject discussed in *The Cure* could also be considered as part of the *Appendices*. The question needs to be investigated further in the context of the transmission of Avicenna's entire works.

The *Notes* is a collection of discrete paragraphs of varying length discussing different subjects in Logic, Physics, and Metaphysics. It appears to have been transmitted in four recensions.[2] The first, that of ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq in the Cairo manuscript Ḥikma 6M,[3] is merely a consecutive but haphazard transcription of all the notes. In the second, the notes are presented in the same order, but they are numbered individually from 1 to 990 and prefaced with a table of contents. The "editor" of this recension and author of the table of contents is identified in at least one of the manuscripts as Lawkarī. The Istanbul manuscript Ahmet III 3204 contains the following note: "Table of contents of the *Notes*, transmitted from (*riwāya*) Bahmanyār on the authority of (*ʿan*) al-Fārābī and Avicenna. ... This table was prepared by al-Lawkarī in the year 503[/1109]."[4] The third recension is represented by late Iranian manuscripts in which the individual notes are rearranged according to subject matter and grouped into Logic, Physics, and Metaphysics. The fourth recension, finally, consists of extracts from these notes on specific subjects, circulating independently in the manuscript tradition under various titles.[5] The interrelationship of these recensions, the authorship of those notes attributed to Fārābī,[6] and the relation between the *Notes* and the *Discussions* are all questions that have yet to be studied.

The *Discussions* is a collection of philosophical questions and Avicenna's written answers, the latter occasionally found in the form of letters. This collection also is transmitted in various recensions, the exact number of which has yet to be determined.[7] The original recension, however, appears to be the one represented by the valuable Bodleian manuscript Hunt. 534. The manuscript is dated 634/1236 and is very carefully

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[2] See Mahdavī 61-64 and M. El-Khodeiri, "Autour de deux opuscules d'Avicenne traduits en Latin," *MIDEO* 2 (1955) 344-345.

[3] See Gutas "Avicenna's Library." This recension was published by ʿA. Badawī, *Ibn Sīnā, at-Taʿlīqāt*, Cairo 1973.

[4] Badawī *Taʿlīqāt* 9, Mahdavī 62. According to Badawī, these notes in the manuscript occur on ff. 1v and 19v respectively. The oldest manuscript containing this recension, Ayasofya 2390, apparently also has the table of contents, but it is not clear from Badawī's and Mahdavī's reports whether it also includes the remarks about Bahmanyār and Lawkarī. The Longer Bibliography mentions Ibn-Zayla as the transmitter of the *Notes*; see below, note 8.

[5] See the examples given by El-Khodeiri "Deux opuscules" 345.

[6] The *Notes* published in Hyderabad (*at-Taʿlīqāt*, 1346/1927) under the name of Fārābī are excerpts from the ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq recension of Avicenna's *Notes*, Badawī *Taʿlīqāt* 16.2-193.19. See J. Michot, "Tables de correspondance des 'Taʿlīqāt' d'al-Fārābī, des 'Taʿlīqāt' d'Avicenne et du 'Liber Aphorismorum' d'Andrea Alpago," *MIDEO* 15 (1982) 231-250. See also El-Khodeiri "Deux opuscules" 346-347.

[7] Mahdavī 203-211 identifies six groups of manuscripts which begin and end with different passages, but whether these also constitute different recensions cannot be established without further comparison of their contents.

written (see the introductions to T11 and T13 in Chapter 1). On f. 2r the scribe provides the information that the recension was compiled by putting together slips of paper containing the questions asked by Bahmanyār and Abū-Manṣūr ibn-Zayla, and Avicenna's answers.[8] The person who collected the original slips of paper and added to them letters and other notes by Avicenna to form this recension is not known. It would seem that the recensor was not the scribe of the Bodleian manuscript but rather that the Bodleian manuscript is a copy of the original recension; otherwise it will have to be assumed that these slips of paper and the other material survived in loose form for almost two hundred years after Avicenna's death.

Another recension of the *Discussions* is that of ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq in the Cairo manuscript Ḥikma 6M.[9] As in the case with the *Notes*, ʿAbd-ar-Razzāq did not provide any marginal annotations but merely copied his material consecutively. The relationship of these two recensions to each other and to the other manuscripts of the *Discussions* with regard to both arrangement and contents remains to be investigated.[10]

The title of the *Discussions* is based on a casual reference by Avicenna himself. Although it would seem that he intended this material to be called *Appendices*, the fact that he referred to his philosophical correspondence as "friendly discussions" in two instances apparently led the recensor to adopt the word "discussions" (*mubāḥaṯāt*) as the title.[11]

Research on the *Notes* and the *Discussions* has hardly begun. A detailed investigation into the various recensions and a comparison of their contents will shed much light not only on their transmission and the survival of Avicenna's *Nachlass*, but also on the final elaborations that Avicenna wished to make in his philosophical doctrines.

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[8] Mahdavī 202. The Longer Bibliography gives conflicting information. It says that the *Discussions* consists of Bahmanyār's questions and Avicenna's answers (Gohlman 100.8-102.1), while it lists Ibn-Zayla as the person who wrote down the *Notes* (*at-Taʿālīq*) from Avicenna's dictation (*ʿanhu*; Gohlman 100.7). Jūzjānī mentions only the *Discussions* by title and adds that it consists of one volume (Gohlman 46.12).

[9] See Gutas "Avicenna's Library." This recension was published by Badawī *Arisṭū* 119-249.

[10] The situation is complicated in that there are inevitably contaminated recensions. A very tentative sounding of the material seems to indicate that the Leiden manuscript Warn. Or. 864 contains a recension that mixes the readings of the Bodleian and Cairo manuscripts. See T11 note h.

[11] *Mubāḥaṯāt* §§269, 274 (Badawī *Arisṭū* 173.20, 175.13): *mubāḥaṯāt aṣ-ṣadīq*, *al-mubāḥaṯāt aṣ-ṣadīqīya*, respectively.

CHRONOLOGY OF AVICENNA'S MAJOR PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS

and of Other Texts Discussed in This Study

Period	*Date*	*Work*
EARLY PERIOD		Compendium on the Soul (W1)
		Philosophy for ʿArūḍī (W2)
		The Available and the Valid, Piety and Sin (W3)
		Correspondence with Bīrūnī
TRANSITION PERIOD	403/1013	The Provenance and Destination (W4)
	404/1014	The State of the Human Soul (W5)
MIDDLE PERIOD	414/1023	The Guidance
	~411-418/~1020-1027	The Cure (W6)
		Jūzjānī's Introduction to The Cure (T7)
	~418/~1027	The Salvation (W7)
		Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla (W8)
PERIOD OF EASTERN PHILOSOPHY	~418-420/~1027-1029	The Easterners (W9); lost in 425/1034
	~420/~1029	Prologue to The Cure (T9)
	420/1029	Fair Judgment (W10); lost in Muḥarram 421/Jan. 1030
		Marginal Notes on De Anima (W10)
	~late 421/~late 1030	Memoirs by a Disciple from Rayy (T13)
		The Autobiography (T3)
LATE PERIOD	~421-425/~1030-1034	Pointers and Reminders (W11)
	425/1034	Letter to an Anonymous Disciple (T11)
	~427/~1036	Letter to Kiyā (T12)
	~428/~1037	On the Rational Soul (T14)
		Appendices (Notes and Discussions) (W12)

NOTE. Works for which no date is given cannot be dated absolutely (see Chapter 2, Introduction). In each period, these works are listed chronologically according to their relative order.

The sign (~) before a number means approximately.

PART TWO

AVICENNA'S RECEPTION OF THE ARISTOTELIAN TRADITION

3.

AVICENNA'S INTELLECTUAL UPBRINGING: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND ITS INTERPRETATION

1. *Avicenna's Studies. The Curriculum*

Following Aristotle's general discussion in *Metaphysics* E1, the Alexandrian scholars of late antiquity erected an elaborate schema of classification of his works in which individual treatises corresponded to a field of study. The result of this process was that the classification of *Aristotle's* works became, in effect, a classification of all the sciences, and hence of *all human knowledge*. This classification, whose function was initially and preponderantly descriptive and pedagogical, but which later also acquired normative value on the assumption that it reflected ontological reality as well, was transmitted, mostly via Syriac, into Arabic, and became, with variations depending on the background and orientation of each scholar, the basis in medieval Islam of the classification and instruction of the Greek, as opposed to the native Muslim, sciences.[1] Both the theory of education and the curriculum of higher studies in these sciences which were prevalent in the Greek Aristotelian tradition became in this fashion integrated into Islamic intellectual life.[2]

As a fairly standard representative of this classification I summarize below *The Categories of the Philosophical Sciences* (*Kitāb fī Aṣnāf al-ʿulūm al-ḥikmīya*) by Abū-Sahl al-Masīḥī, a distinguished physician and com-

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[1] The venerable subject of the classification of the sciences in Islam has been the subject of much scholarly discussion and is therefore treated quite summarily here. A thorough survey of the Syriac and Arabic literature and its Greek antecedents, with full bibliography, is now available in the Giessen dissertation by Christel Hein, published as *Definition und Einteilung der Philosophie. Von der spätantiken Einleitungsliteratur zur arabischen Enzyklopädie* [Europäische Hochschulschriften XX/177], Frankfurt/M-Bern-New York 1985. The *sui generis* arboreal (*mušajjar*) classification by Ibn-Farīġūn (4th/10th century) has been recently studied by H. H. Biesterfeldt, *Die Zweige des Wissens. Theorie und Klassifikation der mittelalterlich-islamischen Wissenschaften in der Darstellung des Ibn Farīġūn*, Habilitationsschrift, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, 1985.

For a study of the dual function—descriptive and normative—of the late Alexandrian classification and its transmission into Arabic see Gutas "Paul the Persian," Section III. Useful summary reviews of the contents of the Muslim "encyclopedias" exhibiting each author's division of the sciences can be found in Peters *Aristotle* 104-120 and, with emphasis on Muslim theology (*kalām*), in L. Gardet and G. C. Anawati, *Introduction à la théologie musulmane*, Paris 1948, 101-124.

[2] A general account of the formation of the Aristotelian tradition and its transmission and reception into Arabic can be read in Peters *Aristotle*, especially pp. 1-22, 69-134.

panion of Avicenna himself (and reportedly also one of his teachers of medicine).[3] Apart from being unpublished,[4] Abū-Sahl's classification has the additional distinction of providing a relatively full syllabus of a course in these sciences. Presented in the order in which Abū-Sahl says these sciences ought to be studied, his account is the following:[5]

A. Logic: Enables one to distinguish between truth and falsehood in the sciences that follow. Books by Aristotle: (I
   1. Categories. Commentaries by ʾIlynws,[6] Simplicius, Abū-Bišr Mattā ibn-Yūnus, Fārābī.
   2. De Interpretatione. Commentaries by ʾIlynws, Abū-Bišr, Fārābī.
   3. Prior Analytics (*K. al-Qiyās*). Commentaries by ʾIlynws, Abū-Bišr, Fārābī.
   4. Posterior Analytics (*K. al-Burhān*). Commentaries by Themistius, Abū-Bišr, Fārābī.
   5. Topics. Commentaries by Yaḥyā ibn-ʿAdī, *Investigation of the Topoi* by Themistius.[7]
   6. Rhetoric. Commentary by Fārābī.
   7. Sophistics. No commentaries are available.
   8. Poetics. [No commentaries are mentioned by Abū-Sahl.]

[3] The chronology and the events of Abū-Sahl's life, as well as his precise relation to Avicenna, require further investigation. See the references to the sources in *GAS* III.326 and Ullmann *Medizin* 151, and the discussion in Gohlman 124, note 43. It is certain, however, that they were both in Gurgānj at the court of the Ḫwārizmšāh ʿAlī ibn-Maʾmūn (reigned 387/997-399/1009); Abū-Sahl's essay was written upon the request of Abū-l-Ḥusayn as-Suhaylī (as-Sahlī?), the minister of ʿAlī ibn-Maʾmūn in Gurgānj at the time of Avicenna's arrival there after leaving Buḫārā (T3, §14). That Abū-Sahl was in fact Avicenna's teacher of medicine in Buḫārā is simply stated by Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa, without any details (see T3 note 18).

[4] MS Leiden Acad. 44, ff. 2v-12r. I am grateful to Hans Hinrich Biesterfeldt for both bringing the existence of this treatise to my attention and providing me with a copy of the text.

[5] Since the purpose of the following summary of Abū-Sahl's work is not to comment on it, the information it contains about the works of Aristotle, other authors, and their commentaries is to be compared in every instance with the bibliographical and biographical references provided by F. E. Peters, *Aristoteles Arabus*, Leiden 1968 (along with the additions made to it by H. Daiber in his review in *Gnomon* 42 [1970] 538-547), M. Ullmann *Medizin* and *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften im Islam*, Leiden/Köln 1972, and the appropriate volumes of *GAS*.

[6] For this person see F. Rosenthal, "A Commentator of Aristotle," in *Islamic Philosophy and the Classical Tradition* [Festschrift R. Walzer], ed. by S. M. Stern, A. Hourani, V. Brown, London 1972, 337-349. It thus appears established that this person did in fact write commentaries on the first three books of the *Organon*. See further on his identity F. W. Zimmermann, *Al-Farabi's Commentary and Short Treatise on Aristotle's De Interpretatione*, London 1981, xcvi-xcviii, and H. Daiber's comments in *Arabica* 31 (1984) 63.

[7] *Taʿaqqub al-mawāḍiʿ*. The *Fihrist* (249.23) reports that "Themistius commented on the *topoi* of the book," which appears to be a reference to the same book as that mentioned by Abū-Sahl. Avicenna himself is credited with an essay of a similar title, *Investigation of the Dialectical Topos* (*Taʿaqqub al-mawḍiʿ al-jadalī*; A26, M48; published by M. Mohaghegh and T. Izutsu, *Collected Texts and Papers on Logic and Language* [Wisdom of Persia Series VIII], Tehran 1974, pp. 61-77), which may depend on Themistius. This remains to be investigated (cf. Peters *Aristoteles Arabus* 22).

Particular Sciences

B. MATHEMATICS: Theoretical (*ʿilmī*) particular sciences. Propaedeutic to Physics and Metaphysics.
   1. Geometry. The fundamental texts are those by Euclid, Archimedes, Apollonius.
   2. Arithmetic. The fundamental texts are [*Introduction to*] *Arithmetic* [by Nicomachus of Gerasa], the arithmetical parts in Euclid, books on Indian arithmetic and algebra.
   3. Science of the stars:
      a) Astronomy. Ptolemy's *Almagest*. Commentary by Nayrīzī. Books on *mutawassiṭāt*. Books on *Zīj* by Ḥabaš, Battānī, Nayrīzī.
      b) Astrology. Not being a demonstrative science, it does not belong among those enumerated here, but rather with interpretation of dreams, (bird) divination, physiognomy.
   4. Music. Ptolemy's *Harmonics*, elaborated upon by Kindī. Fārābī wrote an exhaustive book on the subject.[8]
   5. Optics. Books by Ptolemy and Euclid.

C. NON-MATHEMATICAL: Applied (*mihnī*) mathematical particular sciences.
   1. Mechanics. It is properly an applied, rather than a theoretical science.
   2. Medicine. Books by Galen. Medical handbooks (*kunnāšāt*) by Paul [of Aegina], Ahrun, [Masīḥ] ad-Dimašqī, Ibn-Sarābiyūn, Rāzī's *al-Jāmiʿ al-kabīr* [*al-Ḥāwī* = *Continens*].
   3. Agriculture.
   4. Alchemy.

Universal Sciences

D. PHYSICS: Books by Aristotle:
   1. Physics. Commentaries by Alexander, Themistius, Philoponus.
   2. De Caelo. Commentary by Themistius.
   3. De Generatione et Corruptione. Commentaries by Alexander, Philoponus.
   4. Meteorology. Commentary by Alexander.
   5. De Animalibus. No commentary is available.
   6. De Plantis. Not the book by Aristotle himself, but the epitome (*muḫtaṣar*) made by Nicolaus [of Damascus] is the only one that is available.
   7. De Anima. Commentary by Themistius. Alexander wrote a large treatise on the subject.
   8. De Sensu et Sensato. It is attributed to Aristotle but does not seem like what he would say (*wa-laysa yušbihu kalāmahu*). No commentary is available.[9]

[8] In the historical process whereby the classification of Aristotle's works was transformed into a classification of all the sciences, the subjects of the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry astronomy, music) were integrated into the schema as part of the mathematical sciences. The textbooks indicated by Abū-Sahl here as the fundamental ones had already achieved this status in late antiquity. See H. I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, G. Lamb, trans., New York 1964, 243-251.

[9] For the transmission of this work in Arabic see below, Chapter 6.5, note 92.

E. METAPHYSICS:
1. Metaphysics, by Aristotle. Commentary by Themistius on Book *Lambda*. Kindī wrote a short exegesis for the entire book which he called *The Inclusive Philosophy* (*al-Falsafa ad-dāḫila*).[10]

Practical Philosophy

F. ETHICS: These sciences should be both practiced and studied. As practiced, they precede the theoretical parts of philosophy just enumerated. As objects of study, they follow them.[11]
1. Ethics. Nicomachean Ethics by Aristotle.
2. Politics. Letters on Politics by Aristotle.[12] Politics by Plato.
3. Oeconomics.

Avicenna's philosophical formation took place in this tradition, in the intellectually active capital of the Sāmānids, Buḫārā, where he spent the consequential years of his life, approximately from age six to twenty-two.[13] In the Autobiography he gives us a detailed account of the subjects he studied, with his age at each stage and his few teachers. The systematic nature of his presentation can be best elicited when this information is tabulated as follows:[14]

Age	*Subjects*
[6?]-10	A. [ELEMENTARY EDUCATION]
	1. Qurʾān and [Arabic] literature with anonymous teachers.
	2. Hears Ismāʿīlī doctrines about the soul and the intellect

[10] Cf. *Fihrist* 255.27-28.

[11] The twofold application to ethics derives from the late Alexandrian discussions about the starting point of philosophical studies, which distinguished between a "prephilosophical morality" and the study of philosophical ethics. See D. Gutas, "The Starting Point of Philosophical Studies in Alexandrian and Arabic Aristotelianism," *Rutgers University Studies in Classical Humanities* 2 (1985) 115-123.

[12] Presumably the correspondence between Aristotle and Alexander is meant. See M. Grignaschi, "La 'Siyāsatu-l-ʿĀmmiyya' et l'influence iranienne sur la pensée politique islamique," *Acta Iranica* 6 [*Monumentum H. S. Nyberg* III], Leiden/Tehran 1975, 33-287.

[13] It is relatively unimportant when Avicenna began his studies; he may have started when he was four or five or six. In the *Canon of Medicine* (O. C. Gruner, *A Treatise on the Canon of Medicine of Avicenna*, London 1930, 379, §735) he recommends that instruction of children start at six, and on the analogy of the Autobiography, it may be possible to read into this an autobiographical reference. The year of his departure from Buḫārā, on the other hand, can be established only after the problems associated with the chronology of his life, as discussed in the introduction to Chapter 2 above, have been solved. In any case, he says in the Autobiography (T3, §12) that he was still in Buḫārā when he was twenty-one. A similar amount of time for studies is also specified in sources deriving from the Greek tradition. See the references in T2 note 8, above. With Avicenna's period of study is to be compared the approximately twenty years that it took in average for a student in Nīshāpūr in the 10th-11th century to study Prophetic Traditions. See R. W. Bulliet, "The Age Structure of Medieval Islamic Civilization," *SI* 57 (1983) 105-117, the first study to attempt a statistical analysis of the subject.

[14] Words and numbers in square brackets indicate my conjectures and explanatory additions not found in Avicenna's text. See also the notes to the translation of the Autobiography.

from his family and an Ismāʿīlī missionary but does not accept them. They invite him to do so by talking [and talk?] about philosophy, geometry, and Indian arithmetic. [As a result?] his father sends him to study

3. Indian arithmetic with a greengrocer.

[10?]-16 B. [SECONDARY EDUCATION]

1. Islamic jurisprudence with Ismāʿīl az-Zāhid; practices law.
2. [Philosophical sciences]
   a. [Logic:] Porphyry's *Eisagoge* and the *Organon*: a literal reading with Nātilī; in detail and with commentaries by himself.
   b. [Mathematics:]
      i. Euclid's *Elements*: Book I.1-6 with Nātilī, the rest by himself.
      ii. Ptolemy's *Almagest*: Book I.1-8 with Nātilī, the rest by himself.
   c. Physics by himself.
   d. Metaphysics by himself.
3. Medicine by himself; practices medicine.

16-17.5 C. [UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION]

1. [Philosophical sciences]
   a. Logic by himself.
   b. Mathematics by himself.
   c. Physics by himself.
   d. Metaphysics by himself and with the aid of Fārābī's *On the Purposes of the Metaphysics*.

[17.5]-18 D. [GRADUATE EDUCATION]

[Philosophical sciences:] "Books of the ancients" in the royal library of Nūḥ ibn-Manṣūr.

Dissertation: *Compendium on the Soul* (W1)

18 End of his studies.

21 E. ["HABILITATION":] *The Compilation* or *Philosophy for ʿArūḍī* (W2), containing,

1. Theoretical sciences: a. Logic.
   b. Physics.
   c. Metaphysics.
2. Practical sciences: Ethics.

[22?] F. [Precursor of *The Cure* and *Fair Judgment*, in two parts:]
1. Theoretical sciences: *The Available and the Valid* (W3), containing Logic, Mathematics, Physics, Metaphysics;
2. Practical sciences: *Piety and Sin* (W3), containing ethics.

The progression of Avicenna's education is clear enough from the above tabulation: reduced to this skeleton outline, the Autobiography appears as a transcript of studies and a curriculum vitae. His educational career is readily divisible into four stages (which I have taken the liberty of identifying with those current in our culture for purposes of easy reference and highlighting), and culminates with the composition of two works which establish him in the world of learning[15] and which can therefore be seen as the final two stages, the dissertation and "habilitation."

From the point of view of his philosophical training that interests us here, the salient aspects of his report are the following: Avicenna says that he began his education with studies in Qurʾān and literature, along with which he may have also learned grammar. During his tutelage under the greengrocer he could have learned no more than arithmetic,[16] and it is doubtful that this can be counted as a formal study of Arithmetic, the branch of the philosophical science of mathematics. His brush with Ismāʿīlism during this time (if not by the time he was ten, certainly not long afterwards, judging by the chronological presentation), much discussed and even more misinterpreted, is significant not for telling us what he learned from it but for the purpose for which he chose to include it in the Autobiography, to be analyzed below (Chapter 3.3E). Conspicuous in its absence is any mention of having studied Islamic sciences other than the mandatory Qurʾān (like Prophetic Tradition/*ḥadīṯ*, or Qurʾānic interpretation/*tafsīr*, a field in which he later wrote several essays), but in the absence of information to the contrary, not much can be made of this. The upshot of the account of his elementary education, therefore, is that he studied subjects preparatory for the philosophical sciences—language, literature, and arithmetic—and not subjects that have nothing to do with philosophy, like *ḥadīṯ*. This impression is further corroborated by the fact that his rejection of the Ismāʿīlī account of the soul and the intellect—subjects eminently philosophical—indicate a predisposition toward philosophical critical thinking.

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[15] Cf., for example, what Jūzjānī says in his introduction to *The Cure* (T7, §1) with §13 of the Autobiography.

[16] He learned "Indian computation" (*ḥisāb al-Hind*); see note 7 to the Autobiography (T3).

Avicenna's first contact with a formal science, however, the Autobiography continues, was with jurisprudence, an ostensibly non-philosophical subject. Were it not for jurisprudence, his secondary education would have consisted exclusively of the philosophical sciences (including medicine; cf. Abū-Sahl's classification above). And yet the particular way in which he first mentions jurisprudence indicates that he intended this to be understood differently. To quote him again:

> Then Abū-ʿAbdallāh an-Nātilī, who claimed to be a philosopher, came to Buḫārā. My father had him stay in our house, and he occupied himself with my education. *Before* his arrival, I used to occupy myself with jurisprudence, attending frequently Ismāʿīl az-Zāhid about it. I was one of the most skillful questioners, having become familiar with the methods of posing questions and ways of raising objections to a respondent in the manner Customary with these people. *Then* I began to read the *Eisagoge* with an-Nātilī, and when he mentioned to me the definition of "genus," viz. "that which is predicated of many things differing in species, in answer to [the question] 'What is it?'," I set about a Verification of this definition in a manner such as he had never heard. He was extremely amazed at me and cautioned my father that I should occupy myself with nothing else but Philosophy [T3, §5; emphasis added].

For the only time in the entire account of his studies, Avicenna abandons here the strictly chronological sequence of events. He first introduces his teacher, Nātilī, "who claimed to be a philosopher," thus announcing the beginning of his formal studies in philosophy, but then immediately he interrupts his narrative to interject his previous study of Islamic jurisprudence, taking care to point out his expertise in posing questions and raising objections to opponents. With this background, Avicenna continues, he had his first contact with logic, and not only was he able to grasp immediately its central concepts, but he also improved upon the analyses given by his teacher. The implication that he was able to do so *because* of his previous studies in jurisprudence, given the structure of the paragraph cited above, is inevitable.

The question, however, is what precisely Avicenna had in mind here, and what he meant by jurisprudence in this context. First of all, it is to be noted that he brings up the issue of having studied jurisprudence only in association with Prophyry's *Eisagoge*, not independently as he did with the subjects he had studied in his elementary education. If we are to look at the possible connection between the *Eisagoge* and jurisprudence, we discover the following: the *Eisagoge* deals, as is well known, with the *quinque voces* (the five predicables) for the purpose of analyzing the ten categories and assigning definitions, all subjects treated extensively in Aristotle's *Topics* (Books I-VII). The *Topics*, however, also deals (Book VIII) with "the methods of posing questions and ways of raising objec-

tions to a respondent," namely, dialectics. Since then Avicenna is presenting the practice of *Islamic jurisprudence* in the same terms as those used to describe the practice of dialectical argumentation in Aristotle's *Topics*,[17] it seems clear that he is implying here that he was able to analyze the question "What is it?" so brilliantly on account of his previous training in a dialectical discipline, jurisprudence. This in turn is consistent with his position about the usefulness of dialectics: as he says in the Topics of *The Cure*, when we learn the *topoi* from which we may discover the arguments for every problem, acquire the instruments that lead to their discovery, and know how to use them, then we acquire practice which is "the ability to perform a given kind of acts frequently and well."[18] In this particular case Avicenna had practice, as he mentions, in asking questions—which is, in any case, the basis of dialectical disputation[19]—and hence his expert analysis of the definition of genus in the *Eisagoge*. By mentioning Islamic jurisprudence in connection with the *Eisagoge*, Avicenna meant to refer not to the subject matter of jurisprudence, which is properly a non-philosophical discipline, but to its method, which he understands and describes in terms of Aristotelian dialectic.

This is as to be expected. Avicenna would set, in the context of the philosophical sciences, little store by the subject matter of jurisprudence (and theology, *kalām*): the statements of religious leaders upon which it is based can yield only "jurisprudential syllogisms (*qiyāsāt fiqhīya*) which are actually either enthymemes (*ḍamā'ir*) or examples (*miṯālāt*) that belong among dialectical arguments at best or rhetorical ones at worst."[20] The subject matter of jurisprudence and theology is thus of no interest to a philosopher except as examples of premisses constituting generally accepted beliefs (*mašhūr*), while their dialectical method forms part of the general subject discussed in the *Topics*.

For his secondary education, then, Avicenna lists in the Autobiography only the philosophical sciences which he studied: dialectic as a preparatory subject, then the rest of the Organon, then Mathematics, Physics, Metaphysics, and the particular discipline of medicine. This is not to imply that he did not study jurisprudence as an Islamic science; he may very well have—as a matter of fact, it is certain that he did—but

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[17] For the terminology of dialectics used by Avicenna in this passage see note 11 to the translation of the Autobiography (T3).

[18] *Jadal* 48.12-14.

[19] *Qiyās* 537.5-11.

[20] *Qiyās* 555.7-556.3. In a short essay entitled, "On the Supernal Bodies" (*Fī l-ajrām al-ʿulwīya*) he says, in effect, "It is possible that the discipline called 'theology' (*kalām*) in this age of ours may be close to the rank of dialectic, falling short of it only a little" (*Tisʿ Rasā'il*, Bombay 1318, 27.15-16).

what is of relevance here is that he is not reporting on that *prima intentione* in the Autobiography, just as he said nothing about having studied Islamic sciences other than Qur'ān and literature in his elementary education. His concern is to give an account of his education in the philosophical sciences, not of everything that he ever studied. We shall return to this subject below.[21]

Avicenna's higher education, undertaken this time entirely on his own, was devoted exclusively to the philosophical sciences, again according to the Alexandrian/Islamic philosophical curriculum: Logic, Mathematics, Physics, Metaphysics. His particular difficulty with the *Metaphysics*, largely misunderstood by contemporary scholarship, was resolved with the help of Fārābī's brief essay on the book's purpose.[22] After finishing his "undergraduate" studies, Avicenna capped his philosophical training by spending some time (at most six months) in the library of the physicians in the palace of the Sāmānid ruler, where he read "books by the ancients" unknown to many people and never seen subsequently even by him. He was, he says, eighteen years old at that time.

Avicenna thus reports in the Autobiography that he studied the philosophical sciences following the order of the classification in the Alexandrian/Islamic Aristotelian tradition, and that he studied these sciences in three successive stages at increasingly advanced levels. Thanks to Abū-Sahl al-Masīḥī's little essay outlined above, we can also be relatively certain about the very books which Avicenna read, "both original texts and commentaries" (T3, §6). As is evident from Abū-Sahl's comments about some works for which no commentaries were available, he must have included in his list only books in circulation in Gurgānj at that time, and hence presumably in broader Ḫurāsān as well.

The very systematic nature of Avicenna's presentation of the *actual* course of his studies, however, and its close correspondence to the *theoretical* classification of the sciences as found in works like that of Abū-Sahl, raise the question of the extent to which the subjects Avicenna says he studied and the order in which he says he studied them really reflect historical reality. The problem is, in other words, whether Avicenna presented a stylized Autobiography in which the chronology of events is

[21] A related historical question on this issue concerns the extent to which the study of the principles of jurisprudence in Avicenna's time had already incorporated Aristotelian dialectical methods in order to provide the young Avicenna with the the training which he claims he had. If it had, then the Autobiography is a significant document for the history of the development of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, a subject in great need of thorough treatment. If not, then Avicenna is reading back into his early training his position about the usefulness of dialectical training mentioned above.

[22] This subject is fully discussed below, Chapter 6.1.

bent to fit the theoretical classification of the sciences. In the absence of outside corroboration, the issue cannot be resolved, insofar as there seems to be a "chicken-and-egg" situation: the classification of the sciences in the Aristotelian tradition influenced actual educational practice which in turn is presented in an autobiographical account reproducing that very classification in order to promote it. However, the exact historical sequence of events in Avicenna's studies is not as important as the point which his account intends to make and the tendentiousness it seems to exhibit: philosophy *ought to be* studied, and in his case, it *was* studied, in the Aristotelian tradition and according to its division of the parts of philosophy.

Equally as important as Avicenna's adoption of the Alexandrian classification of Aristotle's works as the philosophical curriculum to be (or actually) followed, is his embracing of the concomitant view, as mentioned at the beginning of this section, that this classification represents not only the work of Aristotle or the Philosophical Sciences alone, but *Knowledge* itself, *al-ʿilm*. Consistently in the Autobiography, but elsewhere in autobiographical passages as well, Avicenna uses the word, with the definite article, to refer to the Philosophical Sciences, thereby equating scientific knowledge with Knowledge/Philosophy as classified in the Aristotelian tradition. In the Autobiography, this occurs every time Avicenna uses the singular word absolutely, *al-ʿilm*,[23] and the same is true with the plural in the general expressions, "these sciences" (*hāḏihi l-ʿulūm*), and "all the sciences" (*jamīʿ al-ʿulūm*).[24] Jūzjānī continues in this vein in the very first sentence of the Biography: "There was in Jurjān ... aš-Šīrāzī who loved these sciences" (*hāḏihi l-ʿulūm*), i.e., the philosophical sciences.[25] A misunderstanding of this fact has led to numerous mistranslations of these crucial passages in the Autobiography.[26] Avicenna's position with regard to this key term, however, was evident to subsequent Muslim scholars familiar with the Aristotelian/philosophical tradition. The great Faḫr-ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī (d.

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[23] Gohlman 22.4 (T3, §5 middle), 24.7 (§6 end), 26.5 (§8 beginning), 34.6 (§10 beginning), 38.1 bis (§11, second sentence), 38.4 (*hāḏā l-ʿilm*, §12); see further T8, §3 beginning, and §6 middle; T12, §2 beginning.

[24] Gohlman 30.4 (T3, §8 end), 36.8 (§11, first sentence), 38.8 (§13), 40.5 (§14).

[25] Gohlman 44.3-4.

[26] "These sciences" for which Baraqī had an inclination, for example (T3, §13), has been misinterpreted to refer to the Muslim sciences previously mentioned in the text, i.e., jurisprudence, exegesis, Ṣūfism. But when so understood, the sentence would make little sense: someone who favors the Muslim sciences cannot merely have an "inclination" for the same sciences. The contrast intended here is between the Muslim sciences, which Baraqī cultivated, and the Greek sciences, for which he had a liking. This is further evident by the subjects of the two books he commissioned from Avicenna: see W3 in Chapter 2.

606/1209) says in the beginning of his commentary on Avicenna's *Pointers and Reminders* that the philosophical sciences alone constitute real knowledge.[27]

2. *Avicenna's Studies. Methods of Learning: Intuition* (Ḥads)

If the Aristotelian curriculum, the Philosophical Sciences in their Alexandrian classification, represents in the estimation of Avicenna absolute Knowledge, *al-ʿilm* as such, the question that has to be considered next is how this knowledge can be acquired, or more specifically, how Avicenna says he acquired it. The subject of the principles of Avicenna's epistemology appears upon closer inspection of his works to be so central to his thought, and he himself speaks so frequently about it both in theoretical and autobiographical terms, that it has to be seriously considered as the *via regia* to his philosophical system. The Autobiography provides again the starting point for the investigation.

This unique document makes strange reading today primarily because of a number of statements which have been consistently felt by virtually all interpreters to exceed all bounds of good taste in their apparent conceit, even after due allowance has been made for cultural and temporal divergences. I need only mention here Misch's use of the word "befremden" ("to estrange") thrice in a single page to describe two such statements.[28] The result of this feeling of estrangement has been to neglect to examine the purpose of Avicenna in making them, and consequently to misinterpret them.

These statements are the following: (a) Avicenna evokes amazement by mastering the Qurʾān and "a great deal of literature" by the age of ten (§2); (b) at this early—and one would think, impressionable—age, his "soul" rejects the Ismāʿīlī theories about the soul and the intellect (§3), and (c) he is extremely skillful in dialectical disputation (§5); (d)

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[27] Reference in F. Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant*, Leiden 1970, 245. Rosenthal's book should be consulted in this connection for an evaluation of Avicenna's use of the term *ʿilm* in the wider Islamic context.

[28] Georg Misch, *Geschichte der Autobiographie*, Frankfurt a.M. 1962, III.ii, 1003. This quite unscientific attitude to Avicenna's statements in the Autobiography is frequently based on a Eurocentric perspective, as exemplified, e.g., by Reuben Levy, a by no means superficial scholar of the Islamic world. In a paper read before the Cambridge University History of Medicine Society on 27 November 1956, entitled "Avicenna—His Life and Times," he expressed himself as follows: "It is obvious that we are here dealing with a prodigy, and one who was by no means unconscious of his own powers. But I have often remarked in such parts of *The East* as I have visited that there is not that reticence about personal accomplishments to which *we* are accustomed *here normally*. Formal modesty is *there* regarded as an affectation, and may in fact well be so. Clearly Avicenna did not *suffer* from it." (*Medical History* 1 [1957] 250-251; emphasis added.) Statements such as these are legion in Western scholarship on Avicenna.

Nātilī is amazed at his analysis of the definition of "genus" and at his conceptualization of logical problems (§5); (e) Avicenna claims that Nātilī had no real knowledge of geometry and astronomy (§6); (f) he says that "medicine is not one of the difficult sciences" and masters it "in a very short time" (§7); (g) he studies and masters the Philosophical Sciences (the Aristotelian curriculum) all by himself by the time he is eighteen years old (§11); and (h) he remarks twice that he has not learned anything new since the completion of his "undergraduate" and "graduate" education (§§8, 11). The intention of all these statements is certainly to draw the reader's attention to his precocity, but the ulterior motive for doing so is not conceit, vainglory, or hunting for acclamation, but the desire to make a philosophical point, namely, to provide an illustration for his epistemology.

The most explicit passage in Avicenna's philosophical works in which autobiographical material is used for the purposes of illustration is the one from his *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla*, translated in Chapter 1 as Text 2. It first presents his theory of Intuition and instruction as the ways of acquiring knowledge (§§1-3) and then ends with a paragraph (§4) so exactly parallel to the Autobiography as to merit closer scrutiny.

In this passage Avicenna states that although knowledge of intelligible matters, which is knowledge of the middle terms of syllogisms expressing the propositions known, is acquired in two ways, through Intuition and instruction, the latter is nevertheless ultimately reducible to the former since, as he puts it, the (theoretical) first person to acquire such knowledge had necessarily only Intuition at his disposal. The significance which this formulation lends to the concept of Intuition as *the* way of acquiring knowledge should be explicitly appreciated and analyzed since it makes Intuition the final arbiter over instruction, and consequently conditions an "Intuitive" philosopher's stand toward philosophical tradition (i.e., knowledge transmitted through instruction) and the relation of his own philosophy to the transmitted knowledge. The basis of the present study is an investigation of the implications of this core theory of Avicenna for his philosophical system.

In order to analyze and trace the development of Avicenna's theory of Intuition it will be necessary to present first in chronological order all the significant passages from his works relating to the subject.[29] At the expense of some redundancy, it will be useful to repeat some of the passages already presented in Chapter 1, for the methodologically sound

[29] The following passages do not exhaust all those discussing *ḥads* in Avicenna's works. I have omitted some of Avicenna's other discussions (e.g., *Mabdaʾ* 115-117 Nūrānī = ff. 200r-v MS Ambrosiana 320 [Hammer]; *Hidāya* 293-294, § 184; *Taʿlīqāt* 141.9-12), which do not contribute anything beyond what is offered in the selections below.

reason, I believe, of reading these passages in close succession and contextual proximity.

[1] From *Compendium on the Soul* (T1) (L6)

2. This faculty [the rational soul as material intellect], which exists in the entire human species, does not in itself possess any intelligible forms, but these rather come about within it in one of two ways. The first is through divine inspiration [*ilhām ilāhī*], without any process of learning or utilization of the senses, as is the cause with *a priori* intelligibles [*al-maᶜqūlāt al-badīhīya*]... .

3. The second way is to acquire [them] through syllogisms and Discover [them] through demonstration... .

4. [Another aspect of the second way in which intelligibles come about in the rational soul:] In some people, keenness of mind [*yaqẓa*] and contact with the universal intellect [*al-ittiṣāl bi-l-ᶜaql al-kullī*] may so predispose the rational faculty as to free it from having recourse to syllogisms and reasoning [*rawīya*] in order to acquire knowledge; inspiration [*ilhām*] and revelation [*waḥy*], rather, are sufficient sustenance for it. This specific property of the rational faculty is called sanctification [*taqdīs*], in accordance with which it is then called sanctified spirit [*rūḥ muqaddas*]. None shall gain the enjoyment of this rank except prophets and messengers of God.

[2] From *The State of the Human Soul* = *The Cure* = *The Salvation*[30] (L7)

1. The acquisition of knowledge, whether from someone else or by oneself, is of varying degrees. Some people who acquire knowledge have greater facility for forming concepts [*taṣawwur*] than others because their predisposition [viz., the material intellect] which precedes the predisposition we have mentioned [viz., the intellect *in habitu*] is more powerful. If such is the private state of an individual,[31] then this powerful predisposition is called Intuition [*ḥads*]. This predisposition may be so strong in certain people that they do not need great effort, or training and instruction, in order to make contact with the active intellect—or rather their predisposition for this is so strong that it is as if they were in actual possession of the second predisposition [viz., the intellect *in habitu*]; indeed it seems as if they know everything of themselves. This is the highest degree of this predisposition. In this state the material intellect ought to be called "sacred intellect," since it partakes of the genus of intellect *in habitu*, except that it is so lofty that it is not something shared by all people. It is not unlikely that some of these acts pertaining to the sacred spirit because of their powerful and

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[30] Ahwānī *Aḥwāl* 122.6-123.9 (does not contain the first paragraph) = *Nafs* (F. Rahman, *Avicenna's De Anima*, London 1959) 248.9-250.4 = *Najāt* 272.3-274.4. I have noted only the significant variants among the three largely verbatim identical versions. Cf. the translation by F. Rahman, *Avicenna's Psychology. An English Translation of Kitāb al-Najāt, Book II, Chapter VI*, Oxford 1952, 35.25-37.5, which I adopted with numerous modifications, and his commentary on pp. 93-95.

[31] The text of *The Salvation* reads, "if such a person is predisposed to acquire perfection in his private state."

overwhelming nature deluge the imagination which then reproduces them in terms of perceptible and audible linguistic images in the way in which we have previously indicated.

2. What verifies this is the evident fact that the acquisition of intelligible matters[32] comes about only when the middle term of a syllogism is obtained. This middle term may be obtained in two ways: sometimes through Intuition, which is a mental act by means of which the mind Discovers [*yastanbiṭu*][33] the middle term all by itself—acumen [*ḏakāʾ*] being the power of Intuition[34]—and sometimes through instruction, the origins of which are [again] Intuition, since doubtless everything is ultimately reduced to [knowledge derived from] Intuitions [*ḥudūs*] handed down by those who first Discovered them to their students.

3. It is possible, therefore, that Intuition may occur to a man by himself, and that the syllogism may be constructed in his mind without a teacher. This varies both quantitatively and qualitatively; quantitatively, because some people have had a greater number of Intuitions of middle terms; and qualitatively, because some people Intuit faster. Now since this variation is not restricted by any [arbitrary] boundary but is always susceptible to increase and decrease, and since its lowest point is reached in people who are wholly without Intuition, its highest point must be reached in people who possess Intuition regarding all or most problems, or[35] in people who can Intuit in the shortest time possible.[36] Thus there might be a person whose soul has been rendered so powerful [*muʾayyad an-nafs*] through extreme purity and intense contact with intellectual principles that he blazes with Intuition (i.e., with the ability to receive the inspiration[37] in all matters from the active intellect), and the forms of all things contained in the active intellect are imprinted on his soul either at once or nearly so. This imprinting is not an uncritical reception [of the forms] merely on Authority [*irtisāman lā taqlīdīyan*], but rather occurs in an order which includes the middle terms: for beliefs accepted on Authority concerning those things

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[32] *The State of the Human Soul* adds, "previously unknown."

[33] I would guess that the term *istinbāṭ* (Discovery) which repeatedly occurs in Avicenna's discussion of Intuition, may ultimately reflect the Greek *heuresis*, current in the commentatorial tradition. Cf. the texts of Themistius and Philoponus quoted below, L14 and following (*In An. Post.* 41.6 and 333.6, 9, respectively).

[34] This parenthetical aside is a reference to the Aristotelian definition of "acumen," *anchinoia*, *ḏakāʾ*. See the discussion below.

[35] *The Cure*, reads, "and."

[36] The variation in Intuitive powers among humans, Avicenna means to say, has only natural boundaries, namely the absolute idiot and the perfect prophet. It is therefore not unlimited, as Rahman translates. Within these two termini, on the other hand, no arbitrary limit can be imposed on the variation of the levels of human sagacity. This variation is the foundation of Avicenna's proof of prophecy: see the parallel discussion in Avicenna's *On the Proof of Prophecies* (*Fī iṯbāt an-nubūwāt*, M. Marmura, ed., Beirut 1968, 45, 114-115). I have the impression that Avicenna insists on this point in order to allow for the possibility that every human being may be a candidate for prophethood, and not only those so designated by tradition and the religious scholars. Cf. his concluding statement in this passage.

[37] The text in *The State of the Human Soul* and *The Salvation* reads, *qabūlan li-ilhām*, as translated above, while *The Cure* reads, *qabūlan lahā*, i.e., "the ability to receive them," viz. the intellectual principles. But Avicenna already said that in the preceding phrase.

which are known only through their causes possess no intellectual certainty. This is a kind of prophethood—indeed its highest faculty—and the most appropriate thing is to call this faculty "sacred faculty" [*qūwa qudsīya*]. It is the highest level of human faculties.

[3] From *The Shorter Summary on Logic = The Salvation*[38] (L8)

Acumen [*ḏakāʾ*] is the power of predisposition for Intuition. Intuition is a motion with a view to hitting upon [*iṣāba*] the middle term when that is the unknown, or hitting upon the major term once the middle term has been found.

[4] From *The Cure*[39] (L9)

Intuition is the accurate motion of this faculty [viz. the mind, *ḏihn*] with a view to spontaneously tracking down the middle term. ... Acumen [*ḏakāʾ*] is accurate Intuition [*jūdatu ḥadsin*] by this faculty [the mind], taking place in an infinitesimally short period of time.

[5] From *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* (T2) (L10)

1. It is a fact that unknown [intelligible] things are acquired by means of the middle term [of a syllogism]. The middle term can be obtained either through quickness of apprehension, which pours Intuition into the soul (and that is due to the soul's disposition to be affected by the active intellect), or from a teacher.

2. Intuition is likewise of two sorts: one comes about slowly and after delay, the other at once. ...

3. ... Among people [a] there is the person who needs a teacher for most things, being completely incapable of any Intuition—or even worse, he might be incapable of understanding even with a teacher; [b] there may be a person who knows most things by Intuition and has a slight need for a teacher; and [c] there may also be a person, though rarely, who can attain whenever he wishes the sciences from beginning to end in order of Intuition without a teacher and in very little time. This is because he has made excellent contact with the active intellect so that he has absolutely no need of reflection, and therefore believes that [this knowledge] is being poured into his heart from one place—and perhaps this is what the truth is. It is from this person that the basis of instruction for humans must come.

4. One must not be amazed at this. We ourselves have witnessed a person who was not at this rank and would learn things after reflection and hard work, but who nevertheless dispensed with excessive hard work through his strong Intuition. His Intuition in most things corresponded with what is found in books, and consequently he did not have to endure the hard work of excessive book reading.

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[38] This *Logic* is the earlier work of Avicenna which Jūzjānī says Avicenna incorporated in the logic part of *The Salvation* (see Chapter 2, W7). *Najāt* 137.8-10. The section where this definition of *ḥads* occurs corresponds to the part on the Posterior Analytics.

[39] *Aš-Šifāʾ, al-Manṭiq, al-Burhān*, A. E. Afifi, ed., Cairo 1955, 259.

[6] From *Pointers and Reminders*[40] (I

[In this account of the faculties of the rational soul, Avicenna added to the philosophical presentation of the concepts he was discussing their symbolic equivalents from the famous Light Verse in the Qur'ān (24.35).[41] In Arberry's translation, the Light Verse reads as follows:

God is the Light of the heavens and the earth;
the likeness of His Light is as a niche
wherein is a lamp
(the lamp in a glass,
the glass as it were a glittering star)
kindled from a Blessed Tree,
an olive that is neither of the East nor of the West
whose oil wellnigh would shine, even if no fire touched it;
Light upon Light.]

Pointer.

1. Among the faculties [of the soul] there are some which it possesses in accordance with its need to perfect its substance as actual intellect.

2. The first is a faculty with a predisposition toward the intelligibles. People sometimes call it "material intellect;" (it is the "niche").

3. This is followed by another faculty that comes to the soul once it has attained the primary intelligibles, by means of which it is then prepared to acquire [*iktisāb*] the secondary intelligibles, either, if it is very weak, by means of reflection [*fikra*] (which is "the olive tree"), or, if it is stronger than that, by means of Intuition (which is also "the oil"). [This faculty] is then called "intellect *in habitu*" (which is "the glass"). At its sublime and consummate level, it is a sacred faculty, "whose oil wellnigh would shine, even if no fire touched it."

4. Next there come upon the soul another faculty and perfection. The perfection: the intelligibles come about actually in [the soul], observed and represented in the mind. This is the "Light upon Light." The faculty: the intelligible which has been acquired but is no longer [actually] present may come about as if it were actually being observed. This is "the lamp." This perfection is called "acquired intellect," and this faculty is called "actual intellect."

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[40] *Išārāt* II.388-394; cf. the translation in Goichon *Directives* 324-327, and the discussion and references in her *Distinction* 321-325.

[41] For Avicenna's symbolic method see below, Chapter 8.2. Avicenna first provided in a tentative fashion the same correspondences between the Light Verse and the function of the rational intellect in *The Provenance and Destination* (*Mabda'* p. 116 Nūrānī; MS Ambrosiana ff. 200v-201r), and then, fully, in his *On the Proof of Prophecies*. The Light Verse is also explained in a philosophical/theological way in a treatise entitled "Elevated Discourse on the Principles of Physics," where different corrspondences are given for each of the items in the allegory. The treatise is attributed in one of the two extant manuscripts to Fārābī, but this is clearly out of the question. It would much rather seem that it is inspired directly from Avicenna's work and aims to substitute for the obscure philosophical correspondences which Avicenna provides, concepts taken directly from the mainstream Islamic tradition. See N. Lûgal and A. Sayılı, "Farabi'nin Tabiat ilminin kökleri hakkında yüksek makaleler kitabı," *Belleten* 15 (1951) 81-122.

5. That which brings [the intellect *in*] *habitu* into complete actuality, and the material [intellect] into [the state of intellect *in*] *habitu* is the active intellect. It is the "fire."

Reminder.

6. Perhaps you now wish to find out about the difference between "reflection" [*fikra*] and "Intuition." Listen:

7. Reflection is a certain motion of the soul among concepts, having for the most part recourse[42] to imagination. It looks for the middle term (or, in case it cannot be located, [it looks for] anything analogous to it which might lead to a knowledge of the unknown), by surveying the stock [of ideas] (or whatever is analogous to it) stored inside. Sometimes it reaches what is sought and sometimes it falls short.

8. Intuition occurs when the middle term presents itself [*yatamaṯṯalu*] to the mind [*ḏihn*] all at once, either as a result of a search or desire [for it] but without any [corresponding] motion [of the soul], or without any desire and motion. The middle term is a means to something [i.e., the conclusion; see next selection, §2]; that, or something like it, presents itself [to the mind] along with the middle term.

> [There follows Avicenna's standard argument (similar to that in No. 5, above) for the existence of the "sacred intellect" on the basis of the varying degrees of Intuition among men.]

[7] From *Discussions*[43] (L12)

1. Avicenna was asked the following question: The intellective faculty cannot avoid using [the power of] reflection in order to learn and remember. How, then, will it be able to perceive [*idrāk*] after the separation [of the soul from the body upon death], when reflection ceases to exist?

2. Avicenna answered: God forbid that it should have to use the power of reflection to search for the middle term! The reason for this is that learning occurs in two ways: one is by way of Intuition, which consists of the middle term occurring to the mind without search and thus being obtained, along with the conclusion [of a syllogism]; the second is through contrived means [*ḥīla*] and [after] search. Intuition is a divine effluence [*fayḍ*] and an intellectual contact [*ittiṣāl*] taking place without any act of acquisition [*kasb*][44] at all. Some people may reach such a stage [of consummate Intuition] that they almost have no need of reflection in most of what they learn, and possess the sacred faculty of the soul.

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[42] "Having recourse to:" *mustaʿīna bi-*. Faḫr-ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī reads in the *Lubāb al-Išārāt* (Cairo 1355, p. 72), *mustaġniya bi-*, "managing with." He criticizes Avicenna for introducing imagination in the process of reflection on the grounds that imagination is of particulars while reflection in search of middle terms is of universals.

[43] *Mubāḥaṯāt* §467 (Badawī *Arisṭū* 231).

[44] This word, used by Muslim theologians to describe the acquisition by humans of their acts created by God (cf. L. Gardet's article on "Kasb" in *EI*2, IV.692-694), is used here to indicate the total lack of intention or deliberation on the part of the individual, i.e., the total lack of human agency, in "Intuiting" the middle term. See M. Marmura, "Ghazālī's Attitude to the Secular Sciences and Logic," *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science*, G. F. Hourani, ed., New York (Albany) 1975, 104.

3. When the soul has reached a sublime stage, acquired the excellent [sacred] faculty, and separated from the body, it attains whatever is attained There, where all distractions are vanished, faster than through Intuition: the intellectual world presents itself to the soul according to the order of the terms of propositions and according to the essential, not temporal order of the intelligibles;[45] and this takes place all at once. There is need for reflection [in this world] only because the soul is turbid, or because it has had little training and is impotent to attain the divine effluence, or because of distractions. Were it not for all this, the soul would rise, leaving everything behind, to the end of truth.

[Avicenna then continues with another version of his proof of prophecy on the basis of the variation in natural capacities among humans.]

[8] From *On the Rational Soul* (T14) (L

3. ... The [rational] faculty is prepared to acquire the secondary intelligibles either by means of reflection, which is an act of finding what <results from> these primary intelligibles by [their] composition and combination [to form definitions and syllogisms], or by means of Intuition, which is the representation of the middle term in the faculty all at once and without thinking or considering. By "middle term" I mean the cause which makes assent to the existence or the non-existence of a thing necessary—i.e., the evidence which justifies the judgment—and this sometimes comes about following search and a desire to attain the intelligibles, and sometimes initially, without desire or search; and whenever the evidence is attained, so is invariably that for which the evidence is provided.

Avicenna derived and developed his theory of Intuition directly from Aristotle's brief, and almost incidental, discussions of *eustochia*, "hitting correctly upon the mark" (and the related concept of *anchinoia*, "acumen") in the *Posterior Analytics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*.[46] In the former work, Aristotle says (I.34, 89b10-11, 14), "Acumen [*anchinoia*] is

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[45] "And according ... intelligibles:" literally, "and of the essential intelligibles, not the temporal ones."

[46] For other passages where Aristotle uses the words *eustochia* and *anchinoia* see J. Barnes, *Aristotle's Posterior Analytics*, Oxford 1975, 193 and H. Bonitz's *Index Aristotelicus*, Berlin 1870, s.vv. Apparently independently from each other, Goichon (*Directives* 177, note 2) and Rahman (*Psychology* 94 and *Prophecy in Islam*, London 1958, 31 and 66, note 9) were the first to note that the passage in the *Posterior Analytics* formed the basis of Avicenna's theory of Intuition. They both equate *ḥads* with *anchinoia*, however, something which, strictly speaking, is not correct. *Anchinoia* is rendered by *ḏakāʾ*, while it is *eustochia* that corresponds to *ḥads*. In her earlier *Lexique* and *Vocabulaires Comparés d'Aristote et d'Ibn Sīnā*, Paris 1939, Goichon had failed to see the connection between *ḥads* (§140) and *eustochia* in the definition of *anchinoia*. In the *Vocabulaires*, especially, she wrongly equated *ḥads* with *noēsis*. The same holds true of J. Bakoš, *Psychologie d'Ibn Sīnā (Avicenne) d'après son œuvre aš-Šifāʾ*, Prague 1956, II.201, note 145, who says that *ḥads* probably stands for *nous* or *noēsis*. In more recent discussions of the topic, even this relatively inaccurate association of *ḥads* with the Aristotelian *anchinoia* seems to be overlooked (Marmura "Ghazālī's Attitude" 106 and 110, note 20).

a certain [talent for] hitting correctly upon [*eustochia*] the middle term in an inconsiderable time. ... For seeing the extreme terms, one recognizes all the middle terms, which are the causes [*aítia*]." The Arabic translation available to Avicenna, that of Abū-Bišr Mattā ibn-Yūnus made from Isḥāq ibn-Ḥunayn's Syriac intermediary, read as follows: "As for acumen [*ḏakā'*], it is a certain correct Intuition taking place in a time that does not lend itself to research of middle terms. ... For he who knows the two extreme terms knows all the causes."[47] The crucial term in the definition, *eustochia*, which in the Greek means literally "hitting correctly upon the mark" and metaphorically "quickness in guessing correctly," was thus rendered literally and accurately by *ḥusnu ḥadsin*, an expression that includes in Arabic both significations of the Greek.[48] The same literalness is also evident in the translation of "in an inconsiderable time" (*en askeptōi chronōi*) by "in a time that does not lend itself to research;" it reflects an etymological analysis of *askeptos* as interpreted by Philoponus, whose commentary on the *Posterior Analytics* was available in Arabic translation:

> "Aristotle said 'in an inconsiderable time' instead of 'instantaneously' [*en akariaiōi*] in order [to indicate] that the discovery [*heuresis*] of the middle term would come about without reflection [*skepsasthai*]."[49] (L14)

Apart from this aspect of the process of Intuition that is made explicit by Philoponus (doubtless reflecting earlier practice), there is very little elaboration in the extant commentatorial tradition. Themistius, for example, only states the obvious: "Acumen is a certain analysis of the conclusion [of a syllogism] into its [constituent] propositions and the quick discovery [*heuresis*] of the middle term."[50]

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle tries to discriminate among various intellectual virtues and argues as follows (1142a32-b6):

> "We must grasp the nature of excellence in deliberation [*euboulia*] as well— whether it is a form of knowledge, or opinion, or [a talent for] hitting correctly upon the mark [*eustochia*], or something else. Knowledge it is not... . Nor is it hitting correctly upon the mark; for this both involves no reasoning [*logos*] and is something that happens quickly, whereas men deliberate a (L15)

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[47] *Manṭiq Arisṭū* 406 (Badawī). Badawī adds "<the intermediary> causes" (*al-asbāb <al-mutawassiṭa>*) on the basis of the Greek (*ta aitia ta mesa*), but the word is apparently lacking in the Paris manuscript of the Arabic *Organon*.

[48] The rendition of *eustochia* by *ḥusnu ḥadsin* is representative of what is called "etymological translation:" *ḥusn* translates the prefix *eu-*, and *ḥads* translates *stochos*.

[49] *In An. Post.* 333.8-9 (Wallies), *CAG* XIII.3. *Askeptos* in Greek means both "inconsiderate" and "unconsidered;" Philoponus interprets it to mean "in which no consideration takes place."

[50] *In An. Post.* 41.5-6 (Wallies), *CAG* V.1.

> long time—as a matter of fact, the saying goes that one should carry out quickly the conclusions of one's deliberation, but should deliberate slowly. Again, acumen [*anchinoia*] is different from excellence in deliberation; acumen is a sort of hitting correctly upon the mark."[51]

The Arabic translation of this passage, which Avicenna read, has not been preserved;[52] but it is clear from the commentaries extant in Greek that not much of substance was added in the commentatorial tradition to Aristotle's own discussion. An Arabic translation of a lost Greek summary of the *Ethics* would seem to indicate the extent of elaboration or interpretation Aristotle's enumeration of the intellectual virtues had undergone. These faculties are listed there as follows:

> Acumen [*ḏakāʾ*], memory, intellection [*ʿaql*], quickness of comprehension [*surʿat al-fahm*], ease of learning [*suhūlat at-taʿallum*; *sic lege*]. Acumen is the speed with which the soul moves to construct a syllogism quickly and easily. ... Quickness of comprehension is the predisposition of the soul to perceive... . Ease of learning is sharpness of comprehension which readily perceives theoretical matters.[53] (L1

The only significant elaboration of the Aristotelian concept of intellectual virtues in subsequent Greek thought appears to have occurred in the medical tradition, where they were associated with the humoral constitution of the body and were provided with a quantitative dimension. Toward the end of his extremely influential work, *That the Faculties of the Soul Are Consequent upon the Temperaments of the Body*, Galen says the following:

> In the thinking part of the soul, that which is consequent upon the temperament of the body is quickness of comprehension [*anchinoia*/*surʿat al-fahm*] and stupidity [*mōria*, *jahl*], and a higher or lower degree of that.[54] (L1

In the medical tradition, in other words, acumen was directly related to the temperament of the body, depending on which a person would have more or less of it.

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[51] Translation adopted, with modifications, from D. Ross, *The Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, Oxford 1954 [World's Classics], p. 149.

[52] According to ʿA. Badawī (*al-Aḫlāq*, *taʾlīf Arisṭūṭālīs*, Kuwayt 1979, 197, note), the section of the unique Fez manuscript containing *Nicomachean Ethics* V.9-VI.13 (1136a25-1144b30) is missing.

[53] Text in Badawī *Aḫlāq* 407. For the work and the author see M. C. Lyons, "A Greek Ethical Treatise," *Oriens* 13-14 (1960-61) 35-57; this passage is discussed on p. 51.

[54] Biesterfeldt *Galens Traktat* 43.1-2. I am citing the Arabic translation because this is what Avicenna read. The Greek text is in I. Müller, *Galeni Scripta Minora*, Leipzig 1891, II.79.1-2. It is probable, though far from certain, that the Galenic passage may go back to Poseidonius. W. Theiler seems to think so, because he included it among the Stoic philosopher's fragments, in *Poseidonios. Die Fragmente*, Berlin/New York 1982, frg. 423, p. I.344 top, and cf. the commentary on p. II.361.

From these passages it is evident that the following concepts, mentioned repeatedly in the passages of Avicenna quoted above, went into the making of his theory of Intuition: Intuition is a function of acumen; it occurs spontaneously and without reflection; it hits correctly upon the middle terms, which are the causes of, i.e., explain, the extreme terms; it is associated with quickness of apprehension and, most significantly, with ease of learning; acumen, furthermore, is a function of the temperament, or humoral constitution, of the body, according to which people have more or less of it. All these concepts were present in a discrete form both in the text of Aristotle and, to a lesser extent, in the elaborations in the subsequent commentatorial tradition on the *Posterior Analytics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*;[55] what is not present in either, however, is an indication that these elements were integrated into a comprehensive epistemology as in Avicenna.

In addition to the Aristotelian tradition, it has been suggested that a possible background of Avicenna's theory of Intuition is provided by the development by the Stoics of the Aristotelian acumen "in relation to their doctrine of revelation of the wise man."[56] The Stoic understanding of "acumen," however, is not specific enough to be of use in the present discussion; it does not refer to the Intuition of *the middle term* of a syllogism, the core of Aristotle's and Avicenna's position. It talks of acumen in the context of ethics, as a subcategory of "prudence" (*phronēsis*), one of the four primary virtues: acumen (*anchinoia*) is the knowledge whereby one can discover on the spot "the appropriate act" (*to kathēkon*).[57] Avicenna, on the other hand, is not interested in the ethical but the epistemological function of the concept of *ḥads* (*eustochia*, not *anchinoia*). He uses it in the psychological part of his physical treatises to describe the operation whereby the rational faculty acquires the secondary intelligibles. Furthermore, as in every instance of an alleged Stoic theory in Arabic philosophy, the problem that has to be solved first is to establish the material (i.e., textual) means whereby that Stoic theory was transmitted into Arabic, a problem that has not yet been satisfactorily

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[55] The commentatorial tradition in both Greek and Arabic is scanty and very little studied. More research is necessary before an authoritative judgment can be made about this question; the preliminary impression, however, would appear to justify the statement made above. See further below the arguments for Avicenna's development of the theory of Intuition on his own. For the Greek and Arabic commentaries on these two works see Peters *Aristoteles Arabus*.

[56] Rahman *Prophecy* 31. Rahman's further reference (66, note 9) to Plutarch's concept of the intellection of the divine as a sudden illumination is too general an idea to be relevant here.

[57] *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, J. von Arnim, ed., Leipzig 1903, III.64.15-28.

and comprehensively addressed.[58] It would thus seem that for reasons both of substance and textual transmission, the Stoic doctrine of acumen played no role in the development of Avicenna's theory of Intuition.[59]

There is, on the other hand, a Muslim dimension to the issue that ought not to be overlooked. The concept of natural intelligence providing innate, *a priori* knowledge, as expressed in the Qurʾānic *fiṭra*, played a crucial role from the very beginning in the development of epistemological theories in Islamic theology;[60] and *fiṭra* is precisely the term Avicenna uses to describe Intuition in theological terminology.[61] Closely related to *fiṭra* there is a pool of terms used to denote non-cogitative methods of acquiring or possessing knowledge, all with a long history of serious discussion in most disciplines of Islamic intellectual life. Foremost among these are *waḥy* (revelation), *ilhām* (inspiration), and particularly *badīha* (self-evident, spontaneous, or *a priori* knowledge).[62] There are finally, the theories of Fārābī, which, insofar as we are able to read and study them in his extant writings, appear to have provided the initial stimulus and basic orientation to Avicenna's thoughts on this subject.[63]

The confluence of all these factors briefly indicated above formed the background against which Avicenna developed his doctrine of Intuition. The specific ingredients are directly traceable to the Aristotelian tradition; the urgency and high significance of concepts like inspiration, revelation, and Intuition, are due to the Islamic context; and the general orientation of the philosophical discussion and its location within the theory of the soul (and not, as in Aristotle, in logic or ethics) are borrowed from Fārābī. But the synthesis of these diverse elements into a coherent and consistent account is original to Avicenna, if only because it is clear that he did not formulate this theory from the very beginning of his philosophical career.

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[58] Rahman (*Prophecy* 45ff.) suggests that the Stoic doctrine of sympathy, which he credits with constituting "the basis of Avicenna's doctrine of revelation, prayer, and miracles," was taken over by Plotinus, and hence, one would assume, was available in Arabic in the form of the *Theologia Aristotelis*. Be that as it may, this still does not account for the way in which the Stoic doctrine of acumen allegedly reached Avicenna.

[59] Except perhaps whatever may be due to Poseidonius as transmitted by Galen. See note 54 above.

[60] See J. van Ess, *Zwischen Ḥadīṯ und Theologie*, Berlin 1974, pp. 101ff. See also D. B. Macdonald's article "Fiṭra" in *EI*2, II.931-932.

[61] *Burhān* 64; reference in Marmura "Ghazālī's Attitude" 110, note 20.

[62] These concepts were widely discussed by philosophers one or two generations older than Avicenna, like Abū-Sulaymān, Yaḥyā ibn-ʿAdī, Tawḥīdī. See the references in Joel Kraemer, *Philosophy in the Renaissance of Islam*, Leiden 1986, 148-50; cf. further Tawḥīdī *Muqābasāt*, Ḥasan as-Sandūbī, ed., Cairo 1347/1929, 238-239, *al-Imtāʿ wa-l-muʾānasa*, A. Amīn and A. az-Zayn, eds., Cairo 1932-1944, I.106, and see these words in *EI*.

[63] See Rahman *Prophecy* 11-20, 30-31.

In his very first treatise, the *Compendium on the Soul*, his treatment of the two ways of acquiring the intelligibles is markedly divergent from that in all his later works. First of all, Avicenna makes the distinction between the two ways of acquiring the intelligibles on the basis of the *objects* acquired. The first way, which he says occurs through "divine inspiration," results in the acquisition of the primary intelligibles, while the second way, through syllogistic reasoning, results in the acquisition of the secondary intelligibles—in fact, as it became clear from T1, §3, of all the contents of logic and theoretical philosophy as classified in the Aristotelian tradition. Avicenna was later to make the distinction between the two ways of acquiring the *secondary* intelligibles on the basis, first, of the *provenance* of the knowledge, (self/teacher), and second, of the intellective *function* yielding the knowledge (reflection/Intuition), while relegating the acquisition of the primary intelligibles not to the instrumentality of divine inspiration but to the spontaneous and instinctive activity of the material intellect.

Next, in Avicenna's description of the second way in passage [1] above, the body of what was later to become his theory of Intuition is perceptible, but its soul, Intuition itself, is missing. He says that (secondary) intelligibles are acquired either through syllogistic reasoning or, in the case of some keen-minded people, through inspiration and revelation. It is easy to see in this the origins of the later reflection/Intuition dichotomy, but the mechanism, or common feature, whereby two completely different methods will yield the same result, i.e., the same intelligible, is not specified, nor is their mutual relationship explained.

Finally, because of the problems with the theory just described, there is a tentativeness in the presentation and imprecision in its technical vocabulary. Avicenna is manifestly repeating here material both from the Islamic tradition (knowledge through inspiration) and from the philosophical tradition (knowledge through demonstration), but he does not attempt to integrate this disparate material in the resultant formulation. Instead, he relies on the indefinite semantic field denoted by traditional epistemological terms—both philosophical and Islamic—to do the work for him. It is no accident that in the very short passage [1] we find the indiscriminate use of almost all the Arabic terms employed in discussions of the theory of knowledge: revelation, inspiration, *a priori* knowledge, sense-perception, learning, reflection, keenness of mind, and demonstration. This makes for hazy presentation and overall bad philosophy. Avicenna, who was intensely interested in the subject, must have quickly realized the deficiencies of his first formulation, and in one of the few instances which belie his statement that he had never learned anything new in philosophy since his early years, he made a substantial

change in his theory. In an apparently unprecedented move, as we saw above, he made Aristotle's concept of "intuition of the middle term" the focus of his argument and thereby lent cohesion and wide applicability to his theory.

We are not in a position to determine how early Avicenna hit upon this solution to the problem. The latter part of the section on De Anima from his "habilitation," *Philosophy for ʿArūḍī*, and the entire *The Available and the Valid*, where Intuition would presumably have been discussed, have not been preserved (see W2 and 3). The first extant work which contains this theory fully articulated is his psychological essay, *The State of the Human Soul* (W4), and Avicenna must have been so satisfied with it that he incorporated it verbatim first in *The Cure* and later in *The Salvation* (passage [2]). In subsequent works, Avicenna modified and refined it to a certain extent, but in essence it remained the same.

The great merit of this theory lies in the fact that, first, it enables Avicenna to combine into one the two seemingly disparate ways of acquiring the secondary intelligibles, the "demonstration" and "revelation" or "inspiration" of passage [1], by making the common feature of both cognitive processes the discovery of the middle term, and second, it integrates this process firmly into the function of the intellect *in habitu*, a philosophically well defined part, or stage, of the rational soul. The mechanism of acquiring the intelligibles is thus fully explained, "revelation" and "inspiration" are demystified and adapted to this mechanism, incongruities in terminology are eliminated or explained away (as, e.g., in T14, §10), and the whole account is made not only to fit neatly in the theory of the soul as developed in the Aristotelian tradition, but also to harmonize and interrelate the various branches of this philosophical tradition: psychology provides the framework within which epistemology, through logic, reproduces ontology which posits psychology. In other words, the agent engaged in intellection (the intellect/ psychology), the process of intellection (Intuition/ epistemology), the method of intellection (syllogistic reasoning, the middle term/ logic), and the objects of intellection (the intelligibles/ ontology) are interdependent and mutually explanatory elements unified in a coherent and systematic theory.

Once the essentials of this theory were formulated in *The State of the Human Soul*, Avicenna occupied himself in subsequent works with further clarifying and rendering more precise the central concept of the theory of Intuition. The first and most important modification came from Avicenna's awareness of the implications of what it means to acquire knowledge by or of oneself. Initially he had held that the major difference in the acquisition of knowledge depends on the provenance of knowledge, oneself or a teacher (passage [2], §1), while he assumed the variations of

acquiring knowledge by oneself to be of relatively secondary importance ([2], §3; [4], §2), though of course crucial for establishing the possibility of the existence of a prophet. But Avicenna's own admission that instruction is ultimately reducible to Intuition ([2], §2; [4], §2) forced him to look closer into the implications of what it means to acquire knowledge by oneself, and into his own exposition of the *rate* of Intuition, from very fast to very slow, and eventually led him to an understanding that it is not the provenance of the acquired knowledge that is the essential differentia but rather the process of the acquisition itself, whether, that is, it is one of learning and acquisition or spontaneous. Avicenna thus restricted the concept of Intuition to apply to spontaneous and immediate perception of the middle term, while he used the term reflection to describe the second, deliberative and time consuming way, and thus redefined the two ways of acquiring the intelligibles. In this final formulation instruction is not mentioned; he assumes that it would be considered a variant form of the second, acquisitive process. This modification in the definition of the two ways required a concomitant modification in the description of the psychic mechanism involved. The initial broad understanding of Intuition, capable of variations in its rate, described it as a mental *motion* in search of the middle term (passage [4]); in the final version of the theory, Intuition is a *state* of the mind wherein the intelligibles present themselves all at once ([7], §2; [8]). This leaves room for the discussion of the way in which this state is acquired, and in this fashion ethics and religious law (passage [7]), as well as dreams and medicine (Chapter 3.3) are integrated in the theory.

Once the absolute centrality of the concept of Intuition not only in Avicenna's epistemology but also in his entire philosophical system as a whole is recognized and duly appreciated, it clarifies a number of problems that have chronically plagued the understanding of his philosophy and hampered the reading of his philosophical works.

i) The Autobiography, first of all, can now be read in its proper light: it is not the self-congratulatory bombast of a megalomaniac but a concrete illustration, drawn from observed facts, of philosopher's theory of knowledge, that of *ḥads*. In this light, the apparently vainglorious statements in the Autobiography enumerated at the beginning of this section are seen as specific instances of the powers of Intuition of a "powerful soul" and, although more will be said about them in what follows, lose their problematic and "estranging" aspect.

ii) This theory has numerous implications for the status of Knowledge/*al-ʿilm* (or Philosophy, as we saw at the end of the preceding Section), in general, and of philosophy in the Aristotelian tradition in

particular. First of all, since this Knowledge, when acquired by Intuition, means that "the forms of all things contained in the active intellect are imprinted" on man's intellect *in habitu* (passage [2], §3 middle), which is then called "acquired intellect" and is "like a polished mirror upon which are reflected the forms of things as they are in themselves without any distortion" (T14, §7), and since "the forms of all things as they are in themselves," or the intelligibles, contained in the intellects of the celestial spheres (including of course the active intellect, the last sphere) represent ontological truth, the way things are (T14, §10 end), there is necessarily a one-to-one correspondence between this Knowledge and ontological truth; i.e., the object of this Knowledge is ontological reality as it is in itself, and ontological reality is included, completely and exhaustively, in this Knowledge.

Secondly, since the intelligibles contained in the active intellect are imprinted on the human intellect "in an order which includes the middle terms" ([2], §3), "according to the order of the terms of propositions, and according to the essential, not temporal order of the intelligibles" ([7], §3), not only do the *contents* of this Knowledge correspond, one-to-one, to ontological *reality*, but the *progression* of this Knowledge also corresponds to the *structure* of reality. *The structure of reality is therefore syllogistic.*

Thirdly, since this Knowledge acquired through Intuition "in most things correspond[s] with what is found in books" ([5], §4), and since when one "stands face to face" with the contents of this Knowledge—the forms of things as they are in themselves—one engages automatically in "the theoretical philosophical sciences" (T14, §7 end), this Knowledge is also identical with Philosophy in all its subdivisions as found in books. And since Avicenna was formed in and worked with the philosophical sciences in the Aristotelian tradition, the conclusion that has to be drawn from the above is that for Avicenna, truth, or ontological reality, or the forms of things as they are in themselves, or the intelligibles contained in the intellects of the celestial spheres, collectively comprise absolute Knowledge, which corresponds to Philosophy, or more specifically to the Philosophical Sciences as classified in the Aristotelian tradition, and the structure of this reality corresponds to the progression of the intellect in acquiring the Knowledge whose object this reality is, and this progression is syllogistic, according to Aristotelian logic.

The bond that unites these different parts of the equation, or their point of contact (or "interface"), is Avicenna's theory of Intuition, bridging the gap between pedagogy, epistemology, and ontology. In Avicenna, the Alexandrian tendencies to transorm the classification of Aristotle's works into a classification of all knowledge, and the descriptive

and normative functions of this classification become synthesized into a coherent system logically interconnected.[64]

iii) The identity between absolute Knowledge as acquired through Intuition and philosophy as actually stated in books written in the Aristotelian tradition, however, is not complete. As Avicenna prudently says in [5], §4, from *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla*, his "Intuition in *most things* corresponded with" the Aristotelian books; and the illustration of his powers of Intuition in the Autobiography implies that for the things for which no such correspondence existed, it was his Intuition which, by its very nature, provided the correct Knowledge. Thus, although he says in the Introduction to *The Easterners* that the Peripatetics are "the sect ... most worthy of ... Adherence" (T8, §3), through his emphasis on Intuition in the Autobiography he claims to be independent from slavish adherence to a philosophical school tradition and to have pursued absolute Knowledge embodying truth. By the same token, because of this slight disparity between the contents of philosophy in the Aristotelian tradition and of absolute Knowledge as acquired through Intuition, he can also claim, in the Introduction to *The Easterners*, on the one hand to have overlooked insignificant differences between the doctrine of the Peripatetics and his own intuitive knowledge, and on the other to have "perfected what they meant to say but fell short of doing" (T8, §3).

iv) The theoretical position of Intuition as a means for philosophical Knowledge other than the one through the study of books in the Aristotelian tradition, and his experience, as described in the Autobiography, of having studied the philosophical sciences without having "to endure the hard work of excessive book reading" ([5], §4) also explain the veiled remark in the Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8, §2) that he acquired knowledge "from a direction other than that of the Greeks." This "direction" is, of course, Intuition. As he explicitly says toward the end of the same Introduction (§6), this true Knowledge/Philosophy (*al-ʿilm al-ḥaqq*), i.e., the forms of things as they are in themselves and as contained in the active intellect, "can be Discovered by anybody who examines a lot, reflects long, and has almost fully developed Intuition [*ḥads*]."[65] The same dual access to this Knowledge is also mentioned

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[64] In this regard also Avicenna perfects the systematization of these tendencies already effected by Fārābī. See Gutas "Paul the Persian" 259.

[65] The obsession with an imaginary "oriental philosophy" of Avicenna has prevented many a sagacious reader of this Introduction from seeing its connection with both the Autobiography and the passage from the *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* (T2). The only scholar to have noted this connection, in the form of an afterthought, was Goichon in her article "Philosophie" 31-32, note 36. Her purpose in that article, however, was to identify the non-Greek direction (*jiha*) from which Avicenna acquired his knowledge with an alleged scientific and experimental tradition in the East, and she consequently failed

elsewhere by Avicenna, and in particular in the closing lines of what I consider his last work, *On the Rational Soul* (T14, §11): "I happened to write at the beginning of my career ... a summary treatise ... about the soul ... by following the method of those who engage in philosophy through research (*ahl al-ḥikma al-baḥṯīya*); whoever wishes to find out about the soul should study this treatise because it is appropriate for students who do research. But God Almighty 'guides whomsoever He will' to the way of those who engage in philosophy through direct experience (*ahl al-ḥikma aḏ-ḏawqīya*)." The first method is that of "excessive book reading" ([5], §4), of actually setting up syllogisms and following through to their conclusions, as we shall discuss in the next Section; the second is that of Intuition, available to those "whose soul has been rendered ... powerful through extreme purity and intense contact with intellectual principles" ([2], §3 middle), and hence the invocation to God. The terms used here by Avicenna are different, but the meaning is the same.

v) The eventual formulation of the theory of Intuition in full had thus two aspects: one was the dual access to Knowledge/Philosophy through hard work and Intuition, and the other was the classification of people according to their capacity for Intuition. Since people differ in this capacity, some being well endowed and others totally lacking in it, the question that faces the philosopher wishing to impart this Knowledge is to select his audience and express himself accordingly since it is the quality of the audience that will determine the method of exposition that the author will have to follow. This is another factor that needs to be considered in an understanding of Avicenna's use of different methods of exposition in his various works. The subject will be discussed fully in Chapter 8.

3. *Avicenna's Studies. Methods of Learning: Study*

Avicenna states in the *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* (T2, §4) that his powers of Intuition were not such as to enable him to learn, like the prophets, without any study. He had to spend time with "book reading"

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to recognize the reference to *ḥads* and the overall significance of the very passage she was referring to. Another scholar who also recognized the association of the epistemology implied in Avicenna's Autobiography with *ḥads* was A. F. El Ahwany, "La théorie de la connaissance et la psychologie d'Avicenne," *La Revue du Caire*, Vol. 27, No. 141 (1951) 26, but he failed to develop the argument beyond a general exposition of the subject indicated in his title. Most of Ahwany's presentation has been recently retold with some elaboration by S. Gómez Nogales, "El misticismo persa de Avicena y su influencia en el misticismo español," *Milenario de Avicena* [Cuadernos del Seminario de Estudios de Filosofía y Pensamiento Islámicos, 2], Madrid 1981, 76-79.

and other methods in order to supplement this deficiency and reach full understanding of the philosophical sciences. In the Autobiography he describes in great detail the methods by which he studied and learned. These are (in order of importance after Intuition) logic, prayer, dreams, and, what we might call pharmacological means, wine drinking. Conversely, understanding through Intuition and these auxiliary processes implies a rejection of rote memorization, traditional Authority (*taqlīd*), and Partisan Adherence to it (*taʿaṣṣub*), and a corresponding reliance on independent Verification (*taḥqīq*) and Determination of Validity (*taḥṣīl*). We shall next discuss these methods and the way in which they are related to and help advance the function of Intuition.

A. *Logic*

During the year and a half which Avicenna devoted to his "graduate" studies, he says that he reread all the parts of philosophy (Logic, Mathematics, Physics, Metaphysics) as follows:

> I compiled a set of files for myself, and for each *argument* that I examined, I recorded the *syllogistic premisses* it contained, the way in which they were composed, and the *conclusions* which they might yield; and I would also take into account the *conditions of its premisses* [i.e. their modalities] until I had Ascertained that particular problem. Every time I was at a loss about a problem, concerning which I was unable to find the *middle term* in a syllogism, I would repair on its account to the mosque and worship, *praying* humbly to the All-Creator to disclose to me its obscurity and make its difficulty easy. At night I would return home, set the lamp before me, and occupy myself with reading and writing. Whenever I felt drowsy or weakening, I would turn aside to drink a cup of *wine* to regain my strength, and then I would go back to my reading. Whenever I fell asleep, I would see those very problems in my *dream*; and many problems became clear to me while asleep. So I continued until all the Philosophical Sciences became deeply rooted in me and I understood them as much as is humanly possible [T3, §8; emphasis added].

Avicenna was led to study and analyze Aristotelian philosophy in this fashion primarily by Fārābī's essay on *The Agreement between Plato and Aristotle*, which was to have an immense influence on his philosophical *modus operandi*.[66] Quite apart from its origins, however, the description of his studies above corresponds closely with Avicenna's overall method in logic. In order to explain precisely the procedure followed by Avicenna and identify each stage of his process of learning it is indispensable to

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[66] See the passage from Fārābī's essay translated below, Chapter 5.3, L43, and the discussion of Avicenna's methods of composition in Chapter 8.

appreciate this fact.[67] Avicenna studied the philosophical sciences argument by argument, analyzed its parts, and entered them in index cards—in itself an indication of an extremely systematic approach. Avicenna defines "argument" (*ḥujja*) as follows:

> Something which is set up (*yatarattabu*) first as a given, and through which something else *then* becomes known by inviting assent (*ʿalā sabīl at-taṣdīq*), this thing, whatever its form (*kayfa kāna*), is called "an argument." [Kinds of] arguments are the syllogism, induction, analogy, and other things.[68] (Li

Avicenna thus examined in the sciences he studied *all* arguments, regardless whether these were in the form of a syllogism, induction, or analogy; in other words he examined every passage in which an author professed to progress from the known to the unknown. All such arguments are composed of propositions which are called premisses, since "a premiss is a proposition that has become a part of a syllogism of [another kind of] argument."[69] Avicenna then discriminated among the different kinds of arguments and entered into his index cards *only* the syllogistic propositions, i.e., the premisses of syllogisms. This is perfectly understandable since a syllogism is the only argument—or reasoning process—that leads to certainty: "its condition is not that its propositions should be admitted *so that* it can become a syllogism, but rather its condition is that it be such that, *should its propositions be admitted*, another state-

[67] This has been ignored by all students and translators of Avicenna's Autobiography. As a consequence, their versions of the above passage and its interpretation have suffered to a greater or lesser degree. In what follows I will not refer to the mistranslations and misunderstandings of other scholars; this is a task for the future editor and student of both the Autobiography and Biography. There is a perversity in the way in which the very explicit words of Avicenna have been misinterpreted. As an extreme example I may mention the comments of A. Soubiran, *Avicenne*, Paris 1935, 33, who says, after citing the above passage, the following: "Cette manière d'acquérir la connaissance par la pénétration mystique [!] (kashf) était de la plus grande importance pour Avicenne et il en reparlera dans différents passages du Nadjat." He then adds the following note: "Il ne faut pas la confondre avec la 'connaissance intuitive' que la philosophie thomiste attribue à l'intelligence angélique — 'atteinte de la vérité, d'un simple coup d'œil, sans l'aide du raisonnement'. St. Thomas, Summa Theologica." Soubiran is doubly mistaken. Not only is Intuition precisely the thing Avicenna is referring to here (as already discussed in the previous Section), but also the words of St. Thomas are themselves indebted to the theory of Avicenna. This example, though extreme, is nevertheless quite prevalent in secondary works on Avicenna. See also for example, Carra de Vaux, *Avicenne* (Paris 1900), p. 299: Avicenna and philosophers like him were "hommes de grand cœur qui n'ont pas cru amoindrir l'estime dans laquelle ils tenaient la raison, an avouant qu'elle est bornée, et en admettant au-dessus d'elle une certaine possibilité de connaître intuitivement, qui a donné à leurs âmes le moyen de s'élancer dans les régions mystiques." There is not a single word about the primary function of Intuition, namely, the Discovery of the middle term. This passage is translated and endorsed by Wickens 64.

[68] *Madḫal* 18.6-9. Cf. a fuller account of the three kinds of arguments named in Goichon *Directives* 191-194, Inati 129-131.

[69] *Išārāt* I.372.3-4 = Goichon *Directives* 193, Inati 130.

ment must necessarily follow."[70] Avicenna then noted the way in which the premisses were composed[71] and the conclusions that may be derived from them. What he did, in effect, was to identify and classify the premisses as follows: he recognized three primary classes of propositions according to their composition (*tarkīb*), i.e., structure: predicative (A is/is not B) and conditional, which is subdivided into connective (if ... then) and separative (either ... or). These are all further subdivided, amounting to a total of thirty-eight compositions.[72] So far, then, Avicenna had established whether an argument was a syllogism or not, the composition of each individual premiss of each syllogism, and the conclusions that would be acceptable in each case—in other words, he established the *theoretical* validity of each syllogism. There remained to examine the admissibility of its premisses in order to ascertain the truth, or objective validity *in reality*, of its conclusion, since as we saw above the latter is admissible only if the former were. This Avicenna did by duly taking into account (the term he uses is *urāʿī*) "the conditions of the premisses" (i.e., of the propositions) of the syllogism, an aspect of Avicenna's logic that is little studied despite its crucial importance. In *Pointers and Reminders* he explains as follows the conditions of the propositions:

> In the predication, connection, and separation [that obtains in the predicative, connective, and separative propositions, as classified above according to their composition], you should take into account [*turāʿī*, the same word as that used in the Autobiography]: (a) the state of the relation. For example: if one says, "J is a father," one should take into account [the question], "Whose [father]?" In the same manner [you should also take into account], (b) the time, (c) the place, and (d) the circumstance. For example, if it is said, "Everything that moves changes," one should take into account that [this is so only] as long as it moves. Similarly one should also take into account (e) the state of the part and the whole, and (f) the state of the potentiality and actuality; for if it is said, "Wine intoxicates," one should take into account whether potentially or actually and whether a little portion or a large amount. Failure to consider these qualifications [*maʿānī*] is one of the causes of much erring.[73] (L19)

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[70] *Išārāt* I.373.12-14 = Goichon *Directives* 193-194, Inati 131.

[71] Reading in the passage in the Autobiography *tarkībahā* for the transmitted *tartībahā* (Gohlman 28.1), which would mean "their arrangement." Gohlman translates "their classification," and refers (note 25, p. 122) to the classification of syllogisms given by Goichon *Lexique* No. 611, pp. 340ff. But that which is composed or classified in this passage in the Autobiography is not syllogisms but *premisses* (propositions).

[72] See Goichon *Lexique* No. 586 and the references given there. For *tarkīb* see *ibid.* p. 305. The reference to the *Manṭiq al-mašriqīyīn* on that page is paralleled in *aš-Šifāʾ*, *al-Manṭiq*, *al-ʿIbāra*, M. El-Khodeiri, ed., Cairo 1970, 32-33.

[73] *Išārāt* I.258-259 = Goichon *Directives* 132, Inati 89.

This refinement of Aristotle's modal syllogistic,[74] apparently fully developed in Avicenna's later years,[75] enabled him to test the ontological truth value of propositions, and hence to claim, as he does in the Autobiography, that he "had Ascertained that particular problem." The difficulties that Avicenna encountered in this method of study, a method whose goal was nothing less than to arrive at logical *and* ontological truth—to "prove" reality—by means of syllogistic reasoning, were invariably related to finding the middle term of a syllogism. This is as it should be. The middle term is the only term that does not appear in the conclusion of a syllogism, which consists of the minor (the subject) and the major (the predicate) terms; and any argument which was presented in the texts Avicenna read merely as a conclusion, without the syllogism that it presupposed, could be analyzed[76] and verified only with the help of the middle term, indispensable for the reconstruction of the syllogism. The faculty that enables one to alight all at once on the middle term is, as extensively discussed in the preceding Section, Intuition.

The passage in the Autobiography just analyzed is the most comprehensive description of Avicenna's method in studying philosophy, but it is not alone. The same account is also referred to in the passage from the *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* (T2, §4), and is given in summary form in the Introduction to *The Easterners*:

> We ... measured all that [the Peripatetics bequeathed], word by word, against the sort of science which the Greeks call logic ... and we thus came to know what could bear such a confrontation and what resisted it. For each thing, we sought its manner [in which it was argued for], with the result that whatever is true was [actually shown to be] true, and whatever is false was [actually shown to be] false. ... The fundamental elements of true Philosophy ... can be Discovered by anybody who examines a lot, reflects long, and has almost fully developed Intuition [T8, §§2, 6].

The correspondence with the passage in the Autobiography is apparent. Measuring Peripatetic philosophy against the yardstick of logic is a less

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[74] The six "conditions" enumerated above were not the only ones specified by Avicenna; in the fifth chapter (*nahj*) of *Pointers and Reminders*, in the discussion of contradiction, he mentions at least two more, subject and predicate, as Ṭūsī points out in his commentary (*Išārāt* I.299-304). The whole question of the "conditions of propositions," like most of Avicenna's logic, lacks serious treatment. The only scholar to have taken it into account and recognized its importance is Goichon in her *Directives* 50-68, and in her interpretive essay, "Unité" 292-304 and especially 300-301. Also cf. her notes in *Directives* 132, 153-154. The precise relation of Avicenna's "conditions" to Aristotle's analysis of the modality of contingency, and the extent of Avicenna's refinement of the latter are also unknown; cf. I. M. Bochenski *Ancient Formal Logic*, Amsterdam 1963, 58 and Goichon *Directives* 63 and 53.

[75] Goichon *Directives* 132, note 2; 52-53.

[76] Cf. Avicenna's directions for analyzing a syllogism in *Najāt* 81.

technical way of describing Avicenna's operation with the index cards; the manner of argumentation for each thing which he sought reflects his classification of premisses according to their composition and his consideration of their conditions or modalities; and both long study and developed Intuitive powers are needed to attain the teachings of philosophy that are true.

Avicenna applied this method of logical analysis to his own compositions and commentaries, and taught it to his students who repeatedly asked him about it. The disciple from Rayy gives a succinct account of Avicenna's advice on logical procedure (T13, §§5-7, 10), advice which Avicenna himself also followed. His elaborations on points of detail about the syllogistic process as well as his application of this method in some of his works will be discussed below, in Chapter 8.4.

B. *Prayer*

Avicenna's prayers and frequent visits to the mosque when he was unable to discover the middle term in a syllogism are mentioned in the Autobiography not as an expression of his general piety (as frequently stated),[77] but rather as an indication of the close connection he believed to exist between prayer and the Intuition of middle terms. In his short essay *On the Nature of Prayer*,[78] Avicenna distinguishes between an outward prayer, proper to the body, and an inward prayer, proper to the rational soul. The function of the rational soul, he repeats here as elsewhere, is "to wait for the unveiling (*kašf*) of truths and to reflect with complete Intuition and pure mind upon the perception of subtle ideas." But the rational soul is able actually to perform this function only when it dominates the lower two souls (the animal and vegetative), relieves the person from terrestrial preoccupations, and abstracts him from attachments to this world. The inward prayer is incumbent upon such a person because then he "is disposed, through the purity of his soul, to receive the effluence (*fayḍ*) of his Lord." At this point, "the intellectual matters and the holy effluence (*fayḍ*) descend from the heavenly void into the confines of the rational soul as a result of this prayer." In the Section on Intuition we saw precisely what these "intellectual matters" comprised: "Intuition is a divine effluence (*fayḍ*) and an intellectual con-

[77] By L. Gardet, for example, among many others: "son autobiographie semble témoigner de certaines habitudes de piété personnelle" (*La pensée religieuse d'Avicenne*, Paris 1951, 29). His analysis of prayer on pp. 135-138 fails to see the role of Intuition in the process and concludes that prayer leads to "connaissance mystique" (138).

[78] Mehren *Traités* III.28-43 (text), 16-24 (translation), English translation in Arberry *Theology* 50-63. The three passages quoted below are from pp. 32.13-14, 41.4-8, 39.8-9 (Mehren) = 53, 61, 60 (Arberry).

tact... . The intellectual world presents itself to the soul according to the order of the terms of propositions and according to the essential, not temporal order of the intelligibles" (L12, §§2-3). The connection between prayer and middle terms is thus complete: when the rational soul dominates passions and lusts it becomes pure; when it becomes pure, it is ready, or predisposed (i.e. has Intuition) to receive the divine effluence; the divine effluence is actually invoked by means of the inward prayer; and when the philosopher performs the inward prayer he receives the effluence which comprises the intelligibles "in an order which includes the middle terms" (L7, §3).

This is then the process whereby inward prayer is effective, and it is this process to which Avicenna wishes to point by mentioning in the Autobiography his devotion in connection with the middle terms. More generally, however, prayer, and other acts of worship are significant for their epistemological overtones. As he says in the prayer essay, "All the other ordinances of religion are explicable along the lines which have been set forth in the present treatise."[79] If Intuition is the central faculty in the epistemological process, prayer and other acts of worship are ancillary to it and preparatory because they purify the rational soul and render it receptive to the divine effluence, "the intellectual matter," i.e., the world of the intelligibles known to the heavenly intellects (of the spheres), and structured in syllogistic order, complete with middle terms.

At the time when Avicenna was studying he may not have held this particular interpretation of the efficacity of prayer, since the specific reference to prayer in connection with middle terms in the Autobiography is meaningful only in the context of Avicenna's theory of Intuition as it developed later (and hence the Autobiography is not "historical" in this sense). There is no doubt that he held elevated forms of prayer in high esteem very young; already in the introduction of his first work, the *Compendium on the Soul*, he speaks with respect of the Greek tradition that Asclepius used to cure people merely by praying. The very reference to Asclepius indicates that he was familiar with a wide range of Greek works, and presumably he had access to a number of Neoplatonic works in which the philosopher's prayer was discussed.[80] His general orientation with regard to the efficacity of philosophical prayer

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[79] P. 42.7-8 (Mehren) = 63 (Arberry); below, L82.

[80] R. Walzer discussed briefly some of the possible Greek antecedents of Avicenna's essay in "Platonism in Islamic Philosophy," in *Entretiens Hardt* III (Geneva 1955), pp. 220-224, reprinted, with modifications, in *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* I (*Antike und Orient im Mittelalter*), Berlin 1962, 192-195, and in *Wege der Forschung* 197 (in German translation), Darmstadt 1969, 457-461. Cf. also his references in his *Greek into Arabic*, Cambridge, Mass. 1962, 229, note 2.

thus would seem to have been influenced by the Greek tradition, but the particular elaboration of the subject presented in his brief essay, and its association with Intuition and middle terms, was his own contribution and constitutes a significant achievement in the way in which it integrated prayer—and the ordinances of revealed religion in general—into the very operation of the process of logical analysis and epistemology.

C. *Dreams*

The same epistemological operation induced through philosophical prayer, viz., the reception by the rational soul of the intelligibles from the active intellect "according to the order of the terms of propositions" (L12, §3), also lies behind Avicenna's statement that "many problems became clear to me while asleep" (T3, §8).[81] According to Avicenna, as a matter of fact, human souls can acquire "something of the Unknown" (i.e., the world of the intelligibles, the "intellectual matter" mentioned above) when a person is asleep.[82] The reason for this is that the imaginative faculty, whose function dreaming is, is less likely to be distracted by the calls of the other faculties during sleep, and thus more open to receive the divine effluence. Few of the representations depicted by the imaginative faculty during sleep, however, are those of the "effluence (*fayḍ*) from the divine realm upon the soul;"[83] mostly they have to do with a person's concerns while awake. Accordingly, of the four kinds of dreams which Avicenna identifies, only one is true, that which has its origin in a divine agency that transmits to the soul of the sleeper the "Unknown."[84] In such a state, the sleeper "perceives

[81] The popular notion of veridical dreams was discussed—and rejected—on philosophical terms by Aristotle in his *De Divinatione per Somnum*. This brief essay formed a part of the collection known as *Parva Naturalia*, whose transmission in later Greek and especially Arabic Aristotelianism is extremely complicated. See the discussion and a few representative texts in Gätje *Psychologie* 81-92, 130-139, and the references in Chapter 6.5 note 92. For a comprehensive presentation of Islamic philosophical dream interpretation, with references to the Greek sources, see Gätje, "Philosophische Traumlehren im Islam," *ZDMG* 109 (1959) 258-285. For a "folklore" of dreams of philosophers and by philosophers in Islamic philosophical circles immediately preceding Avicenna see the reports in the *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* about Abū-Sulaymān as-Sijistānī (2852ff.), translated and discussed by Kraemer 124-25.

[82] *Išārāt* IV.119.8-9 = Goichon *Directives* 506. Avicenna's succinct formulation in this passage is stated more explicitly in *The Cure*, *Nafs* 173.9ff.

[83] *Nafs* 179.6.

[84] See Avicenna's essay *On Dreams*, M. ʿA. Khan, "A Unique Treatise on the Interpretation of Dreams," *Avicenna Commemoration Volume*, Iran Society, Calcutta 1956, 298 (text) = M. ʿA. Khan, "Kitabu Taʾbir-ir-Ruya of Abu ʿAli b. Sina," *Indo-Iranica* 9 (1956) 51 (translation). For a concise presentation of the material see *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* II.82-84 (Achena-Massé).

unknown matters (*muġayyabāt*), either as they are in themselves or through their images, by Ascertaining them."[85] The use of the word Ascertainment (*taḥaqquq*) in this sentence is significant because it implies, as we shall next discuss (Section E.i), that the perception is not only of the unknown things themselves, but also of their syllogistic connections that justify the logical progression from one to the other.[86] The process is thus identical with that of Intuition, as Avicenna explains:

> "There is not a single person who has not had his share of [veridical] dreams [while asleep] and of [Intuitive] perceptions while awake, for the cause of the discrete ideas (*ḫawāṭir*) that occur all at once to the soul is nothing else but certain contacts [with the active intellect], and one is conscious neither of these contacts nor of that with which contacts have been made, either before or after them."[87] (L

D. *Wine Drinking*

Few incidents in Avicenna's life have enjoyed the notoriety of his report about drinking wine while working: it has attracted the religious condemnation of orthodox Muslims and excited the romantic imagination of admiring Westerners. Avicenna, however, inserted it in his Autobiography neither to provoke the former nor to titillate the latter. He simply wished to make the pharmacological point, as a physician, that wine is a drug, and that when taken in moderation it enhances the physical capacity to think. Like so many other aspects of Avicenna's life and thought, his drinking wine has to be seen in its scientific, cultural, and social context.

In Greek medicine and materia medica, the varieties of wine and their effects were discussed at great length. When taken in moderation, wine was considered to act beneficially on both the body and the soul. Generally speaking, it helped bring about a balance in the mixture of the bodily humors, and generated a mood of well-being and joy. Rufus of Ephesus specifically mentions that it made people work fast and with ease without feeling tired or exhausted.[88] In the *Canon of Medicine* Avicenna

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[85] *Nafs* 173.14.

[86] Cf. the use of the related term, *taḥqīq*, Verification, for the same purpose in the Prologue of *Pointers and Reminders*, T10, §1, and note 1. The progression referred to here is that described in the previous Section, L7, §3, and L12, §3.

[87] *Nafs* 174.1-4.

[88] Despite its age, Francis Adams's *The Seven Books of Paulus Aegineta*, 3 vols., London (Sydenham Society) 1844-47, still provides the most comprehensive overview of the entire Graeco-Arabic medical tradition. For wine see I.172-178, III.272-273. The great first century physician Rufus of Ephesus (Ullmann *Medizin* 71) wrote an independent treatise on wine which was translated into Arabic by Qusṭā ibn-Lūqā and apparently enjoyed great popularity. The surviving fragments were collected by M. Ullmann

repeats most of the transmitted knowledge about the effects of wine and presents some additional material that is of relevance to this discussion. He first describes, in terms of humoral pathology, the beneficial effects on the body:

> Wine is also very efficient in causing the products of digestion to become disseminated through the body. It cuts phlegm and dissolves it. It extracts yellow bile into the urine and other [bodily wastes]. It renders black bile more slippery and able to leave [the system] easily. It subdues the harmful influence of this black bile by contrariety, and it breaks up all entanglements without the necessity of excessive and abnormal heating.[89] (L21)

There are two things to be noticed about this passage. First, by helping evacuate and counteract noxious humors, wine brings about a balance to, or "tempers", the humoral system. As we saw above, a balanced temperament is a precondition for the ability to have veridical dreams, and more generally, as Avicenna states in his last essay, "the closer ... a temperament is to a balanced state, the more is a person predisposed to receive this [divine] effluence" (T14, §10). Second, it subdues and evacuates black bile. This is extremely desirable in a thinker because prolonged thought produces in the body an excess of black bile, which not only destroys the humoral balance but could also lead to "black bile diseases," i.e., mental disorders and, in extreme cases, death.[90] Black bile diseases are, in contemporary terms, the "occupational hazard" of philosophers, to which, for example, Avicenna's contemporary and Baġdādī rival, Abū-l-Faraj ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib, succumbed (T13, §3). Wine restrains the development of such tendencies in the body.

Apart from assisting indirectly the process of thought and the soul's receptivity to the divine effluence by maintaining a balanced temperament, however, wine also directly fosters mental activity. Avicenna

"Neues zu den diätetischen Schriften des Rufus von Ephesos," *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 9 (1974) 23-40; see in particular fragment 1, pp. 33-35. The medical view of the effects of moderate wine drinking was also reflected in popular Greek literature, in the gnomologia, and thus available in Arabic from that direction as well. See, for example, a saying attributed to Orpheus (?) in Ḥunayn's *Nawādir al-falāsifa*, MS Munich 651, f. 39r: "A little wine exercises the imagination" (*wahm*, which in philosophical terminology indicates the estimative faculty of the soul). This has further implications, yet to be investigated, for the connection of the effects of wine with the *ēthos* theory of music. Cf. the references in A. Loewenthal, *Honein Ibn Ishāk. Sinnsprüche der Philosophen*, Berlin 1896, 85, note 2, and the translation of the saying by Orpheus on p. 86.

[89] *Al-Qānūn fī ṭ-ṭibb*, Būlāq 1294, I.169.24-26 (= Gruner 410, §802).

[90] The most comprehensive extant treatise on black bile diseases (*melancholia*) is that by Isḥāq ibn-ʿImrān, which was written early in the tenth century and drew extensively from a similar work by Rufus. It is summarized by Ullmann *Medicine* 72-77. See also the case history of a patient suffering from black bile disease, caused by "constant brooding over the intricacies of geometry," translated from another work by Rufus, in Ullmann *Medicine* 36-37. Avicenna himself presumably treated the Būyid Majd-ad-Dawla for this disease (Biography 48-50).

elaborates on this point in the following passage in the *Canon of Medicine* which appears to be his own contribution to the subject because it reflects his personal concerns:

> Wine does not inebriate quickly a person of powerful brain, for the brain is then not susceptible to ascending harmful vapors, nor does heat from the wine reach it to any degree beyond what is appropriate.[a] *His mind therefore becomes clear to a degree unequalled at other times.*[b] The effect is different on persons who are not of this calibre.[91] (L2

The reference to Avicenna as the "person of powerful brain" is evident; in psychological terms it is identical with the "powerful souls" referred to in his treatises on the soul (e.g., T2).

From a strictly medical, or biological point of view, Avicenna thus considered wine to be responsible for increasing the brain's capacity for Intuition by causing a balanced temperament in general, expelling excessive black bile from the body, and clearing the mind. As in the case of the other epistemologically significant subjects, prayer and dreams, he also wrote an independent essay *On Dietetics and the Beneficial and Harmful Aspects of Wine.*[92]

From a cultural and social point of view, Avicenna could have had very few inhibitions about openly proclaiming his use of wine, as his continuing practice throughout his life indicates (Biography 78.4-5).[93] Whatever his feelings about the Šuᶜūbīya, he was certainly familiar with pre-Islamic—or allegedly pre-Islamic—Pahlavi wisdom material in which wine drinking in moderation is expressly stated to revive the spirit and lend intellectual acuity. Representative is the following passage from the Pahlavi *Answers of the Spirit of Wisdom*:

> Moderate drinking of wine ... digests the food, kindles the vital fire, *increases the understanding and intellect*, semen and blood, removes vexation, and ... (L2

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[a] Reading *al-mulāʾima*, as in the Roman edition (1593), I.85.21.

[b] *Awqātan uḫrā* is the reading of the Roman edition (I.85.22); the Būlāq edition has "by other minds," *aḏhān uḫrā*.

[91] *Qānūn* I.169.26-28 (= Gruner 410, §803). Emphasis added.

[92] *Siyāsat al-badan wa-faḍāʾil aš-šarāb wa-manāfiᶜuhu wa-maḍārruhu*, A133, M83. I have been unable to examine a manuscript of this work. From the incipit and explicit provided by Mahdavī it is clearly medical in nature; the extent to which it offers additional details about the mechanism by which wine improves mental activity remains to be examined. It would also be desirable to investigate if it contains or draws upon any material from the treatise by Rufus (note 88).

[93] There is little need to repeat the well-known fact of the exceedingly wide-spread use of wine in the ruling circles of the Islamic East precisely at the time of Avicenna, and of the ubiquitous wine-drinking motif in Persian poetry. See, most succinctly, E. Yarshater, "The Theme of Wine-Drinking and the Concept of the Beloved in Early Persian Poetry," *SI* 13 (1960) 43-53.

> causes recollection of things forgotten. ... Work, which it is necessary to do and expedite, becomes more progressive.[94]

It is unimportant whether this material is originally Persian or itself ultimately derived from the same Greek medical tradition;[95] contemporaries and predecessors of Avicenna certainly thought it to be original, and this indicates the cultural background in which wine drinking has to be assessed. As a matter of fact, not only did the Pahlavi texts present this view of wine drinking as Persian, but Rufus himself mentions the same in his treatise on wine. He says that the Persians used to partake of wine when debating issues in which decisions had to be made or measures taken.[96] It is thus no coincidence that many inhabitants of the Persian provinces of the ᶜAbbāsid Empire followed the Ḥanafī rite, which allowed the consumption of *nabīḏ*. This is dramatically confirmed by the report in the *Depository of Wisdom Literature* about Abū-Sulaymān as-Sijistānī himself:

> Although drinking wine is a controversial subject, he would partake of it on the grounds that he belonged to the Ḥanafī rite.[97] (L24)

The legal question of the permissibility of this practice was discussed not only by jurists but also by philosophers; Tawḥīdī reports how ᶜĀmirī used to hold forth on the subject in philosophical terms.[98] By drinking wine Avicenna was thus engaging in a practice which was perfectly ordinary in his cultural, religious, and scientific milieu and which normally would not have merited special mention. The reason he does mention it is his desire to point to an aspect of it generally left unappreciated, its specific pharmacological use in the epistemological process.

E. *Independent Verification:* taḥqīq *and Related Concepts*

The various methods of acquiring knowledge described above are all complementary aspects of the same process, whose core is the rational

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[94] E. M. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, Part III [The Sacred Books of the East 24], Oxford 1885, pp. 47-48; emphasis added. For the work see West's introduction and, more recently, J. C. Tavadia, *Die Mittelpersische Sprache und Literatur der Zarathustrier*, Leipzig 1956, pp. 98-101. On this subject in general see B. M. Gai, "Wine in the Orient and Its Prohibition," *Indo-Iranica* 9.iii (1956) 31-33.

[95] There is a close correspondence between the contents of this passage and the treatise of Rufus; particularly significant is the mention of the "vital fire," the Greek *emphyton thermon* (*al-ḥarāra al-ġarīzīya*). See Ullmann "Diätetische Schriften" 33, and especially note 47.

[96] Ullmann "Diätetische Schriften" 35, par. 22. Rufus is, of course, deriving his information from Herodotus (I.133), but Herodotus was not known in Arabic whereas Rufus was.

[97] *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* 2850-51. Cf. Kraemer 123-24.

[98] See the references in Rowson *Afterlife* 26 and note 65.

soul's contact with the active intellect, Intuition. When the soul is powerful enough and pure enough, Intuition is automatic; otherwise there is need for reflection, which is guided by the rules of logic. Prayer enables the philosopher to purify his soul and abstract himself from worldly preoccupations and thus render his intellect more susceptible to the operation of Intuition. When the body is asleep, worldly distractions are naturally diminished and, given the purity and strength of the soul and the balanced temperament of the constitution, the process of Intuition occurs in the form of veridical dreams. Wine, finally, may be taken to assist materially this process by balancing the temperament and strengthening the intellectual power.

The Autobiography is the record of Avicenna's acquisition of knowledge in this fashion. It also contains *in nuce* the implications which such an epistemology had for Avicenna's conception of the relation of his philosophy (knowledge) to that of others. Three issues which he touches upon have a wider significance for his entire philosophical work.

i) *taḥqīq/taḥaqquq*; *taḥṣīl*; *istinbāṭ*. Acquiring knowledge in the fashion described above means establishing certain facts as absolutely true. This is because they have been verified not through the statements of an authority—whether a philosophical school or individual—but through detailed logical analysis and demonstration that includes the middle terms and hence reflects the syllogistic structure of the intelligible world. This process Avicenna called "Verification" (*taḥqīq*), "Ascertainment" (*taḥaqquq*), or "Validation" (i.e., Determination of Validity, *taḥṣīl*), and it centers around the Discovery of the middle term, what Avicenna consistently calls *istinbāṭ*, perhaps reflecting the Greek *heuresis*, as in the texts cited above in Section 2. The general understanding of *taḥqīq* along these lines was common in the theological discourse of Avicenna's times, in which *ḥaqqaqa* came to mean "to know validly," i.e., after an act of rational verification.[99] Avicenna appropriated this meaning and lent it precision by using it to refer to Verification after the process described above.

Avicenna also lent amplitude to the term *taḥṣīl* by understanding it to include the correction not only of logical inconsistencies in an argument but also of historical anachronisms. In other words, transmitted philosophical texts contain imperfections that are due not only to faults in the logical analysis but also to the historical context in which they were

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[99] See the references in R. M. Frank, "Moral Obligation in Classical Muslim Theology," *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 11 (1983) 217, note 14: "What the author [al-Anṣārī] means here by 'to know validly' (*taḥqīqan*) is that the believer appropriates his belief and acquiesces to God's commands in an act of rationally-grounded conviction, not merely out of social conformity or the like."

written. Determining their Validity thus includes also eliminating their time-bound fallacies (see T13, §7 and L57, §4). A scholar who acquires philosophical knowledge in this fashion, after Verifying it and Determining its Validity, is a *muḥaṣṣil*, a term which Avicenna uses to describe the most accomplished philosophers in the Aristotelian tradition, and in particular Alexander of Aphrodisias.[100]

In the Autobiography, Avicenna draws attention to his independent Verification of the truth, to his *taḥqīq*, in the presentation both of the details of his studies and of their results. In the former case, there is a sharp distinction in his account of his study of the philosophical sciences between the description of what he studied with Nātilī and what he learned by himself: while he is most meticulous in providing not only the *titles* of the books he read with his teacher but also the *chapters* of these books (see the tabulation in Section 1, above), he is general to the extreme when he talks about the subjects he studied by himself: "Then I began to read the books [of the Organon] *by myself* and consult the commentaries until I had mastered logic" (T3, §5); "I occupied myself *on my own* with Determining the Validity of books, both original texts and commentaries, on Physics and Metaphysics" (T3, §6, emphasis added). Such variation in bibliographic detail is certainly not accidental. It can only bespeak a concern on Avicenna's part to emphasize precisely *how little* of the philosophical sciences he learned on authority from a teacher and how much he acquired by independent Verification because of his personal predisposition.

As a result of this process of learning Avicenna is able to claim, twice in the Autobiography, that he had added nothing new to the knowledge of the philosophical sciences which he had acquired during his early studies (T3, §§8 end, 11). This is a natural implication of learning something through its Verification. The knowledge so acquired is perfect and complete because the Fundamental Principles (*uṣūl*) of a subject have been learned along with their causes, i.e., the middle terms, which provide intellectual certainty (cf. L7, §3 end). Once such a state of knowledge about certain things has been reached, there is nothing that can be added to it. *It is the highest form in which Knowledge can be acquired.* Avicenna expresses this fact clearly in his letter to a disciple in Rayy, written toward the end of his life (T11, §8, emphasis added):

> With regard to matters upon which I have spent great effort, I have come to know things which *I have Verified and cannot be improved*, except that they

[100] See *Najāt* 35.5-6: "Among the later scholars who Determined the Validity [of philosophical knowledge], Alexander is the one who accomplished this the most" (*wa-minhum al-Iskandaru wa-ʿiddatun mina l-muḥaṣṣilīna mina l-mutaʾaḫḫirīna mimman huwa ašadduhum taḥṣīlan*). Cf. Shehaby 7, and see note 1 to W1, above, for the meaning of *taḥṣīl*.

> are few. What I neither know nor have a way of knowing, on the other hand, is much indeed, but I sometimes have no hopes that about what I do not know I will ever come into possession of *new knowledge which I have not already achieved* by the assiduous research I have been engaged in, despite the fact that my dedication to the search for truth is unmatched. ... [God] has granted me an *incessant certainty about Fundamental Principles* [*uṣūl*] which the seeker of salvation must without fail know, and a wide-ranging competence in subsequent areas.

In the Autobiography Avicenna thus means that he added nothing new to whatever Fundamental Principles of philosophy he learned through Intuition and study, i.e., to his knowledge of the structure of reality as contained in the active intellect and comprising Knowledge, not that he did not acquire, first, any additional knowledge about derivative, or non-essential, sciences, and second, a more profound and elaborate knowledge of the fundamental sciences.

This is clear, in the first place, from what he considers non-essential sciences in the Autobiography: the Islamic sciences (*tafsīr*, *ḥadīṯ*, *fiqh*), about which, as we saw in Section 1, he does not provide any information, and medicine, one of the "applied" philosophical sciences (according to Abū-Sahl's representative classification), which he says "is not one of the difficult sciences" (T3, §7). These sciences are "easy" or not part of philosophical Knowledge because they do not offer or contain any philosophical Fundamental Principles which need to be Verified through demonstration;[101] a good memory, Avicenna seems to imply, is all that is required to learn them. Similarly, it is also clear from what we know about his later career that Avicenna did not mean to include these non-essential sciences among those about which he said he never learned anything new. Jūzjānī reports in the Biography that Avicenna did, in fact, study Arabic language and lexicography intensely for a period of three years later in his life, and that these studies culminated in his writing an Arabic dictionary entitled *The Arabic Language*;[102] that he improved his knowledge of medicine with experiments (Biography 72-74); and that he studied astronomy further and invented new instruments.[103] Avicenna himself says that he wrote the Music part of *The Cure*

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[101] In his own classification of the sciences, Avicenna explicitly calls these sciences "derivative," or "corollary" (*furūᶜ*). See his *Aqsām* in *Tisᶜ Rasāʾil* 71.

[102] Biography 68-72. The word *luġa* which occurs numerous times in this report clearly refers to lexicography (as Ullmann remarks in his review, 149), and not to "philology" (Arberry *Theology*, Gohlman), or "Grammatik" (Kraus "Biographie"). The extant fragments of this work (M104, ed. by E. Yarshater, *Panj Resāle*, Tehran 1332 Š/1373, pp. 1-31) leave no doubt. It is partly a dictionary of synonyms and of terms relating to Islamic religion and religious sects. These fragments ought to be compared with Abū-Ḥātim ar-Rāzī's *K. az-Zīna*.

[103] Biography 80. See *GAS* VI.276ff., and the references to Wiedemann's works.

"in a manner which was disclosed to [him] after long research and detailed theoretical analysis" (T9, §5C).

Second, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of the principles contained in the fundamental sciences by continuous study; this does not mean, however, that anything new has been added to the principles that have been Verified from the very beginning. Avicenna expresses this in the Autobiography when he says that at that time his understanding was more mature (T3, §11)). How a more mature grasp of these principles comes about is described in the Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8, §§5, 6):

> With regard to what was disclosed to us from the moment when we first applied ourselves to this field, we would expressly reconsider our position and examine anew whatever we thought repeatedly demanded closer scrutiny because an opinion was confusing to us and doubt crept in our beliefs, and we said "perhaps" and "maybe." But you, our friends, know what our position was at the beginning, at the end, and during the time between our first statement [on these matters] and the second. If we find this [to be] our case, then we should all the more trust in most of what we determined, stated, and supplied by way of emendation, especially with regard to matters which are the greatest purposes and the ultimate goals which we have considered and reconsidered hundreds of times.

The "greatest purposes and ultimate goals" are the basic principles of the fundamental sciences, and especially what Avicenna was to call "the fruit" of Physics and Metaphysics, namely, as we shall discuss below, the theory of the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul. An example of this process of maturation in Avicenna's thoughts about a "greatest purpose" was provided in Section 2 in the discussion of his theory of Intuition, which he truly reconsidered numerous times. As serious investigation of the development of Avicenna's thought continues, we will gain a clearer picture of the meaning of his words above.

ii) *taqlīd*; *taᶜaṣṣub*. Closely related to and directly implied by the concept of *taḥqīq* are these two terms. If a person acquires knowledge through independent Verification, then obviously he is not Following Authority uncritically, i.e., without investigating reasons (*taqlīd*), and even less is he Adhering to this authority in a Partisan spirit and obstinately, i.e., despite manifest indications to the contrary (*taᶜaṣṣub*).[104] Avicenna adopts

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[104] These two concepts are widely used in Islamic culture. For *taᶜaṣṣub* see, for example, J. Schacht's article "Taḳlīd" in *EI*1, and A. Bausani, "Some Considerations on Three Problems of the Anti-Aristotelian Controversy between al-Bīrūnī and Ibn Sīnā," *Akten des VII. Kongresses für Arabistik und Islamwissenschaft*, Göttingen 1976, 78, note 8. A good example of the meaning of the latter concept as "Partisan Adherence to a school of thought or authority despite manifest indications to the contrary" is the following. The author of the *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* (95-96) says that Ḥunayn ibn-Isḥāq "went too far in the Partisan Adherence he exhibited toward Galen's book on logic" (*fa-innahu aẓhara li-hāḏā l-kitāb taᶜaṣṣuban ᶜaẓīman tajāwaza fīhi l-ḥadd*) because all other logicians disparaged it. See also Goichon "Philosophie" 33 and note 38.

these two concepts, widespread in Islamic culture, and adds to the meaning of *taqlīd* a nuance that reflects his own interests. Not only does a philosopher that Verifies knowledge independently does not accept it on Authority from *a person*, but he does not accept it wholesale even from the highest authority, *the active intellect*. Instead, he receives it from the active intellect in an order which includes the middle terms of the syllogisms, i.e., the explanatory causes. This is what Avicenna means by non-Authoritative imprinting in *The Salvation*:

> ... The forms of all things contained in the active intellect are imprinted on his soul either at once or nearly so. This imprinting is not an uncritical reception [of the forms] merely on Authority [*irtisāman lā taqlīdīyan*], but rather occurs in an order which includes the middle terms: for beliefs accepted on Authority concerning those things which are known only through their causes possess no intellectual certainty [L7, §3].

This is the reason why in the opening invocation of *Pointers and Reminders* he asks God "for inspiration with the truth *through its Verification*" (T10, §1). The need for *personal* Verification and rational understanding beyond all Authority is paramount.

The Autobiography again provides numerous illustrations of Avicenna's aversion to *taqlīd* and *taʿaṣṣub*, and none more poignant (and ironically, more misunderstood) than his account of the Ismāʿīlī connections of his family. With regard to this notorious incident, it must be borne in mind that at the time Avicenna was writing the Autobiography, he was under no detectable obligation to mention the Ismāʿīlī doctrines taught in his house, or at least to mention them in the detailed way in which he did, and *then* to reject them. If he was an Ismāʿīlī, or had such inclinations, and wished to publicize the fact, he would not have expressly rejected their doctrines. If he was an Ismāʿīlī and wished to write an apology defending himself against charges of heterodoxy—charges that, as far as we know, were never made in his lifetime—he could have omitted the incident altogether; or, more to the point, he would not have drawn a cozy picture of his father *and* brother (notice the implicating of his brother, who even after the death of the father was moving in the same circles as Avicenna, since the latter wrote at least one work, *The Guidance* [*al-Hidāya*] for him) having leisurely talks, apparently without any secrecy, about the Ismāʿīlī doctrine of the soul and the intellect.[105] Avicenna was thus not an Ismāʿīlī, and he recounted these meetings to indicate that he disapproved at an early age of the way in which *they* (i.e., the Ismāʿīlīs; the emphasis is in the Arabic) presented the

[105] A very appropriate description of the atmosphere at these family meetings is that given by F. Rosenthal, "Die arabische Autobiographie," *Studia Arabica I* [Analecta Orientalia 14], Rome 1937, p. 21: "ein anregendes Vaterhaus," "a stimulating home."

theory of the soul and the intellect. The obvious implication is that the way in which he came to study it (by himself) and write about it is better. Another implication, quite significant in view of the importance attached in Arabic autobiographies and biographies to the intellectual associations of a scholar, is that Avicenna, in his very first encounter with an established speculative tradition and its instruction by *Authorized teachers* (the Egyptian proselytizer), exhibited a critical stand and independence of mind, i.e., he rejected *taqlīd* and *taʿaṣṣub*.

This independence is further emphasized, as we saw above, in the particular way in which he describes his philosophical studies: his unnecessarily disparaging remarks about the only teacher of philosophy he mentions, Nātilī, his pains—uncommon in the genre of Arabic autobiography—to record precisely how little he studied with him and how much by himself, his singular failure to mention the names, if not of any teacher, then at least of the authors of the books he studied (with the only exception of Fārābī), and most important, his meticulous delineation of his methods of study on his way to truth, with references not only to Intuition and logic, but also to dreams, prayer, and wine. All this betrays a concern and bespeaks a purpose to disclaim discipleship in any philosophical school and to direct attention to his autonomous Verification by means of Intuition of matters that ought to be held true by all mankind. If he says in the Introduction to *The Easterners* that the Aristotelian tradition is most worthy of Adherence in a Partisan spirit (T8, §3), this is because, as we saw above, the teachings of this tradition most closely reflect the intelligible structure of the universe, which Avicenna Verified independently.

iii) *Inṣāf*. The preceding considerations lead directly into the final implication which Avicenna's theory of Intuition had for his general philosophical orientation. If a person neither follows Authority uncritically nor Adheres to a set of doctrines in a Partisan spirit, but has instead acquired absolute Knowledge through independent Verification, then he is in a position to ascertain the degree of attainment of other philosophers precisely because he has an objective and absolute criterion wherewith to judge. This explains his statement upon completion of his "graduate" studies in the library of the Sāmānid ruler's physicians: "I read those books [of the ancients], mastered their teachings, and realized how far each man had advanced in his science" (T3, §10). This is, again, no mere intellectual arrogance,[106] but fully consistent with the perspective of the Autobiography. Realizing the degree of others' attainments implies judging, and judgment can only be properly passed by somebody

[106] A view most explicitly expressed by Wickens 51.

impartial, like Avicenna, whose independent Verification of truth gives him the licence to judge. This attitude of Avicenna is also reflected in a report by Jūzjānī in the Biography (68.2-6):

> One of the remarkable things about the Master was that for the twenty-five years that I was his companion and servant, I never saw him, when he came across a new book, examine it from beginning to end; instead he would go directly to its difficult passages and complicated problems, look at what its author said about them, seek to ascertain the level which he had reached in the Philosophical Sciences and his degree of understanding. (L25

The tendency to pass impartial judgment (*inṣāf*) on the basis of absolute Knowledge was exhibited by Avicenna also in writing. It formed the subject of his *Fair Judgment* (W10), and possibly also of the earlier *The Available and the Valid* (W3), works which aimed to measure the history of philosophical ideas against the yardstick of "the forms of all things contained in the active intellect" (L7, §3) as Intuited by Avicenna.

4. *The Purpose and Date of the Autobiography*

An autobiography is always a tendentious document, to be read only after the proper corrective measures against the slant of the author's perspective have been taken. By this I simply wish to draw attention to the fact, frequently overlooked (in historical, if not always in literary, criticism), that autobiographies by their very nature reflect the author's perspective on himself and on his work *at a given moment in his career* and suggest the light in which the author wishes his life and work to be seen by his immediate posterity. I say immediate posterity because an author of an autobiography can only address and project the intended perspective to his contemporary and younger generations, whose thought patterns he knows and shares, and according to whose sensibilities he molds, consciously or unconsciously, his account. He has no control over the way in which later generations, in time as well as in place, will receive his account because with them he will have lost the common ground (cultural, semantic, semeiotic) that makes spontaneous communication at a certain expository level both viable and intelligible. The reception of his work will be determined by critical sensibilities obtaining at the later time, not by his own, which shaped it in the first place. This is the major reason for the long series of misunderstandings in the history of literary interpretation in general, and of the interpretation of Avicenna's Autobiography in particular.

To these general observations regarding the analysis of an autobiography should be added the consideration of the particular tradition in which each was written. Arabic autobiography was predominantly of a

factual nature, frequently rivaling the aridity and laconism of a *curriculum vitae*.[107] The main information imparted consisted of details about origins, early studies, names of teachers, travels, encounters with politicians and scholars, bibliography. This would tend to imply that in medieval Islamic culture, knowledge of a person's origins, teachers, and associates was considered sufficient to define completely that person. Autobiographies provided precisely that information, but (and this is endemic to the genre) with total discretion on the author's part with regard to its selection and quantity.

Avicenna's account follows closely the traditional pattern of Arabic autobiography in providing succinct information about his origins, studies, and travels, and has by and large been received as such by scholarship, medieval and modern alike. The assessment first made by Ibn-Abī-Uṣaybiʿa (13th century) has been adopted, whether tacitly or explicitly, by both Muslim and Western scholars:

> Even though Avicenna is too famous to be mentioned [in a book on the biographies of physicians] and his virtues too manifest to be written down, he has nevertheless mentioned his personal circumstances and described his own life in a way that relieves others of describing it again. (II.1) (L26)

Such an assessment has caused the Autobiography to be received as if it were a mere information sheet and as if this, its ostensible, purpose coincided with and completely exhausted its real purpose.[108] Information it certainly does provide, but how much information it provides, in which way and from what perspective, and which period of Avicenna's life this perspective reflects, are all essential questions that have never been asked.

The independently unverifiable nature of most of the facts offered in the Autobiography presents a difficulty that may not be resolved, although it can be procedurally obviated by assuming Avicenna not to have falsified or misrepresented facts but rather to have omitted some of them and cast the rest in a light consonant with his purpose.[109] In the preceding sections of this chapter we have identified several such omis-

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[107] Rosenthal "Autobiographie" 11, 19.

[108] In addition to reading the Autobiography merely as a *curriculum vitae*, each scholar added interpretations and inferences peculiar to his taste and times and hence irrelevant but also misleading. For example, Bayhaqī (d. 565/1169-70) infers from the Ismāʿīlī connection of Avicenna's father that he, Avicenna, "would occasionally study the *Rasāʾil Iḫwān aṣ-Ṣafāʾ*" (*Tatimma* 40.1-2/53.1), something which is decidedly *not* what Avicenna says (see Gutas "Avicenna's *Maḏhab*"); A. J. Arberry deduces from Avicenna's teaching himself a "complete lack of qualified teachers" in Buḫārā at his time [!] (in Wickens 17), something which is again quite far from the truth.

[109] This assumption underlies the two critical studies of the Autobiography, Sellheim's review of Ergin, and Lüling's "Ein anderer Avicenna."

sions and aspects of his purpose. Avicenna seems to have omitted or not to have adequately mentioned all the subjects he studied because he wished to concentrate only on the philosophical sciences which provide fundamental intellectual principles; he also apparently did not mention the names of at least his teachers in medicine in order better to project the image of an autodidact (T3, §7 and note 18). His purpose in so doing was to indicate that he did not belong *by training* to any school of thought and that he was accordingly not beholden by a sense of loyalty or conditioning to defending it and perpetuating its traditions. What he learned, the implication is, was absolute Knowledge which, given the formal nature of the presentation of the course of his studies, should be studied in the order in which the philosophical sciences are classified in the Aristotelian tradition. The purpose, finally, of Avicenna's insistence on having learned most of these sciences by himself, of the numerous seemingly conceited statements enumerated above in Section 2, and of the references to his various methods of study, is to illustrate his central epistemological theory. At the same time that he is informing the reader about his studies in philosophy and fulfilling the requirements of the genre of autobiography (or, differently stated, in the guise of fulfilling the requirements of the genre), he is providing a concrete illustration for his theory of the twin methods of acquiring knowledge, Intuition and study, with all the ancillary processes.

Another aspect of Avicenna's perspective of himself, which is complementary to the description of his purpose just outlined, is the striking resemblance which the Autobiography bears to the biography of Aristotle. Aristotle's biography was known in Arabic primarily in two versions: a translation of the biography of Ptolemy (P), and a tendentious account deriving from Alexandrian circles (A).[110] The following elements to be found in these two biographies are also present in Avicenna's Autobiography:

Aristotle	*Avicenna*
Detailed information about parents and early life; his father was in the employ of King Amyntas. (P)	Detailed information about parents and early life; his father was in the employ of Prince Nūḥ ibn-Manṣūr.
Father takes him to Athens, the capital, to study, at the age of eight. (A) (Note precise age.)	Father takes him to Buḫārā, the capital, to study, and he excels by the age of ten. (Note precise age.)
Studies poetry, grammar, and rhetoric. (A)	Studies Qurʾān and literature.

[110] For references and details see D. Gutas, "The Spurious and the Authentic in the Arabic Lives of Aristotle," *Pseudo-Aristotle in the Middle Ages*, J. Kraye, W. F. Ryan, and C. B. Schmitt, eds., London (The Warburg Institute) 1986, 15-36. Cf. L28 below.

Refutes at this early age the Epicurean attacks on these subjects. (A)	Rejects at this early age the doctrines of the Ismāʿīlīs on the soul and the intellect.
After these preliminary subjects, he studies ethics, politics, mathematics, physics, metaphysics with Plato. (A)	After these preliminary subjects he studies logic, mathematics, physics, metaphysics by himself.
Starts the study of these subjects at seventeen. (A) (Note precise age.)	Finishes the study of these subjects at eighteen. (Note precise age.)
Plato calls him "the intellect."[111]	(He learns very fast because of his Intuition.)
After Plato's death, travels to various places and works with various patrons: Assos, Athens, Macedonia, Athens, Chalcis. (P)	After his father's death, travels to various places and works with various patrons (names given in the Autobiography).
Leaves Athens for Chalcis because of persecution, where he dies. (P)	Travels from place to place because "necessity led" him; persecution implied in the final poem of the Autobiography and substantiated in the Biography.

The two lives may have indeed been objectively parallel, but the similarities in presentation can hardly have been accidental. This becomes even clearer when Avicenna's precocity is compared with that of Aristotle in a well-known story in Ḥunayn ibn-Isḥāq's report about the gatherings of the philosophers for the purpose of instructing the Greek princes.[112] The report ends by stating the curriculum the students followed:

> Wise sayings, together with the Greek script, is the first thing that the philosopher teaches his pupil during the first year of instruction. After that he lets him go on to grammar and poetry and then gradually to law, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, medicine and music. After that he studies logic and finally philosophy, namely the sciences of the heavenly phenomena. These are ten sciences which the pupil learns in ten years.[113] (L27)

With the exception of music, which Avicenna says he studied in order to write *The Cure* (T9, §5C), the subjects enumerated in this passage are the *only* subjects Avicenna mentions by name as having studied. Conversely, the only subject in Avicenna's account that is added to this curriculum is, for obvious reasons, the Qurʾān.

The perspective of the Autobiography, therefore, is that of a philosopher belonging to no school tradition, who established truth on his own

[111] Although this saying is neither in the *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* version (A) of Aristotle's biographer nor in the extant form of Ptolemy's text, it was widely available in Arabic. Mubaššir, for example, incorporates it into his account (*Muḫtār al-ḥikam*, ʿA. Badawī, ed., Madrid 1958, 180.13-16). See Gutas "Lives of Aristotle" 26, 28.

[112] See Gutas "Lives of Aristotle" 30-31.

[113] Translation in F. Rosenthal, *The Classical Heritage in Islam*, London/California 1975, 73.

by means of his Intuition, equalling Aristotle in this regard, if not surpassing him, and whose independent Verification of the truth, which reproduces for the most part the philosophical sciences as classified originally by Aristotle, puts him in a position both to teach this more accurate version of the truth and to judge the philosophical attainments of others.

The question now remains: when did Avicenna have this perspective, i.e., when did he dictate his autobiography to Jūzjānī? The immediate reaction is to assume that he did so at the time in his life when the Autobiography breaks off, that is, soon after he met Jūzjānī in 1013.[114] The following considerations, however, make it clear that it was much later. The Autobiography has the same purpose and perspective as some later autobiographical notes of Avicenna, notably in his Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8), in the *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* (T2), and in his Letter to Kiyā (T12). The same account of his early development and studies is given in *The Easterners* and the Autobiography, and the same claim is made in both that his philosophical position had not changed since the completion of his studies in his teens; the same claim to judging the degree of each philosopher's attainments is made in the Autobiography and in the Letter to Kiyā (in the latter the judgment took the form of a book, *Fair Judgment*), and the same and only philosopher, Fārābī, is singled out in both for praise as his only philosophical mentor. His independent Verification of the truth by means of his Intuition, on the basis of which he can justify writing a book like *The Easterners*, is clearly alluded to in the *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* and plainly illustrated in the Autobiography; and it is the same basis that enables him to write about philosophy "as it is in itself" without regard for predecessors, like Aristotle. From all these considerations it appears that the Autobiography is contemporary with these works, written after the completion of *The Cure* and *The Salvation*, from *The Easterners* onwards. It shares their concerns and tries to justify, or explain, them from a different approach. The Autobiography is thus both an apologia for and a protrepticus to philosophy—Avicenna's philosophy.

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[114] See, for example, Weisweiler "Fürstenbibliotheken" 53, 57. Despite his original and perceptive—if not always acceptable—analysis, Lüling falls into this trap because, I assume, he unconsciously took the Autobiography to have been written in 1013. The reason he gives for Avicenna's concealing his motives for his travels is that he was a supporter of the last Sāmānid, al-Muntaṣir, and he found it inexpedient to publicize this support after the latter's fall, especially since al-Muntaṣir had attempted to install himself, with the help of Qābūs, in Rayy, where Avicenna later found refuge for a while. This assumes that the Autobiography was written at the time when it ends; for how important could it have been to conceal these motives much later when Avicenna was in Iṣfahān, and Rayy was no longer under the control of the Būyids?

4.

AVICENNA'S CONCEPTION OF THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

With modifications dictated by his purpose at every instance, Avicenna adhered to the classification of the sciences in the Aristotelian tradition in all his works. This applies both to his structuring of the polythematic philosophical summae and to his treatment of the division of the sciences itself, whether independently (as in *The Divisions of the Intellectual Sciences*, *Aqsām al-ʿulūm al-ʿaqlīya*) or in other contexts.[1] This observation in itself is nothing new or particularly revealing: following the division of philosophy current in the Aristotelian tradition was the rule rather than the exception for Muslim scholars. What is noteworthy, rather, is the following: the elaborate classificatory schema of late Alexandrian scholars presented an outline of the entire Aristotelian corpus, or, for that matter, of all philosophy; with the benefit of historical hindsight we can now see that by the same token it also presented a blueprint, or a table of contents, as it were, for a work that *would encompass* all philosophy. The Alexandrians and the tradition they had been reared in had noticed the systematic nature of Aristotle's thought. As stated by J. Barnes,

> we may allow that Aristotle's philosophy fails actually to present a grand system, without giving up the conviction that it is potentially and in design systematic; if the Aristotelian *corpus* is not, as it stands, an Encyclopaedia of Unified Science, it nevertheless forms—or was intended to form—the basis for such a large project. There are hints enough, scattered throughout Aristotle's writings, to show that he had a general conception of the range and classification of human knowledge, and that he saw his own voluminous researches in the light of that conception. And there are hints, less frequent but no less clear, that the theory of the *Posterior Analytics* was meant to provide the proper formal account and presentation of the finished system. In a perfect Aristotelian world, the material gathered in the *corpus* will be systematically presented; and the logical structure of the system will follow the pattern of the *Posterior Analytics*.[2]

But although the Alexandrians brought out the outline of the "perfect Aristotelian world," they were blind to the possibilities of the schema they had created, as were the Arabic philosophers to the potential of the

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[1] As in the *Compendium on the Soul* (T1), for example, or in the Eisagoge part of *The Cure*, *Madḫal* 12-16.

[2] Barnes *Posterior Analytics*, p. x.

system thay had adopted: for all of them each discrete item of the schema corresponded to a work by Aristotle which was the last word on the subject, admitting only of explicative commentaries in which differing viewpoints might be expressed through circumlocutions.[3]

It was only Avicenna, close to five centuries after the schema had been fully developed, who actualized the latent "summa" in the classification of the sciences and created a coherent account of human knowledge, an "Encyclopaedia of Unified Science," as called by Barnes, and indeed on the very basis of the *Posterior Analytics*. This revolutionary break with tradition on the part of Avicenna cannot be explained in a facile way by referring to his genius: he was preceded by no lesser philosophical minds in Islamic civilization. The reason rather ought to be sought in his conception of the history of philosophy in general and of the place of Aristotle and his commentators in it in particular; this will in turn facilitate the subsequent analysis (in Chapter 7) of Avicenna's attitude and approach to the Aristotelian tradition as well as his view of his own role in this historical process.

Avicenna did not develop his concept of the history of philosophy through a mere reading of the philosophers themselves; in this he was profoundly influenced by traditional views prevailing in the literature available to him. In the Neoplatonic school of Alexandria during the two centuries prior to the Muslim conquest, classroom discussions in the course on the prolegomena to Aristotle frequently centered on the key question of the degree to which Aristotle's philosophy was identical with Plato's, and on its corollary, the original contributions to philosophy by Aristotle.[4] These questions were not asked in a historical context about the development of philosophical ideas but in a context of introducing the student to Aristotle's philosophy, and they were preceded and followed

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[3] It is true that, as H. J. Blumenthal suggests, the later Greek commentators were "true to the aim of making Aristotle self-consistent through a knowledge of the whole of his philosophy" ("Neoplatonic Elements in the *De Anima* Commentaries," *Phronesis* 21 [1976] 71), but they accomplished their task through commentary on individual Aristotelian passages, and not through comprehensive exhibitions of a systematic nature and independently of the Aristotelian texts, like Avicenna. Philoponus, for example, presents himself in the preface to the *De Anima* commentary as the defender of the true Aristotelian doctrine about the separability of the rational soul (*CAG* XV, 10-12 Hayduck) despite the fact that both some ideas which he lists in that passage and his commentary in general deviate significantly from Aristotelian teachings (cf. Blumenthal 70). An instance of the precise way in which Philoponus tacitly revises an Aristotelian text and its meaning on this subject I have examined in "Philoponos and Avicenna on the Separability of the Intellect," in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 31 (1986) 121-29.

[4] Testimonia relating to this question, which deserves a separate and detailed investigation, have been collected by I. Düring, *Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition*, Göteborg 1957, 315-336. Cf. also his notes on the appropriate passages in the *Vita Marciana* on pp. 112-113.

by lectures on Aristotle's life and works. Their purpose was to compare atemporally Plato and Aristotle and, given that the Alexandrian Neoplatonists had an Aristotelian orientation, glorify Aristotle. The answers that were given to these questions varied in detail and emphasis, and occasionally in substance: in the course of the last two centuries of Alexandrian scholarship a tendency is observed toward greater glorification of Aristotle and a corresponding minimization of Plato's achievements. This tendency is clearly reflected in the biographies of Aristotle used in classroom instruction, and is best illustrated by comparing two of them: the *Vita Marciana* (VM), which was in use in the school of Alexandria in the fifth century, and the so-called *Vita Vulgata* (VV), which was in use in the middle of the sixth century.[5]

VM	*VV*
I. (§28) We saw that Aristotle is a Platonist (*platonizein*) even where he contradicts Plato, for it is Plato who says that he cares little for Socrates but much for truth [*Phaedo* 91c]. ... (§29) But perhaps Aristotle does not even fight against Plato's doctrines but only against those who misunderstood them. ...	(§8) Aristotle does not contradict Plato pure and simple, but those who have not understood Plato's doctrines. But even if he does contradict Plato himself, there is nothing improper (*atopon*) in that because here too he follows Plato, (§9) for it was Plato who said that one should care more for truth than for anybody else. ... (§10) Aristotle, then, did just that; and if he overturned what Plato said, here too he acted like him, not wishing to overlook truth. ...
II. (§35) Aristotle added to philosophy more than what he selected from it. ...	(§25) In philosophy, Aristotle transcended human standards by having missed nothing in its treatment; but he also fully erected (*katōrthōse*) [the edifice of] all philosophy by having added much to it out of his own acumen.[6]

[5] The texts of *Vitae Marciana* and *Vulgata* are edited and studied by Düring *Biographical Tradition* 94-139. The former was also edited and annotated by O. Gigon, *Vita Aristotelis Marciana*, Berlin 1962. Düring's thesis that these two *Vitae* are epitomes of Ptolemy's *Vita* is incorrect. See Gutas "Lives of Aristotle" 17-18. That the classroom discussions about Aristotle's original contributions to philosophy are reflected in these biographies is amply documented in Düring's Testimonia to his edition, pp. 101-103, §§28-30; p. 135, §26; pp. 112-113.

[6] The word for acumen here is *anchinoia*, the word defined by Aristotle as the *eustochia* (*ḥads*) of the middle term (*Post. An.* I.34). See Chapter 3.2.

III. (§40) Logic is Aristotle's discovery because he separated the methods of syllogisms from the syllogisms themselves (*tōn pragmatōn*).	(§26) He made additions to logic by distinguishing the rules from the subject matter (*apo tōn pragmatōn*) and by creating the demonstrative method. For his predecessors (*hoi palai*) knew how to use demonstration but were unable to construct demonstrative syllogisms, just like people who are unable to make shoes but know how to use them.
IV. (§§36-39) (Detailed enumeration of individual original contributions by Aristotle to ethics, physics, mathematics, and theology [!].)	(§§27-29) (Brief mention of Aristotle's original contribution to physics only. Aristotle did not contribute anything new to theology, though he did not miss anything, either; he did, however, show that divinity is incorporeal and impassive.)

In section (I) above, VM is much more cautious than VV. Although the possibility that Aristotle contradicted Plato is entertained on the grounds of the Platonic dictum that truth should be dearer to one than adherence to a teacher's doctrines, it is quickly substituted by the assumption that Aristotle contradicted in reality only Plato's misinterpreters. The impression conveyed is thus that Aristotle only seemingly contradicted Plato, and that by adhering to Plato's real doctrines he was also adhering to truth. In VV the two parts of the same argument are reversed: it is first stated briefly that Aristotle fought only against Plato's misinterpreters, and then the hypothesis that he contradicted Plato himself is vigorously defended, with particular emphasis laid on truth, and not adherence to a teacher's doctrines, as the goal of philosophical activity. The implication here is that though both Plato and Aristotle strove after truth, Aristotle was closer to it since he had to overturn Plato's doctrines in order not to overlook it.

Sections II-IV deal with the question of Aristotle's original contributions to philosophy. Again VM is more subdued and specific, VV more encomiastic and general. The number of specific contributions listed in VM (Section IV) is reduced in VV,[7] and Aristotle's accomplishments, assessed modestly in VM (Section II), are generalized in VV to include

[7] The statement in VV that Aristotle contributed nothing new to theology (despite the fact that VV proceeds to add almost exactly the same material mentioned as original contributions in VM) is not discussed either by Düring *Biographical Tradition* or Gigon. In all probability it is to be interpreted against the background of Christian sensibilities, which either were directly responsible for it or indirectly inhibited the compiler of VV from a more explicit statement. On this general issue see L. G. Westerink, *The Greek Commentaries on Plato's Phaedo, Vol. 1: Olympiodorus*, Amsterdam 1976, 24.

all philosophy, in a statement that was to become axiomatic in the Arabic tradition: Aristotle erected fully the entire edifice of philosophy.

Section III deserves special attention. It contains the most explicit mention of the claim that Aristotle was the first philosopher to distinguish and formulate the rules of syllogistic thinking. The issue was certainly raised before,[8] but it seems never to have been stated with as much clarity as in the writings of the sixth century Alexandrians, and indeed in terms borrowed from Aristotle himself. For strange as it may sound, it appears that it was Olympiodorus (d. after 565) who first[9] answered the question of Aristotle's original contribution to logic by implicitly referring to Aristotle's epilogue in the *Sophistici Elenchi* (183b16-184b8). This epilogue, of great importance for the history of the history of philosophy, on the one hand clearly states that Aristotle was the first to discover the methods of syllogism in general (184b1-6) and the discipline (*technē*) of dialectic and argumentation in particular (183b1, b35, 184a7-8), and on the other provides a historical blueprint for the way in which knowledge progresses (183b16-184a9): first the particulars of a science are applied in practice without knowledge of its rules and principles; second, somebody discovers the basis of this science, but because the "beginning of anything is the most important and hence the most difficult," little progress is made by that person; future generations, finally, through continuous elaborations (what Avicenna was later to call *tafrīʿ*, Deriving Corollary Principles), grant the discipline "amplitude" (*plēthos*). Aristotle says that he found rhetoric and "practically all the other disciplines" already at the third stage; but he himself claims the credit for advancing the syllogistic discipline from the first to the second stage "after many years of hard work at sedulous researches."

In the prolegomena to Aristotle's logic, and in the context of comparing Plato to Aristotle, Olympiodorus uses Aristotle's epilogue and particularly the cobbler metaphor (*CAG* XII.1, p. 17.37ff.) to describe Aristotle's original contribution to logic. This passage was then incorporated in VV.

Aristotle's depiction of the progress of knowledge in historical terms in the epilogue of the *Sophistici Elenchi* also seems to have contributed to the development of a stylized conception of the history of philosophy. The (alleged) historical tripartite sequence—practice of a discipline, theory, elaboration—may be behind the introduction of the details about Aris-

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[8] Philoponus (*In An. Pr.*, *CAG* XIII.2, p. 6.14) quotes Themistius who said that though Aristotle did not invent analytics as such, he nevertheless composed the Analytica by "crafting certain rules" (*technōsai kanosi tisi*).

[9] That is, as far as we know on the basis of the extant Alexandrian commentaries on Aristotle.

totle's early education in VM (§4) and VV (§3), where it is mentioned that Aristotle, "while still young", had a liberal education, studying essentially rhetoric and poetry. I tend to believe that the rationale behind these additions—apart from the understandable desire to have Aristotle reflect in his education school practices contemporary with those of the compilers of the biographies—is the assumption that Aristotle had to reproduce, in his own education, the history of philosophy up to his time in order to be able to develop it further. This tendency is amplified and more visible in what is yet a later version of these *vitae*, preserved only in Arabic and found in the *Depository of Wisdom Literature.*[10] The passage reads as follows:

> When Aristotle became eight years old, his father brought him to Athens[11] and had him associate with the poets, grammarians, and orators that were there, as their student in order to learn from them. Aristotle acquired their knowledge in its entirety in nine years. ...[12] When he completed his study of the disciplines of grammar, poetry and rhetoric, he turned to the science of philosophy[13] and desired to learn it. He became Plato's[14] student exclusively in order to learn from him. At that time he was seventeen years old. (L2

This brief and necessarily limited survey of late Alexandrian conceptions of Aristotle's position in the history of philosophy reveals the following: Aristotle was the philosopher who sought the truth above all else; the syllogistic disciplines before him were practised but their theory was unknown, and it was he who discovered the rules and principles governing them and thereby laid the foundation of logic; Aristotle treated exhaustively all the branches of philosophy and through his own genius and original contributions set it on its feet (*katōrthōse*); and finally, if one were to judge from the elaborate classification of the parts of philosophy developed by the Alexandrian scholars, Aristotle organized philosophy, assigning each part to its proper place.

This picture of Aristotle's achievements and position in the history of philosophy, most clearly present in the *Vita Vulgata*, was transmitted

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[10] *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* 680-2, 696-8. Mubaššir's *Muḫtār al-ḥikam* presents a parallel text (179-80), obviously derived from the *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma*, but the precise relationship among these versions remains to be investigated. See the discussion of this passage in Gutas "Lives of Aristotle" 20-22.

[11] The Arabic translator adds here, "the city that was the gathering place of philosophers and sages."

[12] Here follows the report about Epicurus' attack upon these scholars and Aristotle's defense of them. Cf. Gutas "Lives of Aristotle" 22.

[13] The parallel text in Mubaššir (180.9) enumerates the fields: "ethics, politics, physics, mathematics, metaphysics," i.e. the subdivisions of practical and theoretical philosophy.

[14] The Arabic translator adds, "his name means 'the broad one'."

wholesale into Arabic. The details of this transmission are far from having been thoroughly studied, but we are informed adequately about its highlights, some of which, of particular relevance for Avicenna, are given below.

A major connecting link between the last generation of Alexandrian scholars and Arabic philosophy is Paul the Persian (*fl.* mid-6th century), whose works were known in the Syriac tradition and also partly translated into Arabic. In what appears to be the introduction of a treatise on the classification of the parts of Aristotle's philosophy,[15] he says the following:

> Prior to Aristotle, [the parts of] philosophy were dispersed like the rest of the useful things which God created, and with the exploitation of which He entrusted both men's natural disposition and the capacity he gave them for this purpose—[things] like medicaments which, found dispersed in the countryside and the mountains, result in useful medication when collected and combined. In a similar manner Aristotle collected the dispersed parts of philosophy, combined each part with what was conformable to it, and placed it in its [appropriate] place, so that he produced from it a complete course of treatment [*šifāʾ*] by means of which souls are cured of the diseases of ignorance. (L29)

The medical metaphor—philosophy is the medicine of souls—goes back to Aristotle himself and was in constant use throughout the history of Greek philosophy. In late Alexandrian Aristotelianism it was used as one of the possible definitions of philosophy and is found in the writings of scholars with which Paul was familiar.[16] It is tempting to see in Paul's description of Aristotle's oeuvre as a "course of treatment" (*šifāʾ*) that cures "the diseases of ignorance" the source of Avicenna's title for *The Cure*. Avicenna says in his Prologue to *The Cure* that he collected the gist of all philosophical knowledge (T9, §1) and arranged it as he saw fit (§2) to produce a compendium "which will help remove the veils of fanciful notions" (§1); and in the actual execution of the work he follows the late Alexandrian blueprint of the classification of the parts of philosophy (Chapter 3.1), as does Paul in the rest of his treatise. The point cannot nor need be pressed any further; it is virtually certain, however, that such is the context that determined Avicenna's choice of a title.

The assessments of Aristotle's achievements and position in the history of philosophy which are given in the very popular Graeco-Arabic gnomologia are directly inspired by late Alexandrian texts like VV. The following, probably by the great translator and physician Ḥunayn ibn-

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[15] For this work and its transmission see Gutas "Paul the Persian 233 and ff."

[16] See Gutas *Greek Wisdom* A7 and the commentary, p. 385, and Py10 and the commentary, pp. 233-4.

Isḥāq, are reformulations in elegant rhyming prose (*saj*ᶜ).[17] It is to be noted that the first one, intended to extol Plato, does so only by referring to Aristotle:

> Should you wish to see Plato on this august summit [which he occupies] (L3)
> and in this position of repute and exalted station,
> then look at his influence upon his disciple, Aristotle,
> for it was the latter who brought together into a whole the parts of philosophy,
> lifted it from its lowly states unto its lofty pinnacles,
> and reaped the fruit that all its custodians had sown.[18]
>
> Aristotle is the first teacher, the seal of the ancient philosophers,
> and the model of the learned men who followed their path.
> He classified [the parts of] philosophy and established it;
> he improved it and set it down accurately.
> He put logic at the beginning
> and prepared a foundation for all of the other sciences.
> He thus became the medium through which the ancient philosophers
> were to benefit the future ones,
> and the means by which later philosophers
> were to procure the benefits of the earlier ones.
> Not only did he not restrict himself to pouring out upon later generations
> what the earlier ones had captured, but he even added to every kind [of knowledge] many times what they had produced, thereby rendering it more complete and more perfect.[19]

Similar encomia of Aristotle were common among Arabic authors, and their list could be expanded at will. Particular mention could perhaps be made of Ġazālī's comment, reproducing material that we saw in the *Vitae Marciana* and *Vulgata*, that Aristotle attacked all his predecessors, even Plato, because truth was dearer to him than his teacher.[20] This picture of the early development of philosophy and of Aristotle's achievements and position in the history of philosophy informed the writings of most Arabic authors, and it corresponds particularly closely with Avicenna's Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8, §1).[21]

The next question concerning Avicenna's understanding of the history of philosophy is to determine his view about the attitude which

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[17] Gutas *Greek Wisdom* 216. The reference there to Dunlop is now to his edition of the *Muntakhab Ṣiwān al-ḥikmah* pp. xvii-xviii.

[18] Gutas *Greek Wisdom* 117; cf. 332-3.

[19] Gutas *Greek Wisdom* 159.

[20] Cited in his *Tahāfot al-falāsifat*, M. Bouyges, ed., Beirut 1927, 40: *Aflāṭun ṣadīq wa-l-ḥaqq ṣadīq wa-lākin al-ḥaqq aṣdaq minhu.*

[21] See also T6, where Avicenna paraphrases Aristotle's crucial epilogue. For further examples of Avicenna's understanding of the early history of philosophy along these lines see Booth *Aporetic Ontology* 124, and Gutas "Paul the Persian" 259, note 70. For the development of this tendentious history of philosophy see also Gutas "Lives of Aristotle" 34, note 25.

philosophers subsequent to Aristotle adopted, or should have adopted, toward him. The disjunctive particle in the preceding sentence points to the two aspects of the question, one historical and the other procedural. This latter aspect is concerned directly with Avicenna's conception of the philosophical praxis, both in its general orientation (to be discussed in the next chapter), and its specific application (to be discussed in Chapter 8). Here we may look closely at the general background against which developed Avicenna's ideas on method and the philosophical praxis as stated, most comprehensively, in the Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8). In this regard, illuminating as well as fascinating is the debate about methods of inquiry and proper attitude toward authorities by two scholars from Rayy in NW Persia, both active about a century before Avicenna and known to him: the famous philosopher and physician Abū-Bakr ar-Rāzī (Rhazes, d. 311/923 or 320/920), and the Ismāʿīlī theologian and missionary, Abū-Ḥātim ar-Rāzī (d. ca. 330/929). The debate is reported in the first person by Abū-Ḥātim in his *Signs of Prophethood* (*Aʿlām an-nubūwa*) and hence the philosopher Abū-Bakr is made to have the worst of the argument, but it is his views that command our attention here.[22]

(L31) Abū-Ḥātim: Tell me about the Fundamental Principle which you believe, namely your statement that these five—the creator, the soul, matter, place, and time—are pre-existent: is this something on which the ancient philosophers agree or disagree with you?

1. Abū-Bakr: No, the ancients say various things on this matter, but through much research and theoretical investigation into their Fundamental Principles I have emended [their theories] and derived something which is the irrefutable and inevitable truth.

Abū-Ḥātim: But how could the sagacity of these philosophers display such impotence and their doctrines vary when, by your own claim, they were assiduous scholars who had expended their zeal in philosophical investigations to the point that they mastered [even] the subtle sciences and became authorities in them and models [for others to follow]? [And how] can you claim that you achieved through much investigation into their writings [*rusūm*] and books what they failed to achieve when they are your leaders and you their follower, since you have studied their writings, investigated into their Fundamental Principles, and learned from their books? How is it possible, then, that the subject should be higher than the sovereign, and the led a more accomplished philosopher than the leader?

2. Abū-Bakr: On this issue I will now state something to you whereby you will know that the matter is indeed as I have mentioned, and you will

[22] The text of the debate was first edited by P. Kraus, "Raziana II," *Orientalia* 5 (1936) 44.4-46.22, and reproduced, with corrections, in his *Razis Opera Philosophica*, Cairo 1939, 300.21-303.19. The entire book has been recently edited by Ṣalāḥ aṣ-Ṣāwī, *Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī. Aʿlām al-nubuwwah*, Tehran 1397/1977; the text translated here appears on pp. 10.3-13.16. My translation is based on Kraus's second edition. The few insignificant variants presented in aṣ-Ṣāwī's edition have not been recorded.

[be able to] recognize the true from the false on this subject. Know that when every succeeding philosopher expends his zeal in philosophical investigations, applies himself with perseverance and assiduity to them, and researches issues that are controversial on account of their subtlety and difficulty,[23] he learns from his predecessors their knowledge, retains it, and supplements it with other things through his sagacity and numerous researches and investigations. This is so because, proficient now in the knowledge of his predecessors, he becomes aware of other useful ideas [*fawā'id*] and learns even more, since research, investigation, and assiduity necessarily result in additional and abundant material.

Abū-Ḥātim: But if what the successor supplements is in disagreement with [the theories of] his predecessors—just as you yourself disagree with your predecessors—then disagreement is not a benefit; on the contrary, disagreement is an evil, it increases blindness and strengthens falsehood, it is destruction and corruption—why, we find that the more you research and investigate the more are your opinions at variance and contradict each other! And when you set as a condition for yourself that the successor achieves what his predecessors did not—just as you claim that you achieved it and [as a result] disagreed with your predecessors—then you will not be safe [from the eventuality] that someone more assiduous than you will come after you, learn what you know and even more, achieve through his sagacity, assiduity, and investigation what you yourself never achieved, and invalidate your conclusions and disagree with your Fundamental Principles—just as you refuted your predecessors and disagreed with their Fundamental Principles when you asserted the pre-existence of your five [principles] and claimed that your predecessors are mistaken if they disagree with you, and just as some of you [philosophers] disagree with others. On the basis of this condition, then, corruption will become permanent in the world, truth will always be absent, and falsehood will be the order of the day. Those who disagree with you arrived at falsehood and strayed from the right course because disagreement [itself leads to] falsehood, and errors [cause] straying. On the basis of this assumption it will follow that you also will arrive at falsehood and stray from the right course since, on the analogy of your statement, your successor will produce a [new] useful idea and hit upon what you missed.

3. Abū-Bakr: This is neither falsehood nor straying from the right course because both the predecessor and the successor are striving in earnest; and when one makes earnest efforts and occupies himself with investigation and research, then he is on his way to truth because souls can become purified of the filth of this world and escape to the next only by means of philosophical investigation. And when one engages in such investigation and achieves something in it—be it even the slightest little bit—then his soul is purified of this filth and saved. If the common people who have caused the perdition of their souls in total ignorance of research had but engaged even in the slightest philosophical investigation, this would have constituted their deliverance from this filth even if they had achieved very little.

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[23] "Subtlety and difficulty:" These ideas appear to have been taken from the treatise on *The Principles of the Universe* (*Fī mabādi' al-kull*), translated below, L34.

Abū-Ḥātim: Didn't you stipulate that philosophical investigation means arriving at the truth and forsaking falsehood?

Abū-Bakr: Yes.

Abū-Ḥātim: And you also claimed that people perish through mutual enmity and disagreement.[24] On the basis of your claim, then, he who engages in philosophical investigation can increase only his [chances of] perdition because you have just affirmed that philosophers hold varying doctrines and that what you believe is in conflict with the views of your predecessors, and you have imposed upon yourself the condition that your successor may disagree both with you and with others. On the basis of this condition, then, the cause of perdition grows stronger day by day and falsehood and straying from the right course are on the rise.

4. Abū-Bakr: I do not consider this as falsehood or straying from the right course because he who is engaged in earnest [philosophical] investigation is the one who is in the right even if he does not reach the goal which I have just described to you, and because souls are purified only through investigation and research. This is all I am saying.

Abū-Ḥātim: Well, if you insist on this assertion and stubbornly refuse [to accept] the truth, then tell me what you think about the person who engages in philosophical investigation while at the same time he also believes in the laws of the prophets: will his soul be purified and do you expect him to be delivered of the filth of this world?

5. Abū-Bakr: How could he engage in philosophical investigation while he believes in these superstitions, is permanently involved in contradictions, and persists in his ignorance and in Following Authority?

Abū-Ḥātim: Yes, but did you not assert that the soul of the person who engages in philosophical investigation will be purified even if he does not delve into the subject but studies it "the slightest little bit"?

Abū-Bakr: Yes.

Abū-Ḥātim: This person, then, who does not delve into the subject but studies it a little is, in fact, imitating his predecessors and Following their Authority, and all he has learned is imitating disagreement and how to Follow Authority! So which superstition is greater than this, which other servility to Authority can surpass it, and which ignorance is more immense than it? And what kind of purification of the soul is this, and what does it result in except in rejection of religious laws, disbelief in God and His prophets and messengers, entrance into apostasy, and upholding the doctrine which divests God of all attributes [*taʿṭīl*]?[25] Doesn't then this person deserve, more than anybody else, to be called ignorant, a Follower of Authority, and a believer in superstitions and disagreement?

Abū-Bakr: When the discussion reaches this stage, one ought to keep silent.

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[24] Abū-Bakr made this claim in a previous discussion recorded by Abū-Ḥātim. Abū-Bakr's argument was, in effect, directed against the belief that God chose certain peoples to whom He sent a prophet. If God is wise, Abū-Bakr argued, he would not have done this and thereby caused dissension and enmity among people which bring about their perdition. See Kraus "Raziana II" 38.

[25] For the doctrine of *taʿṭīl* in Islam see *EI*1 s.v. "tashbīh" (R. Strothmann).

It is to the credit of Abū-Ḥātim that, as far as we are able to judge, he seems on the whole not to have misrepresented Abū-Bakr's ideas except, perhaps, for what might be ascribed to dramatic license. The views of Abū-Bakr presented here are consonant with what we know of his approach and theories from his other works.[26] The main points of his argument of particular relevance to our subject are the following.

Central to Abū-Bakr's argument is the concept of progress in the acquisition of truth. This lies at the root of his disagreement with the theologian Abū-Ḥātim for whom truth, by the very nature of what he is professing, was revealed complete all at once. At issue is the perennial problem of reason versus revelation, but neither of the two Rāzī's addresses the problem squarely, and they are hence arguing at cross purposes. For Abū-Bakr, then, truth is something that is acquired piecemeal and cumulatively by reason[27] in the march of history. Past philosophers, "the ancients," discovered Fundamental Principles (*uṣūl*, §1 above), and each succeeding generation of philosophers, after learning all that they had to teach them, added to their store of knowledge and supplemented it (§2 above). The individual doctrines of past philosophers are not sacrosanct; they are subject to criticism and rejection because the issues with which they deal are abstruse and the concepts fine and difficult (§2 above). For this reason what is required from a philosopher is zealous application, sustained research, and a keen mind. As a matter of fact, the disposition to and execution of research are the minimum requirements for a philosopher (§3 above), because his allegiance is to *discovering* the truth through personal endeavor (*ijtihād*) and not to following blindly the "truth" of an Authoritative predecessor (*taqlīd*).

This brief résumé does not exhaust all the ideas expressed in the debate, but enough has been said to indicate that Abū-Bakr's thoughts constitute the natural extension of the intellectual framework encountered in late Alexandrian Aristotelianism and depicted especially in Aristotle's *Vita Vulgata*: a philosopher should care more for truth than for his predecessors, and in order not to overlook the truth he may have to contradict them (VV, §§9-10); in his work he should, like Aristotle, learn all that his teachers taught and add to it out of his own acumen (VV, §25). This is not to imply that there is necessarily an immediate connection between VV and Abū-Bakr ar-Rāzī. The details of the transmission

[26] See in particular Arberry *Spiritual Physick* and Kraus "Raziana I" 300-334.

[27] Cf. Abū-Bakr's eloquent introduction to his *Spiritual Physick* (Arberry 20): "By reason we have comprehended matters obscure and remote, things that were secret and hidden from us; by it we have learned the shape of the earth and the sky, the dimension of the sun, moon and other stars, their distances and motions; by it we have achieved even the knowledge of the Almighty, our Creator, the most majestic of all that we have sought to reach and our most profitable attainment."

of Greek knowledge to the Arab world are still far from having been thoroughly studied, and in the present case direct textual affiliation cannot be demonstrated (nor is it necessary); but it is incontestable that the same spirit permeates both, and also Avicenna: the last part of §1 in the Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8) and §1 of the Prologue to *The Cure* (T9) are sufficient testimony.

Abū-Bakr ar-Rāzī and Avicenna were two very different philosophers with widely divergent systems; and yet they display the same attitude of critical inquiry toward past authorities, and the same dedication to hard work and independent thinking for the acquisition of truth. I attribute this to the fact that Abū-Bakr ar-Rāzī, like Avicenna, was an autodidact who was not educated in a philosophical school tradition and consequently, also like Avicenna, not beholden to reproducing the traditional school material. This may be further indicated also by the fact that they both wrote autobiographies whose main thrust seems to be a defense and exposition of their conduct as philosophers.[28]

With regard to the historical aspect of the question about the attitude toward Aristotle adopted by his successors, the information about post-Aristotelian philosophy available in Arabic was neither plentiful nor, indeed, has what is extant of it been adequately studied. In general, no detailed report was available: the Stoics and Epicureans are merely names of philosophical schools chronologically not brought into relation with Aristotle,[29] and Plotinus was not known by name to the Arabs;[30] other philosophical schools of Hellenistic and Imperial times are, of course, modern designations.

What was known of post-Aristotelian philosophers in the Arabic tradition was discrete names (known mostly from Graeco-Arabic collections of sayings and the bibliographical sources, like the *Fihrist* of Ibn an-Nadīm), some of whom were considered simply as commentators of Aristotle, while others were identified by an individual accomplishment in some area of specialization. Indicative of this notion is a tendentious history of Greek philosophy which survives in at least two apparently independent extracts, one in ʿĀmirī's *Al-Amad ʿalā l-abad* (composed in 375/985-6), and the other in Ṣāʿid al-Andalusī's (compiled in 460/1068) *Ṭabaqāt al-umam*. The ultimate provenance of this history is certainly

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[28] For Abū-Bakr ar-Rāzī's Autobiography see Kraus "Raziana I."

[29] The most extensive historical information about philosophical schools in relation to the Peripatetics is the report by Ḥunayn in his *Nawādir al-falāsifa* which goes back to the Alexandrian Eisagoge complex. See K. Merkle *Die Sittensprüche der Philosophen*, Leipzig 1921, 36-39.

[30] See F. Rosenthal, "Plotinus in Islam: The Power of Anonymity," in *Plotino e il Neoplatonismo in Oriente e in Occidente* [Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Anno CCCLXXI, Quaderno N. 198], Rome 1974, 437-446.

Greek, but the form in which it was available in Arabic in the 4th/10th century was most likely shaped in Islamic circles, and it also appears that both ʿĀmirī and Ṣāʿid dealt relatively freely with their source. Of the two, ʿĀmirī's account is the more condensed, although at this stage of research it is difficult to assess the nature of interpolations in both authors and discriminate them from the passages original to the source.[31] The first five philosophers are given as Empedocles, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The two authors then continue:

Ṣāʿid	*ʿĀmirī*	
These five are the masters of the Greek philosophers and those who attended to [all] the branches of philosophy. The Greeks have famous philosophers other than these, like Thales of Miletus, follower of Pythagoras, Democritus, who maintained in a work that bodies are dissolved into atoms, Anaxagoras, and others who were both the predecessors and contemporaries of Aristotle.	These five were the philosophers proper.[32]	(L31
After Aristotle there was a group who followed his philosophy and commented upon his books. Among the most illustrious were Themistius, Alexander of Aphrodisias, and Porphyry. These three are the most learned in the books of Aristotle[a] and the most deliberate in their study of philosophical books. ...		
The learned Greeks (*ʿulamāʾuhum*) who were famous in some [or: in one of the] philosophical sciences and attended to one of its parts are many. Among the celebrated in physical sciences and medicine is Hippo-	After them no one was called a philosopher but rather each person would be associated with a certain discipline or a way of life, like Hippocrates	

[a] The text has *kutub faylasūf*, the books of a philosopher, instead of *kutub al-faylasūf*, the books of the philosopher (Aristotle), but it is certain that this is what is meant.

[31] This history of philosophy, its sources, and its relation to others available in medieval Islam (including Porphyry's *Philosophos Historia*) deserve further study. In his dissertation on ʿĀmirī's *Afterlife*, E. K. Rowson suggests that (pp. 224, 241) it was compiled by ʿĀmirī himself from existing material and that Ṣāʿid copied from his account (p. 223). I tend to think that they both depend on a common source, for reasons among which are those mentioned by Rowson himself on p. 480, n. 5. The question remains open.

[32] Literally, "were characterized by philosophy," or "philosophy was predicated of them" (*kānū yūṣafūna bi-l-ḥikma*). What is meant is that for one to be a philosopher proper and deserve the name of "philosopher," one must be proficient in all branches of philosophy. As Rowson *Afterlife* 241 shows, this is stated explicitly by a younger contemporary of ʿĀmirī, Miskawayh (*Al-Fawz al-aṣġar*, Cairo 1325/1907, p. 9); see further Rowson's references, p. 489, note 72.

crates, the master of the natural scientists and the most learned in the physical and demonstrative sciences. Galen collected the titles of his works—numbering more than a hundred—in a sizable bibliography, mentioned the order in which they are to be read, and gave advice on the way in which they are to be studied. ...
I do not know of anybody after Aristotle more learned in physical science than these two excellent scholars, I mean Hippocrates and Galen.

Among other physical scientists there are Asclepiades, Erasistratus, Lycus, Paul, etc.[35] ...

Among the mathematicians there was Apollonius. ... Euclid ... Archimedes ... Simplicius ... Poseidonius ... Hipparchus ... Ptolemy, the author of the *Almagest.*[36] ...

I know of no book written on a particular science, be it ancient or modern, which includes the entirety of that science and encompasses all its parts, other than three books: Ptolemy's *Almagest* on astronomy and the motions of the stars, Aristotle's book on logic [i.e. the entire *Organon*], and Sībawayh al-Baṣrī's *The Book* on Arabic grammar; for nothing is missing from each one of them: neither the Fundamental Principles [*uṣūl*] of the science nor its Corollary Principles [*furūᶜ*], except what is of no significance. ...[37]

These people are the suns of the Greeks and their most resplendent stars in the skies. People have gained from their works, benefited from their lights, and been guided by their signs. After these the Greeks had numerous other philosophers whose judg-

the physician, Homer the poet, Archimedes the geometer, Diogenes the cynic, and Democritus the natural scientist.[33]

[ᶜĀmirī's account contains instead a disparaging story about how Galen was ridiculed when he wished to be called a philosopher instead of a physician.[34] See what follows here.]

...The Greeks undertook to master disciplines which are useful in producing prosperity in the land, and are beneficial in promoting the well-being of men—[disciplines]

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[33] ᶜĀmirī, *Al-Amad ᶜalā l-abad*, E. K. Rowson, ed., Beirut 1979, 74.7-10. Cf. the translation by Rowson in his *Afterlife* 91, §9.

[34] Text in ᶜĀmirī *Amad* 74.11-75.2; translation in Rowson *Afterlife* 91, §10.

[35] The names are far from having been established (cf. Blachère's notes, p. 70, in his translation cited below, note 38), but this issue is not central to the present discussion.

[36] A host of other names given by Ṣāᶜid is omitted here.

[37] Cf. with this paragraph Avicenna's Prologue to *The Cure* (T9), and his overall plan in his works to write books which encompass the entirety of the philosophical sciences.

ment [subsequent] philosophers followed [*qallada*] and whose anecdotes they collected.[38]

like medicine, geometry, astronomy, music, and others. They composed well-known books on them which have been translated into various languages and which won the approval of men of understanding in the various nations, where the Greeks have gained high esteem.[39]

ᶜĀmirī's version of the history of philosophy, including the disparaging story about Galen, are taken over by the compiler of the *Depository of Wisdom Literature* who then adds the following (*Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* 88ff.; emphasis added):

> After the ancients whom we have just mentioned, there appeared[b] some people who left the sound Fundamental Principles to[c] their predecessors, and thus occupied themselves with scrutinizing particulars in order to obtain a sound basis for some discipline. They confined their investigation to those perceptible[40] parts of that single discipline, and took most of their demonstrative proofs from the transmitted Fundamental Principles[d] with which the ancient theoreticians were occupied—one of them based his syllogisms on [statements like] "it is more appropriate" and "it is more like"[41]. Although they are excellent men, *they are unable to Verify the Fundamental Principles of their discipline*—I mean its first principles. They are people like Galen and Ptolemy, for each one of them occupied himself with empirical matters [*tajriba*] and with accounts of the empiricists, and used syllogisms by forsaking Fundamental Principles and the premisses that are built on them. (L3

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[b] Reading *naša'a* (line 88) with the Murad Molla MS and ᶜA. Badawī's edition, *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma wa-ṭalāṭ rasā'il*, Tehran 1974, 86.1.

[c] Reading *li-man* (line 88) with the Murad Molla MS and Badawī *Ṣiwān*, 86.2.

[d] Reading *al-uṣūl* for *al-awā'il*, as suggested by Dunlop in the apparatus.

[38] Text in Ṣāᶜid al-Andalusī, *Ṭabaqāt al-umam*, L. Cheikho, ed., Beirut 1912, pp. 27-31; French translation by R. Blachère, *Kitāb Ṭabaḳāt al-umam* (*Livre des catégories des nations*), Paris 1935, pp. 68-74.

[39] ᶜĀmirī *Amad* 76.13-17. Translation adopted, with modifications, from Rowson *Afterlife* 92-93.

[40] I.e., to empirical matters (*tajriba*, based on observation), as he is going to say later (line 93) about Galen and Ptolemy for medicine and astronomy. See Ullmann *Medizin* 311 for *mujarrabāt*.

[41] "It is more appropriate:" *a potiori*; cf. J. Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, Oxford 1950, 112, 124. "It is more like:" cf. R. Brunschvig, 'Logic and Law in Classical Islam,' in *Logic in Classical Islamic Culture* [First Giorgio Levi Della Vida Conference], G. E. von Grunebaum, ed., Wiesbaden 1970, p. 16.

The compiler of the *Depository of Wisdom Literature* then continues with a long tirade against Galen's deficiencies in logic.[42]

Reports such as the above betray their pro-Aristotelian bias and hence their affinity with the thought world of late Alexandrian Aristotelianism. The latter report in particular indirectly praises Aristotle by the implied comparison of the narrow specialization and logical incompetence of later philosophers with Aristotle's encyclopedic expertise (he treated *all* philosophy, *Vita Vulgata*) and superiority in logical analysis (he discovered the rules of logic, *Vita Vulgata*), qualities which a 'proper' philosopher, it is assumed, ought to have.

Even within the pro-Aristotelian tradition in the historiography of philosophy, however, the attitude adopted toward him was not always one of unadulterated adulation. Serious Aristotelians were aware of the problems in the Master's theories and adopted a critical, but constructive stand. In the epilogue of a treatise that was to have great influence on Avicenna, *The Principles of the Universe*—a treatise which Avicenna, uncharacteristically for his later period, even cites by its title[43]—this very stand and the rationale behind it are described in detail. The treatise is a discussion of *Metaphysics Lambda*, expounding the theory of the unmoved mover and the order of the universe. The epilogue reads as follows:[e]

1. This, then, is how the universe is governed, according to what we have taken from divine Aristotle, by way of summary of the principles. Each one of the things contained in the universe sustains the proper nature[f] of the universe, while the activities which are proper to itself[g] follow the eternity and order of the universe. (L34)

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[e] The text of *Fī mabādiʾ al-kull* in Badawī *Aristū* 276.6-277.6 (B) is quite defective. It is somewhat corrected below according to the readings of the Istanbul MS Carullah 1279, ff. 58v8-26 (C), not used by Badawī. In the absence of a sorely needed critical edition, no attempt is made to record all the variant readings from the Carullah MS which I mostly follow. The French translation by ʿA. Badawī, *La transmission de la philosophie grecque au monde arabe*, Paris 1968, 138-139, based on his edition, suffers accordingly.

[f] Reading *li-ṭabʿihi* C for *li-ṭabīʿatihi* B.

[g] Reading *afʿāluhu llatī taḫuṣṣuhu* C for *afʿāluhā llatī taḫuṣṣuhā* B.

[42] In his explicit remarks about Galen, Avicenna also shows little regard for the physician's abilities in logic, although it appears that Avicenna did benefit from his works on logic. See Shehaby *Logic* 5-6; J. C. Bürgel, *Averroes "contra Galenum"* [Nachr. d. Akad. d. Wiss. in Göttingen, Phil.-hist. Kl., Nr. 9], Göttingen 1967, 263-340; F. W. Zimmermann, "Al-Farabi und die philosophische Kritik an Galen von Alexander zu Averroes," *Akten des VII. Kongresses für Arabistik und Islamwissenschaft*, A. Dietrich, ed., [Abh. d. Akad. d. Wiss. in Göttingen, Phil.-Hist. Kl., III. Folge], Göttingen 1976, 401-414; S. Pines, "Some Problems of Islamic Philosophy," *Islamic Culture* 11 (1937) 73 note 1; S. Pines, "Rāzī critique de Galien," *Actes du VIIe Congrès Internationale d'Histoire des Sciences*, Paris 1953, pp. 480-87.

[43] In the Theology of *The Cure*, *Ilāhīyāt* 392-393 = *Najāt* 436.11.

2. This theory [*raʾy*], in addition to the fact that it alone and no other is appropriate[h] to the divine governance, is also the one to be the object of attention and assent more than other theories because of its conformity with and correspondence to observed facts in the world.[i] All people engaged in philosophy ought to act in accordance with this theory and prefer it in every case over others since[j] it is the most correct of the theories which have been held concerning God and the divine body. Among theories, it is the only one which preserves the continuity and order of things which originate from them and because of them [i.e., God and the divine body]. If it should appear to someone that among the things that have been said there is something[k] in need of greater and more detailed investigation, we should not, on account of some slight difficulty that might possibly appear in it, slacken[l] our actual concern and efforts in the consideration[m] of this entire theory, and distance ourselves and feel alienated from it;[n] on the contrary, along with our adherence to this theory, we sometimes have to show it to be correct,[o] since it is the most excellent[p] theory that has been held about God Almighty, and the one most worthy of Him. The right course is to aim to analyze[q] all the theories which are opposed to it and to revise whatever is defective or objectionable in them to the extent of our ability, after starting with the belief that it is difficult to find a theory devoid of problems.

3. As for the reason for the divergence and opposition of theories, it is most probably among the following: it is either on account of the love for leadership and supremacy which inhibit the acquaintance and compliance with truth, or on account of the difficulty, fineness, and obscurity of the subjects under discussion, or on account of the weakness of *our* nature and its impotence to grasp truths. This, however, should not lead us to reject what we have come to believe and hold through theoretical and philosophical investigation; on the contrary, we should, in the main, believe in what has become clear to us after thorough examinations, and first investigate a subject in its own right and attempt to acquaint ourselves with its real nature—as people do with matters that concern them most intimately—and then investigate any of its problems about which we are uncertain and solve them. We should not aim, on account of a few problems, at lengthy expositions and prolixity lest we thereby obscure the sense and hide the beauty, but we should rather arrive at the estimation, by means of previous knowledge and such sciences[r] assent[s] to which is not[t]

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h Reading *maʿa annahu faqaṭ* [*sic*] *dūna ġayrihi min al-ārāʾi mulāʾimun* C.

i Reading *fī l-ʿālam* C for *li-l-ʿālam* B.

j Reading *iḏ kānat* C [*leg. iḏ kāna*] for *aw kānat* B.

k *Qulnā mimmā* B; *qīla* C; I read *qīla mā*.

l Reading *natarāḫā* C.

m Reading *naẓra* C for *nuṣra* B.

n Reading *wa-an nabʿuda ʿanhu wa-nastawḥiša minhu* C for *wa-an yunfara minhu wa-yustawḥaša* B.

o Reading *taṣwībunā* C for *nuṣratunā* B.

p Reading *afḍal* C for *min jamīʿ* B.

q Reading *li-ḥall* [*an leg. ilā ḥall*?] C for *kull* B.

r *Min al-maʿārif* B; *min al-ʿulūm wa-l-maʿārif* C.

s *At-taṣdīq* B; *li-t-taṣdīq* C.

t *Lā* B; *lam* C.

> hindered by problems, that there is something doubtful in the theory and not reject it.[u]

Striking in this epilogue is the reasoned and educated defense of both Aristotle and the philosophical method of rational inquiry. Aristotle's theory of the workings of the universe is defended not by an *ipse dixit* argument, but by its objective merits: "its conformity with and correspondence to observed facts in the world" (§1). But theories, and especially of such profound and difficult matters, are seldom without problems; the proper attitude, therefore, is not to reject the entire theory, but to try and solve these problems and refine the theory. Secondly, knowledge is acquired through philosophical investigation into matters. Through human vainglory or mere incompetence, or even through the very difficulty of the subject matter itself, different opinions arise. Disagreement, however, is salutory rather than debilitating because it should lead to renewed and invigorated research into the the very principles of a subject and eventually to the solution of individual problems. The apologetic attitude perceptible in these arguments, and especially in the second one, is directed against the position that a variety of opinions about a theory invalidates the theory itself. This position was traditionally held by adherents of a revealed doctrine, like Abū-Ḥātim in the debate with Abū-Bakr ar-Rāzī cited above, and is thus but a corollary of the central discussion of reason versus revelation. In the case of *The Principles of the Universe*, the polemic is in all probability addressed to Christians, and might thus point to a composition date of the treatise in late Alexandrian times. From the very beginning of the pagan/Christian dialogue, a standard argument of the Christian apologists against the validity of philosophical ideas was the disagreement among philosophers as opposed to the single belief of the Christians. A few lines of the apologist Tatian will serve as an example:

> Philosophers ... dogmatize one against the other. ... They have, moreover, many collisions among themselves; each one hates the other; they indulge in conflicting opinions, and their arrogance makes them eager for the highest places" (par. III). "You who receive from your predecessors doctrines which clash with one another, you the inharmonious, are fighting against the harmonious" (par. XXV). "But with us [the Christians] there is no desire of vainglory, nor do we indulge in a variety of opinions" (par. XXXII, from *Address to the Greeks*). (L35)

The epilogue of *The Principles of the Universe* provides an answer to the kind of objections to philosophical investigation raised by the likes of Tatian and Abū-Ḥātim in both Christianity and Islam.

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[u] *Yṭṛhh* B; *naṭraḥahu* C. The reading and the syntax of this sentence are uncertain. Badawī's translation disregards some words.

Avicenna's conception of the history of philosophy, the position occupied by Aristotle in it, the attitude toward him adopted by his successors, and the proper approach of philosophical inquiry was formed against an intellectual background outlined by the passages selected above, a background which in its essentials was an extension of the thought world of late Alexandrian Aristotelianism. This conception is clearly reflected in all his personal writings where he explicitly mentions the subject and especially in the introduction to *The Easterners* (T8). It also provides one of the keys for our approach to his philosophy and to reading his works.

5.

AVICENNA'S CONCEPTION OF THE PRAXIS OF PHILOSOPHY

The understanding of the history and development of philosophy which Avicenna acquired from the Aristotelian tradition provided the starting point and the context for his own philosophical activity and his self-consciousness as a philosopher. It helped him crystallize his thoughts about the philosophical praxis, or what it is to "do" philosophy, and by extension, about how all philosophers should proceed.

The starting point of all philosophical praxis is acknowledging the fact that the knowledge to be acquired and then communicated is the Knowledge possessed by the intellects of the spheres, the Knowledge, that is, which reflects ontology, and has a syllogistic structure. This Knowledge presents a closed system: it contains all the knowledge there is. But "what is known to mankind is limited" (T11, §7) because the human intellect is encased in a body which hinders its acquisition of this Knowledge. Only "when the association of the soul with the body is severed through death" will the soul "receive the divine effluence [containing Knowledge], will have revealed to it whatever was hidden from it before the separation, and there will come about it a similarity with the abstract intellects which are the principles of the causes of beings, since all the truths are revealed to these [celestial] intellects" (T14, §10). While still in the body, the Knowledge can be acquired, however partially, by philosophy. The goal of the *praxis* of philosophy is therefore to actualize in the human intellect the Knowledge of the celestial spheres, while the *history* of philosophy is the record of the progressive acquisition by humans of parts of this Knowledge. Thus, although the Knowledge to be acquired in itself and on a transcendental plane is a closed system and hence static, on a human level and in history it is evolutionary. This idea of progress in the acquisition of Knowledge which Avicenna inherited from the Aristotelian tradition informed both the orientation of his philosophical praxis and his prescription of it.

1. *Objective Method: Fundamental Principles and Corollaries*

Following the spirit of philosophical inquiry indicated by the attitudes of Abū-Bakr ar-Rāzī and the epilogue of *The Principles of the Universe*, Avicenna repeatedly specified in his works that "doing" philosophy con-

sists, essentially, of two operations: discerning the Fundamental Principles (*uṣūl*) of the Knowledge and Working Out Corollary Principles on their basis (*tafrīʿ*). The first philosopher to have done so and to have set the course for the future was Aristotle: he distinguished the parts of the sciences one from the other, he classified them, he perceived the truth in many things, and he discerned sound Fundamental Principles in most sciences (T8, §1). Subsequent philosophers were not as successful, as we saw in the preceding section, in establishing with the same precision such Principles; Avicenna, however, could claim for himself that God had granted him "an incessant certainty about Fundamental Principles which the seeker of salvation must without fail know, and a wide-ranging competence in subsequent areas" (T11, §8). What Aristotle's successors, and by implication, all philosophers, should do, is

> gather the loose ends [Aristotle] left, repair any breach they find in what he constructed, and Supply Corollaries to Fundamental Principles he presented. (T8, §1).

This is precisely what Avicenna claims to have done in the Prologue to *The Cure*: he presented the Fundamental Principles which he established as true and he Supplied their Corollaries (T9, §1). Even so, and despite his keen awareness of the validity of what he had done, the sense of historical evolution and of progress in the acquisition of Knowledge never left Avicenna. Toward the end of his life he could write with perfect candor to a disciple:

> With regard to matters upon which I have spent great effort, I have come to know things which I have Verified and cannot be improved, except that they are few. What I neither know nor have a way of knowing, on the other hand, is much indeed, but sometimes I have no hopes that about what I do not know I will ever come into possession of new knowledge which I have not already achieved by the assiduous research I have been engaged in, despite the fact that my dedication to the search for truth is unmatched [T11, §8].

And in the same spirit he could exhort posterity in his last major work to continue with the search for truth along the lines he prescribed:

> O you who are zealous to Ascertain the truth! I have exposed to you in these Pointers and reminders Fundamental Principles and essential elements of philosophy; if sagacity takes hold of your hand [to guide you], it will become easy for you to Derive Corollary Principles from the former and work out the details of the latter [T10, §2].

The two concepts of Fundamental Principles and Working Out Corollaries on their basis (*uṣūl, tafrīʿ*) are therefore central in Avicenna's conception of the praxis of philosophy and used throughout his works. They

are, however, by no means original to him. They are primarily terms of Islamic jurisprudence, from which they have become completely integrated into common Arabic usage in all areas. A particularly apposite example is their use in an irreverent poem about hashish:

> The jurist says to me, while in my eyes (L36)
> there are allusions [to intoxication] more telling than evidence itself,
> Given the most eminent Fundamental Principles of relaxation, upon which basis
> would you Derive its Corollary states? And I replied, On the basis of hashish.[1]

In philosophical terminology, these two words were in use long before Avicenna. In the preceding section we saw them employed by Abū-Bakr ar-Rāzī for much the same purpose; and even before Rāzī the great Ḥunayn ibn-Isḥāq used them to describe precisely what it was that the ancient philosophers had done:

> The ancients provided Fundamental Principles for philosophy, Worked Out its Corollary principles, and spread it far and wide...[2] (L37)

Avicenna was thus following the mainstream tradition in this regard; his main contribution was to employ these terms with consistency and rigor and make them an integral part of his conception of the philosophical praxis. An excellent example is provided by his letter to Kiyā (T12, §§1-2) in which he describes in detail his analysis of Aristotle's *De Anima*, *Physics*, and *De Caelo*, and offers suggestions about how to proceed to build upon their teachings. As for the specific epistemological aspect of the procedure, it is intimately associated with Intuition, which helps a philosopher Discover the First Principles and Supply the Corollaries (T9, §1 and note 1; T10, §2 and note 3), subjects that have already been discussed.

2. *Social Contextuality: Customary Practice*

Avicenna exhibited great originality, on the other hand, by identifying another aspect of the philosophical praxis, which lent it fullness and cogency. Granted that perceiving fundamental principles and

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[1] The last two lines of the poem in Arabic, quoted in F. Rosenthal, *The Herb*, Leiden 1971, 28, note 5, read as follows: *uṣūlu l-basṭi awjahahā ʿalā mā / tufarriʿuhū fa-qultu ʿalā ṣ-ṣaḥīḥi*. The pun here depends on the nickname for hashish, *ṣaḥīḥ*, which is also the title of Buḫārī's famous collection of *ḥadīṯ* (Prophetic Traditions), one of the *uṣūl* on the basis of which jurists derived legislation for individual cases.

[2] *Nawādir al-Falāsifa*, MS Escorial 760, f. 2v: *al-qudamāʾ ... aṣṣalū l-ḥikmata wa-farraʿū-hā wa-aḏāʿū-hā*. Cf. Merkle 36.

elaborating corollaries are the two major operations that a philosopher has to perform, the fact nevertheless remains that each philosopher is grounded in historical circumstances and has been schooled in ways which determine his outlook and his position vis-à-vis the philosophical praxis itself. What Avicenna came to realize with great perspicacity, in other words, was the *contextuality* of the philosophical praxis and the inevitable distortions that result therefrom even if the philosopher avoids blind and uncritical Adherence to a sect (*taqlīd, taᶜaṣṣub*) and proceeds by Principles and Corollaries. Doubtless Avicenna was alerted to this aspect of philosophizing by his own experience as described in the Autobiography, i.e. by the development of his theory of Intuition which enabled him to claim access to and certainty in absolute Knowledge outside the historical process. Engaging in philosophy in history, however, entailed following habits of thought acquired from teachers and predecessors, from a tradition of instruction, which in turn generated a potential conflict between one's own ideas and those inherited. Hence there are two subjective issues involved, whose resolution is necessary before the philosophical praxis can proceed objectively by Principles and Corollaries. Acquired habits of research and study have to be brought into full consciousness and if necessary broken, and deferential attitudes toward tradition should not result, out of fear of creating schisms, in its accommodation by means of pretexts or deliberate disregard of past errors. For the philosophical praxis to yield results, the effects of a philosopher's contextuality have to be neutralized.

Avicenna came gradually to a realization of these issues.[3] The first note of independence, of his self-awareness of his contextuality and his attempt to counteract it, is struck in the very first page of *The Cure* that he wrote, the introduction to the Physics, where he explains his statement to Jūzjānī and the other disciples (W6) that he did not wish to write commentaries:[4]

> We frequently see that when those who discuss the Philosophical Sciences [*al-mutakallimūn fī l-ᶜulūm*] undertake to refute some feeble essay or turn to explicate a problem whose truth can be observed at a short distance, they exhaust every effort, Verify every part, and set forth every argument; but (L:

[3] The evolution of Avicenna's independent attitude toward the Aristotelian tradition will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7; here it is sufficient to present his exposition of these issues.

[4] *Aš-Šifāᵓ, aṭ-Ṭabīᶜīyāt, as-Samāᶜ aṭ-ṭabīᶜī*, S. Zayed, ed., Cairo 1983, 3.8-4.9; also quoted in Mahdavī 146.2-14. Although Avicenna opens this introduction by stating that he has already presented the "gist" (*lubāb*) of logic, it is clear that this is merely in anticipation of what he intends to do. It is impossible to characterize the actual Logic of *The Cure* as "the gist," especially since, as Jūzjānī remarks, "the Logic grew longer" than anticipated (T7, §6).

> when they set out on a difficult matter and reach some ambiguity, they pass it over completely. As for ourselves, we hope that beyond this there is a way opposite and a method contrary to theirs; we shall do our best to spread [only] what is right from our predecessors and leave unmentioned what we think they neglected. This is then what prevented us from writing commentaries on their books and exegeses on their texts, since we were not sure that we would ever get to the end of all the places in which we[a] think they have been negligent, and we would therefore be compelled either to undertake to excuse them, or devise arguments and pretexts for them, or to refute them openly. But God spared us this and allotted them a group of people who worked hard and wrote exegeses on their books. If anybody desires to understand what they said, these commentaries will lead him and these exegeses will suffice him. But whoever actively strives for Knowledge and substance [*al-maʿānī*], he will find them written down in those books [on philosophy], and he will also find some of the results of our research, despite our young age, in these books[b] which we wrote and collectively called *The Cure*.[c]

There is an incipient awareness of the dangers of customary procedures here. The practice has been, Avicenna says, to concentrate on the process of commenting itself and overlook the purpose for which commentaries are written, namely, understanding the concepts themselves, the substance of the issue. If he were to write commentaries, he would have to deal with the same issues already determined by his predecessors and in the same way as they did, and the only alternatives would then be either to accommodate tradition and devise pretexts, or to spend the time refuting it. In neither case would the real purpose, discussing the substance, be served. As Avicenna's disciple from Rayy put it, the commentaries of other scholars and especially of Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib are noted for their "scant attention to substance [*al-maʿānī*], the narrow scope of exposition, the dubious argumentation that fails to convince, the use of rhetorical and sophistical methods in the demonstrative sciences, and the inconsistent procedures. ... Avicenna [would not write such refutations] because he keeps himself above engaging in arguments about everything and everybody" [T13, §4].

As Avicenna continued writing *The Cure*, the implications for the philosophical praxis of following tradition were becoming increasingly apparent to him. By the time he came to write the part on Music, he stated his views in a synoptic fashion. In its introduction he mentioned that he was going to deviate from the accepted method of presenting that subject, and justified his originality by stating the numerous mistakes

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[a] Reading *naẓunnu* for *yuẓannu* (?) in the text.

[b] Reading *fī hāḏihi l-kutub*, as in some mss and Mahdavī, for *fī hāḏā, al-kutub* in the text.

[c] The text has not been properly established in what follows.

which blind imitation of models and lack of independent and critical thinking have caused in the history of philosophy:[5]

> [Presenting music in the traditional manner] is the practice of those who (L39
> cannot distinguish one science from the next and separate the essential from the accidental. Their philosophy, which was the first to appear, was inherited undigested, and they were imitated by people inferior to the man who attained [the level of] revising philosophy and reached [the method of] detailed and Verified analysis.[6] Many a careless error has been caused by imitation, many an inadvertent thought has been covered by high opinion of the ancients and thus met with approval, many a Customary Practice [*ʿāda*] obstructed truth, and many an accommodating stance [*musāʿada*] has diverted [thinkers] from reflection!
>
> We have expended great efforts to observe the truth itself and turn a deaf ear to the lures of Customary Practices [*ʿādāt*] to the extent of our ability and good fortune, even though we were actually on our guard for the most part rather than at all times, and caution saved us from error in the majority of cases rather than in all. We therefore need our colleagues to correct what we have been remiss in and failed to achieve.

In the Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8), finally, which can fairly be called Avicenna's manifesto of the philosophical praxis, all these points are taken one by one. The acquisition of Knowledge in history is piecemeal; Aristotle was the first to discern Fundamental Principles in most sciences, but his statements and those of the ancients are in need of addition, correction, and revision (§1). The philosophical praxis consists of establishing Fundamental Principles and Working Out the Corollaries; but this should be done after the philosopher has become conscious of his historical contextuality and has rejected sectarian opinion, his own fancy, Customary Practice, and personal habit (§1). Otherwise, there is the danger of accommodating tradition and consequently failing to exercise his own mind and reflect on the problems (§1). But even if such a level of awareness is reached there is the further danger, to which Avicenna confesses to have succumbed, of accommodating tradition and devising pretexts for it out of a desire to avoid confrontation and creating schisms (§§3, 5). This can be overcome only by the personal courage of the philosopher. He should have no personal fear about appearing to contradict majority opinion (§4), and he should have no fear about truth itself lest it be misunderstood (§5); these two problems, which cannot be overlooked, can be resolved by adopting appropriate methods of composition (Chapter 8). He should have the strength of his convictions,

[5] *Aš-Šifāʾ, ar-Riyāḍīyāt, Jawāmiʿ ʿilm al-mūsīqā*, Z. Yusef, ed., Cairo 1956, 4.1-8.

[6] By the first philosophers Avicenna would seem to be referring to the Pythagoreans, especially since he says that the traditional manner of presenting music which he rejects included a discussion of the theory of *ēthos*. The man who revised philosophy, of course, is Aristotle, whose example Avicenna is following in proceeding by Verification.

especially if his personal experience assures him of having reached Knowledge through Intuition (§§2, 6); he should therefore discard traditional molds, restate the issues on his own terms, and present Knowledge as it is in itself (§6). This, indeed, is his duty as a philosopher: having come from within the tradition and Adhered to it in a Partisan spirit, he commands the respect of his colleagues, and his works are held in high esteem; he is therefore in the best position to teach them the truth and save them from their faults. But neither can he do otherwise; the very Partisan attachment to doctrines now discredited in his eyes, that originally made him sought after among his colleagues, lowers his self-esteem and forces him to communicate the true Philosophy he has Discovered through Intuition (§6).

3. *Social Contextuality: Withholding Knowledge*

One of the most significant factors that determined Avicenna's understanding of the praxis of philosophy was traditional attitudes about communication and withholding of knowledge. The question has been debated primarily in a context that has been defined as the ubiquitous need in ancient and medieval times for philosophers to conceal their secret or esoteric doctrines. This formulation, whatever its worth, assumes that all philosophers had secret doctrines to conceal and that they were all persecuted in their societies. The assumption may be true for some philosophers but certainly not for all; particularly it does not apply to Avicenna, as it becomes apparent from a brief investigation of the concepts about withholding knowledge which he inherited from tradition and his immediate milieu.

The idea of teaching one's philosophy only to those prepared to receive it had traversed a long path in intellectual history and is to be encountered in almost every aspect of it. Here we are specifically concerned with its manifestation in the Aristotelian tradition, within which Avicenna squarely placed himself.

Beginning with discussions on the difference between Aristotle's popular works ("exoteric") and his school treatises ("acroatic"), a long succession of Aristotelian scholars debated continuously the question whether Aristotle taught in the latter what he withheld from the former. Positions were taken on both sides of the question, but the focal point of the argument revolved around the issue of Aristotle's style in the acroatic works, or the method he used in them to present his philosophy.[7] The

[7] The texts of this debate, lasting from the first century B.C. well into Byzantine times, were collected and discussed by Düring *Biographical Tradition* 426-443.

sources that were used for the conduct of this debate included, in addition to whatever evidence could be produced from the scientific works of Aristotle himself, the pseudepigraphic "correspondence" of Aristotle. One such exchange of letters, allegedly between Alexander and Aristotle, has been preserved both in Greek and, in a derivative form, in Arabic, and may have been known to Avicenna. The Greek is found in Gellius's *Noctes Atticae* and reads as follows:[8]

(L40) Alexander to Aristotle, best wishes.
You did not do well to have publicized your acroatic works. For in what respect are we to be different from others, if they are going to share with us all the works in which we have been instructed? I personally would have much preferred to be distinctive with regard to acquaintance with or capacity for the best. Greetings.
Aristotle to Alexander the King, best wishes.
You wrote to me about the acroatic works, stating your belief that they should be kept secret. You should know, however, that, though publicized, they are not public: for they are intelligible only to those who have attended our lectures. Greetings, King Alexander.

In Mubaššir's *Muḫtār al-ḥikam*, after passing through an unknown number of stages, this exchange is reproduced in the following form:[9]

(L41) Plato reproached Aristotle for the philosophy he had publicized and the books he had written. Aristotle made the following plea in his defense: "As for the practitioners and students[10] of philosophy, they ought to make copies of it;[d] but as for its enemies and those who refuse to have anything to do with it, they will never have access to it on account of their ignorance of its contents and their distaste for it, and of their shying away from it because it is too difficult for them. Thus, although I have made this philosophy public, I have surrounded it with impregnable fortifications—so that the foolish cannot scale its walls, the ignorant gain access to it, and the wicked lay their hands on it—and I have ordered it in such a way that is of no consequence to philosophers but does not benefit lying detractors."

Such discussions eventually led, in Alexandrian Aristotelianism, to the formulation of the doctrine that Aristotle deliberately cultivated obscurity

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[d] "They ought to make copies of it:" *fa-yanbaġī an yansaḫūhā*. The correct reading is found in the Ahmet III manuscript, a photograph of which is reproduced in Rosenthal *Heritage*, facing page 45. Badawī has the impossible *yunjisūhā* [?], while Lippert reads *fa-lan yanbaġiya an yubḫasūhā* and translates, "so ist est nicht nötig, dass wir ihnen etwas vorenthalten."

[8] Gellius 20,5,11-12 (Marshall) = M. Plezia, *Aristoteles, Privatorum Scriptorum Fragmenta*, Leipzig 1977, 28 (with exhaustive references to previous literature).

[9] *Muḫtār al-ḥikam* 184.5-10 = J. Lippert, *Studien auf dem Gebiete der griechisch-arabischen Übersetzungslitteratur*, Braunschweig 1894, 9.2-7 = MS Istanbul Ahmet III 3206, f. 90r, 1-7. Cf. the translation by Lippert, p. 18, and by M. Plezia, *Aristotelis Epistularum Fragmenta cum Testamento*, Warsaw 1961, 49.

[10] "Practitioners and students," literally, "sons and heirs."

in his works. This doctrine became incorporated in classroom instruction, and was included among the ten points that were necessary for a student to study as an introduction to the works of Aristotle.[11] They formed the prolegomena of every commentary on the *Categories*, and as such were transmitted wholesale into Arabic. This introduction was available to Avicenna in the numerous translations of the commentaries on the *Categories*, a perfect specimen of which is preserved in Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib's adaptation of such a commentary,[12] and in Fārābī's summary of the ten points, known under the title *Prolegomena to the Study of Aristotle's Philosophy*, which may be translated here because of its brevity:

> Aristotle used an obscure way of expression for three reasons: first, to test the nature of the student in order to find out whether he is suitable to be educated or not; second, to avoid lavishing philosophy on all people but only on those who are worthy of it; and third, to train the mind through the exertion of research.[13] (L42)

This tripartite etiology of Aristotle's obscurity was well known among Arabic authors writing on Greek philosophy. It was incorporated, for example, in a work not engaged at all in commenting upon the *Categories*, in ʿĀmirī's *Afterlife*.[14] Even more significant for the influence it was to exercise on Avicenna, however, is a passage from Fārābī's *The Agreement between Plato and Aristotle*. Regrettably, no study has been made of this treatise, despite its obvious importance for the development of the discussions on the subject both in late Alexandrian Aristotelianism and during the two dark centuries of its survival after the Islamic conquests and before its re-emergence with Abū-Bišr Mattā and Fārābī. The passage that concerns us here represents another aspect of the tendentious history

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[11] The ten points are presented in a summary form and with full references to the extant Greek texts by L. G. Westerink, *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, Amsterdam 1962, xxvi-xxvii, and in Düring *Biographical Tradition* 445-449.

[12] The work, still unedited, is preserved in the Cairo manuscript Dār al-Kutub, Ḥikma 1M. Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib's preface to this chapter is translated, from this manuscript, by Rosenthal *Heritage* 70-72. The discussion of the reasons of Aristotle's obscurity is on ff. 7v-8r. In this section, as in the entire commentary, Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib follows very closely, even to the reproduction of the poetic quotations, his Greek archetype, which must have been a variation of the text of Elias, *In Aristotelis Categorias* (*CAG* 18.1) 124.25-127.2.

[13] Fārābī, *Mā yanbaġī an yuqaddama qabla taʿallum falsafat Arisṭū*, in *Mabādiʾ al-falsafa al-qadīma*, Cairo 1328/1910, 14 = F. Dieterici, *Alfārābī's philosophische Abhandlungen*, Leiden 1890, 54 (text) = F. Dieterici, *Alfārābī's philosophische Abhandlungen*, Leiden 1892, 89 (translation). The standard three reasons given by Elias for Aristotle's obscurity, and reproduced by both Fārābī and Ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib, with the respective terms used, are, testing the student (*dokimasia*, *istibrāʾ*, *imtiḥān*), training him (*gymnasia*, *riyāḍa*, *riyāḍa*), and withholding philosophy from the unworthy (*krypsis*, *li-allā yubḍala l-falsafa*, *li-kay-mā lā taẓhara asrāru l-falsafa*).

[14] ʿĀmirī *Amad* 85-86 = Rowson *Afterlife* 100. See also Rowson's comments on pp. 340-343.

and study of philosophy that developed during that time,[15] and it manifestly derives from sophisticated elaborations of the late Alexandrian dogma of Aristotle's obscurity: for it informs the reader not only *why* Aristotle was obscure, but *how*; it specifies in great detail the procedures whereby Aristotle allegedly managed to conceal his innermost ideas behind a fortress of words impenetrable to the non-philosopher. It is translated here in full:[16]

1. It is also stated that there is disparity between the methods of Plato (L4
and Aristotle in recording the sciences and writing books. This is because formerly Plato used to prohibit recording the sciences and depositing the depths of books anywhere except in pure hearts and "well-pleasing" minds. But when he feared for himself that he would become negligent and forgetful, and that what he had discovered would be lost and become difficult to understand—since his knowledge and philosophy, which he had treated in detail, had become extensive—he selected symbols and allegories with the purpose of recording his sciences and philosophy in a way that only those deserving of them, and those worthy of comprehending them, would detect after inquiries, research, examination and assiduous application.

2. As for Aristotle, his method was to elucidate, record, arrange in order, communicate, uncover, expound, and to treat exhaustively everything for which he could find a way.

3. These two methods are apparently disparate. And yet, the person who researches the Aristotelian sciences, studies his books, and applies himself with perseverance to them, knows full well the different methods he used to render things inaccessible, cryptic, and intricate, despite his express intent to expound and explain. Among these [methods] are the following:

i. In many of the syllogisms which he presents in the fields of physics, metaphysics, and ethics, it is found in what he says that he omits the necessary premiss. The commentators have pointed out the passages where this occurs.

ii. He omits many conclusions [of such syllogisms], and he also omits one of the two [premisses of the conclusion] and offers only the other. For example, in his 'Epistle to Alexander on the Constitutions of Particular Cities,' he says: "He who chooses justice in civic intercourse, deserves to be set apart by the governor of the city when it comes to [meting] punishments." The complete form of this statement is the following: "He who chooses justice over injustice, deserves to be set apart by the governor of the city when it comes to [meting] punishments and rewards;" i.e., "He who chooses justice deserves to be rewarded, just as he who chooses injustice deserves to be punished."

iii. He mentions two premisses of one syllogism, but follows them with the conclusion of another; or he mentions two premisses of one syllogism, and follows it with the conclusion of the consequents of these premisses. He did this, for example, in the *Analytica Priora* [A.32, 47a27] when he mentioned parts of substances to be themselves substances.

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[15] See the references in Gutas "Starting Point" 122 note 1.

[16] Fārābī *Jamᶜ* 5-7 (in Dieterici *Abhandlungen*, text) = 84-85 (Nader, Beirut 1960, text) = 9-11 (Dieterici *Abhandlungen*, translation).

iv. He discusses at great length and presents multiple particulars about something evident in order to create the impression that he treated [the issue] exhaustively and with great effort; but then he passes over something obscure without discussing it at length or writing it out fully.

v. The order, arrangement, and plan of his scientific [i.e., acroatic] works are such that make one think that these are his peculiar characteristics, from which it is impossible for him to deviate. But when his [exoteric] epistles are examined closely, it is found that his presentation of the subjects in them is structured and ordered according to plans and arrangements which differ from those in the [acroatic] books. It is sufficient for us [to mention here] his well-known letter to Plato in response to what Plato had written to him, reprimanding him for writing books and classifying the sciences, and making them public in his complete and penetrating works. Aristotle clarified the matter in this letter to Plato, and said: "Although I have recorded [in writing] these sciences and the philosophical doctrines which they contain, I have nevertheless arranged them in a way that will be accessible only to their adherents, and expressed them in ways that will be comprehended only by their practitioners."

4. It is therefore evident from what we have described that two appraisals [of the issue whether philosophy ought to be written or not], apparently contradictory but [in fact] united by a single intent, contain the reason for the presupposition of a disparity between the two methods.

Avicenna studied Fārābī's treatise, and this passage in particular, with great care and applied its teachings in his efforts to understand the Aristotelian texts. In his responses to the physical questions posed to him by Bīrūnī he explicitly refers to Fārābī's treatise by title;[17] the description of his method of study in the Autobiography (T3, §8) is directly inspired by the above passage (Chapter 3.3A), and the epilogue of his work, *The State of the Human Soul* (T5), is conceived and worded by constant reference to the same passage. When he came to write his detailed analytical commentaries on Aristotle, as in the *Fair Judgment*, for example, he followed closely (as we shall see in Chapter 8) Fārābī's description of Aristotle's method of composition.

With regard to the problem of communicating philosophical knowledge, Avicenna's attitudes were thus shaped in part by the ideas he found in the Aristotelian tradition. This knowledge was to be communicated in writing lest it be forgotten, but it was to be communicated in an obscure style in order to conceal it from those unworthy of it, and in order to test and train the students. The stylistic devices whereby this obscurity was to be achieved consisted essentially of peculiarities in the arrangement of the works and the omission of various steps in the syllogistic process; the philosopher would pay no attention to the

[17] *As'ila* 40.12-13.

arrangement, and he will easily supply these steps, while the unlettered would be baffled by both and turn away from philosophy altogether.

Native Arabic and Islamic tradition developed analogous attitudes toward the problem of communicating knowledge quite independently of the Greek tradition. Although the subject of knowledge in Islam has been treated extensively,[18] it is necessary to elaborate here on the particular aspect of it that is our concern.

As in the Aristotelian tradition, there also developed in Islamic culture a two-sided approach to the question of disseminating knowledge. On the one hand, knowledge of all sorts, but frequently knowledge of a specific kind, was to be passed on and taught absolutely by the person who possessed it; withholding it was to be considered a sin and forbidden. On the other hand, the reverse position maintained that knowledge was to be given only to those worthy to receive it, lest it be ignored, debased, or lost. The terms that were universally used in this context were *ḍanna bi-* (and its various synonyms, like *baḫila bi-* and *šaḥḥa bi-*), "being stingy about" or "withholding" knowledge, and its antonym, *baḏala*, "lavishing," in the case of those deserving (*al-ahl*), and "squander", in the case of the unworthy (*ġayr al-ahl*).

The locus classicus of the term *ḍanna bi-* is the Qurʾānic *hapax legomenon*, *wa-mā huwa ʿalā l-ġaybi bi-ḍ-ḍanīn* (81.24), "Neither does he [Muḥammad] withhold [knowledge of] the Unseen," where the "Unseen" was invariably interpreted as the Qurʾān. There is a variant reading of *ẓanīn* for *ḍanīn* among the early generations of Qurʾānic readers, and there is the further problem that the preposition *ʿalā* should have been *bi-* (i.e., *wa-mā huwa bi-l-ġaybi bi-ḍ-ḍanīn*). Whatever the original reading and its meaning in the time of Muḥammad, however, the entire Islamic tradition which preferred the reading *ḍanīn* interpreted it uniformly as meaning "being stingy about." Two representative interpretations may be offered from those collected by Ṭabarī in his commentary, both on the authority of early and reliable Qurʾānic scholars. "From Qatāda: 'This Qurʾān is the Unseen. God gave it to Muḥammad, lavished it upon him (*baḏalahu*), taught it to him, and summoned to it. God did not withhold it from Muḥammad'." "From Ibn-Zayd: '... God sent it [the Qurʾān] through Gabriel ... to Muḥammad. Gabriel transmitted what had been consigned [to him] by God to Muḥammad, and Muḥammad transmitted what had been consigned [to him] by God and Gabriel to mankind. Not one of them [i.e., God, Gabriel, Muḥammad] withheld, suppressed, or fabricated [anything]'." Ṭabarī himself preferred *ḍanīn* because, he said, it was the reading of all the Qurʾānic manuscripts.[19]

[18] Rosenthal *Knowledge*.

[19] Ṭabarī *Tafsīr* (Būlāq), Cairo 1321, XXX.45.

These interpretations create a chain of transmission of *religious* knowledge and stipulate that no link in that chain is to hold back or fabricate any part of it. The same sentiment about the transmission of religious knowledge is sounded in a Prophetic Tradition reported by Ġazālī. The Prophet is reported to have said that there are two kinds of religious scholars of the Islamic community: those who, having been given knowledge by God, lavish it upon (*baḏala*) people and accept no payment in return, and those who, having also been given knowledge by God, withhold it (*ḍanna bi-*) from mankind and accept payment in return. The former will be rewarded on the Day of Judgment and the latter will be severely punished.[20] Withholding knowledge for the sake of gain was thus associated with "studying for this world" and counted among the major sins. It was so listed by Ḏahabī in his *Book of Major Sins*.[21]

Withholding *secular* knowledge, presumably for the sake of self-aggrandizement, also met with disapproval. There is the parabolic story of a lexicographer who wrote a dictionary of unparalleled richness, but who was "stingy about it" (*ḍanna bi-*) and did not allow his students to copy it. "He thus," says Azharī who reports the story, "saw no good come out of his work during his lifetime." But even after his death, the story continues, the book was jinxed, for it fell in the water while being transported across a river and was lost. Azharī concludes with the inevitable moral: "Withholding knowledge (*aḍ-ḍann bi-l-ʿilm*) is not praiseworthy and no good comes out of it (*wa-lā mubāraka fīhi*)."[22] In the same spirit Aristotle is credited in the *Depository of Wisdom Literature* with having said, "Withholding the knowledge (*ḍannu r-rajuli bi-l-ʿilm*) and philosophy which bring one close to happiness is one of the cruelest acts and greatest sins."[23]

The complementary position to this approach to disseminating knowledge, viz., that it should be divulged only to those deserving it and capable of understanding it, also found its authority among the sayings of the Prophet and other respected personalities in Islamic culture. A few

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[20] Ġazālī *Iḥyāʾ*, Book I, *Bāb* 6, *fī āfāt al-ʿilm* = p. I.46-47, Būlāq 1312; I.55, Cairo 1334. This *ḥadīṯ* is found in none of the canonical collections, but this fact is insignificant. The *ḥadīṯ* is important for conveying a widely held belief, though it seems, not practice, that knowledge ought not to be withheld for the sake of personal gain.

[21] References in Rosenthal *Knowledge* 315, where the subject of the "Personal Failings of Scholars" is treated in detail.

[22] Al-Azharī *Taḥḏīb al-luġa* (Cairo 1964-1967) I.25. See the story and references in J. A. Haywood, *Arabic Lexicography*, Leiden 1965, 95-96. The author of the lost dictionary (*K. al-Jīm*) is reported to have been Šamir al-Harawī (*GAS* VIII.191), but Haywood rightly questions the attribution. In the *Marātib an-Naḥwīyīn* of ʿAbd-al-Wāḥid ibn-ʿAlī al-Ḥalabī (Cairo 1974, p. 145), which Haywood does not cite, a similar story is told of Abū-ʿAmr aš-Šaybānī's *K. al-Jīm*.

[23] *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* 766.

Traditions in the collection of none other than Buḫārī present the Prophet as favoring suppression of *religious* knowledge (i.e., of *ḥadīṯ*) from those who might misunderstand and misapply it.[24] In Avicenna's Andalusian contemporary Ibn-ᶜAbd-al-Barr's *Comprehensive Exposition of Knowledge and Its Excellence*, where various statements on this subject are collected,[25] the Prophet's statement takes the following generalized form: "Forgetfulness destroys knowledge, and transmitting it to the undeserving (*ġayr ahlihi*) causes its loss." The famous logion of Jesus from Matthew 7:6, "neither cast ye your pearls before swine," figures prominently in such discussions, and is retold in numerous variations ascribed both to Jesus and others.[26] One version in Ibn-ᶜAbd-al-Barr will serve as an example: "It is related on the authority of the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace, that he said: 'My brother Jesus, peace be upon him, rose among the Israelites to deliver a sermon and said: "O Israelites, do not give wisdom (*ḥikma*) to the undeserving (*ġayr ahlihā*) lest you wrong it, and do not keep it from the deserving lest you wrong them".' " Ibn-ᶜAbd-al-Barr then goes on to quote with great approval a few verses from an anonymous poet, which may not be irrelevant in the present context:

Am I to strew pearls [in prose] among grazing droves, (L4
  Or string them [in verse] for heedless sheep?
Haven't you seen how I have been wasted in the worst of lands?
  I will not squander sayings/words like pearls among them!
If ever the Merciful should cure me of the long hardship I am in,
  And I come across people worthy of knowledge and wisdom,[27]
I will spread [my pearls], benefiting them, and gain their love;
  Otherwise I will keep [my pearls] stored with me, concealed.

This poem is significant because it illustrates the association that was made in Islamic culture between withholding knowledge and another widely held concept, "evil times:" a regular aspect of the "complaint about the times" at every age was that interest in knowledge had waned, and that there was hardly anybody left able to understand and appreciate

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[24] Buḫārī, *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ*, I.45-46 (L. Krehl, ed., *Le recueil des traditions Mahométans par ... el-Bokhâri*, Leiden 1862; *bāb* 48 and 49 of *kitāb al-ᶜilm*). See the summary in Rosenthal *Knowledge* 81-82.

[25] Ibn-ᶜAbd-al-Barr, *Jāmiᶜ bayān al-ᶜilm wa-faḍlihi*, Cairo 1968, I.130-33.

[26] For further variants and references see D. Gutas, "Classical Arabic Wisdom Literature: Nature and Scope," *JAOS* 101 (1981) 78, note 67. Cf. also Rosenthal *Knowledge* 259.

[27] It is impossible to convey in English the breadth of the Arabic words *ᶜulūm* and *ḥikam*; the former suggests at the same time "different kinds of knowledge" and "sciences," the latter "maxims," "wisdom," and "different kinds of philosophical sciences."

the knowledge transmitted to him.[28] In such circumstances, as our poet says, it is better to withhold knowledge.

The two attitudes in Islamic culture about communicating or withholding knowledge were complementary and converged on an unexpressed principle, the intention of the person in withholding it. All knowledge, and especially religious knowledge, was to be communicated except if the potential teacher knew that by communicating it some harm would ensue. The harm could be directed either to the knowledge itself (it might be lost if entrusted to dull minds), or to the person communicating it (he would be considered foolish, or called a liar, or attract abuse), or to the person receiving the knowledge and hence to society at large (he might misunderstand and misapply the contents of the knowledge).[29] If the intention of the potential teacher was to avoid causing any of these harms, then withholding knowledge was acceptable. If, however, his intention was gain, self-aggrandizement, or any worldly pursuits in general, then withholding knowledge was a sin. This state of affairs was satisfactory as long as knowledge was to be communicated orally, and there were few able and willing students (the "pure hearts" of Plato as reported by Fārābī in the passage above) to receive it. But the deteriorating state of the world (*fasād az-zamān*) made it increasingly evident that such students were no longer in sufficient supply—hence the need to consign knowledge to writing without at the same time also making it widely accessible and subject to the harms from which one wished to protect it. These are precisely the problems Avicenna referred to in *The Provenance and Destination* and *The State of the Human Soul* (T4, §3; T5, §2). The Aristotelian tradition provided at this point the answer by stating the ways in which one could "publicize knowledge without making it public," and Fārābī, summarizing centuries of development, enumerates the ways.

The Greek and Islamic attitudes towards the communication of knowledge were thus largely complementary, and it was this cluster of ideas that formed the background against which Avicenna's views about the subject were shaped.

To recapitulate: There are three major aspects to Avicenna's understanding of the philosophical praxis, all dictated by the reality of the human condition that the acquisition of Knowledge, that is, doing philos-

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[28] See the discussion of the "complaint about the times" in F. Rosenthal, "*Sweeter than Hope*", Leiden 1983, Chapter I, and particularly pp. 49-51.

[29] A good example of such potential harm of divulging knowledge to the unworthy is provided by Buḫārī. The Prophet did not want his statement that a mere pronouncement of the *šahāda* would protect one from Hell become widely known lest people rely on the *šahāda* only and stop doing good deeds (*Ṣaḥīḥ* I.46 Krehl). See Rosenthal *Knowledge* 82.

ophy, is a historical process. The first is theoretical and procedural. Knowledge is acquired by establishing Fundamental Principles and Working Out the Corollaries by syllogistic means. This centers on the Discovery of the middle term, which again is twofold. The middle term can be discovered after thought and reflection, or instantaneously by means of Intuition, i.e., the capacity the human intellect has for coming into contact with the Active Intellect. This is the only avenue available to humans to evade the constraints of history. Because of the attendant requirements for prolonged engagement in Intuition, this avenue is, understandably, limited to very few individuals, prophets and the most accomplished of philosophers.

The second and third are social. Since the acquisition of knowledge has to be done in a certain social context and by following the teachings of previous philosophers, incidental, but nonetheless deciding, considerations are operative. The teachings are transmitted in a certain tradition, and this tradition, by its very nature generates sclerotic attitudes which eventually hamper, rather than assist, the philosophical praxis. The "lures" of Custom and tradition have therefore to be avoided. The teachings are also transmitted in a society that has developed its own conventions, religious or cultural, of communicating the highest realities to the ignorant and dull multitudes. These conventions, because expressed in largely symbolic forms—the only forms of communication intelligible to the multitudes—may seem to contradict the outward sense of most of the pronouncements of the philosophers expressing realities as they are in themselves, and if exposed to them, the multitudes will misunderstand them, ignore the conventions which bind the society together, and cause harm. The pronouncements of the philosophers have therefore to be Withheld from the multitudes, or presented in such a fashion that will be unintelligible to them. Philosophical Knowledge has therefore to be communicated in a couched manner, and the process of acquisition of knowledge by the philosopher has accordingly to take this into consideration and unravel the allusive manner of exposition engaged in by previous philosophers.

PART THREE

AVICENNA'S INTEGRATION OF THE ARISTOTELIAN TRADITION

6.

THE RESOLUTION OF THE MAJOR POINTS OF CONFLICT WITH THE ARISTOTELIAN TRADITION

The Aristotelian tradition which Avicenna received and its teachings which he inherited were not homogeneous, nor were its various parts mutually compatible. The problems that presented themselves to him were endemic to the material which he received, and they ranged widely in origin: some were already to be found in the texts of Aristotle himself—the "loose ends" and "breaches" Avicenna refers to in the Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8, §1)—others were created by the generations of commentators, both Greek and Arabic, in their efforts "to understand what [Aristotle] accomplished best and in Partisan Adherence to some defective theories he originated" [*idem*], and still others had their origin in the vicissitudes of the transmission of this tradition, both from Greek into Arabic and subsequently within Arabic intellectual history. The latter category includes distortions and misrepresentations of this tradition that are due not only to textual corruption or terminological debates (like the one about the term *manṭiq*/logic to be discussed below in Section 5), but also to Neoplatonic pseudepigrapha associated in Arabic with the Aristotelian tradition, and in particular the Plotinian *Theologia Aristotelis*. Content as previous philosophers and commentators may have been either to gloss over these problems or treat them discretely and individually, Avicenna laid before him the task of reconciling the divergent tendencies of thirteen centuries of philosophical history[1] in the context of the Aristotelian system as homogenized and reflected in his own understanding of absolute truth. His efforts in this direction are perfectly consonant with his awareness of the historical dimension of the progress of philosophy and its acqusition, as evidenced in his conception of the history and praxis of philosophy previously discussed. His identification, appreciation, and proposed solution of these problems shed light on his general approach to philosophy and on his purpose as a philosopher.

Avicenna himself directs us to the areas where these major problems lie. He opens *The Easterners*, which aims to present Philosophy/Knowledge "as it is in itself," i.e., systematically and not historically, with the

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[1] Avicenna was fully aware of the thirteen centuries separating him from Aristotle; see T6B, §7.

following words: "We have resolved to compile a treatise on matters about which researchers have disagreed" (T8, §1). At the end of the first section after this introduction, he states that the areas in which these disagreements are to be found are Logic, the Universal Science and Theology parts of Metaphysics, the fundamental parts of Physics, and that part of Ethics "which is needed by the seeker of salvation." Mathematics and the rest of the practical science, he adds, are not contested subjects (Testimonium 17 in Chapter 2, W9).

Avicenna provides the same information about the areas of disagreement in the Prologue to *The Cure*, which was written shortly after the passage above (see W6). Here, however, he presents them in a positive light by calling them matters which he treated through his own reflection, and omits any reference to practical science "in anticipation," as he says, "of a comprehensive and separate book" he intended to write on the subject:

> There is nothing of account to be found in the books of the ancients which we did not include in this book of ours... . To this I added some of the things which I perceived through my own reflection and whose Validity I Determined through my own theoretical analysis, especially in Physics and Metaphysics—and even in Logic... [T9, §2].

A detailed comparison between Aristotelian logic, physics, and metaphysics and those of Avicenna is clearly beyond the scope of the present study and possibly not feasible with our present knowledge of his philosophy; but neither is it Avicenna's intention to draw attention in the passages above to differences of detail of which there would be many and not worth specific mention. This is indicated by the fact that Avicenna almost invariably presents his different viewpoint on matters of detail tacitly, while he makes a point to attract the reader's attention to divergences concerning significant issues in Metaphysics, Physics, and Logic.

1. *The Contents of Metaphysics*

Hardly a scholar who dealt with Avicenna's biography at some length failed to mention with amusement and awe his striking story in the Autobiography about his study of the *Metaphysics*:

> Having mastered Logic, Physics and Mathematics, I had now reached *Theology*. I read the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle but did not understand *what* it contained and was confused about the author's *purpose* to the point that I reread it forty times and consequently memorized it. In spite of this I still did not understand it or *what was intended by it*... . I bought ... Fārābī's book *On the Purposes of the Metaphysics*. I returned home and hastened to read it, and at once the *purposes* of that book were disclosed to me [T3, §9; emphasis added].

The reaction to this report has been twofold. Some scholars have been content simply to summarize it (with varying degrees of accuracy) or refer to it, as if it were self-explanatory and in need of no further comment other than, in some instances, an expression of amazement. Representative of this reaction is the following:

> An autobiographical tradition points out [Avicenna's] debt to al-Fārābī, whose *Intentions of Aristotle's Metaphysics* unraveled for him the secrets of that work, which he read forty times and almost memorized, we are told, without grasping its sense.[2]

Others have expressed some doubts about taking the story at its face value on the basis that Fārābī's work referred to by Avicenna, in its extant form, could hardly have had the effect described. The following is an eloquent representative of this view:

> [Fārābī's] treatise on the *Metaphysics* ... was printed in eight pages at Hyderabad in 1927. ... The text as we have it is in truth exceedingly slight, and one is bound to suspect that what we possess is very far from the complete original, for it would constitute a most slender guide to the mysteries of metaphysical speculation.[3]

Both approaches make two fundamental mistakes. One is not to read Avicenna's words carefully: he does not say that he did not understand the *sense* of the book, but its *purpose* and why it contained what it does. This is why upon reading Fārābī's essay he says that he understood not the concepts and the ideas of the book but its purposes. To assume that Avicenna meant that he could not understand the sense of the work requires one to accept the blatant contradiction, of which neither approach seems to be aware, between Avicenna's precocity in everything else and his dullness with regard to the *Metaphysics*.

The second mistake is not to read Fārābī's essay carefully—or at least to read it in the light of the first erroneous assumption: for it is obvious that to someone incapable of understanding the sense of the *Metaphysics* Fārābī's essay is of absolutely no help (hence Arberry's suggestion of a lost fuller commentary).

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[2] Fakhry *History* 147. Even more serious students of Avicenna fall into this category, e.g., Goichon *Directives* 16. Examples can be multiplied at will. Among the most amusing summaries of Avicenna's story is that given by Philip Hitti, admittedly not a historian of philosophy: "A copy of the *Metaphysics* ascribed to Aristotle fell into [Avicenna's] hands and floored him" (*Makers of Arab History*, New York 1968, 205-206).

[3] Arberry in Wickens 18. Through a later remark, Goichon also expresses herself in this fashion: "Il est peu vraisemblable que celui que publia Dieterici [i.e., Fārābī's *On the Purposes of the Metaphysics*] apportât un grand secours à Avicenne;" review of Gohlman, p. 98.

Avicenna's problem evidently was not with the ideas analyzed by Aristotle in the *Metaphysics* but with its purpose, and specifically with the classification of the subject matter discussed therein under the heading of "Theology." The precise areas of his difficulty can be appreciated after a closer look at the first half of Fārābī's essay in order to formulate the questions to which Fārābī provides the answers.[a]

1. Our intention in this treatise is to indicate the purpose contained in (L45) the book by Aristotle known as *Metaphysics* and the primary divisions which it has, since many people have the preconceived notion that the import and contents of this book consist of a treatment of the Creator, the intellect, the soul, and other related topics, and that the science of metaphysics and Islamic theology[4] are one and the same thing. For this reason we find most of those who examine [this book] perplexed and astray, since we[b] find most of the discussion in it devoid of any such purpose—even worse, we[b] can find no discussion specifically devoted to this purpose except in the eleventh chapter, the one designated with the letter *Lambda*.

2. Furthermore, there exists[c] no discussion by the ancients commenting in the proper manner on this book (as is the case with the other books [by Aristotle]), but at most there is the incomplete commentary on Chapter *Lambda* by Alexander [of Aphrodisias], and the complete one by Themistius. As for the other chapters, either they have not been commented upon, or rather [the commentaries] have not survived to our times since upon examination of the books by later Peripatetics it may be assumed that Alexander did, in fact, write a commentary on the entire book. For our part, we wish to point out the purpose of the book as well as the purpose of each one of its chapters.

3. We say: Some sciences are particular and others are universal. Particular sciences are those whose subject matter is *some* beings or *some* imaginary objects, and which study specifically the accidents[d] proper to

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[a] The following translation of the first part of Fārābī's *Maqāla fī aġrāḍ ... mā baʿda ṭ-ṭabīʿa* is based on the edition of Dieterici (D), *Abhandlungen* 34.6-36.19, after comparison with the text printed in Hyderabad (H), pp. 3-6. Neither edition is satisfactory and in a few places the transmitted readings are questionable. Dieterici's edition is based on two manuscripts, British Museum Or. 425 (D/B) and Berlin Landberg 368 (D/L), the first of which appears to be related to the manuscript used for the Hyderabad edition (Rāmpūr 70). A new critical edition is certainly a desideratum. I have accordingly avoided making any editorial decisions and simply followed what appeared to me the best reading, indicating significant variants in these notes. Dieterici's German translation (*Abhandlungen* [trans.] 54-58; see also p. xvi) is to be compared throughout. For bibliographical references to this work see A. Ateş, "Farabinin Eserlerinin Bibliyografyası," *Belleten* 15 (1951), no. 2; N. Rescher, *Al-Fārābī. An Annotated Bibliography*, Pittsburgh 1962, 44.

[b] H reads here "he" or "they," i.e., those who are perplexed.

[c] H reads, "we can find."

[d] H reads, "the purposes," *aġrāḍ*.

[4] *ʿIlm at-tawḥīd*, i.e. "the science dealing with the profession of God's oneness," a synonymous designation of *kalām*. See Gardet in *EI*2 s.v.

them. For example: physics studies one being, namely, body, insofar as it changes, moves, and is at rest, and insofar as it possesses[e] the first principles and consequent characteristics of that [i.e., change, motion, and rest]. Geometry studies dimensions insofar as they admit the qualities that are proper to them and the ratios that are present in them (both the first principles and the consequent characteristics; and insofar this is so).[f] Arithmetic does the same with number, and medicine with human bodies insofar as they are healthy or ill. The same applies for other particular sciences. None of them studies anything that is common to all beings.

4. Universal science studies what is common to all beings (like existence and oneness), its species and consequent properties, things which are not specific accidents of each individual object studied by the particular sciences (like priority, posteriority, potentiality, actuality, perfection, imperfection, and similar things), and the common first principle of all beings, which [alone] ought to be called by the name of God. There ought to be [only] one universal science, for if there were two, then each one of them would have a subject matter proper to it; but the science which has a subject matter proper to it and which does not include the subject matter of another science is a particular science; therefore both sciences would be particular; but this is contradictory; therefore there is [only] one universal science.

5. Theology ought to belong to this [universal] science because God is a principle of absolute being, not of one being to the exclusion of another. That part of [the universal science], then, which includes providing the principle of being[g] ought to be itself Theology. Furthermore,[h] because these categories [*maʿānī*] are not proper to physical objects but are loftier than them in their universality [*ʿumūman*], then this [universal] science is loftier than physics and after physics, and should therefore be called the science of metaphysics.

6. Although mathematics is loftier than physics—since its objects are abstracted from matter—it ought not to be called metaphysics because its objects are abstracted from matter in imagination [only], not in [actual] existence: actually they exist only in natural things.

7. Of the objects of this science [of metaphysics], some have no existence at all, be it imaginary or actual, in natural things; and not only has the imagination abstracted them from natural things, but their being and nature are totally[i] abstracted. Others exist in natural things even though they can be imagined as abstracted from them; they do *not*, however, exist in natural things *essentially* (i.e., not in such a way that their being could

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[e] D/L reads "they are" (*mā hiya*) for "it possesses" (*mā lahu*), in which case the sense would be, "and insofar as they [presumably change, motion, and rest] are the primary principles and consequent characteristics of that [i.e., the body]."

[f] The text is very uncertain here. H omits the entire text in parentheses.

[g] H reads, "existence," *wujūd* for *mawjūd*.

[h] All manuscripts (D/B, D/L, and H) have a conjunction here (*fa-li-anna*, *wa-li-anna*), which Dieterici omits.

[i] Reading *innamā* with D for *annahā* in H. For the *laysa ... faqaṭ bal* construction in this sentence see M. Ullmann, "Nicht nur ..., sondern auch ...," *Der Islam* 60 (1983) 3-36. I am also grateful to Manfred Ullmann for a private communication on the structure of this sentence.

not be independent of them and that they would be things whose subsistence would depend on the natural things), but are found [only][j] with things, natural and non-natural, which are separable either in reality or in imagination. The science, therefore, which deserves to be called by this name [of metaphysics] is this science, and it alone, all other sciences excluded, is meta-physics.

8. The primary object of this science is absolute being[k] and what is equivalent to it in universality [*ʿumūm*], namely, the one. But since the knowledge of contrary correlatives [*mutaqābilāt*] is one,[5] theoretical inquiry into privation and multiplicity is also included in this science. Then after examination of these subjects, [this science] inquires into matters which are as species to them, like the ten categories of an existent being, the species of the one (like the individual one, the specific one, the generic one, and the analogic one, and the subdivisions of each one of these), and similarly the species of privation and multiplicity. [This science] then [inquires] into the consequent properties of being (like potentiality and actuality, perfection and imperfection, and cause and effect), the consequent properties of unity (like identity, similarity, equality, coincidence, parallelism, analogy, etc.), and the consequent properties of privation and multiplicity, and then into the first principles of each one of these. After further ramifications and subdivisions, it arrives at the objects of the particular sciences. It expounds the first principles of all the particular sciences and the definitions[l] of their objects. Here this science ends.

[Fārābī's text then concludes with brief descriptions of the contents of each one of the books of the *Metaphysics*, A and N excluded.]

Fārābī's essay, whose succinctness conceals its importance for the history of metaphysics, provides answers to a number of interrelated questions that may have proved problematical for Avicenna. His formulation of these answers helps us locate Avicenna's problems and analyze their provenance.

Fārābī states that many people are baffled by Aristotle's *Metaphysics* because they expect it to deal with God, the intellect, and the soul, and because they assume metaphysics and Islamic theology to be identical. Upon actual study, however, they find these subjects to be discussed only in one of its books, the famous *Lambda*, and consequently, the implication is, they do not know what to make of the remaining books. Avicenna's great joy when he read this paragraph can only mean that he labored under the same mistaken preconception. This raises the question of the provenance of this preconception.

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[j] This sentence also has a *laysa ... bal* construction; cf. Ullmann "Nicht nur" no. XXXIV. Dieterici disregards this construction.

[k] H reads "existent," *mawjūd*, for "being," *wujūd*.

[l] "Definitions:" *ḥudūd*; Dieterici translates, "Abgrenzungen."

[5] I.e., knowing one correlative implies knowing the other.

The early history of philosophy in Islam displays two tendencies, or lines of development. One is associated with Kindī and his school, and the other with the Aristotelians of Baġdād, Abū-Bišr Mattā, Fārābī, and their followers. Since Fārābī is a representative of one line of development, it is reasonable to seek the "many people" who Fārābī says have this misconception among representatives of the other line.

The tendency of identifying metaphysics with Islamic theology was initiated by Kindī, the first philosopher who consciously interpreted and sought to naturalize Greek thought in its new Arabic speaking environment. In the opening chapter of his treatise significantly entitled *On First Philosophy*, he presents an apologia for the study of philosophy and argues, through deliberate simplification, that the noblest part of philosophy contains the subjects discussed by Islamic theology:[6]

> Whoever resists acquiring knowledge of the real nature of things possesses in truth no religion, because knowledge of the real nature of things [which has just been given as the definition of philosophy, the noblest part of which, first philosophy, studies the First Truth] includes knowledge of God's Lordship and Oneness, knowledge of virtue, and all the knowledge of everything useful and of the way to it, and of staying away from everything harmful and guarding against it. It is the acquisition of all this which the true messengers brought from God, for the true messengers brought precisely confirmation of the Lordship of God alone, and an adherence to virtues pleasing to Him and relinquishment of vices opposed to them both absolutely and relatively.[m] (L46)

What is cited here as being included in philosophy, and by implication (through what preceded in the text), in the noblest part of philosophy, is, significantly, *only* the subjects regularly dealt with in Islamic, and indeed, Muʿtazilī, theology, namely, professing the oneness of God (*tawḥīd*), and command to virtue and prohibiton of vice (*al-amr bi-l-ḫayr wa-n-nafy ʿan al-munkar*). This simplified and apologetic presentation of the contents of metaphysics is deliberate, as I said above, because Kindī proceeds in the main body of the treatise to discuss that part of metaphysics that deals with being as such, not with the unmovable and eternal first cause.[7] More explicit in its identification of metaphysics and

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[m] The transmitted reading *wa-l̲l̲ārihā* seems to be correct: "relinquishment of vices opposed to virtues both in themselves (= absolutely) and in liking, or preferring, them (= relatively)." A. L. Ivry ("Al-Kindī's *On First Philosophy* and Aristotle's *Metaphysics*," *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science*, G. F. Hourani, ed., New York [Albany] 1975) apparently reads *wa-l̲l̲ārihā* and translates (p. 23), "and in their effects."

[6] M. Abū-Rīda, *Rasāʾil al-Kindī al-falsafīya*, Cairo 1950, I.104.6-13. Cf. the translation by A. L. Ivry, *Al-Kindi's Metaphysics*, Albany 1974, 59; for a review of Ivry see R. M. Frank in *JSS* 22 (1977) 128-32.

[7] Cf. Ivry *Metaphysics* 16-17.

theology is Kindī's description of the *Metaphysics* in his introductory essay to the works of Aristotle:[8]

> Aristotle's purpose in his book called *Metaphysics* is: (L4
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> a) to expound among the things which are neither connected nor united with matter those which subsist without matter but are found associated with something material,[n] and
>
> b) to declare the oneness of God, and to expound His most beautiful names and that He is the efficient and perfecting cause of the universe [or, of all], God of the universe, and governor of the world[, governing it] with His perfect management and complete wisdom.

It is to be noted that Kindī specifies two subjects studied in metaphysics. The second is completely identifiable with Islamic theology, and is made to include even an exposition of God's "most beautiful names" (*al-ibāna ʿan asmāʾihi l-ḥusnā*)! What Kindī intended by the first, though, is more difficult to establish.

Textual difficulties aside, it seems clear that Kindī wished to include in metaphysics the study of things which, though not subsisting through matter and neither connected nor united with it, nevertheless exist in association with it. There are, I think, three possible alternatives about the referents of these "things;" they could be either the objects of mathematics (the "mathematicals," number), or universal concepts such as being, unity, etc. (being and its "consequent properties" as specified by Fārābī above, §8), or the soul and the intellect in the Neoplatonic sense. Which of these alternatives is the "correct" one depends on the point of view from which Kindī's description of the first subject of metaphysics is approached.

(a) Seen from the point of view of Kindī's *sources* upon which his *On the Number of Aristotle's Books* is based, the objects of metaphysics which are found in association with matter must be probably understood to refer to the universal concepts of the Aristotelian tradition, however broadly these are taken. Despite the fact that the sources of Kindī's treatise had a "decidedly Academic [i.e., Platonic] orientation,"[9] the subject treated in it was, after all, the works of Aristotle, and formula-

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[n] Abū-Rīda emends the transmitted text here to read, *al-aśyāʾ al-qāʾima bi-ġayri ṭīna <wa-> l-mawjūda*, in which case the meaning would be, "among the things which are neither connected nor united with matter those which subsist without matter <and> those which are found with something material."

[8] M. Guidi and R. Walzer, "Studi su al-Kindi I: Uno scritto introduttivo allo studio di Aristotele," *Memorie della R. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*, Classe di Sc. Mor. Stor. e Fil., Ser. VI, Vol. VI, Fasc. V, Rome 1940, 403.8-11, 418 = Abū-Rīda 384.7-10.

[9] Guidi-Walzer 378.

tions of Peripatetic origin to express the contents of the *Metaphysics* could not (or need not) have been avoided, as is evident from the high degree of congruity between Kindī's description of the first subject of metaphysics cited above (L47, §a) and the statement of Fārābī (L45, §6), a solid representative of the Alexandrian Aristotelian tradition.

(b) Seen from the point of view of *Kindī himself*, it seems that this alternative, and the one about mathematicals as the objects of metaphysics found in association with matter, are to be excluded. Judging by the extant portion of his *On First Philosophy*, it is evident that his concern centers on a discussion of the One in Neoplatonic terms and by means of the "via negativa." Universal concepts and even number theory are indeed part of the discussion, but not for their own sake; they only serve to expound better what the One is or is not. But a discussion of the One, or God's oneness (*tawḥīd*), belongs, according to Kindī's description, to the part of metaphysics dealing with God, especially since the One, or God, cannot be described as existing "in association with matter." The extant portion of *On First Philosophy*, therefore, deals with the theological part of metaphysics, and the lost second part, if it ever existed, must have dealt with the intellect and the soul.

Circumstantial evidence for this assertion can also be found in the *Epistles of the Sincere Brethren* (*Rasāʾil Iḫwān aṣ-Ṣafāʾ*), which apparently employed a common source with Kindī on this subject,[10] where "knowledge of the substance of the soul" is said to be the first step of the study of the Theological Sciences (*al-ʿulūm al-ilāhīya*).[11] In the extant first part of *On First Philosophy*, Kindī has a brief section dealing with the soul and the intellect,[12] but it also appears to be incidental to the main discussion of the One. It would not be unlikely to assume that the subject was treated on its own merit in the second, lost part of the treatise.

(c) More important—and conclusive—than these conjectures is the evidence provided by the *traditional understanding* of Kindī's position by his direct and indirect disciples. They understood the object of metaphysics to be the study of the One, intellect, and soul according to Neoplatonic emanationism, and they practically, though not explicitly, identified metaphysics and Islamic theology. Particularly relevant in the present discussion are two men, one of whom, Ibn-Farīġūn, was a third generation student of Kindī, and the other, Ḫwārizmī, was apparently schooled in the same tradition which was active in the tenth century in the Eastern provinces of the Caliphate.

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[10] See Ivry *Metaphysics* 21 and note 69, and the references given there.
[11] I.76 (Beirut ed.); cf. Ivry *Metaphysics* 21.
[12] Abū-Rīda 154.10ff. See Ivry *Metaphysics* 183ff.

Ibn-Farīġūn's description of the contents and purpose of metaphysics in his arboreal encyclopedia of the sciences merits quotation in full:[13]

1. No science is more majestic than this science [metaphysics] for three (L4
reasons:

a) It is a science which investigates the cause of things, while all other [sciences] investigate caused things; the science [investigating] the cause is of higher rank.

b) It is a science which investigates an object that is the ultimate goal, namely, the Lordship of the Creator—He is exalted—because Lordship is the ultimate attribute whereby He can be described with reference to "majesty and splendor."[14]

c) It is a science which investigates its object [i.e., Lordship] by means of the faculty of the intellect alone, without any recourse whatsoever to the faculties of sense perception and imagination.[o]

2. Whoever does not fully master these three sciences [i.e., physics, mathematics, metaphysics] is not a philosopher but [merely] a natural scientist or a mathematician. [Metaphysics] is a simple [homogeneous] science and does not admit the division which is characteristic of compound things, since composition pertains to bodies[p] first and acts of imagination second; thus whatever is not affected by bodies and acts of imagination in being perceived, [is perceived] through the intellect only.

3. The purpose of investigating these three sciences is

a) to acquire knowledge, as human need requires, about what one should believe concerning the Divinity, Lordship, and Oneness;

b) to make the attainment of these [objects of belief] by means of premisses, based on the intellect (and not on sense-perception or imagination) and derived from logic, which are instilled by God, in order that Authority be not Followed uncritically [*taqlīd*];

c) to follow a proper course toward rational understanding by means of these premisses, taken from things whose soundness is agreed upon because of [what they are in] themselves; and

d) to make the other two sciences [physics and mathematics] the means of attaining the truths of this science [metaphysics].

4. The utmost that a seeker of this science can reach is to find out [*yaʿrifa*] that created things are gradated in a way required by the Creator's wisdom, and that some of them are the final goal of others, some the movers of

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[o] Reading *wa-l-wahm* for *wa-l-ʿaql* in the MS, which is patently a mistake; cf. *al-awhām* in the following three lines in the MS.

[p] Reading *al-ajsām* for *al-ajnās* in the MS; cf. the following line, *al-ajsām wa-l-awhām*.

[13] Ibn-Farīġūn *Jawāmiʿ al-ʿulūm*, MS Istanbul Ahmet III, 2768, f. 73r, reproduced in the *Publications of the Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science* [Series C, Facsimile Editions, Vol. 14], Frankfurt/M 1985, p. 145.

[14] The reference here is to the Qurʾān 55.27: "All that dwells upon the earth is perishing, yet still abides the Face of thy Lord, majestic, splendid" (Arberry). In this passage majesty and splendor are indicated as subsidiary attributes of God as *Lord* (*rabb*), and Ibn-Farīġūn, who found Lordship (*rubūbīya*) stated as the object of Metaphysics by Kindī (above, L46) sees a scriptural endorsement for the ancient science of metaphysics as the study of God's Lordship.

> others, and that some are related to others <as some others are related> to the Mover[q] who originates qualified beings by means of [his] pure oneness to which no multiplicity, change, or alteration ever attaches.

Ibn-Farīġūn clearly omits any mention of "universals," or "being-as-such"—Aristotle's first philosophy—from his discussions of metaphysics. Its object is, he says, the cause and ultimate goal of things (§1a, b) (which is the same thing depending on which end of the scale of emanation God is viewed from); its method is logic (§3b), which is a function of the intellect (§1c, 3b, c), because the intellect is the only faculty able to perceive objects subsisting neither in matter nor in imagination, i.e., God (§2); its preparatory sciences are physics and mathematics (§3d); and its purpose is to acquire knowledge about God (§3a) and how He relates to the rest of the created world (§4). The focal point of metaphysics is therefore God as the object of knowledge and the intellect as the means of knowledge. Discussing these subjects will inevitably entail an understanding of the "order" created by God, the scale of being referred to in §4, which is the Neoplatonic scheme of emanation from the One to intellect, to soul, and to nature.

In his classification of the sciences, Ibn-Farīġūn discusses metaphysics and Islamic theology separately and without explicitly referring to the question of their connectedness, but his formulation of their description makes it clear that with respect to their object and method they are to be seen as complementary and interrelated, if not absolutely identical, sciences. Islamic theology (*kalām*), which he classifies as a science interpreting (*taʾwīl*) the concepts (*maʿānī*) of the Qurʾān, he defines as follows:[15]

> The discipline, called *kalām*, of those who interpret [*al-mutaʾawwilīn*] the oneness of God [*at-tawḥīd*], [His] attributes [*aṣ-ṣifāt*], and the principles of religion [*uṣūl ad-dīn*] that must be believed in. Their purpose is to investigate these principles. (L49)

Scholars of the three religious sciences—theologians (*mutakallimūn*), jurists (*fuqahāʾ*), and traditionists (*aṣḥāb al-ḥadīṯ*)—Ibn-Farīġūn continues, should beware in their method of the following:

> Their love for [uncritical] acceptance of Authority[r] should not induce them to believe in the soundness of reports occurring in the traditions [*āṯār*] that contradict reason/intellect [*ʿaql*], which is the fair balance [*mīzān*] by means of which everything disputed or doubtful is weighed.

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[q] The MS has *min al-baʿḍ wa-nisbat baʿḍihā ilā baʿḍ ilā l-muḥarrik*; I read *wa-nisbata baʿḍihā ilā baʿḍin <ka-n-nisbati mina l-baʿḍi> ilā l-muḥarrik*.

[r] The next word or two (*wa-annahum <...>*?) seem to be either corrupt or missing in the manuscript.

[15] MS Ahmet III, 2768, f. 68v (p. 136 facsimile edition).

The high degree of congruence between Ibn-Farīġūn's description of *kalām* and metaphysics is obvious. *Kalām* studies the Qurʾānic data about the oneness of God and his other attributes by means of the intellect, which is here specifically designated as "the fair balance" (*al-mīzān al-ʿadl*), a well established synonym for logic (see Section 5 below). Metaphysics studies the same thing (including the Qurʾānic description of God)[16] in the same way. The only perceptible difference between the two would be in their stated purposes: the former's is to investigate the principles of religion (Islam), the latter's simply to acquire knowledge about God, although in their essence both purposes would seem to coincide. At most one could say that the two sciences are different only to the extent that *kalām* is *Islamic* metaphysics.

Ḫwārizmī, like Ibn-Farīġūn, discusses *kalām* and metaphysics in two separate chapters, the former among the Muslim sciences, the latter among the foreign. His treatment of *kalām*, which he does not define, is restricted to definitions of a number of conventional terms (*muwāḍaʿāt*) used in Islamic theology, and consequently does not allow us to judge the extent to which he intended this science to be seen as corresponding to metaphysics.[17] Conversely, his description of metaphysics is most explicit. Under the subjects which it covers he lists God, whose specific attribute he says is "the necessary existent" (*wājib al-wujūd*, a concept Avicenna was to make the center of his discussion of God, see Section 3 below), intellect (active and material), soul (universal and general), and nature.[18] These are precisely the subjects which Fārābī ways (L45, §1) are thought to constitute "the import and contents" of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*.

The philosophical tradition established by Kindī and continued by scholars active in the Islamic world Northeast of Baġdād thus showed two distinct tendencies in its understanding of Aristotelian metaphysics. One was to consider it as dealing solely with the One and the stages of emanation from both the ontological and epistemological points of view, and the other was largely to identify it with the autochthonous science of Islamic theology. Whether the first was developed in order to justify the second, or the first was already present in the sources of the tradition and as a result led to the second one, are historical questions of considerable sig-

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[16] See note 14.

[17] *Mafātīḥ al-ʿulūm*, G. van Vloten, ed., Leiden 1895, 22-23; see C. E. Bosworth, "A Pioneer Arabic Encyclopedia of the Sciences," *Isis* 54 (1963) 104. Ḫwārizmī's remark that these terms are discussed differently by philosophers and geometers cannot be assessed without a clear understanding of which philosophers and geometers he is referring to.

[18] *Mafātīḥ* 134-135; Bosworth "Encyclopedia" 107-108.

nificance that will have to be studied in the future; what they indicate, though, is a trend in the earliest philosophical school in Islam, perhaps existing already in the last phase of antiquity, to emphasize the theological aspect of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* at the expense of that dealing with the first philosophy, being-as-such.

Fārābī belonged to a different tradition, one that descended directly from the last Aristotelians of the Alexandrian school.[19] As a representative of mainstream Aristotelianism he objected to these two tendencies in the older, and presumably more dominant, philosophical school of Kindī, and wrote his essay *On the Purposes of Aristotle's Metaphysics* in reaction to them and in order to point out that metaphysics and Islamic theology are *not* the same, and that the subject of metaphysics is not merely the One and the Hypostases. The first point is stated explicitly in his *Enumeration of the Sciences* in which Islamic theology (*kalām*) is defined not as a *theoretical* "investigation of the principles of religion," or of the One and His attributes (Ibn-Farīġūn), but as an *apologetic* discipline whose purpose is to defend the opinions and actions of the founder of one's religion.[20] Its method is not demonstration (the "logic" meant by Ibn-Farīġūn), but dialectics, rhetoric, and sophistry.[21]

The sharp variation which the two traditions, Kindī's and Fārābī's, exhibit in their view of the relation of metaphysics and theology is excellently illustrated by a textual variant in the transmission of a text by ʿĀmirī, a second generation student of Kindī. Faithful to his tradition, ʿĀmirī identifies Theology, as a branch of metaphysics, with religion, apparently unwittingly (and hence all the more significant for our purposes). In the introductory chapters of his *On the Afterlife* (*Al-Amad ʿalā l-abad*), he says of Pythagoras the following: "Having learned geometry from the Egyptians, he then learned physics and Theology (*al-ʿulūm al-ilāhīya*) from the companions of Solomon. These three sciences—that is, geometry, physics, and the science of religion (*ʿilm ad-dīn*)—he then transferred to the land of Greece."[22] No more than a couple of decades later, the compiler of the *Depository of Wisdom Literature* (*Ṣiwān al-ḥikma*), who had distinct affinities with the tradition of Fārābī as represented by

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[19] Fārābī rightly claims this for himself in the sketch of his philosophical pedigree. There is much independent evidence to support this claim. See Gutas "Paul the Persian" 255 and notes 58, 59.

[20] *Iḥṣāʾ al-ʿulūm*, A. Gonzalez Palencia, ed., Madrid 1932, 100 = R. Lerner and M. Mahdi, *Medieval Political Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, New York 1963, 27.

[21] Dialectics and rhetoric (*jadal, ḫiṭāba*) are mentioned by Fārābī in his *Book of Religion* (*Kitāb al-Milla wa-nuṣūṣ uḫrā*, M. Mahdi, ed., Beirut 1968, 47-48); sophistry (*muġālaṭa*) in the *Enumeration* (*Iḥṣāʾ* 106 Gonzalez Palencia = Lerner-Mahdi 30).

[22] ʿĀmirī *Amad* 71 (text) = Rowson *Afterlife* 88 (translation).

the latter's student Abū-Sulaymān as-Sijistānī,[23] copied this passage word for word but with one exception: for "the science of religion" he substituted "Theology" (*al-ʿilm al-ilāhī*).[24]

Avicenna was born and raised in the Eastern parts of the Islamic Empire where Kindī's tradition was most flourishing, as the provenance of the personalities just discussed indicates; he pursued his "graduate" studies in the very library in which ʿĀmirī most likely composed and probably deposited his *On the Afterlife*.[25] As Fārābī noted in his essay (L45, §2), "proper," i.e., Peripatetic, commentaries on the *Metaphysics* were scanty. The autodidact Avicenna could not help but approach the book with the misconceptions described by Fārābī, and be duly perplexed.

The problem, as it was presented to Avicenna, was essentially a historical one, though it was solved for him by Fārābī's explanations in terms other than historical. It centered, primarily, on the question whether there is a dichotomy in Aristotle's teaching between metaphysics as Theology (*theologikē*), the study of the unmoved mover, and metaphysics as first philosophy, the science of being-as-such (*on hēi on*), or, alternatively put, if there is both a "metaphysica specialis" and a "metaphysica generalis" in Aristotle.[26] Aristotle, first of all, used a number of terms to designate the science he was engaged in in the *Metaphysics*, notably "first philosophy," the science of "being-as-such," and twice "the science of divinity," or "Theology," *theologikē* (scil. *philosophia* or *epistēmē*). To the terms employed by Aristotle there was added another one, metaphysics, in the course of the transmission of his books.[27]

Second, the Alexandrian scholars of the school of Ammonius, who provided the immediate background for Arabic philosophy, viewed all these terms as referring to a single science and a single subject matter, but in their explanations of each one of these terms they highlighted different aspects of it and thus generated the impression of a polythematic

[23] See W. al-Qāḍī, "*Kitāb Ṣiwān al-ḥikma*: Structure, Composition, Authorship and Sources," *Der Islam* 58 (1981) 115-119.

[24] *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* 57.

[25] Cf. Rowson *Afterlife* 5, 37.

[26] The problem has been intensively discussed by contemporary scholarship for more than a century now; two books that argue for the unity of Aristotle's metaphysics are by P. Merlan, *From Platonism to Neoplatonism*, The Hague 1968, and K. Kremer, *Der Metaphysikbegriff in den Aristoteles-Kommentaren der Ammonius-Schule*, Münster 1960, both of which contain extensive references to earlier literature.

[27] *Metaphysics* E.1, 1026a29; K.7, 1064b3. For a discussion of the Greek word *theologia* used in this sense, apparently a Platonic/Aristotelian neologism, see W. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*, Oxford 1967 (1947), 4ff. The use of the term in early Christianity is traced by F. Kattenbusch, "Die Entstehung einer christlichen Theologie," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 11 (1930) 161-205. For a collection of seminal contemporary articles on this problem see F.-P. Hager, ed., *Metaphysik und Theologie des Aristoteles* [Wege der Forschung 206], Darmstadt 1969.

science.[28] They also clearly emphasized the theological aspect over the rest because they began their commentaries by saying that the purpose (*skopos*) of the *Metaphysics* was "to theologize" (*theologēsai*).[29]

Third, additional considerations were inevitably involved in Arabic philosophy through the mere fact of translation and the semantic field of the subject as it was discussed in Arabic. In the translation of the *Metaphysics*, the expression *philosophia theologikē* was rendered (etymologically for *theo-logikē*) as "philosophy treating of divinity" (*al-falsafa ... al-ilāhīyat al-qawl*),[30] which became current in Arabic in a smoother form as *al-ʿilm al-ilāhī*, "the science of divinity," or "Theology." This expression, however, though perhaps clear to the few schooled in Aristotelian philosophy, was ambiguous to the educated Arabic thinker. Literally it means "the knowledge/science pertaining to the deity," which theoretically could be interpreted either as 'God's knowledge,' or 'man's knowledge of God,' or 'the science dealing with God.'[31] Arabic theological discourse had well defined terms to cover all these meanings,[32] but whichever meaning was taken, the educated guess of an Arabic speaker, and especially a Muslim, unfamiliar with technical Aristotelian phraseology, would be to assume that it had to do something with theology as understood in an Islamic context.

These three aspects of the problem of the subject matter and terms of metaphysics were present the very moment the work was translated into Arabic. To them there was added, in the course of the development of Arabic philosophy in the school of Kindī, the identification of Aristotelian metaphysics with Islamic theology, as previously discussed. This was the state of the problem as addressed by Fārābī. His essay on the purposes of the *Metaphysics* is thus significant for the history of philosophy on two counts: it reformulates the problem on the basis of late Alexandrian Aristotelianism and, eliminating the incrustations due to the Islamic tradition, states the various aspects of the problem as they appear in the new Islamic context; and it paves the way and provides the theoretical foundation for the eventual synthesis worked by Avicenna.

[28] Kremer advanced convincing arguments about their unified view of metaphysics. The issue is discussed extensively on pp. 5-9, 197-199, 209-216.

[29] See e.g., Asclepius' notes of Ammonius' lectures (*apo phōnēs*), *CAG* VI.ii, 1.7-8, 1.18-19.

[30] Ibn Rušd, *Tafsīr Mā baʿd aṭ-Ṭabīʿat*, M. Bouyges, ed., Beirut 1938-1952, 707.5-6.

[31] As a matter of fact, Kindī, who *was* trained in Aristotelian terminology, exploits this ambiguity precisely in order to effect a fusion between Aristotelian metaphysics and Islamic theology. In his bibliographical essay on the books of Aristotle he uses the expression *al-ʿilm al-ilāhī* to refer not to the Aristotelian science but to *God's knowledge* given to prophets, who acquire it without effort: Guidi-Walzer 395 (text), 409 (translation).

[32] For a discussion of the terms used to cover "God's knowledge" and "man's knowledge of God," see Rosenthal *Knowledge* 108ff. and 129ff. The terms for Islamic theology were, of course, *ʿilm al-kalām* and *ʿilm at-tawḥīd*.

The effect of Fārābī's essay on the philosophy of Avicenna was, by the latter's own admission, decisive. It alerted him to the fact that Theology is only a part of metaphysics, not the entire subject, and that metaphysics also includes the study of "being-as-such," i.e., the universal science, and provides the first principles of the other sciences. In other words, Fārābī's essay gave Avicenna information about the three ways in which Aristotle himself described the subject of metaphysics and which were discussed in the historical development of the Aristotelian tradition: metaphysics as the study of "being-as-such," as "first philosophy," and as Theology (*theologikē*). In this light Avicenna could identify what he had earlier thought to be the entire Metaphysics as only one of its three parts, the Theological one, and add to it the other two parts, thus accounting for all the contents of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. The purpose of the book Avicenna had read forty times became clear to him thanks, indeed, to Fārābī's essay, his indebtedness to which is apparent in his first work, *Compendium on the Soul*, written shortly after the fateful encounter with the crier in the bookseller's quarter (T3, §9). Avicenna follows in that work closely Fārābī's description of the contents of Metaphysics, and even occasionally his very words.[33] The contents of the Theological part he specifies as follows:

> [B. Theology: (iii) Natural Theology] Establishing the first creator, the first created, and the universal soul; the way in which creation occurs; the rank of the intellect with respect to the creator, of the soul to the intellect, of sublunar matter and the forms to the soul, and of the spheres, stars, and generated beings to matter and form; and why there is such a stark divergence in priority and posteriority among them [T1, §3 IV B iii].

Avicenna's sensibilities had been shaped in the philosophical tradition of Kindī, however, and he accordingly considered the Theological part to be the noblest and best, later calling it "the fruit" of Metaphysics (T4, §1 end), in a passage strongly reminiscent of that of Kindī cited earlier (L46).

To this understanding of the contents of Metaphysics Avicenna added, with increasing finality, yet a fourth dimension, which was gained not so much from formal Islamic theology as from general Islamic belief, and which dealt with the subject of the survival of the rational soul and all that implied. This final category, which I call the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul, will be discussed separately in the following section.

The result of these developments was the most comprehensive view of metaphysics until Avicenna's time, one that incorporated all the developments within the Aristotelian tradition, Islamic theology, and

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[33] Cf. T1, §3.iv, with the text of Fārābī translated above, L45, §8.

broader Islamic tenets. This view categorized the contents of metaphysics into two broad divisions, each of which had again two relatively clearly discernible aspects: the first major division was the Universal Science, the two aspects of which were the study of being-as-such and its consequent properties, and first philosophy as the science that provides the principles of the other sciences; the second category was Theology, whose two aspects were natural theology and the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul.

The above classification of the contents of metaphysics is already present, as we saw, in the very first work of Avicenna, the *Compendium on the Soul*, and can be seen in all his subsequent works with varying degrees of sharpness. In *The State of the Human Soul* he talks of the universal science and the first philosophy as synonyms, and distinguishes it from the "Theological discipline."[34] In the Introduction to *The Cure* he mentions that the discussion of the categories properly belongs to the "philosophical" (as opposed to the "Theological") discipline, i.e., universal science or first philosophy (T9, §2), while he refers to the Theological, *al-Ilāhīyāt*, part of *The Cure* as "the science that belongs to metaphysics" (T9, §5D). His precise words in this passage (*al-ʿilm al-mansūb ilā mā baʿda ṭ-ṭabīʿa*) are understandable only in the context of our preceding analysis: Theology, *al-ilāhīyāt*, is not the *entire* metaphysics, but only a part that belongs to it.

The same understanding of the contents of metaphysics is also evident in Avicenna's formal classification of the sciences. In what must be considered a relatively early treatise, *The Divisions of the Intellectual Sciences* (*Aqsām al-ʿulūm al-ʿaqlīya*), he presents as follows the divisions of metaphysics:[35]

I. Fundamental Divisions

[A. Universal Science:]
  [i. Being as such:] 1. Universals
  [ii. First Philosophy:] 2. Principles of the sciences
[B. Theology:]
  [iii. Natural Theology:] 3. God and His attributes
  4. Celestial beings
  5. Divine providence and governance of all

[34] At the beginning of the thirteenth chapter of *The State of the Human Soul*, Avicenna says that the first principles of the sciences are known "from the universal science, which is called first philosophy (*al-ʿilm al-kullī allaḏī yusammā falsafatan ūlā*);" at the end of the preceding chapter he had just stated that knowledge of the first cause, the One, is verified through "the Theological discipline" (*aṣ-ṣināʿa al-ilāhīya*); Ahwānī *Aḥwāl* 113-114.

[35] For this treatise see Jean Michot, "Les sciences physiques et métaphysiques selon la *Risālah fī Aqsām al-ʿulūm* d'Avicenne," *Bulletin de Philosophie Médiévale* (Louvain-la-Neuve), 22 (1980) 62-73.

II. Derivative Divisions

[iv. Metaphysics of the Rational Soul:]	1. Revelation and prophecy 2. Destination and Afterlife

In *The Easterners*, where Avicenna finally decides to discard outward adherence to the transmitted forms of Aristotelianism, he breaks with tradition (he decides not to follow "a course of accommodation" with the Peripatetics, as he phrases it in the Introduction of the work, T8, §5) and states explicitly what had been latent in his earlier formulations: he makes the two primary parts of metaphysics, Universal Science and Theology, into two independent divisions of the theoretical sciences, thus raising their number from three to four:

> It is Customary to call the knowledge of the first part [of the theoretical sciences] Physics, of the second part Mathematics, of the third part [dealing with things totally separate from matter and motion] Theology, and of the fourth part [dealing with things sometimes associated with matter] Universal [Science], even though this division is not generally acknowledged.[36] (L50

The problem of the contents of metaphysics and the classification of its parts thus generated a major point of conflict between Avicenna's understanding of philosophy and the form of the question as transmitted in the Aristotelian tradition and Islamic theology. His works represent repeated efforts to resolve the problem in satisfactory ways and integrate the results in his comprehensive system.

2. *The "Fruit" of Physics: Metaphysics of the Rational Soul*

The most significant area of conflict between Avicenna and the Aristotelian tradition stems from his singular preoccupation with the subject of the survival and fate of the rational soul. The sources of this subject, as encountered by Avicenna, are diverse. They derive, to name but the most prominent, from Aristotelian noetics and the fateful concept of *nous thyrathen*, endlessly debated throughout the centuries and elaborated upon in later Alexandrian tradition,[37] with accretions from Plotinian concepts

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[36] *Mašriqīyūn* 7.5-7. For the meaning of *taʿarruf* see Dozy II.116a.

[37] The history of Aristotelian noetics has been traced, with particular emphasis on Avicenna, by É. Gilson, "Les sources gréco-arabes de l'augustinisme avicennisant," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age* 4 (1929) 5-149. Working only with the Latin Avicenna, Gilson was unable to see the significance of the theory of Intuition, to which he devoted little attention (pp. 73-74). The late Greek, Arabic, and Scholastic theories of the active intellect are also briefly sketched by P. Wilpert, "Die Ausgestaltung der aristotelischen Lehre vom Intellectus agens bei den griechischen Kommentatoren und in der Scholastik des 13. Jahrhunderts," *Aus der Geisteswelt des Mittelalters* [Beiträge

of the contact of the soul with the One, also transmitted independently to Avicenna through the *Theologia Aristotelis*; from Neoplatonic emanationist cosmology and its implications for divine providence, which provided a scale for the ontological rank of the rational soul and lent concreteness to the subject of its final Destination; and most immediately, from basic Islamic tenets, which provided the proximate social context of the subject and determined to a large extent the way in which the issues were to be formulated. Avicenna grappled continuously with the problem of harnessing these divergent traditions and bringing them systematically within the compass of a single theoretical science in the Aristotelian classification. He discussed them repeatedly, depending on the focus of his interest, in three sciences, Metaphysics, the De Anima part of Physics, and Ethics, and in his summae he included them in a fourth subdivision of the Metaphysics which he originated, the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul.

Just as Avicenna's theory of Intuition provided a process whereby the different sciences were interrelated (Chapter 3.2), so also the theory of the rational soul, the substance whose function Intuition is, provided the subject matter where they converged. The study of the different aspects of the rational soul unites several branches of philosophy and appears as the primary purpose and goal of all philosophical praxis. Avicenna explained succinctly and eloquently in his last essay, *On the Rational Soul*:

> The rational soul is a substance subsisting in itself, and is imprinted neither in a human body nor in any other corporeal entity. ... [It] comes into existence together with the body, not before, but it does not perish when the body perishes and dies; it survives, rather, as it was, except that it attains, after its association with the body is severed, either bliss and pleasure or misery and pain.
>
> [Its] bliss comes about when its substance is rendered perfect, and this is accomplished when it is purified through knowledge of God and works for God. Its purification through works for God consists of (a) its being purged of vile and wicked qualities of character, (b) its rehabilitation from blameworthy attributes and evil and offensive habits by following reason and religious law, and (c) its being adorned with good habits, praiseworthy qualities of character, and excellent and pleasing traits by following reason and religious law.
>
> Its purification through knowledge of God consists of its attainment a *habitus* it has, by means of which it is ready to call all the intelligibles to presence whenever it wishes without needing to acquire them, and thus to have all the intelligibles present in it in actuality, or in a potentiality that

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zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters, Suppl. III.1], Münster 1935, 447-462; and by R. Walzer, "Aristotle's Active Intellect ποιητικός in Greek and Early Islamic Philosophy," *Plotino e il neoplatonismo in Oriente e in Occidente*, Rome 1974, 423-436.

> is as close to actuality as possible. The soul then becomes like a polished mirror upon which are reflected the forms of things as they are in themselves without any distortion, and whenever it stands face to face with them having been purified through knowledge, there ensues [an automatic] practicing of the theoretical philosophical sciences.
>
> Purification through works is accomplished by methods mentioned in books on Ethics and by assiduous performance of religious duties, both legal and traditional, such as observances relating to [the functions of] the body, one's property, and to a combination of the two. For performing what is pleasing to religious law and its statutes, and undertaking to submit to its commands, are beneficial in subjugating the soul that "incites to evil" [and thus transforming it] into the rational soul which is "at peace," i.e., making the bodily faculties of the soul, the appetitive and the irascible, subservient to the rational soul which is "at peace" [T14, §§5-8.]

The study of the rational soul thus involves both the theoretical sciences, Metaphysics (the knowledge of God and the intelligibles) and Physics (De Anima), and the practical sciences, Ethics and religious law. The rational soul is the meeting point of philosophical theory and praxis because when it becomes "like a polished mirror," there ensues an automatic practicing of the philosophical sciences. The science that engages in this study, the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul, is thus the highest stage of the philosophical sciences.

From the very beginning of his philosophical career Avicenna had a clear understanding of the questions that were to be treated by this science. He lists them twice in his first work, the *Compendium on the Soul*:

> [Metaphysics of the Rational Soul:] Knowledge about divine governance, the nature of the universe, the providence of the First One, prophetic revelation, the sanctified and Lordly spirit, and the supernal angels; attaining the real meaning of the doctrines denying polytheism and the anthropomorphism of the creator; attaining knowledge about the reward in store for the virtuous and the punishment for evildoers, and about the pleasure and pain befalling souls after their separation from the body [T1, §3.IV.B.iv.]

At the end of the work, he states the subjects that remain to be discussed:

> Among the subjects associated with this investigation [on the soul] that still remain to be done is to state how the souls exist in the bodies, the purpose on account of which they exist in them, the eternal pleasure, neverending punishment, or temporary punishment which visit them in the Hereafter after a period that comes upon the separation from the body, the discussion of the concept called by specialists in religious law "intercession," and of the nature of the four angels and carriers of the Throne. However, had it not been Customary to separate the investigation of these subjects from the investigation we have been conducting, out of respect and veneration for the former, and to offer the present investigation first as an introduction to the other and in order to establish the framework of discussion, I would

> have followed these chapters with the rest of the discussion on the other subjects to complete the matter. Had I not been wary of becoming tiresome through prolixity, on the other hand, I would have dismissed the dictates of Customary Practice.[38]

Avicenna is clear about the issues to be discussed, but there is a wavering about the precise *philosophical* science in which they are to be discussed: they are listed in this work both under Metaphysics and as "subjects associated with this investigation," i.e. De Anima. There is no question, however, of treating them in another, *non-philosophical* science, according to established practice; Islamic theology, *kalām*, may provide the terms in which these questions are posed, but they have to be treated in a way different from that of *kalām*, because according to Avicenna *kalām*, as we saw above (Chapter 3.1 and note 20), is a dialectical discipline not conducive to the acquisition of demonstrative truth.

Avicenna's first philosophical summa, the *Philosophy for ʿArūḍī* (W2), does not contain a final section on the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul; but since it is not extant in its complete form, it is impossible to say whether Avicenna had already decided, after his hesitation in the *Compendium on the Soul*, to include the subject in a summa of the Aristotelian system and classify it under Metaphysics. The next work that may have contained such a section, *The Available and the Valid* (W3), is similarly lost, although it would appear that at that stage Avicenna treated the subject in the context of the practical sciences (Ethics and Politics) in his *Piety and Sin* (W3). Avicenna's reference to the latter work in *The Cure* clearly indicates that it was largely devoted to this cluster of ideas: "divine punishments descending upon corrupt cities and tyrants, ... the reason for praying, almsgiving, etc., as well as the existence of wrongdoing and sin" (L1). It would also seem, however, that Avicenna soon abandoned the idea of treating the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul in Ethics because the subjects that he discussed in *Piety and Sin* reappear later in the tenth book of the Metaphysics of *The Cure* and, significantly, are also treated, under the heading "The Inner Meanings of Signs" (*asrār al-āyāt*), at the end of the Metaphysics part of his last major work, *Pointers and Reminders* (see the chart below).

This explains the reason why throughout his philosophical career Avicenna evinced little interest in Ethics as understood and treated in the Aristotelian tradition. Although the transmission of his ethical works is fragmentary and confused, the material that is available for study indicates that he dealt with the subject perfunctorily. Such is the impression generated by the two brief essays on *Ethics* and *Politics*, and by the

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[38] Landauer 372 (text), 418 (translation).

chapters 4 and 5 in the tenth book of the Metaphysics of *The Cure*.[39] Since he saw the core of the philosophical theory and praxis in the study of the rational intellect, he found the subjects of divine providence, the influences of the celestial spheres upon this world (the "signs") and the rational soul's relation to them, and the real purpose of religious ordinances more germane to his central concern.

Avicenna came to the realization that the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul thematically belongs with Natural Theology when he identified the former as the "fruit" of Physics and the latter as the "fruit" of Metaphysics, and decided to write an independent work on the subject that would combine both subdivisions of what was later to become the Theological part of Metaphysics. This was *The Provenance and Destination*, the first of many works he was to write on this subject and in this new genre he had originated. In its introduction he described the work as follows:

> This treatise of mine contains the fruits of two great sciences, one of which is characterized by being about metaphysical, and the other physical, matters. The fruit of the science dealing with metaphysical matters is that part of it known as "Theology," which treats [the subjects of] Lordship, the first principle, and the relationship which beings bear to it according to their rank. The fruit of the science dealing with physical matters is the knowledge that the human soul survives and that it has a Destination [T4, §1.]

When Avicenna came to discuss the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul in his philosophical summae, which implied a conscious classification of the subject among the other sciences, his wavering finally disappeared and he decided to treat it as the second section of the Theology part of Metaphysics, thus following his initial impulse evident in his first work, the *Compendium on the Soul* (T1, §3.IV). Avicenna explicitly stated in *The Cure* that this subject is the domain proper of Metaphysics: "The subject of the Destination (*maʿād*) of the soul ought not to be discussed in the context of Physics but only in the context of the philosophical discipline (*aṣ-ṣināʿa al-ḥikmīya*) where the things that are separable [from matter] are investigated."[40]

The first extant and dated summa that discusses the subject is *The Guidance*, although the *Elements of Philosophy*, which may antedate it, does end with a very brief section on the rational soul, its pleasure and future

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[39] For the *Risāla fī l-aḫlāq* see A246, M13; for the *Risāla fī s-siyāsa* see A253, M82. These two essays, and chapters 4 and the second half of 5 in the tenth book of the Metaphysics of *The Cure*, deal briefly with traditional ethics, oeconomics, and politics, the latter subject heavily influenced by the elaborations of Fārābī.

[40] *Nafs* 238.5-7. This philosophical discipline is Theology, since it investigates things separable from matter, the definition given to Theology in *Mašriqīyūn* 6-7.

happiness.[41] *The Guidance*, which was written in 414/1023 while Avicenna was imprisoned in the castle of Fardajān (Biography 60.7), has a full section on the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul. It is essentially the same as that included in the later summae, *The Cure* and *Pointers and Reminders*, and it is instructive to compare their contents in order to demonstrate the continuity of Avicenna's thought and dispel the misconceptions about his alleged progressive "mysticism," especially in the *Pointers and Reminders*.[42]

Guidance, III.4-6	*Cure*, IX.6-7, X.1-5	*Pointers*, II.7-10
	The Metaphysics of the Rational Soul	
	IX.6 Providence	7 b) Providence
4.2 Good and evil	The problem of evil	c) Evil
	7 Destination of soul;	a) Destination
6 Bliss; description of real happiness through knowledge	its bliss and misery; real happiness is the perfection of the rational soul through knowledge.	8 Bliss 9 Knowledge that leads to bliss: the state of acquired intellect; the soul becomes like a polished mirror.[43] Details on those who attained this state.
4.1 Celestial effects on the world	X.1 Celestial effects on the world:	10 Inner meanings of signs: a) abstinence
5.1 Knowledge: Intuition	inspiration	
5.3 Knowledge: revelation		
5.2 Knowledge: dreams	dreams	c) dreams
4.3 Miracles		b) miraculous powers
4.4 Prayer	prayer	
	celestial punishment	
5.4 Prophecy	prophecy	d) prophecy
	astrology	
		e) evil eye etc.
	2 Proof of prophecy	
	3 Acts of worship	
	Practical Philosophy	
	4 Politics	
	Oeconomics	
	5 The Caliphate	
	Legislation	
	Ethics	

[41] *ʿUyūn al-ḥikma*, ʿA. Badawī, ed., Cairo 1954, 59.13-60 (end).

[42] *Hidāya* 280-308; *Ilāhīyāt* 414-455 (English translation of Book X.2-5 by Marmura in Lerner-Mahdi 99-110); *Išārāt* III.241ff., IV = Goichon *Directives* 435-526.

[43] The position which this controversial chapter of the *Pointers* occupies in Avicenna's philosophy is clearly indicated by the place Avicenna assigns to the person who has attained knowledge of God and whose soul became like a polished mirror in *On the Rational Soul* (T14, §7), a work written after the *Pointers*.

Avicenna wrote a great number of monographs on the various aspects of the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul, ranging from essays strictly on the theory of the soul, Theology (*Throne Philosophy*), and prophetology, to a number of essays on the genre he originated, Provenance and Destination, and including those dealing with specific instances of the interplay between providence (the arrangement of the universe) and the rational soul, such as the questions of destiny (A181, M4.8), prayer (A227, M85), dream interpretation (A156, M47), and the visitation of tombs of saints (A213, M4.4).

There is one final aspect of this subject which Avicenna again approached innovatively. Part of the "fruit" of Ethics that belongs to the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul is also the matter of legislation by the prophet. Although the epistemological aspect of prophecy belongs to the De Anima part of philosophy and to the discussion of Intuition, the applied aspect of laying the religious law that will serve, when followed, to purify rational souls, belongs to the practical sciences. For this reason Avicenna abandoned the traditional tripartite classification of the practical sciences in *The Easterners* and introduced a fourth subdivision, "the discipline of religious legislation" (*aṣ-ṣināᶜa aš-šāriᶜa*).[44] That part of the book, however, has not survived (W9), and since Avicenna did not take up the subject again in the *Pointers and Reminders*, it is difficult to see precisely what he intended this subdivision to include. Given, though, his general disinterest in matters of practical philosophy, it would appear that he had little intention to offer, beyond this theoretical reclassification, an elaborate treatment.

To recapitulate: The material which Avicenna inherited from the last stages of Alexandrian Aristotelianism contained accretions from centuries of philosophical debates about the central subject of the separability of the rational soul and its relation to the divine. These accretions were heavily influenced by Plotinian and, later, general Neoplatonic ideas about the contact of the intellect with the One, the downward procession (i.e., emanationist cosmology, divine providence, and celestial influences), and the upward progression (i.e., prayer, purification, and theurgy). The fact that these discussions were taking place in later antiquity within a progressively Christian environment that had similar concerns which may have affected the formulation of many of these problems also played its role. With the emergence of Islam, the same concerns were expressed in terms and concepts drawn from the Islamic revelation. Philosophers in the Aristotelian tradition, from late antiquity until the time of Avicenna and including Fārābī, treated these

[44] *Mašriqīyūn* 7-8.

issues, to the extent that they felt compelled or inclined to discuss them, discretely, each in its own place within the rigid classificatory system of the sciences, and dissociated from each other despite their substantive coherence. This was the Customary Practice (*ʿāda*) of doing philosophy which Avicenna so frequently decried (L39, above and Chapter 5.2). Islamic philosophers like Kindī and ʿĀmirī, who attempted to accommodate the subject more in the direction of Islamic theology, did so at the risk of abandoning the philosophical rigor of the Aristotelian system—and were duly castigated by Avicenna himself (Chapter 7). What Avicenna attempted to do was to unify, as demanded by the subject itself, the loose ends and discrete discussions of the Aristotelian tradition by breaking the constricting classificatory mold, without at the same time sacrificing the sharpness and rigor of the philosophical analysis of the tradition. He was able to do so by concentrating on the one concept in the entire system that could act as the common denominator, the rational soul, and on its supreme function, Intuition, as the factor that could unite the various sciences, and by classifying the study of the rational soul and the related issues as the fourth, and highest, subdivision of Metaphysics (after being-as-such, first philosophy, and natural theology). In the revised Aristotelian system that he presented he could indeed claim that he "perfected what they meant to say but fell short of doing" (T8, §3). History bore out his claim because after him Aristotelianism in the Islamic East became Avicennism.

3. *Physics or Metaphysics: Prime Mover versus Necessary Existent*

Another major point of conflict with the received tradition concerning Metaphysics revolved around the question of method in discussing and establishing the existence of the First Cause and First Mover. This conflict also had a historical origin. It stemmed from the two variant positions held by the original Aristotelian tradition and by the philosophical tradition of Kindī and his followers (Chapter 6.1), namely, the arguments for the First Mover by way of motion and by way of the concept of the Necessary Existent (*wājib al-wujūd*), respectively. The former is the explicit position of the Aristotelian texts; the origins of the latter, on the other hand, are obscure.

Before Avicenna, the concept of the Necessary Existent was mentioned in Islamic theology (*kalām*) apparently as part of the general discussion of the attributes (*ṣifāt*) of God. The great Muʿtazilī theologian, the Judge ʿAbd-al-Jabbār, whom Avicenna probably met during his brief stay in Rayy between 403/1013 and 405/1015 (W6),[45] refers to it in his

[45] See G. F. Hourani, *Islamic Rationalism*, Oxford 1971, 6-8.

theological summa, *al-Muġnī*.[46] The encyclopedist Ḫwārizmī includes it in his description of metaphysics as one of the attributes of God (Chapter 6.1). The two older contemporaries of Avicenna, ʿĀmirī and Miskawayh, who attempted a synthesis of Greek philosophy and Islamic theology, also refer to it in their works. Miskawayh mentions it among the attributes of God:

> Existence is essential for the First Creator, since He does not receive it from something else... . But if existence in Him is, as we say, essential, then it is impossible to imagine Him as non-existent, and He is therefore necessary of existence [*wājib al-wujūd*]. And what is necessary of existence is perpetual of existence, and what is perpetual of existence is eternal.[47] (L

ʿĀmirī mentions it in his *Afterlife* as part of the discussion on the attributes of God by "Empedocles":

> The Creator's existence is not like that of any of the existents of this world. For things existing in the world have an existence which is real [only] contingently, that is, it depends on creation, while His essence exists necessarily [*wa-ḏātuhu wājibatu l-wujūd*], without depending on creation.[48] (L

These brief indications suggest that the concept was very much in circulation in the Eastern parts of the Islamic world during Avicenna's philosophical formation, and that it was precisely because of these influences that it held such a significance for Avicenna as to create a conflict with the older and much more established Aristotelian argument by way of motion. The position and implications of the concept in Avicenna's philosophy are well known and have been studied in detail;[49] its prehistory, on the other hand, its interpenetration in Islamic theology and the philosophical tradition of Kindī, and finally its possible late Alexandrian antecedents, are subjects that deserve attention to an extent that cannot be afforded them here.[50] What is clear, however, is that in the philosophical discourse immediately preceding Avicenna, an accommodation was reached whereby the two approaches, though both included within philosophy, were relegated to different areas of study: one was said to be the way of the Physicist, the other of the Theologian. This accommodation is evident in the work of Abū-Sulaymān as-Sijistānī, also an older contemporary of Avicenna:

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[46] *Al-Muġnī fī abwāb at-tawḥīd wa-l-ʿadl*, Cairo 1962ff., IV.250f., XI.432.13ff.

[47] *Al-Fawz al-aṣġar* 15f. Quoted and translated in Rowson, *Afterlife* 281.

[48] *Amad* 78.8-10 = *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* 110-111. Rowson's text in *Amad* reads *wājib al-wujūd*, while the *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* lemma, which I follow, has *wājibat al-wujūd*. Cf. the translation in Rowson, *Afterlife* 94, §2.

[49] Most extensively by Goichon *Distinction*, especially pp. 165ff. and 335ff.; and most recently by Finianos *Être*, especially pp. 239ff.

[50] The most detailed discussion to date of the antecedents and the formation of the concept of the Necessary Existent is that by Rowson, *Afterlife* 279-283.

(L53) The most appropriate inquiry concerning the first mover is that in which discussion of Physical theory is combined with Metaphysical theory. ... Let us then state in what way this is so. Inquiry concerning the conjunction of effects with causes has two aspects; the first, insofar as it ascends through the connection of one to the other to their cause; and the second, insofar as the permeation of the power of the cause in its effects [is considered]. Inquiry in the first mode belongs to the Physicist, and in the second mode to the Metaphysician [i.e., *qua* student of Universal Science]. There exists also a third mode unconcerned with relation, namely, inquiry into the essence apart from affinities and relationships. The discussion of this belongs to the Theologian.[51]

Avicenna initially adopted this accommodation. In *The Provenance and Destination* he first presented the argument for the Necessary Existent and then followed it by presenting the argument by way of motion. He connected the two by means of the following explanatory section, which displays a concern to justify his non-Aristotelian procedures:

(L54) Section: Indicating which method of exposition the one just followed is; starting anew with the customary method; describing the difference between the two ways.

We have established the Necessary Existent [*al-wājib wujūduhu*] neither by way of its acts nor by way of its motion. Syllogisms served neither as proof nor as pure demonstration (pure demonstration does not provide the ground [*ʿilla*] of the [existence of the] First because the First has no likes), but were rather syllogisms resembling demonstration since they were inferences [*istidlāl*] drawn from the fact that existence requires something that is necessary. ...

We will now present the well-known way of establishing the First. This is by way of inference, and especially with regard to motion. We will follow the method used by Aristotle in his two books dealing with universals, one of which, *Physics*, treats of the physical universals, and the other, *Metaphysics*, treats of the metaphysical universals.[52]

In his *Appendices* he identifies, like Abū-Sulaymān, the areas of philosophy which follow these respective methods:

(L55) The Physicists arrive at establishing the First Mover by means of their explanations about the necessity of an incorporeal and infinite power which moves the celestial sphere; they ascend to the First Mover starting with nature.

The Theologians follow a different way. They arrive at establishing the First Mover from the necessity of existence and [the position] that the First Mover must be one and not many. They explain that existing things proceed from it and that they belong to the concomitants of its essence, that the celestial motion moves out of a desire for it, seeking to imitate its perfec-

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[51] *Maqāla fī l-muḥarrik al-awwal*, in Badawī *Ṣiwān* 372.3-4, 375.12-19. Translation adopted with modifications from Kraemer 285, §6.1.1 and 291, §6.4.1.

[52] *Mabdaʾ* f. 141r = Nūrānī 33.

> tion, and that it is impossible that its perfection not be specific to it or that there be a perfection above its perfection, for had this been possible, then whatever possessed that higher perfection would have been first.[53]

In his later period, Avicenna renounced the approach of the Physicists. Although he copied most of *The Provenance and Destination* in *The Cure* and *The Salvation*, he omitted the section translated above and the sections following it which present the arguments for the First Mover by way of motion (W4). More directly, however, he attacked the approach in the *Fair Judgment*:

> Avicenna found fault with Aristotle and the commentators. He said: It is nonsensical to arrive at the First Truth by way of motion and by way of the fact that it is a principle of motion, and [then] to undertake from *this* [position] to make it into a principle for the essences, because these people offered nothing more than establishing it as a mover, not that it is a principle for what exists. How utterly incompetent that motion should be the means of establishing the One, the Truth, which itself is the principle of every being! (L5
>
> Avicenna says that the fact that they make the first principle into a principle of the motion of the celestial sphere does not necessarily entail that they should [also] make it into a principle of the substance of the sphere.[54]

His criticism of the Aristotelian tradition in this regard was tempered, however, by his appreciation of the fact, as he saw it, that the Physical method of proving the existence of the First Mover was only the apparent sense of the *Metaphysics*; its innermost meaning and implicit doctrine was, in fact, to establish the First Truth by means of the Theological way.[55] This is what he taught his students, as recollected by the disciple from Rayy:

> We also heard him say, "It destresses me that the belief in the permanence of the first principle and in the permanence of its unity should be arrived at by means of motion and the oneness of the moved world, as if the *Metaphysics* could yield its riches concerning God Almighty only in this way! This is to be regarded as distressing not on the part of the Modernists only, but also on the part of all their masters like them." He further said, "Had they comprehended the innermost ideas of the *Metaphysics* they would have been ashamed of this sort of thing and not felt compelled to maintain that the course to be adopted includes both the Physical approach and the Theological approach—something totally unfounded because this book [Aristotle's *Metaphysics*] is distinguished by the Theological approach alone" [T13, §8].

Avicenna's criticism of the Aristotelian proof of the First Mover by means of motion and his concomitant theory of the Necessary Existent

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[53] *Taʿlīqāt* 62.14-19.

[54] *Commentary on Lambda*, in Badawī *Arisṭū* 23.21-24.1.

[55] See below, Chapter 8.3, L80.

were among the most important aspects of his metaphysical system. They were also among the most sensational, and they were attacked at first not only by Islamic orthodoxy in the person of Ġazālī, but also by Aristotelian orthodoxy as represented later by Averroes.[56] But the concept of the Necessary Existent gained, through Avicenna's systematization—or his resolution of the conflict between it and the proof by motion—a firm foothold and an integral part in Islamic intellectual history.

4. *Logic or Metaphysics: The Problem of the Categories*

The subject of the categories, both the doctrine and the eponymous book by Aristotle, had a long history of debate by the time it reached Avicenna. Various aspects of the doctrine had been discussed in earnest throughout the history of Greek philosophy, and Porphyry's *Eisagoge*, which was written precisely in response to the problems posed by the doctrine, set in sharper focus its precarious relationship with Metaphysics. The subsequent philosophical tradition of the Alexandrians assimilated and continued these discussions[57] without, however, relinquishing the framework which classified the categories as part of Logic. The history of philosophy as transmitted to Avicenna thus contained the inherent contradiction of discussing the extra-logical foundations of Aristotelian logic within the context of Logic itself. Avicenna addressed the contradiction explicitly and was able, as a result, better to formulate his understanding of the First Philosophy as part of Metaphysics. His introduction to the Categories of *The Cure* presents a detailed exposition of the subject, and the following paragraphs contain the gist of his argument:

> 1. After becoming acquainted with such matters as we described relating to simple terms [Eisagoge], and after becoming acquainted with names and verbs [De Interpretatione], the student of logic can move on to study propositions and their parts, syllogisms, definitions, and their kinds [Prior Analytics], the matters of syllogisms, demonstrative and non-demonstrative terms along with their genera and species [Posterior Analytics], without having any idea that there are ten categories and that they signify either themselves or what pertains to them through the simple terms. (L57)
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> 2. Disregarding the ten categories causes no harm to speak of, nor would it be a weakness in logic for one to labor under the misconception that there is a greater or smaller number of categories; furthermore, knowing whether

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[56] For Ġazālī's criticisms and Averroes' emendations of Avicenna's theory see van den Bergh *Tahafut* I.170ff. and 254; see also Chapter 2, W9, Testimonium 14.

[57] For Neoplatonic discussions of the problem of the categories as related to metaphysics see A. C. Lloyd, "Neoplatonic and Aristotelian Logic," *Phronesis* 1 (1955-56) 58-72, 146-160; and the same author's briefer exposition in *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed. by A. H. Armstrong, Cambridge 1970, 319-322.

some matters should be described as genera is not any more incumbent upon him than knowing whether some others should be described as species. No; knowledge about how all these exist should be sought from First Philosophy; knowledge about the way in which the soul forms concepts of them should be sought from that part of Physics which is close to First Philosophy [De Anima]; and the knowledge that they require terms which signify them should be sought from lexicography.[58]

...

3. You should know that everything with which they attempt to establish the number of these ten, that there is no [special] science of them [?], that one is distinct from the other, that each one of them has such-and-such a special character, that the last nine of them differ from the first in that they are accidents whereas it is substance, and similar things, are all declarations, altogether deficient, drawn from other disciplines. This is so because there is no way to know about such things except after a thorough examination, and there is no way to engage in a thorough examination except after attaining the level of science called First Philosophy.

...

4. What indicates that what I am telling you is the truth is that these subjects have been left out of Aristotle's *Categories*. Moreover, all of the Validating logicians were averse to seeing this book as an investigation into the natures of beings, but said that it is rather an investigation into beings [only] insofar as they are signified by simple terms. ... You should know something else, namely that the author of this book did not write it in order to provide instruction, but by way of convention [*waḍᶜ*] and following transmitted Authority, for there is no way to gain a Verified knowledge of what is known in it by means of an exposition that is appropriate to logic [only; i.e., without involving First Philosophy].[59]

Avicenna's disagreement with the Aristotelian tradition is stated in the first paragraph above: in order to study logic as an instrument for proceeding from the known to the unknown,[60] the student needs to know only about simple terms, i.e., the Eisagoge and the De Interpretatione, before moving on to the core of logic, propositions and syllogisms, i.e., the Analytics. The categories not only have no useful function in this methodical process, but sometimes may even cause harm by misleading people.[61] If the objects of the categories are to be studied in themselves, then they are to be studied, depending on the purpose of the approach, either in First Philosophy (ontology), or in De Anima (epistemology), or in lexicography (semeiotics).

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[58] Avicenna discusses this subject further in *Taᶜlīqāt* 169.1-8.

[59] *Aš-Šifāᵓ, al-Manṭiq, al-Maqūlāt*, G. C. Anawati *et al.*, eds., Cairo 1959, 5.1-11, 6.12-16, 7.8-10, 6.9-11.

[60] See Avicenna's passages stating the instrumental nature of logic translated below in Section 5, L64-69. For Avicenna's understanding of the subject matter treated in logic see Sabra "Logic". See also Avicenna's further explanations in *Taᶜlīqāt* 167, second paragraph.

[61] *Maqūlāt* 8.11-15.

Avicenna developed this view of the categories apparently early. It seems that his difficulty with understanding the purpose of the *Metaphysics*, in addition to stemming from his inherited misconception that it dealt only with Theology, was also associated with the problem of the categories. Fārābī's essay *On the Purposes of the Metaphysics* thus not only solved his difficulty with regard to Theology, as discussed in the previous Section, but also helped him develop a better concept of the Universal Science and helped him locate there the study of the categories. For this reason, apart from *The Cure*, Avicenna never included a critical discussion of the categories in the logical parts of his summae. The trend is already evident in his first summa, *Philosophy for ʿArūḍī*, and continues through his last major work, *Pointers and Reminders*; the only two works dealing with all the philosophical sciences in which the categories are mentioned, *Elements of Philosophy* and *The Guidance*, contain not a critical discussion but a very brief list of the ten categories.[62] As for *The Cure*, Avicenna takes care to point out that he is discussing them not because of their intrinsic worth but merely by way of following tradition: the Customary practice (*ʿāda*) and course of previous philosophers.[63] Interestingly enough, he projects the same motive to Aristotle himself, who he says was also following convention when dealing with the categories.

5. *Logic as Organon: Naming Names and Naming Logic*

One of the persistent problems in the reading of Avicenna's philosophical works concerns the name he wished to give to logic. In two notorious passages from *The Easterners* Avicenna makes the following remarks:

a) "...the sort of science which the Greeks call 'logic' [*manṭiq*]—it is not unlikely that the Easterners may have another name for it" (T8, §2).

b) "It is customary at the present time and in these lands to call by (L58)
the name of 'logic' [*manṭiq*] the science which is sought in order to serve as an instrument. Perhaps it has another name among other people, but we choose to call it now by this well-known name."[64]

Because *The Easterners* has been considered by some to represent Avicenna's true philosophical system—his "esoteric" doctrines—these passages in that book would then seem to imply that according to his true

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[62] For *The Compilation*, see the discussion in Chapter 2, W2; for the other works see their contents in Chapter 2. The categories are listed in *ʿUyūn al-ḥikma* 2-3 and in *Hidāya* 72-76.

[63] *Maqūlāt* 8.10.

[64] *Mašriqīyūn* 5.16-18.

belief, logic should be called by another name, and consequently that the contents of that differently called logic would be different from those in the traditional Aristotelian logic. And yet, the fact remains—a fact which has baffled a number of scholars—that the extant portions of that "Eastern" logic in *The Easterners* are hardly any different from the logic of Avicenna as we know it from his other works. The questions that have to be answered, therefore, are, what do the Easterners call logic and why, who are the "other people" in passage (b) above and how do they call logic, and is this logic any different from Avicenna's logic in his other works. To answer these questions it is necessary to investigate the meaning and context of signification, or "naming names," in Islamic culture prior to Avicenna.

The subject of signification of words (i.e., signification in both its senses, "what words mean" and "how they indicate meaning") in the formative period of medieval Islamic civilization is of great importance, which only recently has begun to be investigated. Central to this subject is the problem of terminology, an issue that plagued Arabic speaking scholars and forced them to expend considerable efforts in trying to control it. The scholars had two causes to worry about. One was the natural tendency of each specialized discipline to develop its own technical terminology which then had to be explained to the uninitiated. Even in disciplines which Muslims considered autochthonous (viz. linguistic sciences, especially grammar, and religious sciences, and particularly the principles of jurisprudence and theology), and whose terminology was a natural extension of the native Arabic semantic field,[65] there came a time when the very nature of specialization and the requirements of highly nuanced arguments necessitated long discussions about the specific terminology of each discipline. Thus one finds, for example, Ibn-Ḥazm (d. 456/1064) providing a long list of legal terms in the introduction to his bulky volume on legal theory, *al-Iḥkām*.

The other cause for worry (and some confusion) was the language of the translated Greek philosophical texts, and especially of the Aristotelian *Organon*, with a "vocabulary whose specialized meanings and implicit sense and reflection of the way things are, originating in a differently articulated historical experience of life and the world, not only did not arise congenially out of native Arabic usage but were in many instances dissonant with it and awkwardly superimposed upon it."[66] By the fourth/tenth century therefore, an Arabic speaking intellectual had to contend with three separate levels of Arabic: native and literary usage (to

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[65] See R. M. Frank, *Beings and Their Attributes*, Albany (New York) 1978, 3-5.
[66] Frank *Beings* 4.

say nothing of topical and colloquial forms), the usage of the Islamic disciplines (with their various subdivisions), and the usage of the translations, itself not uniform but falling into three distinct periods with their corresponding variations.[67] This terminological disarray was one dimension of the problem. These terms also referred to, or signified, concepts, and it was clearly felt that there was overlapping of both concepts and terms. Analysis of the process of signification thus constituted a second, theoretical dimension of the problem. A third dimension was the methodological: the analysis of signification could either follow a grammatical way which was essentially empirical and positive, or a dogmatic and formal (rational) way, based on Aristotelian logic. Finally there was yet a fourth dimension, more important than all the others: this was the immediate problem of applying the theory to the practice. Grammarians, theologians, and philosophers might well argue *ad infinitum* about their respective positions without tangible consequences; legal experts, however, could not indulge in this academic luxury. They had to establish the principles of legal theory in order to derive from them positive legislation.

The tension created by the interplay of all these dimensions, coupled with the emotions generated by the prevalent attitudes in favor or against "foreign sciences," explain the unprecedented preoccupation with linguistic science in the fourth/tenth century and its incorporation, as an essential element, in the epistemological chapters of all the works on grammar, theology, and jurisprudence.[68]

Each author approached the problem of terminology from his own perspective and tradition, but the general aim was to explain the specific vocabulary (and hence discipline) one was advocating in terms of common words and concepts. Operative was the accepted epistemological rule that the less obvious term can be defined by the more familiar one (cf. Aristotle's *Topics* 111a9ff.), the assumption being that the concepts to which these various terms—as well as the words in different languages—correspond are the same. One of the most explicit statements of this procedure comes also from the pen of Ibn-Ḥazm, who was a younger contemporary of Avicenna but living in the antipodes of the Islamic

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[67] The usage of the translations designated as *veteres*, those of the school of Ḥunayn ibn-Isḥāq, and the *recentiores*. See Peters *Aristotle* 59-61.

[68] See C. Versteegh, *Greek Elements in Arabic Linguistic Thinking*, Leiden 1977, *passim*, for grammar and Rosenthal *Knowledge* 208-239 for theology and jurisprudence. The brief sketch drawn here is intended merely to emphasize the importance of the subject. A detailed study of all these dimensions to assess the contribution of this "war of signification" among the various disciplines to the formation of the classical Islamic position is a major desideratum. For a preliminary study see R. M. Frank, "Meanings Are Spoken of in Many Ways: The Earlier Arab Grammarians," *Le Muséon* 94 (1981) 259-319.

world, Spain. Reflecting the intellectual ferment about linguistic science, he wrote about the year 420/1029 the following in the introduction to his treatise entitled, significantly, *An Approach and Introduction to Logic by Means of Common Terms and Examples from Jurisprudence*:[69]

> The philosophers of the past long before our time composed books in which they classified the different ways in which named things acquire names. All nations agree about the meaning of these names although they differ in their actual expression, since [human] nature is one whereas choice varies. [Such books, Ibn-Ḥazm continues, are the eight books on logic by Aristotle. Many people, however, mistook them for heretical and misunderstood them because] the translation was complicated and full of uncommon and rarely used terms, [and it is well known that] not everybody can understand every expression. With God's help we intend to present the meaning of these in terms that are easy and straightforward. God willing, both laymen and specialists, and both scholars and ignorant people will be able equally to understand them to the extent that we have been able to grasp them and God has given us the power and ability. ... The reader should know that the usefulness of Aristotle's books is not for a single science only but for every science. Their usefulness in [the study of] the Qurʾān, the Traditions of the Prophet, and in legal decisions concerning what is religiously permitted or forbidden, and obligatory or indifferent is among the greatest.

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Ibn-Ḥazm then continues to mention the usefulness of logic in almost all sciences. The text of his book lives up to the expectations raised by the title: it is, in fact, a lucid introduction to the *Organon*, and the terminology of the translations is rendered more accessible to the Muslim reader by being interpreted with terms derived from the Muslim sciences of grammar, theology, and especially jurisprudence. The following examples are sufficient indication of the strong parallelism that Ibn-Ḥazm wants to draw between logic and jurisprudence. In the presentation of Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*, and as an introduction to chapters 5-14 of that work, he interprets the Aristotelian term "necessary" (*wājib* = *anankē*), "possible" (*mumkin* = *dynaton*), and "impossible" (*mumtaniᶜ* = *adynaton*) by the legal terms used to qualify religious acts, *farḍ/lāzim* ("duty"/"binding"), *ḥalāl/mubāḥ* ("permissible"/"indifferent"), and *ḥarām/maḥẓūr* ("forbidden"/"prohibited"), respectively.[70] Furthermore, the three kinds of "possible" (viz. remote, equal, and proximate, as they were classified in the commentatorial tradition on the basis of statements

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[69] *At-Taqrīb li-ḥadd al-manṭiq wa-l-madḫal ilayhi bi-l-alfāẓ al-ᶜāmmīya wa-l-amṯila al-fiqhīya*, I. ᶜAbbās, ed., Beirut n.y. [1959], 6-9. There is a pun in the title: *at-taqrīb li-ḥadd al-manṭiq* can mean either "bringing one near the border of logic" or "clarifying the definition of logic." For the title and the date of composition of the work see ᶜAbbās's introduction, pp. *a-j*. See also A. Chejne's study in *JAOS* 104 (1984) 58-72.

[70] For the legal application of these terms see J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law*, Oxford 1964, Glossary.

like *De Interpretatione* 19a33ff.[71]) are also given corresponding terms from the legal vocabulary: proximate possibility = *mubāḥ mustaḥabb* ("indifferent but recommended"), remote possibility = *mubāḥ makrūh* ("indifferent but disapproved"), and equal possibility = *mubāḥ mustawin* ("equally indifferent").[72]

Ibn-Ḥazm does not restrict himself to jurisprudence for his examples. Other logical terms he explains by the corresponding terms from grammar and theology. The word "verb," for example in *De Interpretatione*, chapter 3 (*rhēma*, literally, "What is said" of something, i.e., predicate[73]), was translated into Arabic by *kalima*, "word."[74] Ibn-Ḥazm explains: "By this word the philosophers mean what the grammarians call *nuᶜūt*, 'descriptive [predicates],' and the theologians *ṣifāt*, 'attributes'."[75]

As further examples of this ubiquitous procedure for explaining technical terminology we may look at Fārābī in the Muslim East, the immediate background of Avicenna. The Aristotelian division of simple expressions into "name," "verb," and "instrument" he interprets as follows: "The 'verb' (*kalima*) the Arab grammarians know as the 'verb' (*fiᶜl*), and the 'instrument' (*adāt*) they call the 'particle' (*ḥarf*) which comes in relation to a meaning."[76] Elsewhere he introduces the logical terms for "subject" and "predicate" by referring to the better known theological terms *ṣifa* and *mawṣūf*: "Logicians call the attributes (*ṣifāt*) predicates (*maḥmūlāt*) and the things qualified by an attribute (*mawṣūfāt*) subjects (*mawḍūᶜāt*)."[77]

Two further examples may be given, specifically on the interpretation of the term *manṭiq*, which are of particular interest for the present discussion. The Arabic word *manṭiq* means "speech," and was for this reason selected by the translators "to serve as a literal and artificial translation

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[71] Cf. Fārābī's commentary on this passage in his *Šarḥ Kitāb al-ᶜIbāra*, W. Kutsch and S. Marrow, eds., Beirut 1960, 97 = Zimmermann *Farabi* 91-92.

[72] *Taqrīb* 86.

[73] This is the function of the Aristotelian *rhēma* in logic; cf. J. L. Ackrill, *Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione*, Oxford 1972, 118. Ibn-Ḥazm's interpretation shows that he understood it in the logical sense. Cf. below, note 76, for Fārābī's understanding.

[74] I. Pollak, *Die Hermeneutik des Aristoteles in der arabischen Übersetzung des Isḥāḳ ibn Ḥonain*, Leipzig 1913, 1,4. For the theory of the parts of speech in Greek as compared with that in Arabic see Versteegh, Chapter 3.

[75] *Taqrīb* 80-81. For the concept of attributes in Islamic theology see Frank *Beings*.

[76] D. M. Dunlop, "Al-Fārābī's Introductory Sections on Logic," *Islamic Quarterly* 2 (1955) 270.1-2, 278.4-6. Fārābī takes the word *rhēma*/*kalima* in its grammatical sense. See note 73 above.

[77] D. M. Dunlop, "Al-Fārābī's Introductory *Risālah* on Logic," *Islamic Quarterly* 3 (1956-57) 228.11. For *ṣifa* and *mawṣūf* see Versteegh 71 note 6, and especially Frank *Beings*, references in Index, pp. 198-99, s.r. *w/ṣ/f*.

of the technical meaning of Greek *logos*"[78] ("speech"/"reason," among other meanings). The selection proved particularly discomfiting to later apologists of logic in Islam because it provided ammunition to the arguments of its opponents: if the science of logic, which, in addition to its reprehensibility for being a "foreign" science, means the science of "speech," and hence, of foreign—or in this case, Greek—speech, then it is worthless to a speaker of Arabic who needs only the grammar of his native tongue. In the debate between the grammarian Sīrāfī and the logician Abū-Bišr Mattā, this was precisely Sīrāfī's point at one stage of his argument. He says to Abū-Bišr: "You are not, then, inviting us to the *science* of speech (*manṭiq*), but to learn the Greek language."[79] Fārābī, the student of Abū-Bišr, is accordingly at pains to clarify the situation and explain to a non-Greek audience first the difference in essence or function between logic and speech and logic and grammar, and second the reason why (as he thinks) logic and speech share a common term:

> The discipline of logic is an *instrument* (*āla*) by which, when it is employed in the [several] parts of philosophy, certain knowledge is obtained of all which the theoretical and practical disciplines include. Apart from the discipline of logic, there is no way to be certain about the truth of anything among the things we seek to know. Its name [*manṭiq*] is derived from *nuṭq* ("articulation"[80]). This term [i.e. *nuṭq*] signifies in the opinion of the ancients three things: (1) the faculty by which man intellects the intelligibles...; (2) the intelligibles which are produced in the soul of man by the understanding, and are called interior speech; (3) the expression by language of what is in the mind and is called exterior speech. This art, since it gives rules to the rational faculty for the interior speech which is the intelligibles, and rules shared in common by all languages for the exterior speech which is the expressions, and directs the rational faculty in both matters at once towards what is right and protects it from error in both of them together, is called *manṭiq*, logic. Grammar shares with it to some extent and differs from it also, because grammar gives rules only for the expressions which are peculiar to a particular nation and to the people who use the language, whereas logic gives rules for the expressions which are common to all languages.[81] (L60)

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[78] Rosenthal *Knowledge* 203; for what follows cf. the entire section, pp. 203-208

[79] Tawḥīdī *Imtāʿ* I.111.11; cf. M. Mahdi, "Language and Logic in Classical Islam," in *Logic in Classical Islamic Culture*, G. E. von Grunebaum, ed. [First Giorgio Levi della Vida Conference], Wiesbaden 1970, 66.

[80] There is no word in English that combines both meanings of the Greek *logos* and the Arabic *nuṭq*, i.e., the rational thought process and its outward expression. "Articulation" comes the closest to such a homonymy in that it indicates both the process of creating a coherent whole and a distinct utterance. It is in these two senses that it is used in this translation.

[81] Dunlop "*Risālah*" 227-228, 232-233. Dunlop's translation is slightly modified; emphasis added.

As a footnote to Fārābī's efforts to clarify the issue we may note the care taken by his student, Yaḥyā ibn-ᶜAdī—already two generations after the Sīrāfī/Abū-Bišr debate—to qualify the term *manṭiq*/logic: in a special essay on the subject, he calls it "*philosophical* logic" (*al-manṭiq al-falsafī*) as opposed to *Arabic* grammar (*an-naḥw al-ᶜarabī*).[82]

This elaborate and solicitous presentation of the meaning of the term *manṭiq* represents one path taken by scholars and philosophers in their attempts to differentiate it from a linguistic science, Arabic grammar; another was to substitute for it a plain term or phrase and avoid the logic/speech issue altogether. This was taken by Ibn-Ḥazm. He says that among the powers given to man by God there is "the power of discernment (*qūwat at-tamyīz*) which the ancients have named *manṭiq*."[83]

The few examples cited above sufficiently adumbrate, I hope, what must otherwise be subjected to a detailed investigation: the coming of age, in the fourth/tenth century, of the Islamic sciences of grammar, jurisprudence, and theology, their encounter on a sophisticated level with the translations of Aristotelian philosophy in general and logic in particular, and the centrality of the question of signification—i.e. terminology—in all interdisciplinary discussions. The method followed by scholars in all disciplines—but particularly in philosophy because of the defensive position which Islamic public opinion had put it—to solve or at least remove some of the problems posed by terminological variety was to give for each lesser known term equivalents from other disciplines, the theoretical basis of this procedure being that concepts can be expressed with different words both in the same language or two different languages. In these terminological exchanges the term "logic" itself as well as its subject matter presented particular problems which were met in the way described. This was also part of Avicenna's immediate intellectual background.

There is, finally, yet another aspect of this background that has to be considered in the assessment of the context in which Avicenna engaged in "naming things." He was Persian by birth,[84] and he wrote a number of works, both poetry and prose, in Persian.[85] This was at a time when

[82] See G. Endress in the *Journal for the History of Arabic Science* 2.i (1978) 39.

[83] Ibn-Ḥazm, *Al-Iḥkām fī uṣūl al-aḥkām*, Cairo 1345, I.4; cf. Rosenthal *Knowledge* 235.

[84] Although there seems to be very little doubt about Avicenna's ethnic origin (i.e., his mother tongue), there are those who would argue that he was a Turk. Apparently he knew some Turkish (in a small treatise on phonetics he refers to the velarized Turkish *l*), but we cannot tell how much or how well (*Risāla fī maḫārij al-ḥurūf*, P. N. Ḫānlarī, ed., Tehran 1333, 23; trans. by K. I. Semaan, *Arabic Phonetics*, Lahore 1963, 54). For our purposes here the relevant fact is that, other than in Arabic, he wrote in Persian and not in Turkish.

[85] For his Persian works see G. Lazard, *La langue des plus anciens monuments de la prose persane* [Études Linguistiques 2], Paris 1963, 62-67, with full bibliographical references.

Persian began to reassert itself as a literary language in a literary movement with nationalistic overtones—called "linguistic *šuʿūbīya*" by Goldziher—which aimed at establishing Persian as an Islamic language equal to Arabic.[86] Although Avicenna's contribution to this movement was significant if only in retrospect because of the works he wrote in his native language, there is no reason in the present discussion to analyze his conscious stand on this matter. Irrespective of his feelings about the Persian *šuʿūbīya*, what is of interest here is rather the fact that he was at least bilingual and therefore in possession of the concomitant heightened awareness of linguistic relativity and of the problems regarding the relation between signifier and signified both in one language and in more than one.

In Baġdād, where most of the translation activity took place, the issue revolved around Arabic and Greek; in Spain, Ibn-Ḥazm talks of Arabic and Latin; and in the East, the concern was naturally about Arabic and Persian. In their explanation of unknown or uncommon terms, scholars of Persian descent writing (in Arabic) for a Persian speaking audience followed the same method as their colleagues in other parts of the Muslim world: they gave Persian equivalents, or, as the case may be, better known Arabic words. Although numerous examples from Persian-born authors could be given,[87] we should here concentrate on Avicenna, who is no exception to the general rule. He follows the same procedure already very early, in *The Compilation* (W2). One of the sub-species of persuasive arguments in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is argumentation through examples (*paradeigma*, 1356a-b), which Aristotle considers as the rhetorical counterpart of induction. The Arabic translation had, quite literally, *miṯāl*, "example," and *tamṯīl*, "presenting an example" or "representing." The purport of Aristotle's text is perfectly intelligible in the Arabic translation, but Avicenna finds it possible to improve on the translation because there is a technical term in Islamic jurisprudence that corresponds more closely to the way he understood Aristotle's text. He says that certain legal scholars of his time call *tamṯīl* analogy (*qiyās*), a principle which is rejected, he adds, in the legal schools of the Šīʿīs and

[86] The classic study of the Šuʿūbīya movement in early Islam remains that of I. Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien I*, Halle 1889, 147-216; English translation by C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern, *Muslim Studies I*, London 1967, 137-198. About the controversy in the fourth and fifth centuries and its relation to the development of Neo-Persian see now L. Richter-Bernburg in *JAOS* 94 (1974) 55-64, with full bibliographical references.

[87] For example, the Persian born historian Muṭahhar Maqdisī, an older contemporary of Avicenna (wrote in 355/966; *GAS* I.337), gives both the *darī* and *pahlavī* terms for god in his *al-Bad' wa-t-taʾrīḫ*: see the passages cited by G. Lazard, "*Pahlavi, Pārsi, Dari*. Les Langues de l'Iran d'Après Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ," in *Iran and Islam* [Festschrift V. Minorsky], C. E. Bosworth, ed., Edinburgh 1971, 383. Lazard's article should be consulted for the linguistic variety in Iran during this period.

the Ẓāhirīs.[88] With remarkable consistency (cf. his own statement in the Autobiography, T3, §8, last sentence) he returns to the same interpretation of *tamṯīl* in one of his last works, *Pointers and Reminders*. At the very beginning of his discussion on syllogisms, he presents induction (*istiqrāʾ*), analogy (*tamṯīl*), and syllogism (*qiyās*) as the three kinds of argumentation in establishing something. *Tamṯīl* he again explains by referring to legal theory, and this time adds some further details:

> *Tamṯīl* (giving an example) is what our contemporaries know as *qiyās* (drawing an analogy). Its consists of an attempt to judge a matter by means of a previous judgment on a similar matter. It is a judgment on a particular thing by means of something similar in another particular thing having a common basis [of comparison: *maʿnan jāmiʿ*[89]] with the first. Our contemporaries call the matter being judged upon "corollary" (*farʿ*, literally, "branch") and the matter it resembles "principle" (*aṣl*, literally, "root"). What they have in common they call "the basis and ground [of comparison": *maʿnan wa-ʿilla*].[90] (L61)

In the following example from Avicenna's treatise on the interpretation of dreams,[91] he explains the concept of the active intellect (that is, the divine power which emanates from the godhead and which, when in contact with an individual's intellect, causes, among other things, veridical dreams[92]) by mentioning its various names in different cultures and stating explicitly the purpose behind this procedure: different words signify the same concept. It is also important to note that of all the names he cites he gives the word in the original language (for obvious reasons) only in Persian:

> There is no group of people in the world who have reason and are able to reflect, consider, and engage in [scientific] research that do not acknowledge the existence of this power in this world. ... Each group of people or nation calls this power by a different name. The ancient Sabians call it "the nearest manager;" the Greek philosophers "divine effluence" and "divine (L62)

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[88] *ʿArūḍīya*, f. 36r5-7. Cf. Anawati "Ḥikma ʿArūḍiyya" 174. Avicenna may have found the *tamṯīl* = *qiyās* correspondence in Fārābī, who says that "common people call *tamṯīl qiyās*" (Langhade-Grignaschi *Réthorique* 63.11; cf. also p. 83.14ff., where Fārābī contrasts *fiqh* and *kalām* scholars to logicians, *aṣḥāb al-manṭiq*, 85.4). Avicenna adds himself the legal details.

[89] For the technical meaning of *maʿnā* and *ʿilla* in analogy see Brunschvig 16-17; see also Frank *Beings*, Glossary s.vv. p. 194; Versteegh 100-101.

[90] *Išārāt* I.368-369 = Goichon *Directives* 192 = Inati 129-130; cf. Madkour *Organon* 220-221.

[91] Text in Khan "Unique Treatise" 291-292; English translation in Khan "Taʾbir-ir-ruya" 46-47.

[92] Avicenna refers specifically to Aristotle's *De Sensu et sensibilibus*: Khan "Unique Treatise" 294, "Taʾbir-ir-ruya" 48. For the problem of Aristotle's *Parva Naturalia* in Arabic translation see Gätje *Psychologie* 89; Gätje "Traumlehren"; S. Pines, "The Arabic Recension of Parva Naturalia," *Israel Oriental Studies* 4 (1974) 116-117.

> providence;'' the Syrians call it ''the word'' (which in Arabic is called ''the divine presence'' and ''the holy spirit''); the Persians call it ''light of lights;'' the Manicheans call it ''the good souls;'' and the Arabs [i.e. Muslims] call it ''angels'' and ''divine assistance.'' [All] these different names signify one and the same power.

It is in this context of the discussion of issues relating to interdisciplinary terminology, the signification of the same concept through words in different languages, and the logic/speech controversy, that Avicenna's references to other names of logic in the beginning of his *The Easterners* are to be analyzed. More specifically, however, the entire book exhibits a heightened and conscious concern with problems of terminology, and the two instances of ''naming logic'' cited at the beginning of this Section (and normally singled out for interpretation) are thus part of a more general pattern.

Avicenna's solicitude with terminology in *The Easterners* is evident in three levels:

a) The first level is informative or didactic. As in all expository works, and in accordance with established precedent, technical terms of the particular subject under discussion have to be introduced and explained. Avicenna does this frequently and with repeated reminders to the reader of the *conventional* nature of the practice of establishing names. Many times Avicenna introduces the term for a concept which has already been presented and defined with the words, ''people *Customarily* call this...'' (*min ʿādat an-nās/qawm*; *min ʿādatihim*; *jarat al-ʿāda*; *min šaʾn an-nās* [16 ult.; 17.3; 20.2-4; 60.-5; 61.2; 61.6; 76.10 etc.]), and more specifically, ''the observed practice of our contemporaries is to call this...'' (*al-mašhūd min ahl az-zamān* [6.9]). It seems that this procedure by Avicenna is intended to accomplish three things: i) to introduce the novice to the current terminology; ii) to point out to the fact that the current names do not constitute the primary, or ''natural'' appellation of the things named but the secondary and ''conventional'' one; and hence, iii) to deny exclusivity to these particular names for the science under discussion (logic) even within Arabic, and therefore leave the possibility open that other people—contemporary or not—may provide other names.

b) The second level is analytical and critical, and follows naturally from implication (iii) of the first. At this level Avicenna is interested in analyzing or determining the appropriateness of the terms already established and their correspondence to the signified. For example: when discussing the names given to the different kinds of propositions, he finds the term ''predicative'' (*ḥamlī*) appropriate for the propositions so designated and adopts it. He says: ''This kind of proposition does have a name that is appropriate for it in accordance with the [sense of the]

Arabic language, and therefore let us call it as people do'' [62.5]. When it comes to conditional propositions, however, he objects to the application of the term 'conditional' (*šarṭī*) to disjunctive (i.e., ''either ... or'') propositions, and would like to restrict it only to the connective (i.e. ''if ... then'') propositions. He says: ''In accordance with the [sense of the] Arabic language, the conditional proposition (*aš-šarṭīya*) should have been the connective one (*al-muttaṣila*) only, since it has a condition (*šarṭ*) for a protasis and a result for an apodosis; but people call the disjunctive proposition (*al-munfaṣila*) also conditional'' [61.7-8; cf. Shehaby 215-6]. In order to avoid confusion, Avicenna then proposes to retain the term ''disjunctive'' for the disjunctive-conditional propositions and to substitute a new term, ''tropical'' (*majāzī*) for the connective-conditional propositions [62.6; cf. Shehaby 254 n. 7]. This latter step brings us to Avicenna's concern with terminology at the next level.

c) The third level is institutive; that is, Avicenna is engaged in providing different terms for those judged inappropriate and instituting new terms for concepts not previously differentiated. We have just seen an example of the former practice; for the latter the following may be cited. When a term signifies a concept in such a way as to correspond exactly with its essence, this kind of signification, Avicenna says, ''is the one which *we call specifically* 'that which signifies quiddity' or 'that which signifies what a thing is' [*wa-hāḏihi d-dalāla hiya l-maḫṣūṣa ʿindanā bi-smi...*: 15.10-11].'' A universal affirmative proposition which is true not by ''real necessity,'' i.e. logically, but by reference to what actually exists, ''we call,'' Avicenna says ''by *our own technical term* 'existential' [*wa-hāḏihi hiya l-musammāt bi-ṣṭilāḥinā wujūdīya*: 79.3; cf. Goichon *Directives* 54-5 and 137 n. 2].'' Finally, and most important, Avicenna introduces in *The Easterners* a new theoretical science and a new name for it. As we saw above, the traditional division of theoretical sciences was into Physics, Mathematics, and Metaphysics. Following the hints provided by Fārābī's analyses, Avicenna adds a fourth, ''universal science'' [*ʿilm kullī*], and says, ''It is Customary to call the Knowledge of the first part [of the theoretical sciences] Physics, of the second part Mathematics, of the third part Theology, and of the fourth part Universal [Science], even though *this division is not generally acknowledged* [*wa-in lam yakun hāḏā t-tafṣīl mutaʿārafan*: 7.5-7; cf. L50 above].

This three-level solicitude of Avicenna with terminology needs to be studied in the broader context of contemporary discussions on the same subject in all intellectual disciplines in Islamic culture. For our purposes here it is sufficient to note its function. The avowed purpose of *The Easterners* is to ''include the fundamental elements of true Philosophy'' [T8, §6], that is, to present ''philosophy as it is in itself,'' without con-

sideration of the approaches historically taken by other philosophical schools [T9, §4]. This requires—for various reasons—a corresponding independence, or at least critical stand, in the choice of terminology, and Avicenna is well aware of that.

The general background of the discussions about the signification of terms and the specific context of Avicenna's book *The Easterners* leave little room for ambiguity in the interpretation of his statement in the Introduction, "the sort of science which the Greeks call logic—it is not unlikely that the Easterners may have another name for it..." The very felicitous turn of phrase, "the sort of science which the *Greeks* call logic," by denying, as discussed above [par. (a.iii) in this Section], exclusive possession of this science by the Greeks, establishes logic as a science in its own right, independent of national origins and predilections. To a reader contemporary with Avicenna and raised in the intellectual context described in the preceding pages, this could only appear as a reference to and a repudiation of at least three positions: that of the school Aristotelians, the likes of Abū-Bišr Mattā, who would claim the superiority (indeed, the infallibility, as Sīrāfī would say) of the Greeks and especially Aristotle in this science; that of the traditional scholars in Islamic sciences (especially in grammar and jurisprudence) who, like Sīrāfī, would deny logic/*manṭiq* ("the science of speech") a supranational existence independent of the rules of the language in which it is expressed; and that of the fundamentalists who, as Ibn-Ḥazm says, would see in logic a "foreign science," the beginnings of heresy and atheism.[93] To the same reader, the second part of Avicenna's statement, the notion that different groups of people call one and the same thing (i.e. a signified) by different names appeared as a commonplace. Not only did people speaking different languages name things differently, but also people speaking the same language, as illustrated above. The change of name, finally, suggested by Avicenna's statement could again only indicate, in the context of his avowed independent approach to subject matter and terminology alike in *The Easterners* and of the second level of his concern with terminology discussed above, that he found the term *manṭiq*: "speeech/logic" inappropriate for the science it signified. This again would not appear as particularly novel to the contemporary reader. The problems raised by the choice of this term to signify the science in question formed the core of the Abū-Bišr/Sīrāfī debate, and philosophers had been at pains ever since to solve them either through elaborate explanations, like Fārābī, or through direct substitution of another, more appropriate term, like Ibn-Ḥazm. Avicenna here clearly chose the

[93] Cf. Rosenthal *Knowledge* 205-206.

second alternative, the only difference being that he presented the alleged substitute term not as a discrete description of the science as practiced by the Greeks, but as an integral part of Philosophy itself, regardless of its historical origins.

The alternate term to which Avicenna alludes in the Introduction but not actually cite is given a few paragraphs later. In the classification of the sciences which follows immediately after the Introduction, Avicenna divides the principal sciences into two large categories, the informative and the instrumental. "It is customary at the present time and in these lands," he continues, "to call by the name of *manṭiq*/logic the science which is sought in order to serve as an instrument (*āla*). Perhaps it has another name among other people, but we choose to call it now by this well-known name" [L58]. It is in the same vein, critical of transmitted terminology, that Avicenna also mentions the division of theoretical sciences into four instead of three (above, par. c and L50), a division which is not, as he says, "generally acknowledged." He ends, finally, the chapter on the classification of the sciences by saying that he will not treat in *The Easterners* all the sciences mentioned, but only

> the *Instrumental Science* (*al-ʿilm al-ālī*), the Universal Science (*al-ʿilm al-kullī*), Theology (*al-ʿilm al-ilāhī*), the Fundamental Principles of Physics (*al-ʿilm aṭ-ṭabīʿī al-aṣlī*), and only as much of the practical science as is is needed by the seeker of salvation [i.e. that part of it that falls within the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul; see Ch. 6.2]. As for the science of Mathematics, there is no disagreement [among philosophers] about it, and if we cared to present it here we would present exactly as much as we did in *The Cure*— and similarly with the kinds of practical science which we did not treat here. We now turn to the presentation of *the Instrumental Science, which is Logic/manṭiq* [8.9ff.; emphasis added]. (L63)

It is important to note in this passage that the term "instrumental science" is first given by itself and *instead of logic*, along with the other sciences according to Avicenna's own classification and terminology; only at the end of the paragraph does he use both terms when introducing the following chapter, in which he repeats the identification: "The science which points to the way how to proceed [from the known to the unknown] is the instrumental science, logic/*manṭiq*" [10.14]. It thus seems certain that the more appropriate term for logic which Avicenna had in mind was "the instrumental science." There is nothing extraordinary or surprising in this; the logical works of Aristotle were known collectively as the *Organon* in Greek, and Avicenna is consistent with the genuine and original Aristotelian tradition. What he is objecting to are the accretions to the concept "logic" brought about in the Arabic tradition through the equivocity of the term *manṭiq* and the concomitant con-

fusion that logic has somehow to deal with utterances, grammar, and syntax.[94]

Avicenna is also consistent with himself: from his earliest works onwards he repeatedly described logic as an instrument. A partial list of these descriptions is instructive [the order of the following passages is approximately chronological; emphasis is added]:

1. *The Compilation* (*ʿArūḍīya*), f. lv = Mahdavī 79: (L6
Whoever wishes to become a man of knowledge must necessarily acquire first the *instrument* (*āla*) which will guide his mind and prevent[s] him from accepting falsehood and lies concerning matters in which he ought to believe or[t] according to which he ought to act. This is logic/*manṭiq*.

2. *Brief Treatise on Logic* (*Al-Manṭiq al-mūjiz*), Mahdavī 221: (L6
... One must first prepare an *instrument* (*āla*) that will protect the human mind from error. ... This instrument is logic/*manṭiq*.

3. *The Guidance* (*Al-Hidāya* 64): (L6
Logic/*manṭiq* is a science whereby one can know the way in which a [desired] combination [*ʿaqd*] can be obtained from an existing combination. [This description is more technical than most and refers to the syllogistic process of logic. Although the word 'instrument' is not used, the instrumental nature of the process is evident.]

4. *The Cure* (*Madḫal* 15.19-16.5, 16.10-12): (L6
If philosophy is considered to deal with the investigation of things only insofar as they exist in themselves or as *mere* concepts in the mind, then the science [which inquires into the quantity, quality, and method of looking at the accidental properties acquired by concepts in the mind *in order that we move from the known to the unknown*][95] will not be a part of philosophy; but insofar as this science is useful [in the conduct of the investigation], it will be an *instrument* (*āla*) for philosophy. If philosophy is considered to deal with every theoretical investigation and from every aspect, then this science will be both a part of philosophy and an *instrument* (*āla*) for the other parts of philosophy. ... This sort of theoretical inquiry is the one called logic/*manṭiq*. It is a theoretical inquiry into the matters we mentioned insofar as they can be made to lead to knowledge of the unknown, and into their accidents only insofar as these matters are as described.

5. *The Salvation* (*Najāt* 3): (L6
Logic/*manṭiq* is an *instrument* (*āla*) protecting the mind from error regarding the concepts we form and the judgments we make about [their] veracity;[96] it leads to true belief by providing means and methods for its access.

[s] reading *al-mānīʿati* for *al-mānīʿatihi* in the MS and Mahdavī.
[t] Reading *aw yanbaġī* for *an yanbaġī* in the MS and Mahdavī.

[94] Avicenna's objection is most clearly stated in *The Cure* (*Madḫal* 22.13ff.).
[95] The translation of this passage is somewhat expanded to provide the referents of the pronouns used by Avicenna. The description of logic in square brackets given in the quotation is taken from p. 15.14-17. For a discussion of this passage see Sabra "Logic" 751-752.
[96] The reference here is to *taṣawwur* and *taṣdīq*, the two aspects of all knowledge. See T3 note 14.

6. *Pointers and Reminders* (*Išārāt* I.117-127; cf. Goichon *Directives* 79-80 = Inati 47): (L69)

The purpose (*murād*) of logic/*manṭiq* is to be for man a *normative instrument* (*āla qānūnīya*) the use of which will protect him from going astray in his thinking. By 'thinking' I mean here what is by consensus taken to be a move from matters present in the mind ... to matters absent in it. ... Logic/*manṭiq*, then, is the science whereby are learned the different kinds of moves from matters actually existing in man's mind to those whose acquisition is desired. ...

In these passages, although it is possible to observe a progression in the description of the instrumentality of logic, from vague references to its prevention of error and its use in right belief and action, to specific mention of the aspects of the thought process as it advances from the known to the unknown—a progression that deserves closer study—the instrumental nature itself of logic is never questioned or abandoned. And in *The Easterners*, where Avicenna expresses himself in a language which he least allows to be conditioned by traditional impositions and connotations, he does not simply use the word "instrument" (*āla*) as part of the definition of logic/*manṭiq*, but as a *substitute* for it in the relative construction "instrumental science" (*ʿilm ālī*). This then must have constituted for Avicenna the essence—and name—of logic.[97] But again there is nothing novel or surprising in this. In the Prologue to *The Cure* Avicenna explicitly says that the difference between it and *The Easterners* is one not of substance but of form (T9, §4), and this is also true in the present case: in *The Cure* itself, in the psychological part, he uses the expression "the instrumental discipline" (*ṣināʿa ālīya*) to refer to logic [*Nafs* 259.10]. This, however, passes almost unnoticed because it is an incidental reference and Avicenna does not wish to make a point about it; in *The Easterners*, though, it is precisely this point that he wishes to make, and he accordingly invites all the possible attention to his avowed deviation from tradition.

In this light, it is possible to understand better Avicenna's "cryptic" remark that "it is customary at the present time and in these lands" to call it [logic] *manṭiq*, but perhaps other people may have another name for it (L58). The way the sentence is phrased has created the false impression that Avicenna meant that another people at another place and time developed a science, *parallel* to what Greeks call logic, and named it differently. But

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[97] Muslim commentators on Avicenna, who were quick to grasp semantic nuances, seem to have been aware of this. In his commentary on the *Išārāt* in the description of logic translated above (L69), Ṭūsī explains "normative instrument" by referring to the passage in *The Easterners*: "Logic is both a science in its own right and an instrument in relation to the other sciences. For this reason Avicenna designated it elsewhere [i.e., in *Mašriqīyūn* 8 ult., 10.14] as 'the instrumental science' " *Išārāt* I.117 ult.

this impression is totally unwarranted by what we know of Avicenna's understanding of the history of philosophy and specifically of logic. As discussed in Chapter 4, for him logic was discovered by the Greeks, and more precisely by Aristotle (as Avicenna himself mentions in the passage from the *Brief Treatise on Logic* cited above, L65). There is no question of a rival science and a rival people, but only of a rival name. The logic discovered by Aristotle spread to other nations, which naturally gave the science a name in their own language. Available to Avicenna in this regard was Ḫwārizmī's encyclopedia of the sciences written in 977 A.D., about the time Avicenna himself was born. Ḫwārizmī says about logic:[98] "This science is called in Greek *lōgikē*,[u] in Syriac *malīlūṯā*, and in Arabic *manṭiq*." Avicenna himself suggests *tarāzū*, "scales," for Persian in his *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* (Mahdavī 102). But foreign words for logic cannot be what Avicenna intended in that passage; it would be pointless as well as useless to Avicenna who was writing *The Easterners* in Arabic. Since he says that he chose not to use the other name, this means that he considered it for the book he was writing. He must therefore be referring to *Arabic* terms used by other people at other times and places, and, in view of the preceding discussion, terms referring to instruments: the word *āla* itself was used by the philosophers[99] and so was *mīzān* ("scales")[100] and *mikyāl* ("measure"),[101] to name but a sample;[102] *mīzān*, furthermore, was also current in the Ismāʿīlī tradition.[103] In an extended discussion on logic as the "indispensable instrument for the philosophical sciences," Avicenna himself uses the terms *mīzān*, *mikyāl*, and *miʿyār* ("gauge"),[104] but in the final analysis it appears that he opted in *The Easterners* for the generic term *āla*, "instrument," to stand for logic.

The motives behind Avicenna's attempts to suggest a different name for logic are thus to be sought, in a wider context, in the history of the controversy surrounding technical terminology in general and the equivocal term *manṭiq* (speech/logic) in particular, and, in the context of his own researches, in his critical attitude in *The Easterners* toward traditional Aristotelianism and terminology, and in his concomitant efforts to restructure philosophy as transmitted in the Aristotelian tradition (cf. his unorthodox division of the theoretical sciences) and present a new syn-

[u] *Sic lege*, for *lwġy*ʾ in the text.

[98] *Mafātīḥ al-ʿulūm* 85 van Vloten.

[99] E.g., Fārābī, see above; Kraemer 144, etc.

[100] E.g., by Abū-Bišr Mattā; Tawḥīdī *Imtāʿ* I.109.12; Fārābī *Iḥṣāʾ* 23 Palencia.

[101] E.g., Fārābī *Iḥṣāʾ* 23 Palencia.

[102] See also Rosenthal *Knowledge* 204-205, although most of the authors cited there lived after Avicenna.

[103] See the references in van Ess *Īcī* 285.

[104] *Qiyās* 11.12-13.

thesis (see Chapter 2, W9). Nallino had suggested that Avicenna's purpose was to avoid conservative opposition to logic by avoiding the stimulus to such opposition, the word *manṭiq*,[105] but this consideration hardly seems to have been prominent in Avicenna's mind if only because he proceeds to use "this well-known name" anyway.

Avicenna's half-hearted suggestion that "instrumental science" be substituted for "logic/*manṭiq*" found acceptance, paradoxically, by the posthumous detractor of his philosophy, Ġazālī.[106] This was in a way to be expected. Avicenna had wished to propound philosophy in *The Easterners* "as it is in itself," which meant according it a systematic rather than a historical treatment with references to various views, and this required that he establish, to the extent necessary, an alternative philosophical terminology that would avoid, if only by its sheer novelty, referring to controversial issues that were extraneous to Avicenna's purpose. If the term *manṭiq* was controversial because of its speech/logic equivocity, Avicenna was not only unwilling to defend it because of the unnecessary confusion it entailed regarding the proper domains of logic and grammar, but he positively suggested that he would just as well do without it—like other people at other times and places—were it not for the fact of its wide use. But for an *opponent* of philosophy, such a terminological dispute among philosophers could be viewed with impunity as splitting hairs. Ġazālī could therefore safely appropriate the alternate terminology suggested by Avicenna and leave the term *manṭiq*, with all its problems and the opprobrium by the orthodox that might accompany it, to the philosophers, Avicenna included. In practice Ġazālī does this by using the term *manṭiq* very sparingly: he employs instead the terms suggested by Avicenna and others, and most conspicuously and self-consciously in the titles of four of his books dealing specifically with logic: *The Gauge of Knowledge* (*Miʿyār al-ʿilm*), *The Scales of Action* (*Mīzān al-ʿamal*),[107] *The Touchstone of Theoretical Inquiry* (*Miḥakk an-naẓar*), *The Accurate Balance* (*Al-Qisṭās al-mustaqīm*). Ġazālī's full awareness of the existence of separate sets of terms for individual disciplines and of terminological issues may be illustrated in the following passages from

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[105] Nallino "Filosofia" 456 note 4.

[106] Ġazālī attacked Avicenna from an orthodox position. Avicenna's suggestion found acceptance only by Suhrawardī Maqtūl, who attacked Avicenna from an illuminationist position: in the introduction to *Philosophy of Illumination* (*Ḥikmat al-išrāq*) Suhrawardī refers to logic, with which he will deal, he says, only cursorily, *exclusively* as "the science which is the instrument" (*al-ʿilm allaḏī huwa l-āla*; Corbin *Opera* II.13.9-11).

[107] Whatever the final verdict about the authenticity and attribution of the extant work known as *Mīzān al-ʿamal* (cf. G. F. Hourani, "A Revised Chronology of Ghazālī's Writings," *JAOS* 104 [1984] 294-295), the fact remains that Ġazālī himself announced it under this title at the end of his *Miʿyār al-ʿilm*, S. Dunyā, ed., Cairo 1961, 348.

the introductions to his *Incoherence* (*Tahāfut*) and *The Gauge of Knowledge*, in which it is seen that his choice of words can only be conscious and deliberate, and not merely intended for rhetorical or stylistic effect. Ġazālī says that he wrote *The Gauge* for two reasons. One is "to instruct people in the methods of thinking and theoretical inquiry." Since people frequently stumble when dealing with abstract concepts (*maʿqūlāt*), he continues, "I have composed this book as a gauge (*miʿyār*) for theoretical inquiry and reflection, a scale (*mīzān*) for research and cogitation, a hone (*ṣayqal*) for the mind, and a whetstone (*mišḥaḏ*) for the faculty of thought and reason."[108] The second reason is to enable people "to study what we set down in *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, because we debated with them in their own language and addressed them in accordance with their technical terms (*iṣṭilāḥāt*) which they conventionally employ in logic (*manṭiq*); in this book, then, these terms are explained."[109] It is to be noted that in the process of stating his first purpose for writing the book—which is, in effect, to instruct people in logic—Ġazālī never uses the word *manṭiq* itself; he uses it only when stating his second purpose, and there it is explicitly attributed to the philosophers. The intended implication seems to be similar to that of Avicenna in the Introduction to *The Easterners*: there is an instrumental science which teaches how to think correctly; the (Greek) philosophers call it *manṭiq*, others call it differently. Indeed, the fact that others have different name(s) for it is used in an implicit argument by Avicenna to indicate that it is not the exclusive property of the (Greek) philosophers. The creation of such an opinion was desirable to Avicenna because he wanted to sever the identification in people's minds between logic and Greek logic and thereby win acceptance for his own logic that he believed to be a revision of Greek logic, i.e., that of the school Aristotelian tradition. Ġazālī wanted to sever the same identification but for the different purpose of winning formal acceptance for logic as an instrument in theological studies. And if it is considered that Ġazālī's logic was, in all its essentials, that of Avicenna, then we could perhaps state with relative certainty that Ġazālī was in this respect Avicenna's collaborator and mouthpiece, through whom Avicenna's logic was advertised and ensconced in Islamic culture through the use of Avicenna's method of presenting his logic under a different name, that suggested in *The Easterners*.

With time, however, as the dissociation between logic and Greek logic—through Avicenna's and Ġazālī's efforts—took root in public

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[108] *Miʿyār al-ʿilm* 59. This accumulation of names of similar instruments is common with Ġazālī. See i.a., Rosenthal *Knowledge* 204 note 5, and the last paragraphs of Ġazālī's *Miʿyār al-ʿilm* 347-348.

[109] *Miʿyār al-ʿilm* 60.

opinion, and as the term *manṭiq* ceased to evoke connotations of the old logic/speech controversy, 'the instrumental science' became once more *manṭiq* in Islamic culture. It is true that logicians continued to be occasionally called 'scholars who use the scales' (*mīzānīyūn*)[110] but this never proved a serious challenge to the regained supremacy of *manṭiq*.

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[110] Cf. M. Horten, *Die spekulative und positive Theologie im Islam nach Razi und ihre Kritik durch Tusi*, Leipzig 1912, 268.

7.

THE EVOLUTION OF AVICENNA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ARISTOTLE, THE ARISTOTELIAN TRADITION, AND HIS OWN WORK

Avicenna saw himself as belonging essentially in the Peripatetic tradition. Not only does he himself say that the Peripatetics were the philosophical school most worthy of Partisan Adherence (T8, §3), but it is also clear that he had very little patience with philosophical traditions other than the Peripatetic. His Prologue to the Sophistics of *The Cure* well summarizes his position:

> [Those who] attempted to slander the Peripatetics and to find fault with books on logic as well as those who built on their basis ... propagated the delusion that philosophy is [only] Platonic, wisdom [only] Socratic, and that among the ancients only the earliest, and among philosophers only the Pythagoreans possessed knowledge [T6A, §2].

Avicenna's dismissal of non-Aristotelian philosophical traditions is based on two factors, one personal and the other traditional. First, as is evident from the above passage, any philosophical system not based on logic, and hence on the Verification of truths by means of syllogisms and the Discovery of middle terms primarily through Intuition, is by its very nature not valid. Second, as discussed in Chapter 4, Avicenna derived his conception of the history of philosophy from late Alexandrian tradition which presented Aristotle as the pinnacle of philosophy, perfecting all the tendencies previous to his time.

Only in the case of Plato is there a noticeable evolution in Avicenna's attitude. Although he criticized Plato's theory of vision in two passages in his early writings,[1] he still followed tradition initially and called him "divine" (*ilāhī*)[2] and subscribed to the Neoplatonic theory of the basic agreement between him and Aristotle, claiming that their divergence was only apparent.[3] By the time he came to write the Logic of *The Cure*, how-

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[1] Landauer 354.5; *As'ila* 40.9ff. Avicenna's defense of the Aristotelian theory of vision is discussed in its historical context by D. C. Lindberg, *Theories of Vision from al-Kindi to Kepler*, Chicago 1976, 43-52.

[2] "Divine Plato" appears in *The State of the Human Soul*, Ahwānī *Aḥwāl* 108.4, and is not excised in the reproduction of this passage in the much later *Salvation* (*Najāt* 313.6), something that we would have expected Avicenna to do in view of the preceding discussion.

[3] *As'ila* 40.10ff., where Avicenna expressly refers to Fārābī's *Jam'* as proof of the congruity of the two philosophers.

ever, he abandoned his lip service to traditional forms of expression and spoke in condemnatory, yet fair terms about Plato:

> It is proper, then, that the truth be told: if the extent of Plato's achievements in Philosophy is what came down to us of him, then his wares were paltry indeed and philosophy in his time had not matured to the point of reaping. Whoever affects allegiance to him with only the amount of knowledge about Plato that has been transmitted to us at his disposal, then he does this either out of envy for Aristotle or out of a foolish notion that the prior in time is also in a discipline prior in rank. The truth, however, is the opposite [T6B, §8].[4]

As for Muslim Platonists, finally, like Abū-Bakr ar-Rāzī, he had nothing but contempt from the very beginning.[5]

Avicenna's attitude toward Aristotle never changed in its essence but only in its expression. It was transformed from the traditional adulation to critical appreciation and respect. In his early works he refers to Aristotle in traditional terms as "the Philosopher" (*al-faylasūf*),[6] "the philosopher Aristotle,"[7] and in at least one case, "Aristotle, the Greek philosopher."[8] Later, Aristotle becomes "The First Teacher" (*al-muʿallim al-awwal*),[9] and Aristotle's works "the first teaching" (*at-taʿlīm al-awwal*).[10] The shift in emphasis from "philosopher" to "teacher" would seem to be consistent with Avicenna's overall development toward seeing Knowledge not as the possession of one specific discipline, philosophy (as opposed to other subjects), or of one specific nation, but as universal because it reflects ontological reality. Aristotle was simply the first person to have taught this knowledge intelligibly in accordance with its inherent structure and Fundamental Principles, as Avicenna says in the Introduction to *The Easterners* (T8, §1). *Al-muʿallim*, "teacher," therefore means "he who dispenses Knowledge, *al-ʿilm*," in the sense understood by Avicenna, and Aristotle was the first to have done so,

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[4] For an example of a specific point on which Avicenna criticizes Socrates and Plato see Booth *Aporetic Ontology* 124.

[5] Already in his debate with Bīrūnī Avicenna speaks in the most deprecatory terms about Abū-Bakr ar-Rāzī (*Asʾila* 13.10-13): "He bit more than he could chew in his attempts to deal with Theology and he even exceeded his abilities when cutting up people's wounds and looking at urine and feces—he certainly disgraced himself and exhibited his ignorance in what he endeavored and aimed to do."

[6] E.g., in *Mabdaʾ* f. 138r7, 160r13, 160v4.

[7] E.g., in *Compendium on the Soul* 354.4, 360.14 Landauer.

[8] In *Al-Manṭiq al-mūjiz*, quoted in Mahdavī 221.

[9] E.g., in all the passages from the *Mabdaʾ* cited in note 6, above, which Avicenna copied in *The Cure* and later in *The Salvation*, he changes "the Philosopher" to "The First Teacher:" *Najāt* 394.6, 435.7 (= *Ilāhīyāt* 392.4), 435.17 (= *Ilāhīyāt* 392.9). Avicenna continued referring to Aristotle as "the First Teacher" until the end of his career: *Išārāt* I.329 = Goichon *Directives* 166, Inati 114.

[10] E.g., *Jadal* 38.1, *Ilāhīyāt* 332.4, and throughout *The Cure*.

according to the conception of the history of philosophy bequeathed to Avicenna by Alexandrian Aristotelianism. This perception of Aristotle by Avicenna, along with the concomitant belief in human progress in the acquisition of this Knowledge by Working out Corollary Principles on the basis of the Fundamental Principles discovered by earlier thinkers, enables Avicenna on the one hand to have a reverential but critical attitude toward Aristotle, and on the other to claim for his own discoveries a new stage in the serial acquisition of Knowledge. Thus Avicenna may both state in the *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla* that Aristotle "is the leader of the wise and the guide and teacher of philosophers,"[11] and criticize him on specific details in the roughly contemporary *Fair Judgment*.[12]

This was Avicenna's view of Aristotle as the investigator of absolute Knowledge. But his attitude toward Aristotle was also affected by his understanding of the contextuality of the philosophical praxis. Aristotle, Avicenna thought, was circumscribed, like any philosopher, by his time and place, and was accordingly constrained on the one hand to heed tradition and Customary Practices in his communication of Philosophy, and on the other to take into consideration the fact that he had to Withhold knowledge from the unworthy (see Chapter 5). Avicenna was himself acutely aware of these two problems and he projected them unto Aristotle. He claimed that Aristotle was merely following Authority and Customary practices by discussing the Categories in Logic (Chapter 6.4), and he further maintained that Aristotle would occasionally present his arguments by intimation and implicitly (L80) and Work out Corollaries in a concealed manner (T12, §1). This understanding of Aristotle was also influenced by tradition (Chapter 5.3), but it became more significant for Avicenna as he increasingly began himself to follow this model of the philosophical praxis.

In his earlier writings Avicenna shows a respect for the transmitted tradition and, more important, a respect for and adherence to the manner and method of philosophical discussion. This is evident (a) in his treatment of the major philosophers in the Aristotelian tradition and (b) in his use of the accepted philosophical jargon, as well as (c) in his adherence to traditional forms of exposition and (d) in his description of his own works. In his later works the tradition becomes internalized and

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[11] P. Morewedge, *The Metaphysics of Avicenna*, London 1973, 76 = Achena/Massé I.173. Avicenna makes this remark just before giving a paraphrase of *Metaphysics Lambda*, 1072b24-26.

[12] E.g., in the few pages from the commentary on *Lambda* from *Fair Judgment* which have survived, Avicenna openly criticizes Aristotle twice: Badawī *Arisṭū* 23.21 and 30.23.

integrated rather than reproduced, and it is synthesized into the systematic scholastic philosophy of Avicenna which was forever to replace Aristotelianism in Islam.

(a) With regard to the major Aristotelian philosophers, Avicenna initially followed tradition and presented their views for the most part eponymously, and refrained from open criticism even when he preferred the views of one commentator over those of another. In *Ten Arguments for the Substantiality of the Human Soul*, for example, an early work very close in its ideas to his *Compendium on the Soul*, Avicenna mentions that "scholars and philosophers"—using the neutral terms *al-ʿulamāʾ wa-l-ḥukamāʾ*—disagreed on the subject of the incorporeal subsistence of the soul. He cites, following accepted procedure in philosophical discussion, Alexander of Aphrodisias (*Al-Iskandar al-Afrūdīsī*, a form of the name never repeated by Avicenna in his later writings), who denied it, and Themistius, who accepted it, and says that both of them traced their doctrine to Aristotle himself. He then merely states that the view of Themistius is the correct one without any comment, and proceeds with his argument.[13] Avicenna went even so far in his adherence to Peripatetic tradition as to defend prominent philosophers against their own statements and to attempt to save the appearances. He devised, that is, "pretexts" and excuses for them (T8, §3 and L38). In his youthful debate with Bīrūnī he compares the latter's rejection of the Aristotelian theory of the eternity of the world to that of John Philoponus, but then proceeds to add that Philoponus "pretended to the Christians to display disagreement with Aristotle on this matter; but whoever examines his commentary on the last part of *De Generatione et Corruptione* and his other books will perhaps not fail to see that Philoponus agreed with Aristotle on this issue."[14] In his defense of Philoponus, Avicenna is clearly working within the tradition: it would seem that his argument was suggested to him by the passage in Fārābī's history of the transmission of philosophy, in which the Christians of Alexandria are said to have forbidden the teaching of books beyond the beginning of the *Analytica Priora* "since they believed that everything beyond that would harm Christianity."[15] Much

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[13] *Risāla fī s-saʿāda wa-l-ḥujaj al-ʿašara*, Hyderabad 1353, 15.

[14] *Asʾila* 13.7-10. It is to be noted that the term Avicenna uses here for "pretend" is *mawwaha*, a word used to refer to sophistical misrepresentation. Bīrūnī rejected Avicenna's argument in no uncertain terms: "God forbid that such pretense [misrepresentation, *tamwīh*] should be attributed to John Philoponus! More deserving so to be described is rather Aristotle, who decorates his blasphemies with beautiful ornaments!" (51.13-14). In his reply, Maʿṣūmī reiterated Avicenna's argument in a more elaborate form (69.12-70.5), advising Bīrūnī to read the other books by Philoponus, not just his *Contra Aristotelem*.

[15] Rosenthal *Heritage* 51.

later, toward the end of his life, Avicenna was openly critical of Philoponus' *Contra Aristotelem* and called it "a book which is apparently cogent but essentially weak" (T12, §2).

Apart from such specific examples, however, it is evident from the whole tenor of Avicenna's debate with Bīrūnī that he saw himself fully within the Aristotelian tradition, defending it with numerous references to the works of Aristotle and the commentators, as well as to his own works, which he clearly viewed as belonging in the same field of philosophical endeavor.[16]

In Avicenna's later writings there is decreasing reference by name to scholars in the Greek tradition and a concomitant increase in qualifying descriptions when they are referred to at all. The implication of this new attitude is clear. Avicenna does not see himself, or does not wish to project himself, as belonging to the same philosophical tradition, defending and supporting his predecessors as he had done in the earlier writings. Instead, he presumes to judge and rank the previous Peripatetic philosophers, adopting the stance of an independent overseer. This is the same attitude we have seen earlier expressed in the Autobiography with regard to the accomplishments of each scholar.

An illustration of the tendency of Avicenna's new attitude is provided by a passage from his discussion of the celestial movers. The passage was first written in *The Provenance and Destination*, and then copied in the Metaphysics of both *The Cure* and *The Salvation*. They compare as follows:

Provenance	*Cure/Salvation* (L70)
a) Each celestial sphere has a proximate mover proper to itself, ... according to the opinion of the Philosopher, Alexander, Themistius, and the Peripatetic scholars. ...	a) Each celestial sphere has a proximate mover proper to itself, ... according to the opinion of the First Teacher and the Validating Peripatetic scholars[17] after him. ...
b) The Philosopher established the number of the moving spheres according to the knowledge of his time... .	b) The First Teacher established the number of the moving spheres according to the knowledge of his time... .
c) Alexander explained as follows in his treatise *On the Principles of the Universe*... .	c) One of his followers who speaks more to the point explained as follows in his treatise *On the Principles of the Universe*... .
d) Themistius	d) He who expressed well the books of the First Teacher by way of epitome—although he could not delve deeply

[16] See, e.g., *As'ila* 23.12-14; 25.4-6; 25.9-12; 28.11-29.1; 35.4-7.

[17] *The Salvation* reads, "the Validating scholars of Peripatetic philosophy."

explained as follows... .[18]

e) [Omits.]

into the ideas[19]—explained as follows... .

e) These two are the First Teacher's closest ancient disciples who followed the right course.[20]

The evolving attitude of Avicenna, clearly demonstrated in the above passages, to distance himself from membership in the company of the Aristotelian commentators entails two consequences for his work. First, when his purpose was to comment on the tradition, it enabled him to present himself as the impartial judge of the accomplishments of previous scholars. This development reaches its culmination in his book by the very title, *Fair Judgment*. In the extant fragments (see W10), the commentators are mentioned by name, and in each case, in the apposite words of the Disciple from Rayy, Avicenna "Judged every question and every philosopher by bestowing Fairly praise or blame, and appreciation or deprecation" (T13, §2). Themistius, for example, is mentioned twice in the *Commentary on Lambda*, once with praise and once with blame; in the *Marginal Notes on De Anima* he is mentioned both times with blame.[21] Alexander is mentioned four times in the *Marginal Notes*, and commended in only one of these.[22] Second, when Avicenna's purpose was expository, he could dispense almost completely with referring to any predecessors. This development culminates in the *Pointers and Reminders*, in which no philosopher is ever mentioned by name, with the sole exception of Porphyry who is severely criticized;[23] Aristotle is mentioned only once as "the First Teacher,"[24] and referred to once again as "the master of the Peripatetics" in a passage which sets itself apart from the rest of the books because it is described neither as a "Pointer" nor as a "reminder," but specifically as a "reference" (*istišhād*).[25] All the other references to the commentators are very vague, and even the customary formula "the Validating scholars" (*al-muḥaṣṣilūn*, *ahl at-taḥṣīl*) is rarely used.[26]

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[18] *Mabdaʾ* f. 160v.

[19] Cf. the similar assessment of Themistius by a modern scholar, O. Hamelin, *La théorie de l'intellect d'après Aristote et ses commentateurs*, E. Barbotin, ed., Paris 1953, 39: "Ses [Themistius'] développements [on the text of Aristotle] gardent toujours ce caractère littéral qui fait de lui un interprète utile et sûr pour l'intelligence verbale d'Aristote, mais pauvre en aperçus profonds sur la pensée du maître."

[20] *Ilāhīyāt* 392.8-10, 392.15-393.5; *Najāt* 435.15-436.17.

[21] Badawī *Arisṭū* 26.23, 31.4, 98.18-19, 116.10-11.

[22] Badawī *Arisṭū* 78.22, 101.17, 106.1, 114.6.

[23] *Išārāt* III.271 = Goichon *Directives* 448.

[24] *Išārāt* I.329 = Goichon *Directives* 166, Inati 114.

[25] *Išārāt* III.179 = Goichon *Directives* 416. For these terms see W11.

[26] *Išārāt* I.469, II.166 = Goichon *Directives* 226, 253.

The evolution of a similar critical tone can be observed in Avicenna's attitude toward Muslim thinkers as well. *The Provenance and Destination* again contains passages which have either neutral or no references to predecessors in the Islamic tradition, but which reappear in *The Cure* and *The Salvation* with critical comments inserted. The scholars that come under such attack are ʿĀmirī and Kindī:

Provenance	*Cure*	*Salvation*
a) We still have to consider something else: it is possible to imagine that the various objects of desire [which move the spheres] are bodies rather than separate intellects, ...	We still have to consider something else: it is possible to imagine that the various objects of desire [which move the spheres] are bodies rather than separate intellects, ... as was thought by one of the modern philosophasters who had the audacity[a] to muddle philosophy, since he did not understand the purpose of the ancients.	We still have to consider something else: it is possible to imagine that the various objects of desire [which move the spheres] are bodies rather than separate intellects, ... as was thought by Abū-l-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī, one of the modern philosophasters who had the audacity to muddle philosophy, since he did not understand the purpose of the ancients.
We say that this is impossible... .	We say that this is impossible... .	We say that this is impossible... .[27]
b) Some people who are scholars/philosophers say... .	Some people who claim affiliation with scholars/philosophers say... .	Some people who claim affiliation with scholars/philosophers say... .[28]

In this last example Avicenna does not specify any names; Ṭūsī provides it in his commentary: "i.e., al-Kindī and his followers."[29]

(b) With regard to philosophical jargon, in his earlier writings Avicenna manifestly presents himself as a philosopher writing in the Graeco-Arabic philosophical tradition. In many instances he quotes the titles of Aristotle's books, and an occasional technical term, in Greek

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[a] The reading would seem to be *al-qudm*, "audacious," rather than *al-fadm*, "sluggish;" it has the better attestation in the manuscripts of both the *Šifāʾ* and the *Najāt*. The text of the Cairo edition of the *Ilāhīyāt* (note 27) is accordingly to be corrected.

[27] *Mabdaʾ* f. 163v-164r = *Ilāhīyāt* 399.8-11 = *Najāt* 444.13-17. Cf. Rowson *Afterlife* 37.

[28] *Mabdaʾ* 176v: *qawm min ahl al-ʿilm* = *Ilāhīyāt* 413.1: *qawm min al-muntasibīn ilā ahl* [*sic lege*] *al-ʿilm* = *Najāt* 463.12.

[29] *Išārāt* III.234.

rather than Arabic: *ṭūbīqā* (*Topica*),[30] *Rīṭūrīqā* (*Rhetorica*),[31] *Fwʾīṭīqā* (*Poetica*),[32] *Māṭāfūsīqā* (*Metaphysica*),[33] *fanṭāsiyā*/*banṭāsiyā* (*phantasia*).[34] This practice is continued in, or perhaps, more accurately, is allowed in most cases to be transferred to, the re-presentation of earlier texts in *The Cure* with diminishing frequency. At other times in *The Cure*, the Greek word may be offered but only after the Arabic equivalent has been given, almost as if to ensure that the reader, more familiar with the Greek term, knows which Arabic word it corresponds to. By late works such as *The Easterners* and *Pointers and Reminders*, the practice ceases to exist. The terminology used by Avicenna, whether the traditional one in Aristotelian philosophy or neologistic (as discussed in Chapter 6.5), is allowed to stand on its own and the reader is expected to identify the referents.

(c) There is a similar development toward independence in Avicenna's adherence to the outward forms of presentation and classification of philosophy in the Aristotelian tradition. In his very first work, *Compendium on the Soul*, he discusses only those subjects that the tradition considers appropriate for inclusion in a work on the soul, despite the fact that he would have wished to investigate related questions on the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul (Chapter 6.2). He dutifully expresses his respect for tradition:

> Among the subjects associated with this investigation that still remain to be done is .... However, had it not been Customary to separate the investigation of these subjects from the investigation we have been conducting, out of respect and veneration for the former, and to offer the present investigation first as an introduction to the other and in order to establish the framework of discussion, I would have followed these chapters with the rest of the discussion on the other subjects to complete the matter.[35]

In subsequent works, starting already with *The Provenance and Destination* of his transition period, Avicenna gradually leaves traditional forms of presentation and reaches, with the *Pointers and Reminders*, a stage of high emancipation from Customary Practices.

(d) A concomitant development to the change in Avicenna's adherence to transmitted forms of exposition is the marked difference in the way in which he refers to his own books in his early and later periods. Until the compilation of *The Cure*, Avicenna refers to his previous works as commentaries, interpretations, compendia, or epitomes of the books of Aristotle. In *The Provenance and Destination*, for example, he expresses

[30] *ʿArūḍīya* f. 10r; Ahwānī *Aḥwāl* 55.8.
[31] *ʿArūḍīya* f. 34r.
[32] *ʿArūḍīya* f. 45v.
[33] *Asʾila* 23.14.
[34] *ʿArūḍīya* f. 79v,-2; Ahwānī *Aḥwāl* 120.8.
[35] Landauer 372 (text), 418 (translation).

himself numerous times as follows: "we have Verified and presented an exposition of this in our interpretation (*talḫīṣ*) of *Posterior Analytics*;" "we have presented an exposition of this matter in our interpretation (*talḫīṣ*) of *De Caelo* and *Physics*."[36] More explicit is the prologue to his *Brief Treatise on Logic* (*al-Manṭiq al-mūjiz*), a work that apparently dates from this period:

> The first person who discovered [logic] is Aristotle, the Greek philosopher. We have written many books commenting [*mašrūḥa*] in great detail on the discipline of logic, and we have also written a number of compendia and summaries [*jawāmiʿ wa-muḫtaṣarāt*]... .[37] (L7

In his later period, Avicenna changes his practice altogether. He stops referring indiscriminately to all his earlier works as compendia or summaries of Aristotle's books; he no longer refers to Aristotle's books for documentation but rather to his own—he mentions Aristotle's books only when there is a historical point to be made;[38] and he refers to *some* of his previous works as "commentaries" only when they are clearly in the nature of a direct commentary on Aristotelian texts, like the *Fair Judgment*, not when they are general expositions of Knowledge like *The Cure*. The best illustration of his change of orientation is in the way he describes in two instances his own *Appendices*. In the Sophistics of *The Cure*, written around 414/1024 (W6) and before the completion of the entire work, he says that in the *Appendices* he expects to elaborate on some details of Aristotle's text that were not very explicit (T6B, §7), clearly implying that he planned that work to be a commentary on *Aristotle's* philosophy. About six years later when he wrote the Prologue to the completed work, he describes the *Appendices* this time as a kind of "commentary to [*The Cure*], Providing Corollaries to its Fundamental Principles and elaborating upon its briefly expressed concepts" (T9, §3). *The Cure* thus supplanted Aristotle's texts as the closest approximation to Knowledge, and therefore as the text to be commented upon.

The shift in Avicenna's attitude toward his own work in relation to the Aristotelian tradition is also apparent in the evolution of his general statements of purpose in the various introductions to his successive

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[36] *Mabdaʾ* f. 142r; 144r. For *talḫīṣ* = interpretation, *exēgēsis*, see Ullmann's references in *WKAS* II,1.428b-29a.

[37] *Al-Manṭiq al-mūjiz*, quoted in Mahdavī 221.

[38] In the extant fragments of the *Fair Judgment* and the *Marginal Notes on De Anima*, he refers numerous times to his *Easterners* by invoking the Easterners; in *Pointers and Reminders*, written after *The Easterners* was lost, he refers to *The Cure* for documentation (e.g., *Išārāt* I.316 = Goichon *Directives* 161, Inati 112), and again, in the same work, to the *Prior* and *Posterior Analytics* of Aristotle when discussing the historical aspect of a question (*Išārāt* I.469-471 = Goichon *Directives* 226-227, Inati 150).

works. In the introduction to *The Provenance and Destination* (T4, §1), he states that his purpose is to expound the doctrines of the *Peripatetic* philosophers. In the prologue of the Physics of *The Cure*, the first part of the work to be written (W6), he says that he will write about Physics

> in the manner established by our opinion and arrived at by our theoretical investigation. The arrangement on this occasion will correspond to that followed in Peripatetic philosophy.[39] (L73)

Here Avicenna expresses his ideological independence from the Peripatetics but maintains his contextual affiliation. In the Prologue to the entire *Cure*, written after the work had been completed, there is yet another shift. Instead of writing about Peripatetic philosophy, he says (T9, §1), his book contains "the Fundamental Principles contained in the philosophical sciences attributed to the *ancients*" as well as his own thoughts. There is no mention of a specific name at this point; later on (§5B) he says, interestingly enough, that with regard to physics he "was mostly unsuccessful in pursuing a course parallel to the systematic treatise and the memoranda of Aristotle, the paradigmatic master in this discipline." In the Introduction to *The Easterners* all direct affiliation with the Aristotelian tradition is expressly rejected; Aristotle merely provided the foundation and the direction, but Avicenna's purpose is to build beyond it, not to expound it or explain, as formerly, its hidden meanings. In *Pointers and Reminders*, finally, there is no historical context whatsoever in the very brief prologue, and extremely limited mention of any predecessors in the entire work. The purpose is merely to provide, to those able to understand, Pointers and reminders about Knowledge, regardless of pedigree, and as contained in the active intellect and acquired by Avicenna through Intuition of the middle terms and study.

As Avicenna's awareness of his personal contribution to the history of philosophy grew and he developed a progressively more precise conception of the praxis of philosophy, and as he increasingly stopped seeing himself in the traditional mold of philosopher, i.e., a mere commentator on the Aristotelian texts, a self-perception shared by *all* philosophers after Plotinus, Greek and Arabic alike, he started coming into his own and speaking in his own voice as a philosopher—another Aristotle, as we saw in the implications of his structure of the Autobiography (Chapter 3.4). This shift in self-perception entailed a concomitant shift in his attitude to Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition, and inversely proportional to it. The more he emancipated himself from the traditional mold of philos-

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[39] *As-Samāʿ aṭ-ṭabīʿī* 3.5-6; Mahdavī 145.

opher/commentator and saw himself as the most accurate communicator of Knowledge/Philosophy, the more critical he became of the Aristotelian tradition and the less willing to spend time repeating their theories which he considered erroneous and refuting them. His focus shifted to presenting Knowledge independently of tradition and Customary practices, with scant attention to theories which by then had become, to him, irrelevant, outdated, or misguided, and with even less concern for the names of individuals who had held them. Once he had integrated in his mind the Aristotelian tradition with all the conflicting views, his purpose, which was never fully historical, became completely systematic. The evolution of his attitude toward Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition is therefore of significance in assessing the concomitant evolution of his purpose in the praxis of philosophy.

8.

THE ELABORATION OF METHODS

1. *The Evolution of Avicenna's Methods of Communication*

The development of Avicenna's different methods of composition runs parallel to the evolution of his attitude toward Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition. With increasing awareness of independence from that tradition there came a corresponding independence of style and experimentation with different approaches and methods of communication.

Initially Avicenna saw himself as a commentator on the Aristotelian texts, and his style was accordingly expository, reformulating the accepted doctrines as transmitted. In the transition period of his literary activity, the need to incorporate in his works material not readily treated in the tradition (primarily subjects that belong to the Metaphysics of the Rational Soul) led Avicenna to approach the work of composition by following not so much the contents of the tradition as the doctrine about Aristotle's presumed obscurity which stood in need of explication. This enabled Avicenna to write about what he perceived to be the "fruits" of Physics and Metaphysics while claiming to be expounding the "innermost ideas stored in the depths" of Peripatetic books and "Withheld from explicit mention" (T5, §1; T4, §3). In his mature period, and with increased self-confidence, Avicenna abandoned this approach and reverted to the expository method. Only this time the philosophical doctrines, which include the material introduced in the preceding period under the guise of decoding Peripatetic obfuscation, were presented as the work of Avicenna's own synthesis of what was best in the tradition with his own thoughts, and without reference to the authority of the tradition (T9, §1; T7, §3). In the following period, Avicenna attempted to set up his revised systematization of philosophy as a separate philosophical school native to his place of origin, Ḫurasān (the East), and to delineate its identity sharply be explicitly contrasting it with the Aristotelian tradition. This innovation by Avicenna found little response in his immediate milieu; despite the wide receptivity shown to his revised systematization, the drastic break with the Peripatetic tradition indicated by its new name was not appreciated. In his last period, finally, Avicenna actively used the Peripatetic doctrine of deliberate obscurity and treated philosophy in such a way that would Withhold it from those unworthy to receive it.

This brief summary highlights the course of Avicenna's approach to communicating philosophical knowledge only as represented in the major works of each period. Throughout most of his life, however, or at least from his mature period onwards, Avicenna was continuously preoccupied with elaborating methods of composition and with fashioning the means of presentation to fit the audience he was addressing in each particular case. Almost all of his works were written for patrons who requested them from him. In the main we do not know the reactions, or the extent of satisfaction felt by the commissioners of his works when they received the finished product; Avicenna, however, certainly knew about it. Glimpses of such reactions we get, for example, from the attitude of one of his closest disciples, Jūzjānī, upon seeing the completed *The Cure*. As discussed in Chapter 2 (W6), it seems obvious that he was not entirely pleased with it, in the sense that it did not meet his preconceived idea of what a commentary, or—be it—even an exposition of Aristotle's works ought to have been. In this connection we should not forget that as Avicenna's attitude toward Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition was evolving and he developed an increasingly independent attitude toward it, we cannot expect his disciples and followers, let alone his calumniators or opponents, to have doffed ingrained attitudes of servility and slavish imitation of Aristotelian models. The opposition to Avicenna's neoteristic approach must have therefore been considerable even from his more attached disciples, as is evident from numerous passages of Avicenna himself where he expresses his impatience with such people. It was only his stature and renown that enabled him to continue working along these lines, and the personal cult surrounding him that arose early and was followed by those not so strongly attached to the Aristotelian tradition, that ensured the propagation and survival of his works.

Another indication of a reaction to a commissioned piece is provided by the possibly apocryphal story that ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla himself, his great protector and patron, understood nothing from the *Philosophy* which Avicenna condescended to write in Persian for his very edification.[1]

Considerations such as these, along with Avicenna's deep appreciation of the contextuality of the philosophical praxis (Chapter 5.2, 5.3), made him think seriously about the manner in which he was going to write his works depending on the people to whom they were being addressed, and led him to elaborate three distinct methods of communicating Knowledge. These are, a) the symbolic; presentation by means of symbols and allegories; b) the indicative; presentation by way of Pointers; i.e., allusion, suggestion, and implication; and c) the demonstrative or

[1] Achena-Massé 19.

expository; presentation by means of syllogisms and syllogistic argumentation with varying degrees of fullness. A fourth method, which can be called the mnemonic because it consisted of presentation in verse for easy memorization (like his *rajaz* poems on logic and medicine), will not be discussed here insofar as it is an ancillary subcategory of the expository method.

2. *The Symbolic Method: Symbol and Allegory*

Avicenna's symbolic method is directly derived from his theory of prophecy and its association, through the work of Fārābī, with the Greek traditions about allegorical writing.[2] Representative of the latter is the following passage from Galen's summary of Plato's *Republic*, a work widely available in Arabic translation:

> The masses [*jumhūr an-nās*] are unable to understand the sequence of demonstrative argumentation and are therefore in need of symbols [*rumūz*] whereby they can be aided; (by "symbols" Galen meant the reports about the rewards and punishments in the Hereafter). We see today, for example, that the people who are called Christians have taken their faith merely from symbols and the miraculous, and yet they may be thought to behave like true philosophers: their lack of fear of death, namely, and of what they will encounter after it is something which we may witness every day. The same also applies to their abstinence from sexual intercourse: for some of them, not only men but also women, actually spend their entire lives refraining from sexual intercourse, while others have reached such a point of self-control in regulating their food and drink and in their intense desire for (L74)

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[2] Since the question has been raised, it is necessary to state here the precise meaning of "symbol" and "allegory." The question was raised by Corbin and later by Bausani, who attempted to establish a highly subjective difference between the two terms. Bausani quoted Corbin with approval: "Corbin seems to me perfectly right when he writes: 'Symbol is there to announce something which cannot be expressed otherwise: it is the only possible expression of the thing symbolized; allegory is a more or less artificial figuration of generalities or abstractions that can be perfectly expressed and known by other ways' " (A. Bausani, "Continuity and Break in the Literary and Cultural Tradition of Iran," *Proceedings of the 26th International Congress of Orientalists*, New Delhi 1968, vol. II, p. 187 bottom). This is quite inaccurate and misleading, at least in English (and in French and Italian, I am sure). Contemporary English usage defines symbol as "something used for or regarded as representing something else; a material object representing something, often something immaterial;" and allegory as "a symbolic narrative" (*The Random House College Dictionary*, revised edition, New York 1979). As it can be readily appreciated, the criterion of whether the thing symbolized can be expressed in other ways or not does not enter into the definition; it was only relevant to Corbin's obsession with what he perceived to be the allegedly ineffable Iranian spirituality. In what follows I will be using the words in their dictionary sense.

Avicenna's theory of prophecy has been discussed in adequate detail by Rahman *Prophecy*, and M. Marmura, "Avicenna's Psychological Proof of Prophecy," *JNES* 22 (1963) 49-56, where he refers to further bibliography.

rectitude that they have in fact become not inferior to those who are truly philosophers.[3]

Avicenna stated his understanding of the function of allegory for the work of the prophet in explicit terms as follows:[4]

[a] The prophet ... should let men know that they have a maker, one and omnipotent... . This will induce the masses [*al-jumhūr*] to obey the decrees put in the prophet's mouth by the deity and the angels. With regard to knowledge about God, however, the prophet ought not to involve the masses with anything beyond the fact that He is one, the truth, and has none like Himself. To lead them beyond this and demand that they believe in His existence as being not referred to in place, not subject to verbal categories, neither inside nor outside the world, or anything of this kind, is something that will tax them beyond their capacities, muddle their religion in their affairs, immerse them in a state from which only the exceptional and rare person receiving the succour and success of God can be saved—for they can conceptualize these matters in the right manner only with great strain, and a few of them can barely conceptualize the real nature of this "oneness [of God]" and [His] "remoteness;" before long, however, they will deny the truth of such an existence, fall into dissension, and devote their attention to discussions and analogical arguments that will divert them from performing the duties of the body[a]—and it might even immerse them in opinions contrary to the welfare of society [*al-madīna*] and opposed to the imperatives of truth. As a result, their problems and doubts will multiply, and it will be difficult for any tongue[b] to control them. Divine wisdom is not easily acquired by everybody. (L75)

[b] It is not proper for any man to reveal that he possesses knowledge he is hiding from the common people [*al-ʿāmma*]. Indeed, he should not even permit an intimation of this. Rather, he should inform them about God's majesty and greatness through symbols [*rumūz*] and images [*amṯila*] derived

[a] The *Najāt* text reads *al-badanīya* (of the body), while the *Šifāʾ* text has *al-madanīya* (of the city). The city, however, is mentioned in the next sentence, while this long parenthetical aside aims to explain that by engaging in misguided theological discussions people are apt to forget (or disdain) physical acts of worship like prayer, fasting, etc., and thus fall into a state from which only God can save them.

[b] *ʿAlā l-lisān* (tongue) is the reading of the *Najāt*; the *Šifāʾ* has *ʿalā insān* (man). The intended meaning seems to be that such people cannot be restrained by advice and counsel and may thus have to be punished.

[3] Galen's text is quoted in Abū-ʿĪsā ibn-al-Munajjim's *Chronography* as preserved in Abū-l-Fidāʾ's *Historia Anteislamica*, H. L. Fleischer, ed., Leipzig 1831, 108, and in an abbreviated form in the *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* 209-211; see S. M. Stern "Abū ʿĪsā Ibn Al-Munajjim's Chronography," *Islamic Philosophy and The Classical Tradition*, S. M. Stern, A. Hourani, V. Brown, eds., Oxford 1972, 453 and 456, note 53. See also R. Köbert, "Das nur in arabischer Überlieferung erhaltene Urteil Galens über die Christen," *Orientalia* 25 (1956) 404-409 (with further bibliography), and *Plato Arabus I: Galeni Compendium Timaei Platonis*, P. Kraus and R. Walzer, eds., London 1951, pp. 37 (Arabic), 99-100 (Latin, with references).—The parenthetical sentence in the text explaining what Galen meant by "symbols" is apparently by Abū-ʿĪsā.

[4] *Ilāhīyāt* 442.10-443.12 = *Najāt* 500.5-501.17. Cf. the translation by Marmura in Lerner-Mahdi 100-101, and by Anawati *Métaphysique VI-X* 176-177.

from things that for them are majestic and great, and present in addition to that only this much, namely, that God has neither equal, nor companion, nor likeness. Similarly, he must establish for them the doctrine about the [final] Destination [of the soul] in a way that they will be able to conceive how it happens and that will reassure them, and he must strike images [*amṯāl*] for the eternal bliss and misery that they will understand and conceive. Of the true nature of these matters he should intimate to them only some general concepts: that it is something that "no eye has ever seen nor ear heard," and that there are pleasures that are great possessions and pains that are perpetual punishment.

[c] Know that God knows the manner in which good in these matters [is effected], and what God knows should accordingly be taken in the right manner[c] (as you have found out). It makes no difference that his [the prophet's] address includes symbols [*rumūz*] and Pointers [*išārāt*] inviting to philosophical research [*al-baḥṯ al-ḥikmī*] those naturally predisposed to theoretical investigation.

Several points need to be noted in this significant passage.

First, it establishes that the need for symbolical or allegorical communication derives from the fact that the masses (*al-ʿāmma*) are incapable, because of their stupidity, of understanding truth when stated in demonstrative or expository language. The only way in which they can understand it is when *the same truth* (and not another, mystical, or more profound, truth), or more precisely, a much simplified version of the same truth, reduced to the bare essentials, is expressed in terms of symbols and images to which they can relate and with which they are familiar from their everyday life.

Second, not only can the common people understand the truth only in this manner, but it is possitively deleterious to convey it to them in any other way because they will misunderstand and misapply it. They will not perform their obligatory acts of worship and other civic duties and thereby harm both their life in the Hereafter and society at large (§a). This directly involves and explains Withholding the explicit truth from them, i.e., the entire constellation of ideas and attitudes associated with the concept of *ḍann* discussed in Chapter 5.3.

Third, not only would the common people misunderstand and misapply truth were they to be given it explicitly, but it is also harmful for them to perceive that it is actually withheld from them. It is therefore "not proper for any man to reveal that he possesses knowledge he is hiding from" them (§b). This is a second reason why they should be given the truth in symbols, i.e., not only so that they can understand

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[c] I follow the *Najāt* readings, which give a better text than that of the *Šifāʾ*: *wa-ʿlam anna Llāha taʿālā yaʿlamu* [*Šifāʾ* adds *anna*] *wajha l-ḫayri fī hāḏā fa-yajibu an yuʾḫaḏa* [*Šifāʾ*: *yūjada*] *maʿlūmu Llāhi subḥānahu ʿalā wajhihi*.

what is proper of it for them, but also to dispel their perception that somebody knows something which he is hiding from them.

Fourth, and most important, *the allegorical method of communication is inferior to the demonstrative and expository* because it is suited for and addressed to inferior minds. It merely gives them in symbols what it would have given them demonstratively had they been of greater understanding.

Fifth, the only use the allegorical method may have for superior minds is to invite them to "philosophical research," to the demonstrative method (§c). This is the third reason for communicating in symbols, corresponding to the training and testing of the students in the Aristotelian tradition, as mentioned in Chapter 5.3.

Sixth, finally, communication through various means—symbols, Pointers, demonstration—is part of the divine plan and intended to effect the greatest possible amount of good (§c).

On the basis of this understanding of the function and significance of allegorical communication, Avicenna both interpreted the Qurʾān and himself wrote three allegorical works. In view of the great amount of scholarly effort that has been expended in trying, first, to understand the assumed "mystical" or "oriental" philosophy of Avicenna, and second, to prove that he actually did have one, it is necessary to present here in review our findings so far.

First of all, as we saw in Chapter 5.3 on the concept of *ḍann*, the numerous passages in which Avicenna mentions "withholding knowledge" and "forbidding" his disciples to divulge his teachings to the unworthy do not indicate that he had a "secret," "mystical," or "esoteric" doctrine, separate from his "exoteric" Aristotelian teachings, which he wished to share only with the elect few. If anything, all they indicate is that he followed, to the contrary, Aristotelian tradition and Islamic attitudes in wishing to Withhold knowledge from mentally inferior people for fear that they would misunderstand and misapply it and hence cause damage to themselves and the society. There is no question here of *two* knowledges, one Aristotelian, the other not, one exoteric, the other esoteric, one for the elect, the other for the masses. Knowledge, as we have seen, is one, and that is the forms of things as contained in the active intellect, structured in a syllogistic manner, classified in the Aristotelian fashion, and best expressed, in a manner best suited to their structure, by the philosophy of the Aristotelian tradition. It is the *explicit* exposition of *this* Knowledge that has to be Withheld from the masses because they, unable to understand its syllogistic structure, will be corrupted by it, i.e., neglect their acts of worship and adopt ideas harmful to the society. This Knowledge has to be communicated to them, lest

they perceive that something *is* being withheld from them, in symbols. Avicenna's brief *On the Inner Meaning of Destiny* (*Risāla fī sirr al-qadar*) provides a good illustration of the lack of dichotomy in the knowledge to be communicated and of the existence of various methods of doing so. In the introduction of the essay he says that

> the subject of Destiny (*qadar*) is one of the "most replete with obscurity, one of the subjects which is set down in writing only in symbolic form (*marmūza*) and taught only in a hidden manner because of the corrupting effects its open declaration would have on the common people (*ʿāmma*)."[5] (L76)

This, however, is only a statement of the way in which the subject is generally treated; it does not mean that it is mystical, esoteric, or secret, because it lends itself to syllogistic treatment since, like any other subject or part of Knowledge in the Aristotelian tradition, it reflects ontological reality which has a syllogistic structure. Avicenna then proceeds explicitly to state that "the inner meaning" (*sirr*) of Destiny is based upon premisses (*muqaddimāt*), lists three of these, explains that "it is possible to present proofs and demonstrations" for the first one, says that these three premisses are only the "essential statements" (*jumal*) for which it is needed to furnish demonstrations, and in the ensuing discussion quotes Aristotle and Plato.[6] It is clear that we are faced here with the same process of logical analysis described by Avicenna in the Autobiography.

As for the symbolic presentation, Avicenna shows what the symbols are and provides the corresponding concepts from the philosophical sciences:

> Punishment [after death] is the occurrence of pain in the soul corresponding to the extent of its deficiency. So the soul's abiding in deficiency is its "alienation from God the Exalted," and this is "the curse," "the Penalty," "[God's] wrath" and "anger"... .[7] (L77)

This is then what Avicenna meant when he said that the subject of Destiny has been treated in a symbolic form lest the common people be corrupted. With regard to an aspect of the problem, punishment after death, for example, the expository version of the truth is that human souls feel pain to the extent that they have not perfected themselves, i.e.,

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[5] G. F. Hourani "Ibn Sīnā's 'Essay on the Secret of Destiny'," *BSOAS* 29 (1966) 27.4-5 (text), 31 (translation). Hourani is led by his assumption of a "secret" and "esoteric" knowledge in Avicenna (p. 42) to translate *marmūza* as "enigmatic" (p. 31, 43), which lends a different slant to his interpretation. The earlier translation by Arberry *Theology* 38 is freer.

[6] Hourani "Destiny" 28.10, 28.16, 29.30, 29.31-32.

[7] Hourani "Destiny" 28.24-26 (text), 32 (translation).

in Aristotelian terms, to the extent that they have not actualized the activity proper to them, thinking, but have instead engaged only in the activities of the lower soul which they share with plants and animals, nutritive and affective functions. This proposition, which is potentially a premiss and thus part of a syllogism which can be constructed to prove demonstratively the inner meaning of Destiny, is expressed symbolically in religious texts in terms of God's anger. Common people can understand the concept of God's anger analogically from their own experience; they are therefore virtuous because they fear that if they sin, they will incur God's wrath and be punished. In other words, they do the right thing for the wrong reason because they cannot comprehend the right reason. If, however, they were to be told that they should not sin because sinning would prevent them from perfecting their soul and make it deficient, they would not understand this, sin, and bring about corruption in society. This then is the reason why the inner meaning of Destiny is presented symbolically and taught in a hidden manner. *The relevant discriminating factor here is social expediency, not doctrinal dichotomy.*

Secondly, in all his works in which Avicenna either interprets a symbolically expressed text or himself composes an allegory, all he does is, as we just saw, to provide strict one-to-one correspondences between philosophical concepts and symbols. Again, the Knowledge to be communicated or the truth to be imparted is one, presented through different vehicles. There is no question of the allegories presenting a truth, or a doctrine, that is different, higher, or more profound, than the philosophical exposition. As a matter of fact, allegorical presentation is, if anything, inferior to demonstrative presentation, as already noted. For the demonstrative presentation includes the middle terms, or causes, of the extremes, and intellectual certainty can come about only when things are known through their causes. The most that an allegorical presentation can do is to induce the philosophically minded to engage in philosophical research, construct the syllogisms, and discover the middle terms, thus arriving at the same stage at which he would have been had he been given from the very beginning a demonstrative presentation rather than an allegory.

This correspondence in Avicenna's works between symbol and philosophical concept can be witnessed in numerous works. We just saw above a brief example from the *On the Inner Meaning of Destiny*, and earlier we had seen how he interpreted the Light Verse (Chapter 3.2): each element of the Qur'ānic metaphor corresponded to a specific philosophical concept. The Light Verse for Avicenna thus does not express a higher, or esoteric truth, but merely the doctrine of the intellect as developed in the Aristotelian tradition (including his theory of Intuition) and as expressed

in philosophical language numerous times throughout his works. The only difference is that everybody can understand the external meaning of the Light Verse (it is merely a picture), but very few can understand the epistemological theory indicated in the doctrine of the intellect expressed in philosophical terms.

Further examples of strict correspondences can be found, for example, in his last essay *On the Rational Soul* (T14, §10), where he explicitly makes the identification: "the intellectual substance which is the medium of the divine effluence ... is called 'angel' in the language of Revelation (*fī lisān aš-šarᶜ*) and 'active intellect' in philosophical terminology." Similar identifications are also present in an essay *On the Knowledge about the Rational Soul and Its States*, where the Farthest Sphere is said to correspond to "the Throne in the language of Revelation" (*wa-huwa l-ᶜarš bi-lisān aš-šarᶜ*; cf. Qurᵓān IX.129), and the Sphere of the Fixed Stars to "the Footstool in the language of Revelation" (*wa-huwa l-kursī bi-lisān aš-šar*; cf. Qurᵓān II.255). Even if this essay is not by Avicenna himself, it follows exactly his method.[8]

In *Pointers and Reminders*, finally, when Avicenna refers the disciple/reader to the story of Salāmān and Absāl, he again provides the immediate correspondences and urges the disciple to work on the rest of the symbolism:

> Salāmān is an image (*maṯal*) referring to yourself, and Absāl is an image referring to the stage [you have reached] in Knowledge [*ᶜirfān*], if you are worthy of it.[9] Now analyze the allegory [*ar-ramz*], if you can.[10] (L78)

Ramz is here used in the sense of an aggregate of symbols, and hence allegory, which has to be "analyzed," i.e., identified along the lines hinted at by Avicenna. The inducement is in full accord with one of the purposes for which Aristotle was said to have written in an obscure style, namely the training of students.

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[8] Ahwani *Aḥwāl* 189.15-16, 190.1-2. Mahdavī 302 says that in some manuscripts this essay is attributed to other authors. According to J. Michot ("«L'épître sur la connaissance de l'âme rationnelle et de ses états» attribuée à Avicenne," *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 82 [1984] 481), this treatise was written about 100 to 150 years after Avicenna's death, but it is nevertheless imbued completely with Avicenna's thought. Michot also translates the entire treatise (for the passages referred to above see pp. 492-493). In any case, the identification of the ninth heaven with the Throne was also made elsewhere by Avicenna. See Gardet *Pensée* 140, where also further references to such correspondences can be found.

[9] "If you are worthy of it," *in kunta min ahlihi*; cf. the discussion of this expression in Chapter 5.3.

[10] *Išārāt* IV.49-51 = Goichon *Directives* 485. Whatever the story of Salāmān and Absāl may have been, Avicenna clearly intended by it to symbolize the same epistemological progression, from the stage of material intellect to that of acquired intellect, described in numerous works, as, for example, in his last essay *On the Rational Soul* (T14).

When Avicenna came to write his own allegories, the notorious *Ḥayy ibn-Yaqẓān* and *The Bird*, he applied precisely the same method in constructing his symbols. For each philosophical concept there corresponds a symbol, and the demonstrative and expository presentation of a subject is reproduced in the allegories in the same sequence, albeit in symbols. This is expressly stated at the end of the commentary on *Ḥayy ibn-Yaqẓān* by a disciple, written shortly after Avicenna's death, and addressed to his patron ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla:[11]

> Know that, for each of the questions treated in this epistle [*Ḥayy ibn-Yaqẓān*], a mere indication has been given here. A complete exposition can be found in larger works. Avicenna—may the divine mercy be upon him!—has himself treated them in his *Cure*, a summary of which is found in the *Philosophy for ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla*. (L79

Following the advice of the commentator in this epilogue, Goichon compared all the concepts in *Ḥayy* "phrase for phrase and frequently word for word" with the works suggested and discovered the correspondences.[12] What she did, in fact, was to follow Avicenna's injunction and "analyze the allegory."

To recapitulate: 1) The symbolic method of presentation consisted for Avicenna in presenting Knowledge in images (*amṯāl*) and symbols, either singly or in aggregates (*ramz/rumūz*), that corresponded one to one to the philosophical concepts in which this Knowledge was expressed when it reflected the syllogistic structure of the universe. By its very nature, this method of presentation was inferior to the demonstrative, and constituted the lowest possible way in which Knowledge could be communicated. It needs to be emphasized that the symbolic method *did not* communicate knowledge that was different, more true, or more profound than that communicated through the demonstrative method. 2) The symbolic method had for Avicenna four functions, two positive and two negative. a) Its main *positive* function was to impart to the common people, who are unable to understand syllogistic argumentation, *some* of the Knowledge, viz., that much of it as is necessary for their social and eschatological well-being, namely, about the Creator, their immortal

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[11] H. Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, London [1960] 1961, 380. The pious formula, "may the divine mercy be upon him," unless it is an addition by a later scribe, would indicate that Avicenna had died when the disciple wrote the commentary. Since ʿAlāʾ-ad-Dawla himself died in 433/1041, the commentary was written between 428/1037 and 433/1041 (cf. Corbin *Recital* 128-129).

[12] A.-M. Goichon, *Le Récit de Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān commenté par des textes d'Avicenne*, Paris 1959. Goichon gave a preliminary report about this book, along with some interesting examples, in the 24th International Congress of Orientalists: "Le prétendu ésotérisme d'Avicenne dans le récit de Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān," *Akten*, ed. H. Franke, Wiesbaden 1959, pp. 299-301.

soul, and the Hereafter. This method was employed in Revelation, by prophets, and ancient philosophers. b) Its secondary positive function was first, to ferret out, from among the people who first came into contact with a symbolic text, like that of the Revelation, those individuals with philosophical propensities so that they could then investigate this Knowledge from a demonstrative point of view, and second, once identified, to train them in analyzing the allegories, finding out the correspondences in philosophical terms, and Working Out Corollary Principles from the Fundamental Principles they could see symbolized. c) Its main *negative* function was to conceal from the common people a literal exposition of the same Knowledge because they would misunderstand it and cause damage to themselves and the society. d) Its secondary negative function was to give the common people the impression that nothing was being withheld from them at the same time that the explicit exposition of the same Knowledge was concealed from them.

3. *The Indicative Method: Pointers*

Avicenna recognized two higher methods of communicating knowledge. In his Letter to an anonymous disciple in Rayy he describes them as follows:

> As for the questions which you asked me, they are significant questions about the Philosophical Sciences, and especially these particular ones. ... I have studied these questions carefully and I have found them to be the proper ones; some I have answered at sufficient length, others by means of Pointers, and still others perhaps I have been unable to answer at all. ... [At the end of the letter Avicenna repeats himself:]
>
> ... This sort of investigation, i.e. an investigation with demonstrative methods, is appropriate for the loftiest Philosophical Science ... . You should engage in more such discussions [with me] on anything you wish, because in them lies pleasure and benefit. Whatever I am able to bring to light I will do so either openly, or from behind a veil which acts as a useful kind of stimulus and drill for it [i.e., the question at hand]; whatever I am unable to do so, I will excuse myself and admit it, since what is known to mankind is limited [T11, §§3, 7].

Of the two methods of composition described here, one is expository, following demonstrative methods, and of appropriate length, and the other is by means of Pointers (*išāra*), indications, and as though from behind a veil. The purpose of the former is to explain openly and thoroughly the problem; that of the latter is to prompt the student to further investigation and train him. The first is demonstrative, the second indicative.

Avicenna's thoughts about the distinction between these two methods were formed, or rather, crystallized by Fārābī's passage from *The Agree-*

ment between Plato and Aristotle cited earlier (L43). Properly, an argument should be presented along the lines described by Avicenna in the Autobiography: all the premisses stated, all conclusions analyzed, all middle terms discovered. As indicated in Fārābī's passage, however, Aristotle was said to have engaged in deliberate obfuscation in order to render his teachings inaccessible to the unworthy. The means he used to achieve that objective was incomplete and jumbled presentation of the same analytic argument; the unworthy would be confused by it, while the philosopher could easily supply the missing steps. Thus Aristotle could claim to have publicized his philosophy without making it public (L40).

One question that needs to be raised at this stage is why, if the purpose in writing in an obscure manner is to protect Knowledge from reaching the unworthy, philosophers did not write only in a symbolic manner. The answer is that the symbolic method is appropriate for the common people; when Knowledge has to be communicated to philosophers, however, the symbolic method is inadequate because it cannot convey, being inferior, the demonstrative argumentation which alone brings about certainty. The only way therefore in which both the demonstrative argumentation can be conveyed and Knowledge concealed from the common people is by presenting it in an obscure way as Aristotle did; by providing, that is, Pointers which will show the way to the unexpressed conclusion or premiss or middle term. The indicative method therefore has a second function which it shares with the symbolical, namely, concealment of Knowledge from the unworthy.

In his own works, Avicenna followed such an understanding of the indicative method both to expound what was thought to have been so written in the Aristotelian tradition and to present his own theories. In the former case, he expressly states this to have been his purpose in *The Provenance and Destination* and *The State of the Human Soul*:

> I intend to clarify what [the Peripatetic philosophers] deliberately neglected, proclaim what they concealed and suppressed, collect what they dispersed, and expand what they summarized [T4, §3].
>
> In this essay ... I have ... removed the cover, lifted the veil, and indicated the innermost ideas stored in the depths of books and Withheld from explicit mention. ... One cannot rely [on others] ... to search for the symbolically expressed passages [in these books] and interpret them (should symbolic expression have in fact been used) and to elaborate their succinct passages (should the author have in fact restricted himself only to a succinct exposition) [T5, §§1-2].

In both these passages Avicenna clearly echoes the description of the indicative method in Aristotle given by Fārābī (L43) and bases his procedure upon it. Avicenna maintained this understanding of the composition of Aristotle's works throughout his life; when he mentions in the

Letter to Kiyā, written shortly before his death, that Aristotle in the first book of *De Anima* "Worked Out Corollary Principles in a concealed fashion" (T12, §1), he is referring to this understanding. A further example, among the many that could be adduced, of his application of this method to exegesis is provided by his comments on a disputed Aristotelian passage, *Metaphysics* 1072a23-25, where the First Mover is established by way of motion. Avicenna criticized Aristotle and the commentators in the *Fair Judgment* for having adopted such a way of argumentation (Chapter 6.3), but when he was asked again about the matter in the *Discussions*, he exonerated the ancients of having committed a flagrant error by claiming that they employed the indicative method:[13]

(L80) Question: What is the real exposition of [the argument] that the First is a principle of being and substance? For the ancients explained that it is a principle of movement only.

Answer in Avicenna's hand: Not quite; they engaged in an exposition that it is a principle of movement openly and explicitly [*wāḍiḥan wa-bi-l-fiʿl*], while they engaged in the other [exposition that it is a principle of being and substance] by intimation and implicitly [*ka-t-taʿrīḍ wa-ka-š-šayʾ bi-l-qūwa*]. [Avicenna then goes on to provide a Pointer about how to proceed to elaborate upon their implicit argument.]

Avicenna also used the indicative method in the presentation of his own works throughout his life. In the relatively early *Brief Treatise on Logic* he applies it primarily for its didactic function.

(L81) In these pages we wish to set forth by way of summary and *Pointers* [the discipline of logic] to those who desire to comprehend both its fundamental and corollary principles.[14]

The obfuscatory function is apparent in *On the Nature of Prayer*:

(L82) All the other ordinances of religion are explicable along the lines which have been set forth in the present treatise. We would have desired to set forth each particular act of worship separately, but it was impossible for us to enter upon matters with which it is not proper for every man to be acquainted. We have accordingly prepared a clear and straightforward division [between outward and inward acts of worship], and a *Pointer* is sufficient for the liberal man.[15]

In general, it seems that Avicenna used Pointers for the purpose of obfuscation when dealing primarily with the metaphysics of the rational soul (Chapter 6.2), with those subjects, that is, which he identified in *The Cure* as appropriate for such a treatment by the prophet (L75): the

[13] *Mubāḥaṯāt* §290 (Badawī *Arisṭū* 180.4-6).

[14] Quoted in Mahdavī 221.

[15] Mehren *Traités* III.42.7-10; cf. the translation by Arberry *Theology* 63 and Hourani "Destiny" 42-43.

attributes of God, resurrection, the Afterlife and the attendant misery or bliss, and related subjects like the acts of whorship, including the visitation of tombs, about which he wrote a separate essay.[16] The reason for obfuscation in these matters was, as already mentioned, to prevent the common people from disobeying the ordinances of religion and causing harm to themselves and society, not to present an esoteric doctrine different from his "Peripatetic" philosophy. An excellent illustration of his application of this method to such a subject is provided by his essay *On the Inner Meaning of Destiny*. As analyzed by Hourani, it can be seen that in composing the essay Avicenna followed to a letter Fārābī's description of Aristotle's compositional technique: Avicenna omits the necessary premiss (L43, §3.i), omits the conclusion (§3.ii), and presents the entire argument in an order different from the syllogistic one (§3.v).[17]

If the obfuscatory function of the indicative method was designed for the common people, then its didactic function was intended for the philosopher. In the passage from *On the Nature of Prayer* above Avicenna calls such a person "the liberal man" (*al-ḥurr*); in the passage from *The Cure* he described him as the person "naturally predisposed to theoretical investigation" (L75c). In the epilogue of *Pointers and Reminders* he adds further details: he "whose heart [is] ... pure, his way of life straight, who abstrains from the sudden insinuations of the Whisperer [Satan], and who directs his attention to the truth readily and sincerely" (T10, §7). All these descriptions remind one readily of the attributes Avicenna implicitly claims to possess in the Autobiography, and explicitly says are required of the person in search of Knowledge (Chapter 3.3). In short, they are the attributes necessary for the effectuation of Intuition and the acquisition of Knowledge through the middle terms. This is so because the person who is led by means of Pointers has to study them, derive the Fundamental Principles, and Work out the Corollary Principles, as Avicenna says philosophy ought to be done. All these concepts are neatly encapsulated in Avicenna's last major work, which bears the very name of his indicative method, *Pointers and Reminders*:

> O you who are zealous to ascertain the truth! I have exposed to you in these Pointers and reminders Fundamental Principles and essential elements of philosophy; if sagacity [cf. Intuition] takes hold of your hand, it will become easy for you to Derive Corollary principles from the former and work out the details of the latter [T10, §2].

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[16] Mehren *Traités* III.44-48.

[17] Hourani "Destiny" 34-35, 40-41. What Goichon did with her analysis of *Ḥayy ibn-Yaqẓān* for Avicenna's symbolic method of presentation (*Récit*), Hourani did with this essay for the indicative.

In his last major work therefore Avicenna decided to cast the entire Knowledge in the form of Pointers for those who are able to understand them. The Knowledge that is to be communicated is exactly the same as that in the other works, and the way in which this Knowledge is to be acquired by the reader is exactly the same as that which Avicenna says is the only way to acquire Knowledge: through Intuition and by Working Out the Corollary principles, in order to reproduce, in the Knowledge acquired, the syllogistic structure of the universe. There is no separate Knowledge presented here, "esoteric" or "mystical;" it is the Knowledge of the Aristotelian tradition as integrated, systematized, and represented by Avicenna.

4. *The Demonstrative Method: Syllogism*

The demonstrative method involves exposition by demonstrative proofs (*burhān*) and arguments; it follows, in its strictest form, detailed syllogistic reasoning, and in its loosest, clear and sequential presentation of thoughts and arguments. This is the method that has to be engaged in when the purpose of the investigation is Verification (Chapter 3.3E). Avicenna called this method demonstrative, and is the one in which he engaged in most of his works. Representative of his attitude and of his disciples' understanding of this method is the following passage from the *Discussions*:[18]

> Proof [*iṯbāt*] of the separate substance, according to the method employed in *Throne Philosophy* [*ʿalā ṭ-ṭarīqa al-ʿaršīya*], in Avicenna's hand: (L83)
>
> The basic demonstrative method [*aṭ-ṭarīqa al-aṣlīya al-burhānīya*] is the one described in *The Cure*, namely, that existence is in need of a first principle that exists necessarily, because existence is either contingent in itself or necessary in itself, and contingent existence ultimately derives from the necessary.

The disciples' reference to Avicenna's treatise *Throne Philosophy* is to his systematic presentation of the material mostly in syllogistic form, which Avicenna expressly calls in the introduction as the method of Verification and contrasts it with that of Following Authority.[19] Avicenna refers in turn to *The Cure* (*Ilāhīyāt* 37ff.) because the presentation there is more elaborate than the one in *Throne Philosophy*, which Avicenna calls "abridgement" (*iḫtiṣār*).

Throughout his works, Avicenna comes back to the same arguments and demonstrations numerous times, and depending on his purpose or the addressee of each work, he amplifies or reduces them. This does not

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[18] *Mubāḥaṯāt* §264 (Badawī *Arisṭū* 173.6-8).

[19] *Throne Philosophy* is analyzed in detail by Meyer "Thronschrift."

entail a change in the method itself, but merely an omission or addition of several steps of the argument. The fullness of the argument in the demonstrative method is not determined, as in the case of the indicative method, by the desire to be didactic or obscure, but purely by considerations of clarity of exposition and comprehensibility. If, within the scope of the work and the context of the particular argument, a certain length of presentation is deemed adequate and sufficient, there is no need to encumber the argument with further steps that might detract from the flow of the overall presentation. This is clearly indicated by Avicenna in *The Provenance and Destination* in a parenthetical aside which, however, is left out in the parallel passages in *The Cure* and *The Salvation*:[20]

Provenance	*Cure/Salvation*
It is thus clear and evident that the celestial spheres have first principles that are neither corporeal nor forms of bodies, and that each sphere has among them a first principle that is proper to it, while there is a first principle that is common to all.	It is thus clear and evident that the celestial spheres have first principles that are neither corporeal nor forms of bodies, and that each sphere has among them a first principle that is proper to it, while there is a first principle that is common to all.
There are many syllogisms and demonstrative proofs [*barāhīn*] for this point [*maʿnā*], but in this book we have selected only those arguments [*ḥujaj*] which will not require us to employ many premisses and a long analysis but will be most easily comprehensible. This point, then, has been made clear.	
It is said that there is no doubt that there are simple, separate intellects... .	There is no doubt that there are simple, separate intellects...

(L84

The majority of Avicenna's works thus apply the demonstrative method with greater or lesser strictness. Consistently presenting "many premisses" and making "close textual analyses" (T7, §3), on the other hand, is the strictest possible way of applying the demonstrative method. It is also long and arduous. This is the way in which Avicenna studied the entire Aristotelian corpus (Chapter 3.3A), and possibly the way in which he wrote, while still in his early twenties, the lost *The Available and the Valid* (W3). He declined doing it all over again in *The Cure*, as he told Jūzjānī (W6), because its most appropriate application is in commentaries, and he did not wish to write a commentary in *The Cure*. He used

[20] *Mabdaʾ* ff. 174v-175r = *Ilāhīyāt* 408.15-17 = *Najāt* 458.2-6.

it therefore in the *Fair Judgment*, a commentary on the Aristotelian corpus, in order to enhance the areas of conflict and accord between his own systematization of the Aristotelian tradition and the various statements in that tradition stemming from specific stages in its long history. When this book was lost, it was natural for Avicenna to say that it would be difficult to rewrite it (T11, §1). When, finally, his disciples had questions about individual passages in his own books that were presented with lesser demonstrative rigor, he used it in the comments on his own books, the *Appendices*.

Avicenna also taught the demonstrative method orally to his students, and the high standards that he set for them as well as himself can be readily appreciated from the candid memoirs of his disciple from Rayy (T13, §§4-7, 10). His specific injunctions to pay heed not only to the form of the syllogism but also to its contents, to the relations among terms, to the identification of premisses, etc., are all principles on the basis of which he himself used to study the works of Aristotle, as discussed in the analysis of the Autobiography (Chapter 3.3A).

Avicenna's application of the symbolic method in *Ḥayy ibn-Yaqẓān* was studied by Goichon (Chapter 8.2), of the indicative method by Hourani (Chapter 8.3); there remains to present the way in which he applied the strictest possible demonstrative method in his own works, and especially in his commentaries. The following two examples are taken from his *Marginal Notes on De Anima* and the *Fair Judgment*.

A. *Marginal Notes on De Anima*[21]

The Aristotelian text commented upon is the following (*De Anima* 403a10-12):

> If any of the actions or affections of the soul are proper to it, separate existence will be possible for it; but if there is nothing proper to it, separate existence will not be possible for it.[22] (L85)

In his commentary, Themistius says that the sequence from the first to the second premiss is logically necessary and adds that

> this sequence is confirmed by a manifest axiom, namely, that nature creates nothing that is idle.[23] (L86)

[21] Badawī *Arisṭū* 76.19-77.2.

[22] Aristotle's text is translated from the Latin version of the Arabic translation that was abailable to Avicenna, as preserved by Averroes, in Crawford *Commentarium Magnum* 18.1-4. The second premiss is repeated in Arabic by Avicenna, cited below in his commentary.

[23] R. Heinze, *Themistii Librorum de Anima Paraphrasis* [*CAG* V.iii], Berlin 1899, 6.32-33. The Arabic translation of this passage in Themistius has not been preserved; M. C. Lyons, *Themistius Commentary on Aristoteles de Anima*, Norfolk/Oxford (Cassirer) 1973.

In his marginal glosses, Avicenna a) criticizes Aristotle for having presented no more than two premisses; b) criticizes Themistius for finding a logical connection between them; c) criticizes Aristotle for using a dialectical premiss (the second one) in a demonstrative context; and d) criticizes Themistius for adducing a further argument from the "axiom" about nature creating nothing idle:

> a) Aristotle should have confirmed each one of these two premisses, but neither did he do it, nor even paid any attention to it. (L87
>
> b) Aristotle had the first premiss which he cited followed by a second one neither as an exception [to it] nor as a conclusion. Had he wished, he could have exchanged their places without affecting the existing relation [between them].
>
> c) The Easterners said: Aristotle's statement, "if there is nothing proper to it, separate existence will not be possible for it," is based on [the assumption] that something does not exist unless it acts and is acted upon, otherwise it would be idle. This is a statement [*kalām*] that belongs to the genus of the "generally accepted" [*mašhūr*; i.e. dialectical][24] and is inappropriate for the [demonstrative] sciences. For something may possess in itself a perfection that cannot be transferred either to others or to itself from others. It is not *a priori* necessary, therefore, that it should not exist.
>
> d) As for the statement [of the commentators], "because it would be idle," it turns out to be a *petitio principii* when its Validity is Determined [*ḫuṣṣila*]: it is as if someone were saying, "otherwise, it would be something neither acting at all nor being acted upon at all," which is a tautology. [This minor premiss] needs to be followed by the major premiss, namely, "and whatever is like that, does not exist;" at which stage the objection is raised, where does he know that?

In paragraph (d), Avicenna reconstructs as a sylloogism the argument of Themistius, analyzes it, and refutes it. His reconstruction is as follows.

> Minor: Something that neither acts nor is acted upon is idle.
> Middle: There is something that is idle.
> Major: Whatever is idle does not exist.
> Conclusion: Therefore, something that neither acts nor is acted upon does not exist.
> Inference based on this conclusion: If the soul has no action or affection proper to it, it has no separate existence.

From this it becomes apparent that those who wish to maintain the separate existence of the soul by following the above argumentation will necessarily have to make separate existence of the soul a function of the soul's actions and affections. To this Avicenna expressly objects by saying that something may be in a state of perfection (i.e., completely actualized) without having to be in communication with anything else

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[24] For the meaning of *mašhūr* see Shehaby 274-275.

(§b). He therefore has to maintain the separate existence of the soul independently of its actions and affections. To do this he must first refute the syllogism which claims that. He finds two faults with it: first, he says that the syllogism begs the question because the middle term of the syllogism as he reconstructs it, i.e., "there is something that is idle," is nothing else but a synonym of the minor premiss, "something that neither acts nor is acted upon." The minor premiss thus becomes, in his words, "something that neither acts nor is acted upon is something neither acting at all nor being acted upon at all," which is indeed a tautology. This causes the major premiss to be, "something neither acting at all nor being acted upon at all does not exist," which is identical with the conclusion, and therefore a *petitio principii*.[25] Second, Avicenna disagrees with the major premiss itself. Themistius calls it "a manifest axiom," but Avicenna claims that this is a dialectical proposition that cannot be used in demonstrative proofs.

B. *Fair Judgment*. Commentary on Book *Lambda*[26]

The Aristotelian text commented upon is the following (*Metaphysics* 1074a31-38):

> That heaven is one is evident. For if there are many heavens, they will be like men... . Therefore, the unmoved first mover is one both in word and in number; therefore, that which is moved always in continuous movements ought to be one only; therefore, one heaven only.[27] (L88)

The argument in the garbled version of Usṭāṯ's translation available to Avicenna was relatively unclear. Avicenna used Themistius' commentary to gain a better understanding:

> If the universe is more than one, the first causes must be more than one. ... The first mover must be one both in definition and in number. The body in motion, if it moves continuously, must also be one. The universe therefore is one.[28] (L89)

Avicenna made the following comments in the *Fair Judgment*:

> Whereas Aristotle said, "the mover of heaven is one," he said, [in effect]: Heaven must be one, because, (L90)

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[25] For *petitio principii*, *al-muṣādara ʿalā l-maṭlūb al-awwal*, see Goichon *Directives* 240, note 2, and Inati 158, note 2.

[26] Badawī *Arisṭū* 29.19-21.

[27] The text of Aristotle is taken from Usṭāṯ's translation, Averroes, *Mā baʿd aṭ-Ṭabīʿat*, III.1683.4-1684.2.

[28] Badawī *Arisṭū* 19.10-13. Cf. S. Landauer, *Themistii in Aristotelis Metaphysicorum Librum Lambda Paraphrasis* [*CAG* V.v], Berlin 1903, 28.35-29.8.

if they were many, their first principles would be many;
but this is not possible;
on the contrary, its first principle is one;
it is thus evident from this that heaven is one.
This is [a] true and strong [argument] when it is developed and completed.

Avicenna's students obviously asked him to elucidate further. Their question and his answer are recorded in *Discussions*:[29]

Completion of the statement that (L91
"if heaven were many, their first principles would be many;
but this is not possible;
on the contrary, its first principle is one;
therefore, heaven is one;"
and exposition [of the statement] that the single universe, despite the multiplicity of the parts it contains, must have a single principle. Avicenna's answer in his own hand: "That the first principle of all being is one is evident in a way that dispenses with the need to seek others. When the first principle is one, it is impossible that anything but a single order [proceed] from it. It is much better to use this demonstrative proof, which is of the reason why, than to use its converse, which is of the fact.

Avicenna develops and completes this argument by making here the following logical analysis of the syllogism implied in the Arabic translation of the Aristotelian passage 1074a31-32. He says in the *Discussions* that the better way to construct this syllogism is:

(I) If the first principle is one, only one order proceeds from it; [a]
but the first principle *is* one [this is proven independently]; [b]
therefore only one order proceeds from it; [c]
i.e., there is only one universe.

This syllogism, which is an exceptive syllogism of the first mood, is perfect (*kāmil*) and always valid, regardless whether the connection implied in the conditional premiss [a] is complete or incomplete (*ittiṣāl tāmm, ittiṣāl nāqiṣ*); or, in other words, regardless whether the antecedent and consequent of the conditional premiss are convertible or not.[30] Moreover, as Avicenna says in the *Discussions* passage, this syllogism provides a demonstration of the reason why[31] because the middle term, i.e., the exceptive premiss [b] does not only make the conclusion *logically* necessary and thus make us assent to the conclusion, but it also gives the reason why the minor term (i.e., "the first principle is one") and the major term (i.e., "one order proceeds from it") are *ontologically* con-

[29] *Mubāḥaṯāt* §347 (Badawī *Arisṭū* 196).

[30] For the discussion of exceptive syllogisms in Avicenna see *The Cure, Qiyās* 389-399 = Shehaby 183-192; for complete and incomplete connection see *ibid.*, pp. 233-234 = 37-38, respectively.

[31] Cf. Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* I.13.

nected. As Avicenna puts it, the middle term is "the cause of the major term in itself" and "it is the cause of the existence of the major term in the minor."[32] In other words, the reason why when there is one principle there is only one universe is that from the one, *qua* one, only one thing proceeds.

The syllogism implied in the Arabic translation of the Aristotelian passage 1074a31-32, on the other hand, is the converse (*ʿaks*) of the perfect syllogism (I) discussed above. With regard to connective (conditional) propositions, Avicenna says that there are two kinds of conversion. "The one is the conversion *simpliciter*, and the other is the conversion *per contradictionem*." In the former "you turn the antecedent into a consequent, and the consequent into an antecedent," and in the latter "you put the contradictory of both the antecedent and the consequent."[33] When both conversions are effected, the perfect syllogism (I) becomes the syllogism which Avicenna thinks is implied by Aristotle:

(II) If heaven (= order) were not one (= were many), then its first principle would not be one (= would be many); [d]
but the first principle is one; [e]
therefore heaven is one. [f]

Depending on whether the connection implied in the conditional premiss [d] is complete or incomplete, this syllogism becomes an exceptive syllogism of the eighth or fourth mood, respectively. The conclusion of the fourth mood does not always necessarily follow, while that of the eighth mood does; and since Avicenna seems to approve of this syllogism in the passage from the *Fair Judgment*, it appears that he considered it to be of the eighth mood. But even so, the demonstration provided by this syllogism is of the fact, not of the reason why, because, according to Avicenna,[34] demonstration of the fact either gives the indirect (distant) cause or no cause at all, while demonstration of the reason why always gives the direct (proximate) cause; and in the present case, the syllogism does not give the cause, which is, as stated above, that from the one, *qua* one, only one thing proceeds. In other words, it is not because there are not many heavens that there are not many first principles (syllogism II, of the fact), but it is because there is one first principle that there is one heaven (syllogism I, of the reason why), even though both syllogisms are technically and formally valid. Avicenna's preference for the one over the other because of its contents, given their formal equivalence, underscores his insistence to his students, as recorded by the Disciple from Rayy

[32] *Najāt* 104-105; cf. *Išārāt* I.485-488 = Goichon *Directives* 231-234, and Goichon *Lexique* 22-23, no. 47.
[33] *Qiyās* 385 = Shehaby 180.
[34] *Najāt* 119.

(T13, §6), that they should concentrate on the matters of syllogisms rather than their forms.

Another technical point, which Avicenna may or may not have had in mind when calling syllogism (II) of the fact, is Aristotle's remark in the *Posterior Analytics* (I.13, 78b14-15) that a demonstration is of the fact "in cases in which the middle [term] is positioned outside."[35] In syllogism (II) above, the middle term [e], "the principle is one," is neither of the other two terms, "heaven is not one," and "the principle is not one," and hence it is "positioned outside." Syllogism (II), therefore, is syllogism of the fact.

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[35] Barnes *Posterior Analytics* 22. Cf. T13, §5.

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INDEX OF TECHNICAL TERMS

NOTE. Ethics, Logic, Mathematics, Metaphysics, and Physics, as well as the titles of Aristotle's books that begin with a capital letter but are not italicized, refer to the field of study covered by these subjects or books, as classified in the Aristotelian tradition. This is intended to distinguish them from the corresponding general concepts such as, e.g., logic or categories.

The numbers below refer to chapters and sections.

See also the Index of Arabic Words

Adherence, Partisan Adherence	*taʿaṣṣub*; 3.3E.ii
Ascertain, Ascertainment	*taḥaqquq*; 3.3E.i
Authority, Following Authority	*taqlīd*; 3.3E.ii
Corollary Principle; Derive, Work out C.P.	*farʿ*, *furūʿ*; *tafrīʿ*; 5.1
Custom, Customary Practice	*ʿāda*; 5.2
Derive Corollary Principles	see Corollary Principle
Destination	*maʿād*; T4, preface
Determine Validity	see Validity
Discover, Discovery	*istinbāṭ*; 3.3E.i; 3.2, note 33
Fair Judgment	*inṣāf*; 3.3E.iii
Following Authority	see Authority
Fundamental Principle	*aṣl*, *uṣūl*; 5.1; i.e., as opposed to "first principle," *mabdaʾ*
Intuition	*ḥads*; 3.2
Judgment	see Fair Judgment
Knowledge, Philosophy, Philosophical Sciences	*al-ʿilm*; 3.1 end; 3.2 end, §ii
Partisan Adherence	see Adherence
Philosophy, Philosophical Sciences	see Knowledge
Pointer	*išāra*; 8.3, W11
Principle	see Corollary P. and Fundamental P.
Provenance	*mabdaʾ*; T4, preface
Theology	*al-ʿilm al-ilāhī*, *ilāhīyāt*; i.e., that part of Metaphysics dealing with theological matters, not "being-as-such;" cf. 6.1
Validate, Determine Validity	*ḥaṣṣala*;
Validating	*muḥaṣṣil*; 3.3E.i
Valid	*maḥṣūl*; W3
Verify, Verification	*ḥaqqaqa*, *taḥqīq*; 3.3E.i
Withhold	*ḍanna bi-*; 5.3
Work out Corollary Principles	see Corollary Principle