

CHAPTER SEVEN

AVICENNA'S ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD: WAS HE REALLY INFLUENCED BY THE *MUTAKALLIMŪN*?

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The studies of Avicenna (d. 428/1037) in recent years have clearly stated that as a member of the Islamic intellectual environment, in which “*mutakallimūn*” and “*falāsifa*” had much in common conceptually as well as terminologically, the *mutakallimūn* did influence him. Jean Jolivet suggested that the origins of Avicenna’s distinction between essence and existence lay not in ancient Greek philosophy, as has generally been supposed, but in early *Kalām*, and specifically in the ninth and tenth century debates among *mutakallimūn* over how the terms “thing” and “existent” relate to each other.¹ Robert Wisnovsky also, providing evidence that gives qualified support to Jolivet’s hypothesis, argued that Jolivet is correct in highlighting the *Kalām* background to Avicenna’s essence-existence distinction.² Michael E. Marmura’s article, “Avicenna and the *Kalām*” focuses on Avicenna’s criticisms of *Kalām*, that is to say, its negative influence on him; however, he also claimed that Avicenna was possibly influenced on some issues like his theory of efficient causality and his concept of *tawātur*, that is, an epistemological principle, in a positive way by *Kalām* as well.³

Certainly the claim that Avicenna was influenced by the *mutakallimūn* is not new. Averroes (d. 595/1198) himself, as a *ḥaḍḥāṣ*, criticized important elements of Avicenna’s philosophy based on these grounds. Thus Averroes blamed Avicenna for being influenced both in his philosophical method and in certain concepts of metaphysics and physics by the *mutakallimūn* and then criticized him for failing to follow Aristotle.⁴ In a similar manner Ibn Taymīya (d. 728/1328) also

¹ Jean Jolivet (1984).

² Robert Wisnovsky (2000a).

³ Michael E. Marmura (1992), especially 177.

⁴ For an analytical study of Averroes’ criticism of Avicenna see Ömer Mahir Alper (2001).

asserted in his several books, such as *Dar' ta'arud al-'aql wa-n-naql* and *ar-Radd 'alā l-Mantiqīyīn*, that Avicenna had been influenced by the *mutakallimūn* and used their methods and ideas.⁵

One of the important issues, which both Averroes and Ibn Taymīya, starting from similar points, claimed for evidence that Avicenna had been influenced by the *mutakallimūn*, is Avicenna's proof for the existence of God (*iṭbāt al-wāğib*). The aim of the present work is to study and discuss whether the *mutakallimūn* really did influence Avicenna's argument for the existence of God, and if so, exactly to what extent. I do this within the framework of Averroes' and Ibn Taymīya's arguments and also analyze the basic points of their arguments. In the first section, I deal with the claims of Averroes and Ibn Taymīya, and in the second section with Avicenna's argument for the existence of God. In addition, in the final section, I compare Avicenna's argument for the existence of God with that of the *mutakallimūn*'s and demonstrate the extent of the influence of *Kalām* thinkers on Avicenna in light of the main points of criticism by Averroes and Ibn Taymīya.

I. An Outline of The Claims of Averroes and Ibn Taymīya

In several works Averroes asserts that Avicenna had followed the *mutakallimūn*, especially Aš'arites, in his argument for the existence of God by using their method, which is dialectical, and their concepts.⁶ In his *al-Kašf 'an manāhiğ al-adilla*, which has a chapter dedicated to examining the arguments of the different theological groups regarding the creation of the world and our knowledge of God's existence, Averroes refers to Aš'arite theologians who base their proof for the existence of God on the argument from the creation of the world (*al-ḥudūt*). Regarding the creation of the world, the Aš'arites had two main arguments. The first argument, which is famous and is adopted by most Aš'arites, is based on three premises:

1. Atoms cannot exist without accidents.
2. Accidents were created (*ḥādīṭ*); and so likewise by extension atoms.
3. The world is a composite of atoms and accidents.

⁵ See, for example, Ibn Taymīya, *Dar' ta'arud al-'aql wa-n-naql* (1979–1981), 8:131–136; henceforth, *Dar' ta'arud*; and also *ar-Radd 'alā l-mantiqīyīn* (1993), 2:56.

⁶ See, for example, Averroes, *Tahāfut at-tahāfut* (1981), 1:125–126; II:444–445; henceforth, *Tahāfut at-tahāfut*. Also see 'Abdurrahman Badawī (1980), 285 fn.

Hence the world was created, and so it must necessarily have a Creator (*Muḥdī*).⁷

The second argument by which Avicenna was influenced according to Averroes, was developed by al-Ġuwaynī (d. 478/1085) in his book, *ar-Risāla an-Nizāmīya*. It is based upon two premises:

1. The world in its totality is contingent (*ḡā'iz/mumkin*).
2. The contingent was created.

Hence the world was created, and so it must have a Creator necessarily.⁸

Only the second argument of al-Ġuwaynī for the creation of the world is examined here because of its centrality in this study. Moreover, I treat the argument as it is found in his own work rather than Averroes' presentation of it.

Al-Ġuwaynī argues that it is admissible or acceptable that the world or nature could have been different from what it is now. It could be greater or smaller and have a different form. The natural world and laws could be different from what we know now. This does not need reflection, but could be known by necessity. Since out of all possible states and shapes one state came into existence, there must have been something that singled it out (*muraḡḡih*), which proves that the world is created. The same agent that selected that particular state is the Creator who is endowed with a will.⁹

It should be mentioned that al-Ġuwaynī explains not only shapes or states of possible things, but also "the existence of the contingent world" through particularization (*taḥṣīs*). He states that "the existence of a contingent thing is possible (*ḡā'iz al-wuḡūd*), for it is possible to conceive its existence (*wuḡūduhū*) rather than its non-existence (*adamahū*). Similarly, we may conceive its non-existence rather than its existence. Since it was particularized by the possible existence rather than the admissible non-existence, it must have needed a particularizer (*iftaqara ilā muḥaṣṣis*). This particularizer is the Almighty Creator."¹⁰

Averroes claims that Avicenna followed this second manner of reasoning of the Aṣ'arites for his proof of the existence of God. In other

⁷ Averroes, *al-Kaṣf 'an manāhiḡ al-adilla* (1998), 105; henceforth, *al-Kaṣf*.

⁸ *Al-Kaṣf*, 111–112.

⁹ Al-Ġuwaynī, *al-'Aqida an-Nizāmīya fī l-arkān al-Islāmīya* (1992), 13, 16.

¹⁰ Al-Ġuwaynī, *Luma' al-adilla fī qawā'id ahl as-Sunna* (1965), 80–81; see also, *Kutāb al-Irṣād* (1950), 28.

words, he claims that Avicenna, in a way, used al-Ġuwaynī's argument and premises.¹¹ The world in its totality is contingent; since the contingent can equally exist or not exist, the world as a contingent being must have a particularizer who particularized its actual existence.

In his *Tahāfut at-tahāfut*, Averroes makes clearer the point that the *mutakallimūn* influenced Avicenna. According to him the first to bring into philosophy the proof of the impossibility of an infinite modal causal series was Avicenna. The argument in a nutshell is: each single cause of a series is either possible in itself or necessary; if it is necessary, it needs no cause, and if it is possible, then the whole series needs a cause additional to its essence, a cause standing outside of the series. Avicenna regarded this proof as superior to those given by the ancients (*al-qudamāʾ*), since he claimed that it was based on the essence of the existent, whereas the older proofs were based on accidents consequent on the First Principle. This proof Avicenna took from the theologians, who regarded the dichotomy of existence into possible and necessary as self-evident, and assumed that the possible needs an agent and that the world in its totality, as being possible, needs a necessarily existent agent. This was the theory of the Muʿtazilites before the Ašʿarites, and it is a good argument, except for the assumption that the world as a whole is contingent, which is not self-evident.¹²

Similarly, Ibn Taymīya maintained that regarding the proof for the existence of God Avicenna followed the *mutakallimūn* and that they influenced him rather than ancient philosophers such as Aristotle.¹³ Avicenna argued that the world in its totality is contingent since the contingent (world) can equally exist or not exist. Hence the world must have a particularizer, a necessarily existent agent, who particularized the world's actual existence. According to Ibn Taymīya Avicenna took this proof from the books of Muslim theologians, especially Muʿtazilites, and used it by combining it with certain philosophical ideas.¹⁴

¹¹ *Al-Kašf*, 113.

¹² *Tahāfut at-tahāfut*, 2:444–445.

¹³ *Darʾ taʿāruf*, 8:127.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 8:135; *li-annahū aḥaḍa ʿanhum [mutakallimī l-Islām] anna taḥṣiṣa aḥadi š-šayʿayni l-mutamattiʿilayni l-muḥdaṭayni dūna l-aḥar lā budda laḥū min muḥaṣṣiṣin . . . fa-aḥaḍa min dālika anna taḥṣiṣa l-mumkinī bi-l-wuḡūdi lā budda laḥū min mūḡib.*

Consequently, according to both Averroes and Ibn Taymīya the main points of *Kalām* influence on Avicenna's argument for the existence of God can be summarized as follows:

1. Existence is divided into the *possible* and the *necessary*. Here the former means that which has a cause and the latter means that which has no cause.
2. The world in its totality is contingent, and every contingent being that can equally exist or not exist needs a particularizer, who particularized its actual existence.

Next we will examine Avicenna's argument for the existence of God to see whether the *mutakallimūn* in fact influenced him in light of these two points. In other words, we will see to what extent Averroes and Ibn Taymīya got Avicenna right regarding this issue.

II. Avicenna's Argument for the Existence of God

It is possible to say that Avicenna used several proofs for the existence of God, such as the proof from movement¹⁵ and the proof from causality.¹⁶ His most famous and comprehensive proof, though, and the one that had the most wide-ranging influence in both the East and the West is the proof from necessarily existent being and possibly

¹⁵ The basic origins of the proof from movement can be found in Aristotle's *Physics* VII 1 and VIII 5. The world possesses movement and all movement requires a mover. Since there cannot be an infinite series of movers, the series must ultimately rest in the Unmoved First Mover. As Avicenna himself summarizes it: "It must be clear to you, after our discussion in the *Physics*, that an infinite incorporeal power exists who is the origin (*mabda'*) of the first movement" (Avicenna, *aṣ-Ṣifā': al-Ilāhīyāt* (1960a), 2:373).

¹⁶ The proof is not much more than a variation on the proof from necessarily existent being. In brief, it holds that although causes might be infinite in number, their series cannot go on *ad infinitum*. There does, therefore, exist a Necessary Uncaused Being in whom the series terminates and the world owes its existence to that Being. Ibn Sīnā puts it thus: "Every totality formed successively of causes and effects in which there is a cause which is not an effect must have that cause as its outermost point; because if it were in the middle it would be caused. Every chain, which comprises causes and effects, is finite or infinite. It is clear that if it is only comprised of what is caused, it would need a cause external to it to which it would be attached, without any doubt, by an outermost point. It is clear that if that chain contained something that was not an effect, that would be an outermost point and extremity. So every series culminates in the Being necessary by His essence" (Avicenna, *al-Isārāt wa-t-Tanbīhāt ma'a ṣarḥ Naṣīr ad-Dīn aṭ-Ṭūsī* (1957–1960), 3:26–27).

existent being. We can say that the other proofs are actually aspects of this proof.¹⁷ Moreover, the claims of Averroes and Ibn Taymīya are related to this argument. For these reasons I deal only with this proof of Avicenna here.¹⁸

When we examine the works of Avicenna, it will become clear that Avicenna's argument for the existence of God has two stages.¹⁹ In the first stage, he logically, or conceptually, divides existence into necessary existence, whose existence has no cause, and possible existence, whose existence does have a cause. This mentally constructed dichotomy of existence is quite explicitly stated in the *Šifā'*: "The things which are included in existence are susceptible in the mind to dichotomy into two divisions" (*inna l-umūra llatī tadḥulu fī l-wuḡūdi taḥtamilu fī l-ʿaqli l-inqisāma ilā qismaynī*).²⁰ At this stage, as in the *Šifā'*, he also explains why necessary existence has no cause, but possible existence does have a cause.²¹

In the second stage, he applies this mental division of existence to actual existents in the external world: "There is no doubt that something exists" (*lā šakka anna hunā wuḡūdan*).²² Thus this existent is always either necessary, and so has no cause for its existence, or possible, and so has a cause for its existence; for existence is logically subjected to the above mentioned dichotomy, and it is impossible to think existence outside of this dichotomy. It cannot be said that it is impossible (*mumtaniʿ*) in itself after it has existed, since an impossible being is defined as that whose non-existence is necessary (*darūriyyun fī l-ʿadam*).²³ If it is possible, it must have a cause that determines or gives precedence to its existence over non-existence, since nothing in a possible being's own nature requires it to exist and there is no

¹⁷ See Ian Richard Netton (1994), 172–173.

¹⁸ Recent interpretations of this proof vary widely. Some who interpret the argument as cosmological are H. A. Davidson (1987), 298, L. E. Goodman (1992), 75–76 and M. E. Marmura (1980), 337. Some who interpret the argument as ontological are Parviz Morewedge (1979), 188, 193 and F. Rahman (1963), 482. Another approach to Avicenna's argument takes it to be cosmological overall, but containing an ontological aspect; see, for example, Faruq Abdullah (S. A. Johnson) (1984), 3. More recently, Toby Mayer has described Avicenna's argument as simultaneously ontological and cosmological; see Toby Mayer (2001), especially 35.

¹⁹ *Al-Išārāt*, 3:19–21; Avicenna, *an-Nağāt* (1992), 2: 89–90; *ar-Risāla l-ʿaršīya* (1980), 15–16.

²⁰ *Al-Ilāhīyāt*, 1:37.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1:37–41.

²² *Nağāt*, 2:89.

²³ *Ibid.*, 1:30.

contradiction involved in its never having existed. According to Avicenna, since the contingent can equally exist or not exist, the knowledge that it must have a particularizer, who particularized its actual existence or non-existence, is *a priori*.²⁴ Turning to that cause we ask whether it is necessary or contingent. We so follow the series until we reach a necessary being. For if the cause for something that exists contingently is also contingent, then either (a) there is a further cause that is contingent, and so on *ad infinitum* or (b) the chain culminates in a necessary being. If there were a chain of contingent beings extending infinitely, nothing would exist. (For nothing that is contingent comes into existence except through a cause.) There is something that exists contingently. Therefore, there is a necessary being. If it (this existent) is necessary, then the existence of the Necessary has been proved and that is the conclusion sought.

Consequently, it seems that the two points mentioned above, which both Averroes and Ibn Taymīya claimed that Avicenna took from the *mutakallimūn*, were used in Avicenna's proof for the existence of God. In other words, concerning the issue of the similarity between the proofs of Avicenna and the *Kalām* for the existence of God, Averroes and Ibn Taymīya were right in their assessment. One can still ask, though, whether the *mutakallimūn* really influenced Avicenna on those points. Did the *mutakallimūn* use these arguments and principles in their proofs for God before Avicenna or did these points originally belong to Avicenna? Also, could Avicenna have had philosophical sources other than the *mutakallimūn*? Here we will examine these issues in light of the above mentioned two points.

III. *The Arguments for the Existence of God According to Avicenna and the Mutakallimūn: Comparison and Result*

The terms "necessary existence" and "contingent existence," or the distinction between necessarily existent and possibly existent can be seen explicitly in the works of certain Muslim philosophers such as al-Fārābī²⁵ (d. 339/950) and al-ʿĀmirī²⁶ (d. 381/992), who both

²⁴ *Al-Iṣārāt*, 3: 96–97; *kullu šayʿin lam yakun tumma kāna fa-bayyinun fī l-ʿaqli l-awwali anna taraḡḡuḥa aḥadī tarafayī imkānihi šāra awlā bi-šayʿin wa-bi-sababīn*.

²⁵ Al-Fārābī, *as-Šyāsa l-Madaniya* (1927), 66–67.

²⁶ ʿĀmirī, *Kutāb at-taqrīr li-awḡuḥ at-taqdīr* (1988), 304–309.

attempted a synthesis of Greek philosophy and Islamic theology, although they gave these terms different meanings. It could even be said that the distinction is supplemented by Avicenna with a further distinction that Aristotle suggested.²⁷ Actually Averroes does not criticize Avicenna for this distinction; rather, he criticizes him for his definitions of necessary existent and contingent existent. He claims that the *mutakallimūn* influenced Avicenna in his definition of necessary existent as an existent which has no cause and of contingent existent as an existent which has a cause. Indeed, one element in Avicenna's proof for God is based on his definition of possible existent, namely, every possible existent has a cause and the world in its totality is possible; hence the world has a (necessary) cause.

To what extent did the *mutakallimūn* influence Avicenna concerning the definitions of necessary existent and contingent existent? Firstly, it should be stated that Averroes argues that this definition goes back to Avicenna. He notes, however, that Avicenna reached this definition by generalizing the *mutakallimūn*'s principle that every possible existent has an agent. As will be seen below when we present the *mutakallimūn*'s use of the argument from particularization, it is true that the *mutakallimūn*, before Avicenna, accepted the principle that contingent existents in the world must have an agent to be as they are, or, simply, every contingent existent has an agent. Since according to them the contingent existent cannot exist by itself without a cause, then it needs an agent to exist. It is also accepted as a principle by the *mutakallimūn* that necessary existent does not have an agent and indeed is simply defined by them as "what does not have an agent." For example, the Mu'tazilite 'Abd al-Ġabbār (d. 416/1025), writes with regard to accidents: "If a body in the world is necessarily aggregate, it never needs an aggregator who aggregates it. It is as if a voice, in the state of non-existence of a voice, does not necessarily exist, it does not need an annihilator who annihilates it. It is similar to the existence of the Necessary Existent (God) that does not need an agent to give existence to him due to his necessarily existing."²⁸

²⁷ See Aristotle, *Metaphysics* V(Δ) 5, 1015a30–1015b15; XII(Λ) 7, 1072b5–15. See also H. A. Davidson (1987), 291.

²⁸ 'Abd al-Ġabbār, *Šarḥ al-uṣūl al-ḥamsa* (1965), 97; *wa-kadālika wuġudu l-qadīmi ta'āla lammā kāna waġīban istagnā 'an muġidin yuġiduhū*.

As can be seen, according to the *mutakallimūn* contingent existent has an agent and it indeed *must* have an agent, whereas the necessarily existent does not have an agent. It is possible, then, that Avicenna, as Averroes claims, reached his definitions of necessary existent and possible existent by generalizing the *mutakallimūn*'s principle that every possible existent has an agent since we have not found that exact definition in the earlier philosophical literature.

The second essential point about which Averroes and Ibn Taymīya claim that the *mutakallimūn* influenced Avicenna, concerns the existence of the contingent world through particularization (*taḥṣīṣ*) by a particularizer. According to Avicenna if the world is a possibly existent (as indeed it is), then it must have a cause. That is to say that it must have a particularizer who particularized its actual existence rather than its non-existence, or a preponderator who preponderated its existence over non-existence. This is the very point that concerned Averroes and Ibn Taymīya. Therefore, we will now concentrate on the particularization argument.

When we consider the development of the argument from particularization, it is found in Islamic theology before Avicenna. Still, it should be mentioned that Avicenna contributed to its development in certain aspects, as we will see below. First of all, though, we will examine the *mutakallimūn*'s use of it.

In his *Kitāb ad-Dalīl al-kabīr*, al-Kāsim ibn Ibrāhīm (d. 246/860), who was strongly influenced by Muʿtazilism, supports the argument from design by the argument from particularization (*taḥṣīṣ*). This argument deduces the existence of God from the diverse phenomena in the world. The fact that in the world there exist different things, perfect and imperfect, high and low and so forth, proves the existence of a creator who particularized them (*ḥaṣṣahā*) by means of the different qualities that appeared in them. If there were no particularizer, i.e., God, all the phenomena would be equal to one another.

Does the blind man and the ignoramus, let alone the knower and the intelligent man, not know that if these creations and elements and what reason perceives of them by sight were and came about according to their will and desire, as the ignoramus hold with regard to them, then some of them would not surpass the others at all? The earth would not be low and earth, and the degree of the inferior and low thing would not be less than the degree of the loftiest and highest thing. All things would be equal to each other and some of them would not be stronger than others until all of them would be one

thing and no opposite would exist to one of them. But contradiction among things certainly exists and the perfection of certain things and the imperfection of others is clear to every sense of the five senses. Anyone among the people whose senses are sound can bring proof from the difference and defects that he sees in things, [namely,] that they have a creator who particularized them by difference and particularities, which are clearly shown in them.²⁹

The geographer and religious thinker Abū Zayd Aḥmad ibn Sahl al-Balḥī (c. 849–934) also uses the argument from particularization. In his *Kitāb al-Badʾ wa-t-taʾrīḥ*, he similarly considers the difference seen among the created things as an argument for God's existence.³⁰ If things were produced by the natures of the things, their conditions would be equal. Since we find created things in contrary conditions, i.e., they are not equal to one another and are in different degrees, we know that a director directed them (*mudabbir dabbarahā*) and an arranger arranged them (*murattib rattabahā*), and this is God.³¹

In Māturīdī (d. 333/944) the term “particularization” is absent, but the thought is clearly identifiable. He writes:

If the world had come into existence by itself, there would have been no time more appropriate for its existence than a certain other time, nor would there have been a state more proper than a certain other state, nor would there have been a characteristic more suitable than a certain other characteristic. But since the world's existence has different times, states, and characteristics, then it is clear that the world did not come into existence spontaneously. For, if it had been permissible for the world to create every thing for itself by itself, the world would have created the best states and characteristics, which would have, in turn, eliminated all the evil and ugly things. Therefore, it proves that the world came into existence through something else.³²

The “something else” here is clearly an agent who chose a particular time, state, and quality for the world to come into existence.

Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013) too has an argument from creation to a particularizing agent; however, he looks not at the coming into exis-

²⁹ Al-Kāsim ibn Ibrāhīm, *Kitāb ad-Dalīl al-kabīr* (1990), 114; *wa-man salimat lahū ḥawāssuhū min ḡamīʾi l-insi fa-qad yastadillu bi-mā yarā fihā min al-ihṭilāfi wa-n-naqāʾisi ʿalā anna lahā šānʿan ḥaṣṣahā bi-mā bāna fihā mina l-ihṭilāfi wa-l-ḥaṣāʾisi*. Also see Binyamin Abrahamov (1986).

³⁰ Brockelmann attributed this work to al-Muṭahhar ibn Tāhir al-Maqdisī under the title *Badʾ al-ḥalq wa-t-taʾrīḥ*.

³¹ Al-Balḥī, *Kitāb al-Badʾ wa-t-taʾrīḥ* (1899), 1:65.

³² Al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb at-Tawḥīd* (1979), 17.

tence of the world as a whole, but at the coming into existence of the world's countless parts. He writes:

Another proof for the existence of God is the certain things that come into existence earlier than others and the certain things that come into existence later than others despite being similar to one another. The cause of a thing's coming into existence at an earlier time cannot be the thing itself and its genus. For should a thing come into existence earlier or later by virtue of itself, everything of the same genus would come into existence at the same time earlier or later. The fact is proof that it has an agent rendering it early (*muqaddim qaddamahū*) and assigning it a definite span of existence in conformity with the agent's will.³³

Although Bāqillānī does not expressly speak here of a particularizing agent who brings the world into existence, he does use the term "particular" and "particularizing" in another argument in a parallel context. He states:

We know that each body in the world has the possibility (*ṣihḥa*) of receiving a different composition from the composition it has. And we also know that what is square has the possibility to become round, and what is round has the possibility to become square, and what has the form of one animal has the possibility of receiving a different form from the form it has, and each body has the possibility to transform from the shape it has to another shape. A body that is particularized (*iḥṭaṣṣa*) in a specific, particular (*maḥṣūṣ*) shape cannot have been particularized (*iḥṭaṣṣa*) in its shape by virtue of itself or merely by virtue of its having the possibility of receiving the shape. For then a body would have to receive, at the same time, every shape it has the possibility of receiving, which of course does not, and cannot, occur. Thus whatever possesses a shape, received its shape through a combining agent who combined it (*mu'allif allafahū*) and an intending agent who intended that it should be as it is.³⁴

The great Mu'tazilite theologian and judge 'Abd al-Ġabbār, whom Avicenna probably met in Rayy between 403/1013 and 405/1015,³⁵ did not employ a particularization argument to support the inference of a creator from creation. Still, he uses a particularization argument explicitly to prove the existence of accidents and highlights the term "particularizer" (*muḥaṣṣiṣ*). He writes with regard to proving that desire is an accident:

³³ Al-Bāqillānī, *Kūṭāb at-Tamhīd* (1947), 45.

³⁴ Ibid., 45.

³⁵ Dimitri Gutas (1988), 261.

It is possible that one does not have desire when the situation is the same and the conditions are the same. Meanwhile, if one has desire, then a particularizer (*muḥaṣṣis*) is necessary to have desires; otherwise it would not be (characterized) in the given fashion in preference to the contrary fashion. Since having desire is not more appropriate than not having desire, it necessitates the existence of a thing (*ma'nā*) that is the desire.³⁶

He also uses a particularization argument with regard to accidents, but he stresses that, like Avicenna, what has contingency has the possibility of being impossible and necessary, but what has contingency does not become impossible or necessary by itself. For its being impossible or necessary is no more appropriate than the other, inasmuch as it is contingent. If one of them, then, becomes more appropriate, it is due to the particularizer. He states: "If the body which has the possibility to become both impossible and necessary became impossible or necessary, it is due to the particularizer (*muḥaṣṣis*) to become impossible or necessary. For its being impossible or necessary is no more appropriate than the other."³⁷

As we have seen, the *mutakallimūn* use the particularization argument for different ends and employing various terms. Still, their primary use of the particularization argument is to prove the existence of God as a "principle." Avicenna, however, seem to have added a new dimension, namely, the premise that there is the possibility that the world, as contingent being, exist or not exist, and thus as a contingent being the world needs a preponderator who preponderated its existence over non-existence. It seems that Avicenna, as Averroes and Ibn Taymīya claim, took the idea of particularization from the *mutakallimūn*,³⁸ but generalized it by applying it to the dichotomy of the "world's existence and non-existence." I could not find a *mutakallim* who applied particularization to the dichotomy of the world's existence and non-existence, using either the term "*taḥṣiṣ*" or "*muḥaṣṣis*" until al-Ġuwaynī.³⁹ Thus it could be said that Avicenna, who was influenced in regard to the particularization argument by the *mutakallimūn*,

³⁶ 'Abd al-Ġabbār, *Šarḥ*, 93, and also see 96.

³⁷ Ibid., 98.

³⁸ See also L. E. Goodman (1992), 63–65, 114.

³⁹ Al-Ġuwaynī's special position in regard to the use of the particularization argument for the existence of God is mentioned not only by Averroes but also by Šahrastānī (d. 548/1153) in *Kitāb Nihayat al-aqdam fī 'ilm al-kalām* (1934), 12. See also Mohammad Moslem Adel Saflo (2000), 158, 163, 202ff.

influenced al-Ġuwaynī with regard to the premise that a contingent world needs a preponderator (*muraġġih*) who preponderated its existence over non-existence. Although al-Ġurġānī (d. 816/1413) in his *Šarḥ al-Mawāqif* mentioned that the particularization argument was used by the *mutakallimūn*⁴⁰ and claimed that most of the Muʿtazilites used the premise that the contingent world needs a preponderator (*muraġġih*) who preponderated its existence over non-existence,⁴¹ I have not found such a premise in the literature of the Muʿtazilites themselves.⁴² Consequently, it seems that Averroes and Ibn Taymīya were right in their claim: Avicenna really was influenced both in the definitions of contingent existence and necessary existence and in his use of the particularization argument by the *mutakallimūn*. Yet, it would also seem that Avicenna added a new element that went beyond the *Kalām* sources that might have been available to him, namely, he generalized the *mutakallimūn*'s positions so as to apply to the existence or non-existence of the world as a totality considered as a contingent being.

⁴⁰ Maimonides (d. 601/1204) also ascribed the particularization argument to the *mutakallimūn* before al-Ġurġānī, see Maimonides, *Ḍalālat al-ḥāʾirīn* (1980), 217–218.

⁴¹ Al-Ġurġānī, *Šarḥ al-mawāqif* (1850), 466.

⁴² See Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Hādī Abū Rīda (1989), 96–97.

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