The Poison of Philosophy

Ibn Taymiyya's Struggle For and Against Reason[1]

Anke von Kügelgen

Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) lived in a period in which the claim of the priority of reason/intellect (*ʿaql*) over religious tradition (*naql*) in the case of their contradiction was prevailing in scholarly circles reading and commenting on philosophical texts in Iran, Iraq, Syria, Egypt and the Maghreb. Representatives of these circles were scholars with different intellectual interests and opinions, such as Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209), Athīr al-Dīn al-Abharī (d. 663/1264), Ibn Sabʿīn (d. 668 or 669/1269–71), Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274) and Najm al-Dīn al-Kātibī (d. 657/1276), who saw Aristotelian logic as a neutral and infallible instrument of reason,[2] in fact, al-Abharī's[3] summary of logic

1 I would like to thank Caterina Bori, Kurt Flasch, Dimitri Gutas, Jon Hoover, Birgit Krawietz and Georges Tamer for their very helpful comments on drafts of this paper. It benefited as well from the careful readings of some parts by Stephan Reichmuth and Jan-Peter Hartung and supportive criticisms of the participants at the Workshop "Neo-Hanbalism Reconsidered: The Impact of Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya". Moreover I am much obliged to Kata Moser who proofread several versions of the article, adjusted the transliteration and helped me in preparing the bibliography, and express my gratitude also to Florian Zemmin for his assistance with the last text editing. The composing deadline was spring 2008. All publications after that date were not taken into account except the contributions of Caterina Bori, Livnat Holtzmann, Sait Özervarli and Yossef Rapoport to *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, ed. by Yossef Rapoport and Shahab Ahmed in 2010, and Caterina Bori's contribution to *The Mamlūk Studies Review* 13 (2009), with which the authors or editors kindly provided me when they were still in press.

2 Street, Tony: Arabic Logic, in: Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor (eds.): *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, Cambridge 2005, pp. 572–579; see also below, chapters 2 and 5.

3 Atademir, Hamdi R.: Porphyrios ve Ebherî'nin Isagoci'leri, in: *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi* 6 (1948), p. 468 (according to Gutas, Dimitri: Aspects of Literary Form and Genre in Arabic Logical Works, in:

(*Īsāghūjī*) and al-Kātibī's[4] treatise on some logical questions (*al-Risāla al-Shamsiyya*) respectively were to become the most often-copied and annotated handbooks. Another common feature was the adoption of philosophical terminology, categories and concepts in their own writings.[5] The extent of adoption differed, however, from scholar to scholar. Philosophical notions were thus often modified and harmonized with theological and mystical dogmata.[6] Ibn Taymiyya was not only well-familiar with their works,[7] but was also in direct or indirect touch with several of their pupils, among them Naṣr al-Dīn al-Manbijī (d. 719/1319–20), a powerful Sufi Shaykh who propagated the doctrines of mystical union according to the teachings of Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240) and Ibn Sabʿīn and provoked Ibn Taymiyya's banishment from Damascus in 1305 and his subsequent imprisonment in Egypt.[8] In the penultimate decade of his life, Ibn Taymiyya took up his pen

Charles Burnett (ed.): *Glosses and Commentaries on Aristotelian Logical Texts. The Syriac, Arabic and Medieval Latin Traditions*, London 1993, p. 63, n. 161); Gutas, Dimitri: The Study of Arabic Philosophy in the Twentieth Century. An Essay on the Historiography of Arabic Philosophy, in: *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 29 (2002), pp. 5–25, here 15–16; İzgi, Cevat: *Osmanlı Medreselerinde İlim*, Istanbul 1997, vol. 1, pp. 164, 168–174.

4 Street, Arabic Logic, pp. 247, 252–256.

5 Gutas, The Study of Arabic Philosophy, pp. 6–7, 13, 15–17 et passim; on p. 7 he presents an "outline of Arabic Philosophy (IX–XVIIIc.)" in which he shows that philosophy was vivid during the whole period, with different types of "Avicennism" as the dominant directions; Gutas, Dimitri: The Heritage of Avicenna. The Golden Age of Arabic Philosophy, 1000–ca. 1350, in: Jules Janssens and Daniel de Smet (eds.): *Avicenna and His Heritage. Acts of the International Colloquium, Leuven – Louvain-la-Neuve, September 8–11, 1999*, Leuven 2002, pp. 82–97, here 89–97.

6 Griffel, Frank: *Apostasie und Toleranz im Islam. Die Entwicklung zu al-Ghazālīs Urteil gegen die Philosophie und die Reaktionen der Philosophen*, Leiden, Boston and Cologne 2000, pp. 341–353.

7 See Ibn Taymiyya: *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql*, ed. by Muḥammad Rashād Sālim, Riyadh 1399–1400/1979–1980, "Fihris al-aʿlām", s. v.; and below, chapters 9–11.

8 Laoust, Henri: *Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques de Takī-d-dīn Aḥmad Ibn Taimīya, canoniste Ḥanbalite. Né à Ḥarrān en 661/1262, mort à Damas en 728/1328; thèse pour le doctorat*, Cairo 1939, pp. 128–132; Bori, Caterina: Ibn Taymiyya. Una vita esemplare; analisi delle fonti classiche della sua biografia, in: *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 76 (2003), pp. 131–132. While in custody in Alexandria in 1309/1310 he met several disciples of the Maghrebian philosophical, mystical and juridical schools; see Laoust, Henri: La biographie d'Ibn Taymīya d'après Ibn Kathīr, in: *Bulletin d'études orientales* 9 (1942), pp. 115–162, here 144–146; Laoust, Henri: L'influence d'Ibn Taymiyya, in: Alford T. Welch and Pierre Cachia (eds.): *Islam. Past Influence and Present Challenge*, New York 1979, pp. 15–33, here p. 16.

against those "heretics" and wrote two voluminous refutations of logic and rationalism, namely *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* (The Refutation of the Logicians) and *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* (Averting the Conflict between Reason and Tradition). These two interlinked works have, until now, only been scarcely studied. They constitute one of the most thorough – and certainly the harshest and most comprehensive – critique of logic and philosophy and certainly the harshest and most comprehensive one in the realm of Islam.

Yet, as every intense preoccupation leaves its traces on the preoccupied, the arguments and tenets Ibn Taymiyya so deeply studied and vigorously dismissed left positive imprints on his thought. The present article examines some of these imprints and aims to challenge further the still-widespread view of Ibn Taymiyya as a rigorous fideist and anti-rational theologian, not only in Wahhabi circles.[9] In recent years this view has been seriously questioned especially by Yahya Michot[10] and by Jon Hoover.[11] My research mainly draws on different sources than the ones used by them and thus elucidates Ibn Taymiyya's rationality and his vote for "clear reason" from another perspective. In the few studies devoted to *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn*, mine included, Ibn Taymiyya's position has been presented so far as one of a "nominalist" and/or an "empirist" and thus as a fervent rejection of the rationalist deductions and universal propositions gained from experience. Further investigation led me, however, to a more differentiated view.

9 See the studies mentioned by Krawietz, Birgit: Ibn Taymiyya. Vater des islamischen Fundamentalismus? Zur westlichen Rezeption eines mittelalterlichen Schariatsgelehrten, in: Manuel Atienza, Enrico Pattaro, Martin Schulte, Boris Topornin and Dieter Wyduckel (eds.): *Theorie des Rechts und der Gesellschaft. Festschrift für Werner Krawietz zum 70. Geburtstag*, Berlin 2003, and by Hoover, Jon: *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy of Perpetual Optimism*, Leiden and Boston 2007, pp. 19–20.

10 Yahya Michot reveals in almost all of his translations and studies of Ibn Taymiyya's works the rationality of his arguments (for an almost complete bibliography with the possibility to download many writings see www.muslimphilosophy.com/it/index.html, accessed April 3, 2008).

11 Hoover, Jon: Perpetual Creativity in the Perfection of God. Ibn Taymiyya's Hadith Commentary on God's Creation of this World, in: *Journal of Islamic Studies* 15 (2004), pp. 287–329; Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy* (it includes – in a revised form – two articles that had been published in the *Theological Review of the Near East School of Theology* in 2006). The monograph was published when I was preparing the final draft of this article. Therefore, in the sections where I deal with subjects he treated, I include his findings in the course of my presentation and not at the beginning.

For a better assessment of the value of Ibn Taymiyya's critiques, I shall in the first part briefly place them in the context of other Muslim refutations of logic and philosophy and shortly present the two works and their main addressees. Part two focuses on Ibn Taymiyya's distinction between the rationalists' and the "clear" reason and traces peripatetic tenets in his own theory of knowledge and interlinked ontological assumptions. The two parts are connected, but can be read seperatedly.

1. Greek Poison

The enemies of philosophy (*falsafa/ḥikma falsafiyya*) regarded their practitioners, the *falāsifa*, as followers of the Greek unbelievers, as heretics and as "freethinkers" who reflected on what is inconceivable to the senses and immediate understanding without recourse to the divine revelation. The Muslim philosophers themselves, like al-Fārābī (d. 339/950), Ibn Sīnā (d. 428/1037), and Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198) – all of whom Ibn Taymiyya extensively criticizes – philosophized mainly on the ground of a corpus of Greek wisdom with the conviction that it led to true happiness. They paraphrased, commented upon, modified, criticized or harmonized the writings of Aristotle and Plato especially, being persuaded that – because they relied on sound reasoning – they basically represented the ultimate truth.[12] In their view, mankind had gained an infallible instrument to reach truth with the logic (*al-manṭiq*) Aristotle and his disciples had elaborated and systemized and declared as the propaedeutics of philosophy. So, in the theoretical sciences, especially in metaphysics, i. e. the field of knowledge which rose the greatest suspicion, their instrument of reasoning was the demonstrative, apodictic syllogism (*burhān/qiyās burhānī*) which was based on indubitable premises.[13]

12 Arnaldez, Roger: Falsafa, in: *EI*², vol. 2 (1991), pp. 769–775; Arnaldez, Roger: Falāsifa, in: *EI*², vol. 2 (1991), pp. 764–767; Endress, Gerhard: Die wissenschaftliche Literatur, in: Wolfdietrich Fischer (ed.): *Grundriss der Arabischen Philologie*, Wiesbaden 1992, suppl., vol. 3, pp. 25–57.

13 See for instance al-Fārābī, Abū Naṣr: *Risāla fī al-ʿAql*, ed. by Maurice Bouyges, Beirut 1938, pp. 7.9–9.3, 11.10–12.3; idem: *al-Manṭiq ʿind al-Farābī*, ed., intr., and comm. by Rafīq al-ʿAjam, Beirut 1985–1986, vol. 1 (*Naṣṣ al-tawṭīʾa*), p. 57.2–9; idem: *Iḥṣāʾ al-ʿulūm*, ed. by Angel González Palencia, Madrid 1932, pp. 23–24; and Ibn Rushd who in substance embraces al-Fārābī's view: Ibn Rushd: *Kitāb Faṣl al-maqāl with Its Appendix (ḍamīma) and an Extract from Kitāb al-Kashf ʿan manāhij al-adilla*, ed. by George F. Hourani, Leiden 1959, pp. 2, 17, 19–21,

Yet they did not dismiss divine revelation, but confirmed its truth and its social necessity.[14]

Among those who condemned *falsafa* as such or were suspicious of the main metaphysical tenets, only few stood against it with a deep knowledge of the rejected concepts. None of the latter, however, remained untouched by what he refuted. Ibn Taymiyya was not exempt from that rule. The historian and well renowned Shāfiʿī scholar Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1348) had attended some of Ibn Taymiyya's courses and expressed both positive and negative impressions of his character and knowledge in several of his writings.[15] In a letter, he addressed him with the following accusation:

> By God, we have become the laughing stock of creation! How long will you dig up intricate philosophical blasphemies for us to refute with our brains? You have repeatedly swallowed the poison of the philosophers

---

24.2–8 (the pagination refers to the one of Mueller given by Hourani at the margin); van den Bergh, Simon: *Averroes' Tahafut Al-Tahafut (The Incoherence of the Incoherence)*, Cambridge 1987 (reprints, London 1954 and 1969), pp. 409.1–410.1 et passim; Averroès: *Tafsīr mā baʿd al-ṭabīʿa*, ed. by Maurice Bouyges, Beirut 1967–1973, vol. 1, p. 192.1–5 et passim; see Galston, Miriam: al-Fārābī on Aristotle's Theory of Demonstration, in: Parviz Morewedge (ed.): *Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism*, Delmar and New York 1981, pp. 23–34. Ibn Sīnā also holds the Aristotelian apodictic syllogism to be *the* method of verification (Ibn Sīnā, Abū ʿAlī: *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, *maʿa sharḥ Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī*, ed. by Sulaymān Dunyā, Cairo 1971, vol. 1, p. 460; Avicenna: *Remarks and Admonitions*, part 1: *Logic*, transl. by Shams Constantine Inati, Toronto 1984, p. 148; Gutas, Dimitri: *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition. Introduction to Reading Avicenna's Philosophical Works*, Leiden 1988, pp. 311–318), and states that the middle term can be acquired spontanously through "intuition" (*ḥads*) (Gutas, Dimitri: *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, pp. 159–176; Endress, Gerhard: The Defense of Reason. The Plea for Philosophy in the Religious Community, in: *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften* 6 (1990), pp. 1–49, here p. 32).

14 See for instance al-Fārābī, Abū Naṣr: *Mabādiʾ ārāʾ ahl al-madīna al-fāḍila. Al-Farabi on the Perfect State; a Revised Text with Introduction, Translation and Commentary by Richard Walzer*, Oxford 1985, pp. 276–285; Ibn Sīnā: *Ithbāt al-nubuwwāt* (Proof of Prophecies), ed. by Michael E. Marmura, Beirut 1968; Ibn Rushd, *Kitāb Faṣl al-maqāl*; Endress, The Defense of Reason, pp. 20–23, 30–33.

15 See Bori, *Ibn Taymiyya,* s. v. Ḏahabī (al-); idem: A New Source for the Biography of Ibn Taymiyya, in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 67 (2004), pp. 324, 326–328, 331–348; idem: Ibn Taymiyya *wa-Jamāʿatuhu*. Authority, Conflict and Consensus in Ibn Taymiyya's Milieu, in: Shahab Ahmad and Yossef Rapoport (eds.): *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, Karachi 2010, pp. 23–52.

> and their works; the body becomes addicted to the frequent use of poison so that it is secreted, by God, in the very bones.[16]

The authenticity of al-Dhahabī's authorship was for some time doubted, but can be now regarded as proven.[17] The accusation against Ibn Taymiyya is corroborated by a statement of the Ḥanbalī traditionist (*muḥaddith*) and biographer Ibn Rajab (d. 795/1393) saying that some of Ibn Taymiyya's learnt and pious admirers "disapproved of his preoccupation with (*tawaghghul maʿa*) the *kalām* theologians and the philosophers".[18]

---

16 *Wal-lāhi qad ṣirnā ḍuḥka fī al-wujūd fa-ilā kam tanbush daqāʾiq al-kufriyyāt al-falsafiyya li-narudda ʿalayhā bi-ʿuqūlinā. Yā rajul qad balaʿta sumūm al-falāsifa wa-muṣannafātihim marrāt, wa-bi-kathrat istiʿmāl al-sumūm yudmin ʿalayhā al-jism wa-takmun wal-lāhi fī al-badan*, al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn: *al-Naṣīḥa al-dhahabiyya li-Ibn Taymiyya*, ed. by Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī, Damascus 1347/1928–1929, p. 33; I follow the translation of Little, Donald P.: Did Ibn Taymiyya Have a Screw Loose?, in: *Studia Islamica* 41 (1975), pp. 93–111, here p. 101; also hinted at by Michot, Yahya: Vanités intellectuelles… L'impasse des rationalismes selon le *Rejet de la contradiction* d'Ibn Taymiyyah, in: *Oriente Moderno* 19 (2001), pp. 597–617, here p. 600, n. 10.

17 Doubts were uttered by Laoust (*Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques*, p. 484) and two Pakistani scholars (Little, Did Ibn Taymiyya Have a Screw Loose?, p. 102), but Donald Little (ibid., pp. 100–105) and especially Caterina Bori (Ibn Taymiyya, pp. 142–148) have provided strong evidences for al-Dhahabī's authorship. Bori, furthermore, indicates possible personal reasons for the polemical tone of his letter (ibid., pp. 144–148).

18 Ibn Rajab Zayn al-Dīn, Abū al-Faraj: *Dhayl ʿalā ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābila*, part 4 (part 2), Beirut n. d. (based on the print of Maṭbaʿat al-Sunna al-Muḥammadiyya 1372/1953), p. 394 (biography n. 495); cited already by Michot, Yahya: A Mamlūk Theologian's Commentary on Avicenna's *Risāla adḥawiyya* Being a Translation of a Part of the *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* of Ibn Taymiyya, with Introduction, Annotation, and Appendices, in: *Journal of Islamic Studies* 14 (2003), pp. 149–203, here p. 166, n. 39. Ibn Taymiyya's deep knowledge of *kalām* theology and philosophy was considered by several of his biographers as outstanding to such a degree that he excelled over the best in the respective disciplines and was able to counter them and to disclose their weaknesses (Ibn Rajab, *Dhayl ʿalā ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābila*, p. 388, his praise includes Ibn Taymiyya's knowledge of arithmetics and algebra; al-Karmī, Marʿī b. Yūsuf: *al-Kawākib al-durriyya fī manāqib al-mujtahid Ibn Taymiyya*, ed. by Najm ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Khalaf, Beirut 1406/1986, pp. 62, 66 (quotations from al-Dhahabī)). For a thorough analysis of the dissent towards Ibn Taymiyya from within the Ḥanbalī and traditionalist community in general and Ibn Rajab in particular, see the study of Caterina Bori: Ibn Taymiyya *wa-Jamāʿatuhu* under the heading "Voices of Internal Dissent – Ḥanbalīs".

Research on Ibn Taymiyya in the last decades has revealed striking similarities between some of his tenets and those of other philosophers. Special attention has been paid to affinities between Ibn Rushd and Ibn Taymiyya in respect to their concepts of causality[19] and of the creation of the world.[20] Also mentioned are their common rejection of Aristotle's scientific method and the use of terms like *qidam* (eternity) or *ḥudūth* (origination) in the sphere of religion; and in general, their attempt to clearly separate religion from philosophy.[21] With respect to theodicy, several remarkable common features between Ibn Sīnā's and

19 Al-Ṣughayyir points also to a correspondence of Ibn Taymiyya's and Ibn Rushd's theory of causality (Mawāqif "rushdiyya" li-Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya? Mulāḥaẓāt awwaliyya, in: al-Ṭāhir Waʿzīz (ed.): *Dirāsāt maghribiyya. Muhdāt ilā al-mufakkir al-maghribī Muḥammad ʿAzīz al-Ḥabbābī* (*Lahbabi*), ed. by al-Ṭāhir Waʿzīz, Casablanca 1987, pp. 176–177, refering to Ibn Taymiyya, Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad: *Kitāb al-Nubuwwāt*, Cairo 1346/1927–1928, p. 219 and idem: *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn*, ed. by ʿAbd al-Ṣamad Sharaf al-Dīn al-Kutubī, Bombay 1368/1949, p. 270). Harās considers the Damascene even "strongly influenced" by the Andalusian (Harās, Muḥammad Khalīl: *Bāʿith al-nahḍa al-islāmiyya. Ibn Taymiyya al-salafī; naqduhu li-masālik al-mutakallimīn wal-falāsifa fī al-ilāhiyyāt*, Beirut 1984, p. 168, refering to Ibn Taymiyya's *Minhāj al-sunna* and his *Majmūʿat al-Rasāʾil al-kubrā*, Cairo 1323/1905. See below, chapter 11.2.

20 ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Ṣughayyir and Jon Hoover have shown that Ibn Taymiyya's theory of God's "perpetual creativity" disclose a great similarity to Ibn Rushd's theory of continuous creation from eternity; Hoover, Perpetual Creativity, especially pp. 290, 295. Ibn Taymiyya does, however, not refer to Ibn Rushd in regard to that theory (ibid., p. 295). A very simple explanation for it would be that he was not aware of it, since he apparently did not know *Faṣl al-maqāl* and he might have been not in the possession of the whole *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*. Still, an exhaustive study of Ibn Taymiyya's position towards Ibn Rushd, taking Ibn Taymiyya's main purposes into account, might reveal other reasons. It is noteworthy that Ibn Rushd's theory of continuous creation, developed from the Koran, enjoys much more attention among Arab intellectuals in the 20th century than the theory of eternity he exposes in his commentaries on Aristotle (von Kügelgen, Anke: *Averroes und die arabische Moderne. Ansätze zu einer Neubegründung des Rationalismus im Islam*. Leiden 1994, pp. 385–398) and that these intellectuals are obviously not aware of Ibn Taymiyya's very similar theory.

21 Von Kügelgen, Anke: Dialogpartner im Widerspruch. Ibn Rushd und Ibn Taymīya über die "Einheit der Wahrheit", in: Rüdiger Arnzen and Jörn Thielmann (eds.): *Words, Texts and Concepts Cruising the Mediterranean Sea. Studies on the Sources, Contents and Influences of Islamic Civilization and Arabic Philosophy and Science Dedicated to Gerhard Endress on His Sixty-fifth Birthday*, Leuven 2004, pp. 455–481, here 474–475.

Ibn Taymiyya's theories have been disclosed.[22] How far Ibn Taymiyya borrowed these or other tenets from the philosophers cannot be answered with certainty. The high degree of similarity, however, suggests that Ibn Taymiyya was at least inspired by his enemies, although he never openly adopts their tenets and always embeds them in broader theories that do not correspond with the philosopher's views of man, God and the universe. The present paper will identify a few striking resemblances between Ibn Taymiyya and the philosophers, especially in regard to key epistemological concepts.

2. The Status of Logic up to Ibn Taymiyya's Times

With his rebuttal of logic, Ibn Taymiyya deviated from the mainstream of Muslim theologians.[23] After al-Ghazālī's (d. 505/1111) skillfull pleading for the innocence of logic and its successful introduction into *kalām* theology,[24] many Muslim "speculative theologians" (*mutakallimūn*)

22 Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, pp. 70–72 et passim. Husâm Muhî Eldin al-Alousî describes Ibn Taymiyya's thinking as a melange of "elements of theological origin, elements derived from Ibn Sīnā, and elements attributable to Abū Barakāt al-Baghdādī" (al-Alousî, Husâm Muhî Eldîn: *The Problem of Creation in Islamic Thought. Qur'an, Hadith, Commentaries, and Kalam*, Baghdad 1968 (Ph. D. thesis, Cambridge University 1965), p. 262; see Hoover, Perpetual Creativity, pp. 289–290.

23 For an excellent overview of the state of the study of Peripatetic logic in the Islamic world and an exposition of the main changes regarding Aristotelian logic upto 1300, see Street, Arabic Logic.

24 Similar attempts by other scholars, like the one of the Andalusian Ibn Ḥazm (383/993–456/1064) were less successful (Brunschvig, Robert: Pour ou contre la logique grecque chez les théologiens juristes de l'Islām. Ibn Ḥazm, al-Ghazālī, Ibn Taymiyya, in: *Etudes d'Islamologie*, Paris 1979, pp. 303–327, here 304–313; Chejne, Anwar G.: Ibn Ḥazm of Cordova on Logic, in: *The Journal of the American Oriental Society* 104 (1984), pp. 52–72; Yāfūt, Sālim: *Ibn Ḥazm wal-fikr al-falsafī bil-maghrib wal-andalus*, Casablanca 1986, especially pp. 200–227). Recently, Cornelia Schöck has shown that major elements of Aristotelian logic have been discussed and used for Koran exegesis by *mutakallimūn* already before the eleventh century (Schöck, Cornelia: *Koranexegese, Grammatik und Logik. Zum Verhältnis von arabischer und aristotelischer Urteils-, Konsequenz- und Schlusslehre*, Leiden and Boston 2006). For a new assessment of al-Ghazālī's attitude towards Aristotelian logic and his own use of it, see Rudolph, Ulrich: Die Neubewertung der Logik durch al-Ġazālī, in: Dominik Perler and Ulrich Rudolph (eds.): *Logik und Theologie. Das Organon im arabischen und lateinischen Mittelalter*, Leiden and Boston 2005, pp. 73–97.

had praised logic, on the contrary, as an excellent, infallible instrument of reason with no relation to the objects of knowledge. As such, it was a useful tool for understanding scripture. The majority of *kalām* theologians from the twelfth century onwards denounced only philosophy or parts of philosophy (see below).[25] Ibn Taymiyya – and after him, Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406) – makes the use of logic in theology the essential mark of distinction between the *kalām* theologians, labeling those who rely on logic the "later" ones (*al-muta'akhkhirūn*) and those who don't the "earlier" ones (*al-mutaqaddimūn; al-aqdamūn*).[26] Apparently from the late 13th century on, logic became a subject that was taught at the *madrasa*.[27] Even Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200), one of the harshest critics of metaphysics before Ibn Taymiyya, admits that the Greek philosophers "possessed attainments in mechanics, logic, and natural science, and by their sagacity they discovered hidden things."[28] Neverthe-

25 For an overview of the scarce material concerning early Muslim critiques of logic, see al-Nashshār, ʿAlī Sāmī: *Manāhij al-baḥth ʿind mufakkirī al-islām wa-naqd al-muslimīn lil-manṭiq al-arisṭuṭālīsī*, Cairo 1978, and Hallaq, Wael B.: *Ibn Taymiyya Against the Greek Logicians*, Oxford 1993, pp. xlii–xlvii.

26 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 31; al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn: Jahd al-qarīḥa fī tajrīd al-naṣīḥa, see idem: *Ṣawn al-manṭiq wal-kalām ʿan fann al-manṭiq wal-kalām wa-yalīhī Mukhtaṣar al-Suyūṭī li-kitāb naṣīḥat ahl al-īmān fī al-raddʿalā manṭiq al-yūnān li-Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya. Jahd al-qarīḥa fī tajrīd al-naṣīḥa*, ed. by ʿAlī Sāmī al-Nashshār, Cairo 1366/1947, pp. 208–209; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 15; Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ*, vol. 1, p. 250; vol. 3, pp. 96, 277, 287, 334; vol. 4, p. 84 et passim; Ibn Khaldūn: *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldūn. Prolégomènes d'Ebn-Khaldoun; texte arabe publié d'après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Impériale par M. Quatremère*, Beirut 1970 (reprint of Paris 1858), vol. 3, pp. 41, 113; Ibn Khaldūn: *The Muqaddimah. An Introduction to History*, transl. by Franz Rosenthal, New York 1974, vol. 3, pp. 52, 143; Gardet, Louis and Anawati, Georges C.: *Introduction à la théologie musulmane. Essai de théologie comparée*, Paris 1948, pp. 72–74.

27 Street, Arabic Logic, pp. 524, 579–582; idem: Logic, in: Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor (eds.): *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, Cambridge 2005, pp. 572–579, here p. 249. His statement seems convincing in view of the many logical treatises that were written from that period on and in regard to the "institutionalization" of logic in higher education in the Ottoman Empire (see ch. 5), but an historical overview of the books and subjects taught at the *madrasa*s throughout the Islamic world is still missing. See also below, n. 80.

28 Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū al-Faraj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān: *Talbīs Iblīs*, ed. by Khayr al-Dīn ʿAlī, Beirut n.d., p. 58; Ibn al-Jawzī: *The Devil's Delusion*, transl. by D.S. Margoliouth, in: *Islamic Culture* 9 (1935), pp. 1–21, here p. 19. For Ibn al-Jawzī's rejection of analogy in *fiqh* see *Talbīs Iblīs,* pp. 130–132; Ibn al-Jawzī: *The Devil's Delusion*, transl. by D.S. Margoliouth, in: *Islamic Culture* 10 (1936), pp. 20–39, here 29–31.

less, like his schoolfellow, Ibn al-Jawzī accused "the philosophers" of unbelief because of their metaphysical tenets that contradict religious dogmas[29] and is notorious for his active persecution of philosophers of his time.[30] In contrast to Ibn Taymiyya, however, he does not consider logic to be Satan misleading the philosophers, but the use of reason in the sphere of the metaphysical world. The divine world is, for this Ḥanbalī, still a realm that is beyond the scope of reason.[31] Therefore, obviously, Ibn al-Jawzī makes no attempt to prove the untenability of their tenets. Not all Ḥanbalīs prior to Ibn Taymiyya, however, shared Ibn al-Jawzī's fideistic attitude. Ibn ʿAqīl (d. 513/1119), for instance, viewed the relation between revelation and reason in a different way. After his abjuration of the Muʿtazilī teaching and "other innovators'" teachings he had adopted in his youth and whom Ibn Taymiyya then much respected for his adherence to "the pure *sunna*",[32] he holds that "reason conforms with revelation, and nothing in revelation contradicts reason." This conviction is based on the view that it is reason that conceives God's existence and leads men to live according to His commands.[33] Ibn ʿAqīl thus opens the sphere of reason for the Ḥanbalīs;

29 Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs Iblīs*, pp. 55–59; idem, *The Devil's Delusion* (1935), pp. 15–20.

30 Laoust, Henri: Le Hanbalisme sous le califat de Bagdad (241/855–656/1258), in: *Revue des études islamiques* 1 (1959), pp. 67–128, here 112–115; Hartmann, Angelika: *an-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh (1180–1225). Politik, Religion, Kultur in der späten ʿAbbāsidenzeit*, Berlin and New York 1975, p. 258.

31 See above, n. 28 and 29.

32 Ibn Taymiyya, Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad: *Naqḍ al-manṭiq*, ed. by Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Razzāq Ḥamza, Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣanīʿ and Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fīq, Cairo 1370/1951, p. 135; Makdisi, George: *Ibn ʿAqīl et la résurgence de l'Islam traditionaliste au XI^e siècle* (*V^e siècle de l'Hégire*), Damascus 1963, pp. 508–509; idem: *Ibn ʿAqīl. Religion and Culture in Classical Islam*, Edinburgh 1997, pp. 48–49. For his abjuration see Makdisi, *Ibn ʿAqīl et la résurgence*, pp. 424–441.

33 Ibn ʿAqīl, Abū al-Wafā: *al-Taʿlīqāt al-musammāt "Kitāb al-Funūn"*, ed. by George Makdisi, Beirut 1970–1971, vol. 2, p. 509 *inna al-ʿaql mutābiq lil-shaʿ, wa-innahu lā yaridu al-shaʿ illā bi-mā yuwāfiqu al-ʿaql*. This and other of Ibn ʿAqīl's opinions about reason were scrutinized by Makdisi, *Ibn ʿAqīl*, pp. 92–99 (I follow his translation, p. 97). With another Ḥanbalī, Ibn Qudāma (541/1146–620/1223), who like Ibn Taymiyya severely condemned *kalām* theology, logic met in jurisprudence a strong Ḥanbalī advocate (Hallaq, Wael B.: Logic. Formal Arguments and Formalization of Arguments in Sunnī Jurisprudence, in: *Arabica* 37 (1990), pp. 315–358, here 322–327; Makdisi, *Ibn ʿAqīl*, pp. 47–48. Hallaq exposes the strong impact of Aristotelian and Stoic logic on several eminent jurists as "successors" of al-Ghazālī and Ibn Qudāma, like, among others, the

still, he is not reflecting on logic and its consistency and seems to have taken the "soundness" of reason and reasoning for granted.

3. The Fatwa of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ

The probably most frequently quoted condemnation of logic belongs to the Shāfiʿī jurist and well renowned Hadith scholar Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī (d. 643/1245) and is inseparably linked to the condemnation of philosophy. In his youth, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ had studied logic in Mosul, but – according to Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282) – had to give it up, because he was obviously unable to grasp it.[34] Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ then reversed course and launched a fatwa against philosophy and against logic as the preparation for it, stating that philosophy was "the foundation of folly, the cause of all confusion, all errors and all heresy. The person who occupies himself with it becomes colorblind to the beauties of religious law, supported as it is by brilliant proofs" (*al-ḥujaj al-ẓāhira wal-barāhīn al-bāhira*).[35] In another fatwa, Ibn Sīnā

Shāfiʿī jurist Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī (d. 631/1233) and the Malikite jurist Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Ḥājib (570/1174–646/1249)).

34 Ibn Khallikān: *Kitāb Wafayāt al-aʿyān. Biographical Dictionary; transl. from the Arabic by Mac Guckin de Slane*, Beirut 1970, vol. 3, p. 470 (within the biography of Abū al-Fatḥ Kamāl al-Dīn); Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, ed. by Iḥsān ʿAbbās, n. p. n. d., vol. 5, p. 314; Goldziher, Ignaz: Stellung der alten islamischen Orthodoxie zu den antiken Wissenschaften, in: Joseph Desomogyi (ed.): *Ignaz Goldziher. Gesammelte Schriften*, Hildesheim 1970 (first publ. in 1916), vol. 5, pp. 357–400, here p. 389; Ignaz Goldziher: The Attitude of Orthodox Islam Toward the "Ancient Sciences", in: Merlin L. Swartz (ed.): *Studies on Islam*, New York and Oxford 1981, pp. 204–205. Ibn Khallikān (608/1211–681/1282) further reports that he was taught logic "secretly" by Abū al-Fatḥ Kamāl al-Dīn, who warned him that the public "consider those who apply to this branch of knowledge as holding pernicious opinions on religious matters" (Ibn Khallikān, *Kitāb Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, transl. by de Slane, vol. 3, p. 470; ed. by ʿAbbās, vol. 5, p. 314). This statement implies that logic was not accepted outside certain scholarly circles and somehow contradicted what has been said in chapter two. The solution to this problem might lie in that Ibn Khallikān was not a very reliable biographer, as Dimitri Gutas has shown in regard to his accounts on al-Fārābī (Gutas, Dimitri: Fārābī, Abū Naṣr i. Biography, in: Ehsan Yarshater (ed.): *Encyclopedia Iranica*, vol. 9, New York 1999, pp. 208–213.).

35 Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ: *Fatāwā Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ fī al-tafsīr wal-ḥadīth wal-uṣūl wal-fiqh*, ed. by ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Amīn Qalʿajī, Cairo 1403/1983, p. 70; I cite the translation of Goldziher, which relies on a slightly shorter version, Goldziher, The Attitude of Orthodox Islam, p. 205.

(d. 428/1037) is explicitly called a "devil of the human devils" and the study of his work is prohibited.[36] Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ prohibits logic for three reasons: first, because "the means of access to something bad"[37] must itself be bad; second, because

> preoccupation with the study and teaching of logic has not been permitted by the Lawgiver, nor has it been suggested by his Companions or the generation that followed him, nor by the learned imams, the pious ancestors, nor by the leaders or pillars of the Islamic community whose example is followed;[38]

and third, because "God has made it dispensable for those who have common sense (*kull ṣaḥīḥ al-dhihn*), and it is even more dispensible for the specialists in the speculative branches of jurisprudence."[39] Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ ends his famous fatwa with the conclusion that people who devote themselves to philosophy (and logic) shall be executed if they (continue to) refuse Islam.[40]

Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's argumentation differs from the abovementioned by referring to "the common sense"[41] and to the "clear arguments and brilliant proofs"[42] of the sharia itself and, not least, by its explicit death threat. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ is not known for having refuted logic and philosophy other than by the cited arguments, and although his fatwa probably fueled the persecution of those in touch with these sciences and was often referred to, even in introductions to logic, it failed to erase logic from the education of the "later" *kalām* theologians.[43] Therefore, Ibn Taymiyya might have felt obligated to deeply penetrate into their methods and subjects, in order to refute them from within by demonstrating their internal incoherences.

---

36 Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Fatāwā*, pp. 69–70. The fatwas are not dated and the *mustaftī*(s) are not known.

37 Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Fatāwā*, p. 71; Goldziher, The Attitude of Orthodox Islam, p. 205.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Fatāwā*, p. 71; Goldziher, The Attitude of Orthodox Islam, p. 206.

40 Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *Fatāwā*, pp. 71–72; I follow Goldziher's translation, The Attitude of Orthodox Islam, p. 206. For a comparison of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's position with that of al-Ghazālī, see Griffel, *Apostasie*, pp. 354–357.

41 Ibn al-Ṣalaḥ, *Fatāwā*, p. 71; Goldziher, The Attitude of Orthodox Islam, p. 206.

42 Ibn al-Ṣalaḥ, *Fatāwā*, p. 70; Goldziher, The Attitude of Orthodox Islam, p. 205.

43 Goldziher, Stellung der alten islamischen Orthodoxie, pp. 393–396; idem, The Attitude of Orthodox Islam, pp. 206–209, al-Nashshār, *Manāhij al-baḥth*, pp. 226–227; Endress, Die wissenschaftliche Literatur, vol. 3, pp. 56–57.

4. Ibn Taymiyya's Writings Against Logic

In his refutations of logic, Ibn Taymiyya refers to previous opponents of logic in a rather general way by pointing to the fact that "the Muslim religious scholars and the leaders of religion" slandered and forbade Greek logic.[44] He mentions only a few by name, mainly the theologian Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Nawbakhtī (d. between 300/912 and 310/922),[45] the grammarian Abū Saʿīd al-Sīrāfī (d. 368/979),[46] and Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ.[47]

For Ibn Taymiyya, logic (*manṭiq*) is not the propaedeutics of philosophy and as such a harmless and useful instrument, but in fact the core of philosophy. When he speaks of "logic" or "Greek logic" (*manṭiq al-yunān*), he has in mind Aristotelian logic.[48] He considers it the source of many other evils, leading astray theologians and Sufis and contaminating areas of knowledge that had initially been untainted by that human invention, that "conventional balance (established by) one individual".[49] In fact, since Aristotle's death, Aristotelian logic had turned into "Peripatetic" logic with the many additions and amendments that were introduced to the original Aristotelian texts by their various commentators, not least in Arabic. In *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* which Ibn Taymiyya composed in the same period as his main refutation of logic, he refers extensively to Ibn Sīnā's logical work

44 Ibn Taymiyya, *Naqḍ al-manṭiq*, p. 156 (*ʿulamāʾ al-muslimīn wa-aʾimmat al-dīn*).

45 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 331, 337–339; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 325–236; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 154–155, xlii–xliii.

46 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 178; al-Suyūṭi, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 276; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 100, xlii–xliii. For the famous debate on logic between the grammarian Abū Saʿīd al-Sīrāfī and the logician Abū Bishr Mattā (d. 328/940), see Endress, Gerhard: Grammatik und Logik. Arabische Philologie und griechische Philosophie im Widerstreit, in: Burkhard Mojsisch (ed.): *Sprachphilosophie in Antike und Mittelalter*, Amsterdam 1986, pp. 163–299.

47 Ibn Taymiyya, *Naqḍ al-manṭiq*, p. 156. He does not explicitly refer to Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's fatwa, but instead to the rumours about the latter's militant attitude towards the theologian and jurist Abū al-Ḥasan al-Āmidī (d. 631/1233).

48 Most explicit is his statement "Greek logic was formulated by Aristotle three hundred years before Christ." Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 162; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 333; Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 26, 373; similar is a statement in: Ibn Taymiyya, *Naqḍ al-manṭiq*, p. 185.

49 "Rational knowledges are known by the instruments of understanding bestowed by God to man; they do not rely on a conventional balance (established by) one individual" (*fa-inna al-ʿulūm al-ʿaqliyya tuʿlamu bi-mā faṭara allāh ʿalayhi banī Ādam min asbāb al-idrāk, lā taqifu ʿalā mīzān waḍʿī li-shakhṣ muʿayyan*; Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 26).

al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt[50] and calls it the "*muṣḥaf* [Koran copy] of these heretical philosophers."[51] He probably also drew his knowledge of logic from Abū al-Barakāt (d. after 560/1164–5), to whose *al-Muʿtabar fī al-ḥikma* and other writings he refers in several passages of *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql*.[52] To trace all the sources from which Ibn Taymiyya gained his knowledge on logic, let alone to compare his understanding and exposition of them with the original, is a task far beyond the present study.

Ibn Taymiyya's major refutation of logic is *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* (The Refutation of the Logicians), which is also known as *Naṣīḥat ahl al-īmān fī al-radd ʿalā manṭiq al-yūnān* (Advice to the People of Faith to Refute Greek Logic).[53] Ibn Taymiyya starts this major refutation by asserting that he always knew that "Greek logic is neither needed by the intelligent nor of any use to the dullard", but that he had first considered its propositions true and then discovered the falseness of some of them (*ṭāʾifa min qaḍāyāhu*), whereupon he took up his pen against it.[54] Of this work, only one manuscript has come down to us; it bears many glosses by Ibn Taymiyya himself.[55] Ibn Taymiyya started its composition in 1309/1310 while he was held

50 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ*, vol. 11, "Fihris asmāʾ al-kutub," s. v.; "al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt," s. v.; see also chapter 11.1.

51 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ*, vol. 6, p. 19. At two points, in relation to ontology and epistemology, he also hints to *al-Shifāʾ* (vol. 1, p. 288, vol. 6, pp. 47–48; see also chapter 11.1). His distinction between *taṣawwur* (conception) and *taṣdīq* (judgement to which one assents) is a further indication that his main source for Peripatetic logic was Ibn Sīnā and those who followed his line in logic. Concerning this distinction, see Street, Arabic Logic, pp. 540–542. Al-Ghazālī, obviously in the footsteps of Ibn Sīnā, also explicitly and sharply distinguishes between *taṣawwur* and *taṣdīq* (Rudolph, Die Neubewertung der Logik, p. 76). Although Ibn Taymiyya does not mention one of al-Ghazālī's logical treatises in his two major refutations, he seems at least to have known *al-Qisṭās al-mustaqīm* (see below, n. 270).

52 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ*, vol. 11, "Fihris al-aʿlām," s. v.; "Fihris asmāʾ al-kutub," s. v.

53 The second title is mentioned by al-Suyūṭī (al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 201; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 3).

54 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 3; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 202; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 3–4. (I follow his translation). The Shāfiʿī jurist Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Hakkārī al-Salṭī (d. 786/1384) reproduces in his summary of Ibn Taymiyya's major rebuttal of rationalism (see chapter 7) a biting poem against logic that he attributes to the young Ibn Taymiyya (see Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ*, introduction, pp. 63–64).

55 For the history of this manuscript, see Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. *zāʾ-mīm*.

in custody in Alexandria, but apparently completed it only after his major refutation of the rationalists *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* (see chapter 7).[56] While imprisoned in Alexandria, he was visited by some scholars whose plea for logic and philosophy triggered his vehement impugnment.[57] He tries to demonstrate that – contrary to what many Muslim scholars of his time believed – logic is not a universal and infallible guide to truth shared by all mankind, but simply a matter of convention between some people, and in addition, a completely useless instrument of the intellect, especially in metaphysical matters.

Ibn Taymiyya criticizes some essential principles of definition and deduction from various points of view, although not very systematically and with many repetitions and digressions.[58] Some of what might be understood as a digression in fact constitutes an explication of his own epistemology. His style is sometimes polemical, but mostly technical, trying to refute his enemies by arguments. Most of his counter-arguments had already been stated by Greek or Muslim thinkers,[59] but as Wael B. Hallaq states, Ibn Taymiyya's critique "represents not so much

56 At the beginning of *al-Radd*, he states that he wrote down what he had to comment upon logic at that time after a visit of one of his philosophising visitors and that he followed it through in several sessions afterwards (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 3; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 202; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 4). This statement implies that he started the work in 1309/10. Ibn Taymiyya mentions *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* at least three times in *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 253 (this hint is missing in al-Suyūṭī's abridgement), 323 (al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 322; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 150) and 373 (this hint is missing in al-Suyūṭī's abridgement)). So he seems to have finished it only four to eight years after his custody, since *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* is thought to have been written between 713/1313–1314 and 717/1317–1318 (see below, n. 103). If the dates are rightly assumed, this would either imply that Ibn Taymiyya worked on the two refutations simultaneously or that he inserted the two hints to *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* as additional glosses. Against the latter assumption speaks the short treatment of the estimative propositions (*wahmiyyāt*) in *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* with the reference to "another work," where he expounded upon the subject. *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* contains long passages discussing the *wahmiyyāt* and thus is most probably the work Ibn Taymiyya refers to (see below, chapter 11.1).

57 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 3–4; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 202; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 4; Laoust, La Biographie d'Ibn Taymīya, pp. 144–146; idem, L'influence d'Ibn-Taymiyya, in: Alford T. Welch and Pierre Cachia (eds.): *Islam. Past Influence and Present Challenge*, New York 1979, pp. 15–33, here p. 16.

58 For a concise summary of his critique, see Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. xiv–xxxiv.

59 Al-Nashshār, *Manāhij al-baḥth*, pp. 149–159; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. xxxix–xlviii.

the culmination of a tradition of anti-logical discourse as an ingenious and creative selection of already existing but disparate arguments".[60] *Al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* was printed for the first time in 1949 in Bombay with a foreword by Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī (d. 1953), a former commissioner of teaching at the Islamic Academy (*Dār al-ʿulūm*) of *Nadwat al-ʿulamāʾ* in Lucknow.[61] A much shortened, but very concise abridgment of it by al-Suyūṭī (see chapter 5) was masterfully translated into English by Wael B. Hallaq and prefaced with a substantial introduction.[62] Detailed studies of specific aspects of the original, its summary, or his minor rejections of logic are still rather few.[63]

60 Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. xlvii.

61 It was printed a second time in Cairo in 1977 by ʿAbd al-Sattār Naṣṣār and ʿImād Khafājī. For further information on Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī, see Hartung, Jan-Peter: *Viele Wege und ein Ziel. Leben und Wirken von Sayyid Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Ḥasanī Nadwī (1914–1999)*, Würzburg 2004, index, "Nadwī, Sayyid Sulaymān," s. v. (he regrets the absence of a biography of that eminent scholar, pp. 87–88, n. 178).

62 Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*.

63 Haque, Sirajul: Ibn Taimīyyah. A Life and Works, in: Mian Mohammad Sharif (ed.): *A History of Muslim Philosophy. With Short Accounts of Other Disciplines and the Modern Renaissance in Muslim Lands*, 2 vols., Wiesbaden 1963–1966, vol. 2, pp. 796–819, here 805–812; Qadir, Chaudhry A.: An Early Islamic Critique of Aristotelian Logic. Ibn Taymiyyah, in: *International Philosophical Quarterly* 8 (1968), pp. 498–512; Fakhry, Majid: *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, New York and London 1970, pp. 350–353; al-ʿAbd, ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Muḥammad: *al-Tafkīr al-manṭiqī bayna al-manhaj al-qadīm wal-manhaj al-jadīd*, Cairo 1977, pp. 43–51; al-Nashshār, *Manāhij al-baḥth*, pp. 146–219; Brunschvig, Pour ou contre la logique grecque; Madjid, Nurcholis: *Ibn Taymiyya on Kalām and Falsafa. A Problem of Reason and Revelation in Islam*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Chicago 1984; Heer, Nicholas: Ibn Taymiyah's Empiricism, in: Farhad Kazemi and Robert D. McChesney (eds.): *A Way Prepared. Essays on Islamic Culture in Honor of Richard Bayly Winder*, New York and London 1988, pp. 109–115; Özervarlı, M. Sait: İbn Teymiyye. İtikadî Görüşleri, in: Tufan Buzpınar and Tayyar Altıkulaç (eds.): *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 20, İstanbul 1999, pp. 409–411; von Kügelgen, Anke: Ibn Taymīyas Kritik an der aristotelischen Logik und sein Gegenentwurf, in: Dominik Perler and Ulrich Rudolph (eds.): *Logik und Theologie. Das Organon im arabischen und lateinischen Mittelalter*, Leiden and Boston 2005, pp. 167–225. See also Nadwī, Sayyid Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī: Naqd al-falsafa wal-manṭiq wa-ʿilm al-kalām wa-tarjīḥ uslūb al-kitāb wal-sunna, transl. into Arabic by Saʿīd al-Aʿẓamī al-Nadwī, in: *Majallat al-Baʿth al-Islāmī* 18 (1973), pp. 49–63; idem: *Taʾrīkh daʿwa wa-ʿazīma*, Lucknow 1419/1998, vol. 2, especially pp. 219–258; for these references I thank Jan-Peter Hartung who published a comprehensive study on that scholar in 2004. See Nizami, Khaliq Ahmad: The Impact of Ibn Taimiyya on South Asia, in: *Journal of Islamic Studies* 1 (1990), pp. 120–149, here p. 144.

Ibn Taymiyya wrote also minor refutations of logic. The main one that has come down to us is *Naqḍ al-manṭiq* (The Demolition/Contradiction of Logic) and is seemingly also transmitted in only one manuscript.[64] It was probably written before *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn*[65] and constitutes an answer to a request for a formal legal opinion as to whether it is right or wrong to regard logic as a collective duty (*farḍ kifāya*).[66] In content, it resembles the major refutation because of its concentration on definition and methods of deduction. However, his argumentation is less lucid and detailed, being instead more polemical. Besides these two refutations of logic, Ibn Taymiyya wrote several short treatises or chapters dealing with specific aspects of logic; the longest one is entitled *Fī Ḍabṭ kulliyyāt al-manṭiq wal-khalal fīhi* (On the Formation of Universals in Logic and its Defect).[67]

---

64 See also next footnote. The editors mention no further manuscript and Carl Brockelmann (*Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, Leiden 1898–1949) does not have it in his list of Ibn Taymiyya's writings. It was edited twice (see the footnote after next).

65 In *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* Ibn Taymiyya mentions that he had earlier written something against logic when he became aware of its falseness (p. 3); see, however, below, n. 67. See also Hallaq, who points out his change in position concerning the intramental character of mathematical principles (Ibn Taymiyya, p. xxxi); see chapter 10.1. In the present article I shall rely on *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* as the main source.

66 The first edition (Cairo 1951) comprises far more than a critique of logic: Ibn Taymiyya discusses and criticizes many teachings and methods of Muslim theological, mystical and philosophical schools; only on the last 67 pages (pp. 155–210), does he come to Aristotelian logic. The part concerning logic is included in *Majmūʿat al-Fatāwā li-shaykh al-islām Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Taymiyya al-Ḥarrānī*, al-mujallad 9, ed. by ʿAmīr al-Jazzār and Anwār al-Bāz, Mansoura and Cairo 1421/2001, vol. 5, pp. 7–46, the first part in *Majmūʿat al-Fatāwā li-shaykh al-islām Ibn Taymiyya*, al-mujallad 4, ed. by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Qāsim and Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, Cairo s. d. (reprint of the Riyadh edition 1381–1386/1961–1967), vol. 2, pp. 7–115; see Jon Hoover, who indicates the pages for Ibn Qāsim's edition (*Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 241).

67 Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿat al-Fatāwā,* al-mujallad 9, vol. 5, pp. 137–153 (-170). Ibn Taymiyya mentions in *Naqḍ al-manṭiq* that he had already laid down a summary of Greek logic and some of its errors and misleading concepts (p. 184). It is unlikely that he meant his extensive wor *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn*. The oldest and most comprehensive biography of Ibn Taymiyya, the one by Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Hādī, mentions that Ibn Taymiyya wrote two refutations of logic besides *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiq* (according to al-Nashshār's foreword to al-Suyūṭī, *Ṣawn al-manṭiq*, p. *zā*). Ibn Taymiyya's disciple Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya refers only to two works by his master against logic, a big and a small one (*Miftāḥ dār al-saʿāda wa-manshūr wilāyat al-ʿilm*

5. The Impact of Ibn Taymiyya's Refutation of Logic via al-Suyūṭī

In the 15th century, the encyclopedist and Shāfiʿī jurist al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) abridged Ibn Taymiyya's *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* (*naṣīḥa*) to about a fourth of its size, but kept the wording of the original. He removed many of the repetitions and digressions, whereby he reduced the text mainly to the critique, at the cost of some interesting parts of Ibn Taymiyya's epistemology.[68] It is entitled *Kitāb Jahd al-qarīḥa fī tajrīd al-naṣīḥa* and was edited with al-Suyūṭī's *Ṣawn al-manṭiq wal-kalām ʿan fann al-manṭiq wal-kalām*,[69] which probably represents the most comprehensive compilation of Muslim refutations of logic until the 20th century.[70] Al-Suyūṭī mentions having obtained a copy of *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* only after 20 years of searching.[71] Although al-Suyūṭī's abridgement is extant in but two manuscripts, it seems to have been more widespread than its model.[72] In his autobiography al-Suyūṭī mentions Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ's fatwa as the main reason he gave up the study of logic.[73] However, as a major motivation for his compila-

wal-irāda, ed. by Maḥmūd Ḥasan Rabīʿ, Cairo 1358/1939, p. 172; see, however, al-Nashshār, foreword to al-Suyūṭī, *Ṣawn al-manṭiq*, pp. *zāʾ-ḥāʾ*).

68 Unless the manuscript al-Suyūṭī possessed was defective, with great likelihood he intentionally omitted the chapter on causality (see below, chapter 11.2) and the whole ninth consideration on widespread (*mashhūrāt*) and estimative (*wahmiyyāt*) propositions, which Ibn Taymiyya, unlike the logicians, grants the possibility of generating certainty (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 396–437; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 167, n. 307.1; see below, chapter 11.1).

69 Al-Suyūṭī, *Ṣawn al-manṭiq*, pp. 1–2, 201–343. Since 1947 al-Suyūṭī's summary has been edited several times: as a reprint of al-Nashshār's edition in Beirut 1981; with amendments by Suʿād ʿAbd al-Rāziq in Cairo 1970 (see Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. lvi) and in Ibn Taymiyya's *Majmūʿat al-Fatāwā* (vol. 5, part 9, pp. 47–136 without mentioning al-Suyūṭī's name; see Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. lv–lvi).

70 Al-Nashshār, foreword to al-Suyūṭī, *Ṣawn al-manṭiq*, pp. *alif-ḥāʾ*; al-Nashshār, *Manāhij al-baḥth,* p. 224.

71 Al-Suyūṭī, *Ṣawn al-manṭiq*, pp. 1–2.

72 Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. lv. It is also known under the title *Mukhtaṣar al-Suyūṭī li-Kitāb Naṣīḥat ahl al-īmān fī al-radd ʿalā manṭiq al-yūnān*. For the main editions and their shortcomings, see Hallaq's translation (Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. lv–lvii).

73 *Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī*, vol. 2: *al-Taḥadduth bi-niʿmat Allāh*, ed. by Elizabeth M. Sartain, Cambridge 1975, p. 241; Sartain, Elizabeth M.: *Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī*, vol. 1: *Biography and Background*, Cambridge 1975, p. 32; Goldziher already hinted at it (Stellung der alten islamischen Orthodoxie, pp. 394–395; idem, The Attitude of Orthodox Islam, p. 208). Al-Suyūṭi mentions neither *Jahd al-qarīḥa* nor *Ṣawn al-manṭiq* in his autobiography; instead, he refers to a refutation of

tion, he mentions his annoyance at seeing many of those who deal with logic justifying themselves by pointing to the weakness of arguments by which Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ had forbidden it.[74] Therefore, al-Suyūṭī feels obliged to show that the four "founders" of the law schools and other eminent righteous forefathers forbade innovation (*biḍa*) and speculative theology (*ʿilm al-kalām*). He argues that since logic represents an innovation, they had clearly forbidden it.[75] Al-Suyūṭī repeats the claim that logic was forbidden by the main religious scholars in an apparently far-reaching fatwa entitled *al-Qawl al-mushriq fī taḥrīm al-ishtighāl bil-manṭiq* (The Illuminating Statement about the Prohibition of the Study of Logic), enumerating nearly 50 persons whom he classifies by juridical schools.[76] Therein, he declares logic to be

> a harmful (*khabīth)* and reprehensible (*madhmūm*) discipline, the study of which is forbidden, being partly based on the theory of the primary matter (*hayūlā*), which is unbelief leading to philosophy and heresy (*zandaqa*) and bearing no religious nor worldly fruit whatsoever.[77]

His few further arguments against logic are very simplistic, reducing it to a science whose proofs are based on universals and consequently have no extramental existence. He only mentions inference by signs or indicators as an alternative (see chapter twelve).[78] Thus, al-Suyūṭī's rejections take into account only some points of Ibn Taymiyya's sophisticated critique and leave his epistemological considerations completely aside.

There seems to have been no further elaborate refutation of logic based on Ibn Taymiyya's works or on al-Suyūṭī's compilation of Ibn Taymiyya's *al-Raddʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn*.[79] The reason might be that any

---

logic that he likewise titles *al-Ghayth al-mughriq fī taḥrīm al-manṭiq* (Sartain, *Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī*, vol. 2, p. 241) or *al-Qawl al-mushriq fī taḥrīm al-ishtighāl bil-manṭiq* (ibid., p. 114; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṣawn al-manṭiq*, p. 1); edited in al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn: *al-Ḥāwī lil-fatāwā fī al-fiqh waʿulūm al-tafsīr wal-ḥadīth wal-uṣūl wal-naḥw wal-ʿirāb wa-sāʾir al-funūn*, Beirut 1395/1975, vol. 1, pp. 255–257.

74 Al-Suyūṭī, *Ṣawn al-manṭiq*, p. 2.

75 Ibid., pp. 14–190.

76 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Qawl al-mushriq*, pp. 255–257. See also below, n. 165.

77 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Qawl al-mushriq*, p. 255.

78 Ibid., p. 256.

79 ʿAlī al-Wardī regards Ibn Khaldūn's (732/1332–808/1406) critique of logic (Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddima*, pp. 209–220; see Mahdi, Muhsin: *Ibn Khaldūn's Philosophy of History. A Study in the Philosophic Foundation of the Science of Culture*, London 1957, pp. 100–112) as having been influenced by Ibn Taymiyya

doubts regarding logic had vanished among influential scholars, so that the study of logic became obligatory in many *madrasas* (i. e. in Muslim higher schools that prepared their students for religious posts), at least in the Ottoman Empire.[80] In addition, renowned religious scholars composed commentaries on logic and compiled logical handbooks well into the 19th century. Al-Suyūṭī's refutations, though, remained a point of reference for supporters of logic, such as the Maghrebian scholars al-Maghīlī (d. 909/1503–1504 or 910/1505–1506) and al-Ḥasan al-Yūsī (d. 1102/1691),[81] and for its opponents, like the eminent encyclopedic scholar Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (d. 1205/1791).[82] Al-Zabīdī accepted logic as a means to defend Islamic dogmas against those who tainted it, but was deeply disturbed by what he saw as its obvious "side effects" – namely the vicious conviction that only logic brings perfection, which, in his eyes, had led to an increasing neglect and ignorance of the words and deeds of the prophet and his companions.[83] He was, of course, aware of the high esteem in which logic was held, and he opposed, in a quite balanced manner, refutations of logic from al-Dhahabī, Ibn

(*Muqaddima*, p. 48). A thorough comparison might be a challenging question of research.

80 For the "institutionalization" of logic in higher education, see for instance the programs of Ottoman madrasas, İzgi, Cevat: *Osmanlı Medreselerinde İlim*, vol. 1, pp. 163–183 et passim; El-Rouayheb, Khaled: Was there a Revival of Logical Studies in Eighteenth-Century Egypt?, in: *Die Welt des Islams* 45 (2005), pp. 1–19, here 5–6 (in regard to the Azhar in the 18th and 19th century). For defences of logic in later centuries, see above, n. 43.

81 Al-Zabīdī quotes a passage from al-Maghīlī's verse polemic addressed to al-Suyūṭī and another from al-Yūsī's *Ḥāshiya ʿalā al-kubrā* (i. e., al-Sanūsī's (d. 895/1490) *al-ʿAqīda al-kubrā*; I am indepted to Stefan Reichmuth for the solution of this abbreviation) in which they refute al-Suyūṭī's rejection of logic in *al-Ḥāwī lil-fatāwā*, i. e., in his *al-Qawl al-mushriq* (*Kitāb Itḥāf al-sāda al-muttaqīn bi-sharḥ asrār Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* (*wa-bi-hāmish Kitāb al-Imlāʾ ʿan ishkālāt al-Iḥyāʾ lil-Ghazālī*), Beirut n. d. after 1970 (reprint of Egypt 1311/1894), vol. 1, pp. 177–179, 182–183; see also above or *al-Qawl al-mushriq* (ibid., p. 114; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṣawn al-manṭiq*, p. 1); edited in al-Suyūṭī, *al-Ḥāwī lil-fatāwā*). Khaled El-Rouayheb has revealed the important contributions of al-Yūsī and other Maghrebian scholars in the field of logic from the 14th Century onwards (Was there a Revival, pp. 5, 7–14; idem: Opening the Gate of Verification. The Forgotten Arab-Islamic Florescence of the 17th Century, in: *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 38 (2006), pp. 263–281, here 269–271).

82 Concerning this scholar, see the monograph by Reichmuth, Stefan: *The World of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (1732–1791). Studies on the Life, Networks and Writings of an Islamic Humanist Scholar of the 18th Century*, [Cambridge] 2009.

83 Al-Zabīdī, *Kitāb Itḥāf al-sāda*, vol. 1, pp. 179–180.

Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350), al-Suyūṭī, and others to justifications of logic from Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 756/1355) and the aforementioned Maghrebian scholars al-Maghīlī and al-Ḥasan al-Yūsī.[84] Al-Zabīdī supports al-Suyūṭī, repeating the latter's judgments in *al-Qawl al-mushriq fī taḥrīm al-ishtighāl bil-manṭiq*, namely that logic is harmful, reprehensible, of no use to the dogma of God's unity, and a cause of great harm to the heart.[85] Al-Zabīdī refers to Ibn Taymiyya as the last who devoted himself to illuminating "[logic's] wrongness and inconsistency,"[86] but cites only one sentence from him, indirectly, i. e., as transmitted by ʿAlī al-Qārī (d. 1016/1607): "I do not think that God – He is mighty and sublime – overlooks (that deed of) al-Maʾmūn. He certainly will punish him for what he has brought into the [Muslim] community by translating that science from Greek into Arabic."[87] The history of the impact of Ibn Taymiyya's refutations of logic still waits to be written. It remains to be studied whether they were mainly received via the popularizer al-Suyūṭī, as seems to be the case, judging from the aforementioned examples, or whether they had a direct influence or other popularizers.

6. Forerunners of Ibn Taymiyya in Rejecting *falsafa*

As to the refutation and anathematization of *falsafa*, Ibn Taymiyya had far more "concurrence" regarding elaborate rejections.[88] Before he

84 Ibid., pp. 176–184. The whole chapter has been recently scrutinized by El-Rouayheb, Was there a Revival, especially pp. 2–14. See also below, n. 165. Stefan Reichmuth thoroughly studied al-Zabīdī's whole commentary on al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* (*The World of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī*, ch. 5).

85 Al-Zabīdī, *Kitāb Itḥāf al-sāda*, vol. 1, pp. 180–181. Al-Zabīdī tries to support this view also with a statement by al-Ghazālī (ibid., pp. 183–184). El-Rouayheb has shown, however, that his quotation was taken out of context and thus neglects the fact that al-Ghazālī considered logic a neutral, harmless science in regard to religion (Was there a Revival, p. 4). Noticeably, al-Suyūṭī also claims that al-Ghazālī became hostile to logic at the end of his life (*al-Qawl al-mushriq*, p. 255).

86 *Mā aẓunn Allāh ʿazza wa-jalla yaghfulu ʿalā al-Maʾmūn wa-lā budd an yuʿāqibahu bi-mā adkhalaʿalā al-umma min naql hādhā al-ʿilm min al-yūnāniyya ilā al-ʿarabiyya*, al-Zabīdī, *Kitāb Itḥāf al-sāda*, vol. 1, p. 176. On al-Qārī see the article by Claudia Preckel in this volume.

87 Al-Zabīdī, *Kitāb Itḥāf al-sāda*, vol. 1, p. 176.

88 For a diachronic, though in its generalisation outdated survey of the rejection of Greek philosophy in general, see Goldziher, Stellung der alten islamischen

entered the scene, Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī had already refuted major subjects of the *falāsifa* in several of his writings. He seriously challenged the coherence of their theories and concepts in *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* on the basis of reasoning. As a result of his own experience, he tried to prove the harm of philosophy to the soul of the individual and to the unity of the community in his spiritual autobiography *al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl* and presented a Sufi-inspired alternative that he considered the "right way" to truth and blissfulness in his *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* and other writings.[89] Tāj al-Dīn al-Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153), a contemporary of al-Ghazālī whose refutation, however, he does not mention,[90] tried to show the inconsistency of Ibn Sīnā's main metaphysical tenets in several writings, such as the survey of different religions, philosophies, and Muslim sects *Kitāb al-Milal wal-niḥal*, the comparatistic theological work *Kitāb Nihāyat al-aqdām fī ʿilm al-kalām*, and treatises solely devoted to the critique of Ibn Sīnā.[91] Some decades later, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209), who considered al-Ghazālī and al-Shahrastānī to

---

Orthodoxie, pp. 357–400; for the translation, see idem, The Attitude of Orthodox Islam, pp. 185–215. See Dimitri Gutas' critique: *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture. The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early ʿAbbāsid Society* (*2nd–4th/8th–10th Centuries*), London and New York 1998, pp. 166–175.

89 These works and al-Ghazālī's refutations of and attitudes against philosophy are well studied; for references see Daiber, Hans: *Bibliography of Islamic Philosophy*, Leiden 1999, vol. 1 and vol. 2, s. v. "Ghazzālī". Al-Ghazālī was evidently not the first to refute philosophy in a detailed manner. Al-Ashʿarī (260/873–874–324/935–936), for instance, wrote a book *Fī al-Radd ʿalā al-falāsifa* in which he argued against teachings that might contradict God's creative power; unfortunately however, this book has not come down to us (McCarthy, Richard Joseph: *The Theology of al-Ashʿarī. The Arabic Texts of al-Ashʿarī's Kitāb al-Lumaʿ and Risālat Istiḥsān al-khawḍ fī ʿilm al-kalām; with briefly annotated translations, and appendices containing material pertinent to the study of al-Ashʿarī*, Beirut 1953, p. 225, n. 70).

90 Al-Shahrastānī, Muḥammad: *Struggling with the Philosopher. A Refutation of Avicenna's Metaphysics*; A new Arabic edition and English translation of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Aḥmad al-Shahrastānī's *Kitāb al-Muṣāraʿa* by Wilferd Madelung and Toby Mayer, London and New York 2001, pp. 8–9.

91 The currently best known of these separate treatises is *Kitāb al-Muṣāraʿa* (see al-Shahrastānī, *Struggling with the Philosopher*). Concerning references to the other works and his critique of Ibn Sīnā, see Monnot, Guy: al-Shahrastānī, in: *EI²*, vol. 9 (1997), pp. 214–216; Daiber, *Bibliography of Islamic Philosophy*, vol. 1 and vol. 2, s. v. *Shahrastānī*; and Steigerwald, Diane: *La pensée philosophique et théologique de Shahrastānī* (*m. 548/1153*), Laval 1997.

be only mediocre thinkers,[92] thoroughly criticized – with purely rationalistic arguments – many metaphysical and physical tenets of prior *kalām* theologians and *falāsifa* (especially Ibn Sīnā) in several of his works. He does this in his commentary and his summary of Ibn Sīnā's *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, for instance, and in his main theological and philosophical book *al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyya fī ʿilm al-ilāhiyyāt wal-ṭabīʿiyyāt*.[93] These three authors were clearly influenced by what they refuted, by consciously or unconsciously adopting philosophical concepts or using their opponents' arguments while rejecting them. Al-Shahrastānī and al-Rāzī, especially, were confronted with the reproach that their teachings were deeply tainted with philosophy, and apparently al-Rāzī even had to fear for his life.[94] It was not easy to reject this charge in either case, since – in contrast to al-Ghazālī – they did not charge the philosophers with unbelief, and while al-Shahrastānī adopted Ismāʿīlī tenets in some of his writings,[95] al-Rāzī followed and developed several of Ibn Sīnā's and other philosopher's theses.[96] In fact, both expressed many of their ideas in philosophical terms. Al-Ghazālī was regarded with suspicion in traditionalist circles, not least by Ibn Taymiyya,[97] and there is no doubt that al-Ghazālī remained influenced by philosophy even after his disillusion about its leading to truth.

92 Kraus, Paul: Les "Controverses" de Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, in: *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égypte* 19 (1937), pp. 187–214, here 204–212.

93 At the end of his treatise *Iʿtiqādāt firaq al-muslimīn wal-mushrikīn wa-maʿahu baḥth fī al-ṣūfiyya wal-firaq al-islāmiyya li-Muṣṭafā Bek ʿAbd al-Rāzī*, ed. by ʿAlī Sāmī al-Nashshār, Cairo 1356/1938, pp. 91–92, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī enumerates nine writings he reckons as his refutations of the *falāsifa*, some of which seem not to have survived. These and other of his works are nowadays less studied than those of al-Ghazālī and al-Shahrastānī; see Arnaldez, Roger: L'oeuvre de Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. Commentateur du Coran et philosophe, in: *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale Xe-XIIe siècles* 3 (1960), pp. 307–323; Anawati, George C.: Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, in: *EI*², vol. 2 (1991), pp. 751–755; Gutas, The Heritage of Avicenna, p. 89.

94 See al-Shahrastānī, *Struggling with the Philosopher*, pp. 2, 6; al-Rāzī, *Iʿtiqādāt firaq al-muslimīn wal-mushrikīn*, p. 189.

95 Al-Shahrastānī, *Struggling with the Philosopher*, pp. 1–16 et passim.

96 Arnaldez, L'oeuvre de Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, pp. 316–318; Kraus, Les "Controverses", pp. 190, 203–205.

97 For Ibn Taymiyya's critique of al-Ghazālī, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 11, s. v. "al-Ghazālī". See also below, chapter 8.

Besides these highly rationalistic rejections and discussions of *falsafa*,[98] there were also long and harsh refutations and anathematizations that mainly argued on the basis of the Koran and the Sunna. Especially successful were the attacks by a contemporary of al-Rāzī, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234), the so-called founder of the Sufi brotherhood al-Suhrawardiyya. His books *Idālat al-ʿiyān* and *Kashf al-faḍāʾiḥ al-yūnāniyya wa-rashf al-naṣāʾiḥ al-īmāniyya* (or *Rashf al-naṣāʾiḥ al-īmāniyya wa-kashf al-faḍāʾiḥ al-yūnāniyya*), which demonstrate his utilization of the Ismāʿīlī arguments of al-Shahrastānī in addition to the Koran and the Sunna,[99] were utilized by the ʿAbbāsid rulership to persecute scholars interested in *falsafa*.[100] *Kashf al-faḍāʾiḥ al-yūnāniyya wa-rashf al-naṣāʾiḥ al-īmāniyya* was translated into Persian under the Muẓaffarid Shāh Shujāʿ (d. 786/1384) and his clique, who were also outspoken enemies of all kinds of rationalism.[101]

7. Ibn Taymiyya's *Opus Magnum* Against Rationalism

In his major rejection of rationalism, Ibn Taymiyya takes into account al-Ghazālī's, al-Shahrastānī's, and al-Rāzī's refutations of *falsafa*. He harshly criticizes, however, his forerunners for having given preference to reason in cases where it conflicts with the religious tradition

98 Probably still more common at that time were short and banal, pseudo-rationalistic refutations like Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī's (600/1203–682/1283) *Fī al-Radd ʿalā l-falāsifa* (a chapter of his *Mufīd al-ʿulūm wa-mubīd al-humūm*, ed. by Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭāʾ, Beirut n. d., around 1985, pp. 86–87; the work is often attributed to Jamāl al-Dīn Abū Bakr al-Khwārazmī).

99 Hartmann, Angelika: Ismāʿīlitische Theologie bei sunnitischen ʿulamāʾ des Mittelalters?, in: Ludwig Hagemann and Ernst Pulsfort (eds.): *"Ihr alle aber seid Brüder". Festschrift für A. Th. Khoury zum 60. Geburtstag*, Würzburg and Altenberge 1990, pp. 190–206, here 201–203; Hartmann, Angelika: al-Suhrawardī, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar, in: *EI*², vol. 9 (1997), pp. 780–781.

100 Hartmann, *an-Nāṣir li-dīn Allāh*, pp. 34–36, 250–260.

101 The translator was a well known jurist of his region, Muʿīn al-Dīn Yazdī (d. 789/1387). He freely intermingled his own opinions in the text and left several passages out. In his rejection of *falsafa* and of all those who even touched it, he is no less fervent than al-Suhrawardī. (Hartmann, Angelika: Eine orthodoxe Polemik gegen Philosophen und Freidenker – eine zeitgenössische Schrift gegen Ḥāfiẓ? – Muʿīn ud-Dīn Yazdī und sein "Tarğama-yi rašf an-naṣāʾiḥ", in: *Der Islam* 56 (1979), pp. 274–293; idem, al-Suhrawardī, p. 781; idem: Muʿīn al-Dīn Yazdī, in: *EI*², vol. 7 (1993), pp. 480–481).

(*al-naql/al-sharʿ*), holding that they thereby missed the right path to truth.[102] His vigorous and eminent rebuttal of all schools and individuals adopting that rule was most probably written between 713/1313–1314 and 717/1317–1318,[103] i.e., some years after Ibn Taymiyya had started his work on *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn*. This work is known under several titles. Ibn Taymiyya himself refers to it mostly as *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql*, but other titles of this work, like *Bayān muwāfaqat al-ʿaql al-ṣarīḥ lil-naql al-ṣaḥīḥ* express more precisely Ibn Taymiyya's intention to prove the congruity of "clear reason" with sound religious tradition.[104] No complete copy of *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* has come down to us. Large or small parts of it are preserved in less than ten manuscripts; by collating them, Muḥammad Rashād Sālim reconstructed the work as a whole. Only four of the manuscripts are dated; the oldest one dates from 737–738/1336–1338,[105] one either

102 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, pp. 5–6; vol. 9, pp. 66–68 (among many other instances, see vol. 11, "Fahāris al-aʿlām"). Ibn Taymiyya is well aware of al-Ghazālī's different stages and ways of searching for the truth, but rejects them all (*Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, pp. 162–163). For Ibn Taymiyya's borrowing of arguments from his forerunners, see below.

103 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, introduction, p. 9.

104 Ibid., introduction, p. 6. (I follow the English translation by Michot, A Mamlūk Theologian's Commentary, p. 156). Other titles are *al-Jamʿ bayna al-maʿqūl wal-manqūl* and further slight variations (Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, introduction, pp. 5–7). Under the heading *Bayān muwāfaqat ṣarīḥ al-maʿqūl li-ṣaḥīḥ al-manqūl*, the first third of it had already been published – based on one single manuscript with many amendations by the editors – in Cairo 1321–1322/1903–1905 at the margins of Ibn Taymiyya's *Minhāj al-sunna al-nabawiyya fī naqḍ kalām al-shīʿa wal-qadariyya* (the origin of the manuscript of *Bayān* is not indicated and the scarcity of copies lamented, see Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql,* p. 69); there exist several reprints of this edition (for the exact correspondence of pages, see Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 240). In a second edition of *Minhāj al-sunna* in Cairo 1370/1950–1951 (reprint: Beirut 1985), Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd and Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī edited a manuscript of *Muwāfaqat ṣaḥīḥ al-manqūl li-ṣarīḥ al-maʿqūl* from Medina that is now lost (Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql,* introduction, pp. 69–70). In 1987, ʿAbd al-Laṭīf ʿAbd al-Raḥmān published *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql aw-Muwāfaqat ṣaḥīḥ al-manqūl li-ṣarīḥ al-maʿqūl* in five volumes without any hint either of his manuscript basis or to Sālim's edition; annotations are limited to Hadith references and names of people and there are no indices; I therefore do not refer to it. In fact, the congruity of clear reason and sound religious tradition is a subject that Ibn Taymiyya upholds and treats in many of his writings, see Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 20, n. 7.

105 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql,* vol. 1, pp. 48–55.

from the early 17th or late 19th century[106] and two from the turn of the 19th to the 20th century.[107]

The work is divided into 44 arguments, all of which echo its *leitmotif*, the refutation of the precedence of *ratio* over scripture in case of their divergence. Binyamin Abrahamov has concisely summarized them, and only some major points shall be mentioned. Ibn Taymiyya questions the assumption that reason is the basis of tradition or of the knowledge of its soundness; pointing to the numberless disagreements about dogmas that are based on so-called rational proofs, he maintains that multiply-transmitted reports constitute a necessary knowledge, qualifies his adversaries' use of the Arabic language as improper, and distinguishes in the Koran and the Sunna between orally transmitted (*samʿī*) and rational (*ʿaqlī*) proofs.[108] As shall be shown, Ibn Taymiyya eventually aims to show that "clear reason" cannot contradict the sound religious tradition, thereby dismissing his adversaries' use and understanding of reason.

The appearance of his *leitmotif* is always the beginning of a long and vigorous attack on the metaphysical positions of philosophers and *kalām* theologians. He therein displays a tremendous first-hand knowledge not only of his forerunners' refutations of *falsafa* among the *kalām* theologians, but also of the works of the most prominent Muslim philosophers, like al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Rushd.[109] This

106 Ibid., p. 45.

107 Ibid., pp. 33, 37.

108 Abrahamov, Binyamin: Ibn Taymiyya on the Agreement of Reason with Tradition, in: *The Muslim World* 82 (1992), pp. 256–272. Nicholas Heer directly confronted Ibn Taymiyya's arguments with those of *kalām* theologians: The Priority of Reason in the Interpretation of Scripture. Ibn Taymiyyah and the Mutakallimun, in: Mustansir Mir (ed.): *Literary Heritage of Classical Islam. Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of James A. Bellamy*, Princeton 1993, pp. 181–195. Yahya Michot translated and commented upon the ninth of the 44 arguments (Michot, Vanités intellectuelles, pp. 597–617). Some of them are reproduced in a programmatic manner by the Moroccan Islamist Muḥammad Yatīm (b. 1956) (Yatīm, Muḥammad: Ibn Taymiyya wa-masʾalat al-ʿaql wal-naql, in: *al-Furqān* 3 (1407/1987), pp. 16–24.) Ibn Taymiyya's distinction between rational and transmitted within the Koran and the Sunna has been recently studied by Sait Özervarli: The Qurʾānic Rational Theology of Ibn Taymiyya and His Criticism of the Mutakallimūn, in: Yossef Rapoport and Shahab Ahmed (eds.): *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, Karachi 2010; I am grateful to Yossef Rapoport for providing me with the article in press.

109 Laoust, *Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques*, pp. 84–86; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. xlv; see *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 11, "Fihris al-aʿlām" and "Fihris

knowledge has led him to declare their writings to be bare of any guidance or restoration of the soul. They serve only one useful purpose, namely to provide arguments to refute each other.[110] Indeed, Ibn Taymiyya frequently uses a critique of one rationalist against another and seldom fails to immediately reject the respective counter-argument in turn.[111] Moreover, he states that their works occasionally served him as a source for the history of specific schools and theories, which they doubtless did.[112] He deconstructs most of the theories about God, His messengers, and the invisible world that were known at his time and often confronts them with his own views. Although his tone is at times very polemical, his questions and critiques are mostly of considerable depth and pertinence. In consistency with his view that the application of logic is the main reason for their false dogmas, he repeatedly criticizes in *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* their methods of gaining definitions and deductions. Thus, this work completes *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn*, where he in turn blames several metaphysical theories and their logical foundations. As a matter of fact, both refutations have much in common and supplement each other. They deserve to be studied in a thorough comparative work. The basis for such an immense task, however, is not yet laid. Researchers on Ibn Taymiyya's huge *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* have so far only picked

---

asmāʾ al-kutub", s. v., and below, chapters 10 and 11.1. Ibn Taymiyya can probably be considered with Yahya Michot as "the most important reader of *falāsifa* after Faḫr al-Dīn al-Rāzī in the sunnite world" (Michot, Vanités intellectuelles, p. 599). The fact that Ibn Taymiyya so extensively quotes passages from the main Peripatetics shows, of course, that he wanted to rely on first-hand, not second-hand sources. In addition, this seems to contradict the view that the works of these philosophers ceased to be studied from the turn of the twelfth century on, although there were times and places for which that view holds true (Griffel, *Apostasie*, p. 353). Still, Ibn Taymiyya's library remains to be reconstructed, in order to be able to judge the degree to which Ibn Taymiyya relied on the original works and not on citations of them in later writings.

110 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 9, p. 67.

111 Several times, for instance, Ibn Taymiyya agrees with Ibn Rushd's critique of some of Ibn Sīnā's tenets (*Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 6, p. 245; vol. 8, pp. 174–175, 181; vol. 9, p. 116 et passim). See also al-Ṭablāwī, M. S.: *Mawqif Ibn Taymiyya min falsafat Ibn Rushd fī al-ʿaqīda wa-fī ʿilm al-kalām wal-falsafa*, Cairo 1409/1989; al-Ṣughayyir, Mawāqif, pp. 169–172, 175–180; Michot, A Mamlūk Theologian's Commentary, pp. 170–172.

112 See, for instance, Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 6, pp. 212, 245; vol. 8, pp. 174, 198.

up a few of the subjects he touched therein[113] – and this is true of the present study, as well.

8. The Reception of Ibn Taymiyya's Repudiation of Rationalism

In Ḥanbalī circles, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* was regarded as an *opus magnum* and often referred to, but the real scope of its impact is still unknown.[114] Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350), for instance, reproduces several of Ibn Taymiyya's lines of reasoning in his works, not least the core of Ibn Taymiyya's arguments against the precedence of *ratio* over scripture in his *al-Ṣawāʿiq al-mursala*, arranging them in an independent way and adding his own arguments.[115] Muḥammad b.

113 Ibn Taymiyya's rejection of *falsafa* in general is treated by Nurcholis Madjid (*Ibn Taymiyya on Kalām and Falsafa*) and touched upon by Thomas Michel (Ibn Taymiyya's Critique of Falsafa, in: *Hamdard Islamicus* 6 (1983), pp. 3–14). His rebuttal of specific metaphysical and theological subjects and arguments are dealt with quite extensively by Muḥammad Khalīl Harās, *Bāʿith al-nahḍa al-islāmiyya*; al-Ṣughayyir, Mawāqif "rushdiyya" li-Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya, pp. 164–182; M. S. al-Ṭablāwī, *Mawqif Ibn Taymiyya min falsafat Ibn Rushd*; Michot, A Mamlūk Theologian's Commentary, pp. 149–203; Michot, Jean R.: *Ibn Taymiyya. Lettre à Abû l-Fidâ'; traduction de l'arabe, présentation, notes et lexique*, Louvain-La-Neuve 1994; Çağrıcı, Mustafa: İbn Teymiyye'nin bakışıyla Gazzâlî-Ibn Rüşd tartışması, in: *İslam Tetkikleri Dergisi* (*Review of Islamic Studies*) 9 (1995), pp. 77–126; Özervarlı, *İbn Teymiyye*, pp. 405–413; Marcotte, Roxanne D.: Ibn Taymiyya et sa critique des produits de la faculté d'estimation (Wahmiyyāt) dans le *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wa al-naql*, in: *Luqmān* 18 (2002), pp. 43–58, I am indebted to Jon Hoover for knowledge of this study; von Kügelgen, Dialogpartner im Widerspruch, pp. 455–481; Özervarli, The Qurʾānic Rational Theology of Ibn Taymiyya. See also above, n. 63.

114 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, pp. 4–6; [Ibn Murrī, Shihāb al-Dīn:]: Athāra min al-taʾrīkh, in: *al-Manār* 10 (1325/1907), pp. 616–621 (especially p. 617; see below, n. 118).

115 Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya: *al-Ṣawāʿiq al-mursala ʿalā al-jahmiyya wal-muʿaṭṭila*, ed. by ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Dakhīl Allāh, Riyadh 1408/1987–1988, vol. 3–4, pp. 796–1538. I am grateful to Livnat Holtzman for having drawn my attention to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's reference in this work to Ibn Taymiyya's *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* and for having provided me with a copy of the respective pages in Muḥammad b. al-Mawṣilī's *Mukhtaṣar* (see next note). She recently pointed out that Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya inserted Ibn Taymiyya's long discussion of the Hadith concerning *Fiṭra* (*Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 8, pp. 365–468) in his *Shifāʾ al-ʿalīl* (Holtzman, Livnat: Human Choice and the *Fiṭra* Tradition. Some Remarks on the Later Ḥanbalī Use of *Ḥadīth* in Theo-

al-Mawṣilī (d. 774/1372–1373) included some of them in his *Mukhtaṣar al-ṣawāʿiq al-mursala*.[116] Beyond the Ḥanbalī circles, less is known about the impact of *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql*. The Shāfiʿī jurist Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Hakkārī al-Salṭī (d. 786/1384) abridged it into two volumes in 773/1371 on the basis of a six-volume manuscript,[117] which he claims was partly an autograph.[118] It is an open question whether al-Hakkārī's abridgement fostered a dissemination of that work. Some of its contents, at least, seem to have been discussed.

---

logical Treatises, in: Yossef Rapoport and Ahmed Shahab (eds.): *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, Karachi 2010, pp. 163–188).

116 Ibn al-Mawṣilī, Muḥammad: *Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣawāʿiq al-mursala ʿalā al-jahmiyya wal-muʿaṭṭila li-Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya*, ed. by al-Ḥasan b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAlawī, Riyadh 1425/2004, vol. 1, pp. 246–364, vol. 2, pp. 365–544 (pdf file at http://www.archive.org/details/ muktsr_swaik_mursla, last accessed April 4, 2008). Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's *al-Ṣawāʿiq al-mursala* of which only the first half has come down to us and the abridgement of the entire work by al-Mawṣilī deserve a thorough study. One aspect of it, namely Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's discussion of the fire's duration has recently been scrutinized by Jon Hoover: Islamic Universalism. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's Salafī Deliberations on the Duration of Hell-Fire, in: *The Muslim World* 1 (2009), pp. 181–201.

117 Muḥammad Rashād Sālim refers to al-Hakkārī's *Mukhtaṣar* in his introduction to *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql* (vol. 1, pp. 60–64) and uses it for his collation. Apparently, only one copy of it is known. Al-Hakkārī states that he has summarized it, because of "the many strange citations" from "strange books", but to have fully preserved Ibn Taymiyya's intentions (Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ*, vol. 1, p. 62).

118 According to a letter from the Ḥanbalī scholar Shihāb al-Dīn Ibn Murrī al-Baʿlbakī, one of Ibn Taymiyya's pupils, which he addressed to other followers of his master, the autograph was soon "severely disrupted." He also states that the complete copy of it that he himself used to possess was scattered, and he urges them to bring all parts together. Ibn Murrī refers to the work as *al-Radd ʿalā ʿaqāʾid al-falāsifa*. Thanks to Caterina Bori, I was able to trace the origin of the letter, which I knew only from Rashīd Riḍā's reprint in the journal *al-Manār* 10 (1325/1907), pp. 616–621 under the heading *Athāra min al-taʾrīkh*, here p. 617. She was kind enough to provide me with her forthcoming study on the methods and difficulties of collecting Ibn Taymiyya's works after his death, in which she presents the same paragraph as an example. According to her well founded assumption, the letter was written between 728 and 731 (1327–1331); it was published by M.ʿA. Shams and ʿA. b. Muḥammad al-ʿImrān (*al-Jāmiʿ li-sīrat Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyya*, Mecca 1420/1999, pp. 97–104, see: Bori, Caterina: The Collection and Edition of Ibn Taymiyya's Works. Concerns of a Disciple, in: *The Mamlūk Studies Review* 13 (2009), pp. 1–21. I thank Caterina Bori for having provided me with the article while still in press.

The prominent Shāfiʿī jurist and preacher Taj al-Dīn Abū Naṣr ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Subkī (d. 771/1370), for instance, apparently accuses Ibn Taymiyya and others of having unwarrantedly denounced al-Ghazālī and al-Rāzī – this although al-Subkī was in no way a friend of Greek rationalism; however, he only allowed the study of logic and philosophy for the purpose of refuting them, and even in this case limited it to those whose high degree of knowledge of the Koran, the Sunna, and jurisprudence had been unshakably rooted in their hearts.[119]

The fact that Ibn Taymiyya rejected not only *falsafa*, but also logic, the "later" *kalām* theology, and other schools of thought may have kept his substantial rebuttal from becoming an important point of reference. *Falsafa* in the sense of an adherence to the teachings of Plato, Aristotle, their Greek commentators, and their Muslim followers and thus the claim to reason about the human, the divine, and the universe independently from revelation was instead predominantly rejected with reference to al-Ghazālī and sometimes with reference to al-Rāzī and to al-Suhrawardī.[120] Thus, it was the arguments of al-Ghazālī's *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* that, in the second half of the 15th century, Mehmet II ordered weighed against those of the philosophers.[121] Again, it is *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* that the well-known bibliographer and historiographer, the Ottoman state employee Ḥājjī Khalīfa (Kātib

119 Al-Subkī, Tāj al-Dīn Abū Naṣr ʿAbd al-Wahhāb: *Kitāb Muʿīd al-niʿam wa-mubīd al-niqam. The Restorer of Favours and the Restrainer of Chastisements,* ed. by David W. Myhrman, London 1968, pp. 110–112; he does not explicitly mention Ibn Taymiyya's name, but in all likelihood refers to him. See al-Nashshār, *Manāhij al-baḥth,* p. 225; Tāj al-Dīn's father, Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī, was an explicit enemy of Ibn Taymiyya and wrote several tracts against juridical and theological tenets of Ibn Taymiyya and his followers, see Bori, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 155–169; al-Subkī, Tāj al-Dīn Abū Naṣr ʿAbd al-Wahhāb: Tâj Eddîn Es-Subkî's Muʿîd en-niʿam wa mubîd en-niqam. Über die moralischen Pflichten der verschiedenen islamischen Bevölkerungsklassen, mit Kürzungen aus dem Arabischen übersetzt von Oskar Rescher, in: idem: *Gesammelte Schriften*, sect. II, vol. 2, Osnabrück 1980 (reprint, Constantinople 1925), pp. 71–74.

120 Hartmann, Angelika: Bemerkungen zu Handschriften ʿUmar as-Suhrawardīs, echten und vermeintlichen Autographen, in: *Der Islam* 60 (1983), pp. 112–142, here p. 117; idem, Hartmann, *al-Nāṣir li-dīn Allāh*, p. 36; see also above, n. 95.

121 Ḥājjī Khalīfa (Kātib Çelebi): *Kashf al-ẓunūn ʿan asāmī al-kutub wal-funūn*, ed. by Şerefeddin Yaltakaya and K. Rifat Bilge, vol. 1, Istanbul 1941, p. 513; Ṭāshköprü-Zāda: *al-Shaqāʾiq al-nuʿmāniyya fī ʿulamāʾ al-daula al-ʿuthmāniyya*, ed. by Aḥmad Ṣubḥī Furāt, Istanbul 1985, pp. 98–99; Türker, Mubahat: *Üç Tehâfüt Bakımından Felsefe ve Din Münasebeti*, Ankara 1956, pp. 56–61.

Çelebi, d. 1067/1657), qualifies as a book that one ought to know.[122] *Darʾ al-taʿāruḍ*, in contrast, is simply characterized as "volumes" (*mujalladāt*) of the Shaykh Ibn Taymiyya.[123] Prominent scholars of the 18th century, such as Muḥammad al-Sājaqlī (Sacaqlı-zāde, d. around 1145/1733)[124] and Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (d. 1205/1791)[125] still refer to al-Ghazālī when denouncing *falsafa*. However, the history of the fate of Ibn Taymiyya's refutations of the rationalists remains to be written.

20th-century apologists for Islam regard Ibn Taymiyya as a "philosopher," especially on the basis of *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* and *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql*.[126] Here, "philosophy" is no longer understood as taking Greek thought to be the ultimate truth.[127] Al-Sayyid Sulaymān al-Nadwī (d. 1953), sees in Ibn Taymiyya a forerunner of David Hume (d. 1776) and John Stuart Mill (d. 1873),[128] whereas the

122 Ḥājjī Khalīfa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, vol. 1, p. 512; his exposition of al-Ghazālī's book is long in comparison with the usual size of his summaries in *Kashf al-ẓunūn*.

123 Ibid., vol. 1, p. 730.

124 Reichmuth, Stefan: Bildungskanon und Bildungsreform aus der Sicht eines islamischen Gelehrten der anatolischen Provinz: Muḥammad al-Sājaqlī (Saçaqlı-zāde, gest. um 1145/1733) und sein *Tartīb al-ʿulūm*, in: Rüdiger Arnzen and Jörn Thielmann (eds.): *Words, Texts and Concepts Cruising the Mediterranean Sea. Studies on the Sources, Contents and Influences of Islamic Civilization and Arabic Philosophy and Science Dedicated to Gerhard Endress on His Sixty-fifth Birthday*, Leuven 2004, pp. 498–500, 511–516.

125 Al-Zabīdī, Murtaḍā: *Kitāb Itḥāf al-sāda al-muttaqīn bi-sharḥ asrār Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn (wa-bi-hāmish Kitāb al-Imlāʾ ʿan ishkālāt al-Iḥyāʾ lil-Ghazālī)*, Beirut n.d. (after 1970; reprint of Egypt 1311/1894), vol. 1, pp. 170–185; see also above, chapter 5.

126 It is noteworthy that on the Website www.muslimphilosophy.com (as accessed on January 11, 2007), Ibn Taymiyya figures prominently among "al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, al-Kindi, al-Farabi and Muhammad Iqbal"; the Website hosts also the online e-Journal *Journal of Islamic Philosophy*.

127 ʿAlī al-Wardī explicitly says this in his lectures on Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddima li-dirāsat al-manṭiq al-ijtimāʿī. Manṭiq Ibn Khaldūn fī ḍawʾ ḥaḍāratihi wa-shakhṣiyyatihi; muḥādarāt*, Cairo 1962, pp. 222–223. In a sense of philosophy that encompasses "every rational attempt to interpret the universe and man's place in it", he qualifies Ibn Taymiyya as one of the "great philosophical personalities in Islam" (ibid., pp. 57, 228).

128 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, preface, pp. *fāʾ*, *qāf*. Similarily, he states in an English article: "In reality he (Ibn Taymiyya) was the first founder of Mill's system of logic and the forerunner of Hume's philosophy." (Nadvi, Syed Sulaiman: Muslims and Greek Schools of Philosophy, in: *Islamic Culture* 1 (1927), pp. 85–91, here p. 89; cited also in his foreword to Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. *rāʾ*). Other authors have also outlined similarities between his critique and the British

Moroccan scholar Muḥammad Yatīm (b. 1956) praises him as "one of the most eminent philosophers of our history" for having created an "Islamic theory of knowledge."[129] The Egyptian professor of Islamic philosophy ʿAbd al-Qādir Maḥmūd labels Ibn Taymiyya's critique a "philosophical revolution,"[130] and his compatriot Muḥammad ʿAmāra characterizes him as "the philosopher of the salafiyya."[131] The term "philosophy" obviously has different meanings for them, but seems to have lost the former connotations of "unbelief" and "heresy" although they clearly agree with Ibn Taymiyya in his critique of the *falāsifa*.

9. The Addressees of Ibn Taymiyya's Critique of Logic and Rationalism

9.1. *Falāsifa* and *mutafalsifa*

Ibn Taymiyya himself would, without a doubt, have vigorously objected to being called a philosopher. In his view, philosophy (*falsafa*) taught heresy and contaminated almost every Muslim school of thought, causing Muslims to trivialize God's message and His messengers seriously – the exception being the followers of the "pious forefathers" (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*), among whom he counted himself. Logic was, in his eyes, the main cause of false teaching about metaphysics: all theories about the divine world (*al-ilāhiyyāt*) entirely or partly based on philosophy inevitably led people astray. Ibn Taymiyya asserted that not only the teachings of the Greek philosophers, their Muslim followers,[132] and the

Empiricist's theories of cognition. Seen in the wider theoretical and ideological frame of the respective thinkers, their concepts of universals, particulars, and definitions, however, have fundamentally different purposes (see von Kügelgen, Ibn Taymīyas Kritik, pp. 215–218). Furthermore, Ibn Taymiyya's own epistemological assumptions deviate considerably from his critique (see below, chapters 11.2 and 11.3).

129 Yatīm, Ibn Taymiyya, pp. 18 (2nd column), 17 (1st column), 24, n. 6.

130 Maḥmūd, ʿAbd al-Qādir: *al-Fikr al-islāmī wal-falsafāt al-muʿāriḍa fī al-qadīm wal-ḥadīth*, Cairo 1986, pp. 350–355.

131 ʿAmāra, Muḥammad: Faylasūf al-salafiyya, in: *al-Miṣriyyūn* (Oct. 25, 2007), online: www.almesryoon.com. I owe this information to Lutz Rogler.

132 He refers to Aristotle, Plato, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Proklus, Themistius, Plotin, al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and Ibn Rushd, among others. For them and

"later" *kalām* theologians,[133] but also those of Shiites,[134] theosophists,[135] mystics,[136] and other sects relied on false premises and inferences far removed from truth.

Ibn Taymiyya therefore undertakes to deconstruct logic first. He states in *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* that he initially intended to write a refutation of the *mutafalsifa*'s metaphysics, but had realized "that much in their views on (the basis of metaphysics (*ilāhiyyāt*) and) logic is the source of their errors in metaphysics" and thus engaged in the rebuttal of the logicians.[137] He sometimes, as in this case, uses the term *mutafalsifa*, literally "pseudo-philosophers," as a general denomination for all those he criticizes.[138] Wael B. Hallaq has convincingly argued that Ibn Taymiyya does not distinguish between the semantic use of *falāsifa* and *mutafalsifa*, since for Ibn Taymiyya "philosophy *qua* philosophy is erroneous, and those who make it their business to study it are pseudo-scholars," no matter how they are called.[139]

---

the references in the following four notes, see the entries in the indices: Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 11, "Fihris al-aʿlām", and "Fihris al-firaq wal-ṭawāʾif wal-qabʾil"; and Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*.

133 He differentiates several groups within the *Ashʿariyya*, the *Muʿtazila*, the *Jahmiyya*, and the *Qadariyya*, among others, and often refers to specific persons.

134 He sometimes subsumes them under *al-Shīʿa* or *al-Rāfiḍa*, among others, sometimes alluding to leading proponents of Shiite subgroups.

135 His favorite addressee of critique among them is al-Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl (d. 587/1191).

136 Ibn Taymiyya especially criticizes Ibn al-ʿArabī (560/1165–638/1240) and his school.

137 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 4. Al-Suyūṭī either omitted some words of the original (here in brackets) or his copy of *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* differed from the edited one (*Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 202; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 4). Ibn Taymiyya seems, however, to have completed his refutation of the rationalist's metaphysics before the rebuttal of logic (see above, chapters 4 and 7).

138 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 3; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 202; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 4; see also the following note.

139 Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 4, nn. 3–4 (with many references also to other writings of Ibn Taymiyya). He thereby disproved Michel (Ibn Taymiyya's Critique of Falsafa, p. 4); Hoover came to the same conclusion (*Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 31, n. 41). See also Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 11, "Fihris al-firaq wal-ṭawāʾif wal-qabāʾil", s.v. *al-falāsifa=ahl al-falsafa=al-mutafalsifa*.

9.2. The Attitude Towards the Prophets' Veracity as a Criterion of Distinction

In *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* and *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql*, Ibn Taymiyya attacks the same strains of thought and circles of people, even though in *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* he addresses many more thinkers personally. Ibn Taymiyya often refers to the different schools of thought using the categories established at his time, but draws an unusual line of distinction between them. He distinguishes among the many persons and groups he considers as having gone astray in accordance with their approach to revelation. On the highest level, he discerns two general approaches, I: *ṭarīqat al-tabdīl* (the method of alteration) and II: *ṭarīqat al-tajhīl* (the method of stultification). The approach to revelation that Ibn Taymiyya regards as characteristic of the second category (II) is the conviction that the prophets and those who follow them were either without knowledge about the meaning of God's words or knew it but concealed it from the people, thus making people ignorant. Some of these thinkers hold that the real meaning of scripture, which no one knows but God, is exactly the opposite of its outward meaning; others would say that it has to be understood in accordance with its outward meaning, but nevertheless they interpret in a way that contradicts it.[140] Ibn Taymiyya does not attribute these attitudes to any specific group, but – as an example of the latter position – mentions the Ḥanbalī scholar Abū Yaʿlā b. al-Farrāʾ (380/990–458/1066).[141] The conjecture is thus not far that Ibn Taymiyya counted also other schoolfellows as belonging to this category.

He instead subsumes the main addressees of *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* under the first approach, "the method of alteration" (I). He subdivides this category into the method of *ahl al-wahm wal-takhyīl* (the people of delusion and suggestion) and the method of *ahl al-taḥrīf wal-taʾwīl* (the people of distortion and interpretation).[142] "The people of delusion and suggestion" (I. 1) are those who profess that some

140 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, pp. 8–19, here 15–19. A part of this section has been translated by Michot, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 26–27. M. Sait Özervarli has summarized some key points of the classifications (Özervarlı, *İbn Teymiyye*, pp. 409–410).

141 Ibn Taymiyya mentions that Ibn ʿAqīl (see above, chapter 2) blamed him for precisely this reason (*Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, p. 16).

142 The whole section, of which I give but a short summary, has been translated by Michot, *Lettre à Abū l-Fidāʾ*, pp. 21–26.

things about which the prophets received revelation – such as God, the Day of Judgment, the afterlife, and bodily resurrection – do not correspond to the truth, but have to be believed by the common people for their welfare. Among these he counts Sevener Shiites (*al-Bāṭiniyya kal-malāḥida al-ismāʿīliyya wa-aṣḥāb rasāʾil ikhwān al-ṣafāʾ*), al-Fārābī (d. 339/950), Ibn Sīnā, al-Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl (d. 587/1191), Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198) and "the heretic Sufis who left the path of their forerunners among the Sunnis", like Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240), Ibn Sabʿīn (d. 669/1270), Ibn Ṭufayl (d. 581/1185), "and many others."[143] He considers all of them *bāṭinī*s – that is, "esotericists" – since they distinguish between the outward meaning of the revelation (*ẓāhir*), as it is to be understood by the common people, and its inward meaning (*bāṭin*) that is preserved for themselves.[144] Nevertheless, he distinguishes among them in regard to their positioning of the prophets above or beneath outstanding scholars. He cites Ibn Sīnā as an example of those who propagate that the prophets have more knowledge than the philosophers, since they know how to address the common people and to disguise the truth for their sake. As examples of those who hold that the prophets are inferior, he mentions Ibn (al-)ʿArabī as holding that the Sufi masters excel them and al-Fārābī and Mubashshir b. Fātik (fifth/eleventh century) as proclaiming that the philosophers have a better knowledge of the truth than the prophets.[145]

The second group, "the people of distortion and interpretation" (I. 2), he characterizes as people who believe that the words of the prophets represent the truth but at the same time are convinced that truth is what reason tells us. As such, these people attempt to inter-

143 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, pp. 8–11.

144 Ibid., vol. 6, p. 237 (here, he speaks of *Bāṭiniyyat al-falāsifa*); for applications of the term to other groups, see *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 11, s. v. *Bāṭiniyya* and its composita.

145 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, pp. 9–10. See Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 5, pp. 359–363. Concerning al-Fārābī's theory about the position and the duties of the prophets and the philosopher king, which Ibn Taymiyya alters, see al-Fārābī, *On the Perfect State*, pp. 221–227, 421–423; see, however, Michot, who approves of Ibn Taymiyya's reading (*Lettre à Abū l-Fidāʾ*, p. 23). Mubashshir b. Fātik is especially known for a collection of wisdom of ancient Greek sages (Rosenthal, Franz: al-Mubashshir b. Fātik, in: *EI*², vol. 7 (1993), pp. 282–283). As to Ibn ʿArabī's comprehension of prophecy and the "perfect man", which Ibn Taymiyya also distorts, see Chodkiewicz, Michel: *Le sceau des saints. Prophétie et sainteté dans la doctrine d'Ibn Arabî*, Paris 1986.

pret the words of the prophets in accordance with their own opinions. Thus, under the pretense of explaining the intentions of the prophets and by misusing language, they often say the opposite of what is revealed. Among them Ibn Taymiyya counts "many *kalām* theologians and others," naming "the Muʿtazila, the Kullābiyya, the Sālimiyya, the Karrāmiyya and the (Twelver) Shia."[146]

Ibn Taymiyya's leading criterion of distinction among the different thinkers is in fact their attitude towards the veracity of the prophet,[147] and – on first glance – not their epistemology, as one might expect in regard to the main aim of *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql*. Ibn Taymiyya obviously regarded "veracity" (*ṣidq*) as the most important attribute of the prophet, as Shahab Ahmed has shown with the example of Ibn Taymiyya's interpretation of the so-called Satanic verses.[148] In fact, however, the criterion of veracity is closely linked to Ibn Taymiyya's concept of cognition, since he regards the messages of the prophets as being in full congruity with "clear reason" and as bearing reasonable proofs themselves and teaching rational methods (see below chapters 10.2, 11–12). It is not astonishing that his general judgment about "the people of delusion and suggestion" (I. 1), i. e., about those who either impute that the prophets lie or are less knowledgeable than certain groups of wise men (the philosophers or the Sufi masters), is markedly stern. He repeatedly calls them heretics (*malāḥida*),[149] classifies

146 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, pp. 8, 12–13. For the schools mentioned by Ibn Taymiyya, see the respective entries in the 1st and 2nd edition of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Kullābīya s. v. Ibn Kullāb; according to Ibn Ḥazm, he belonged to the Ashʿariyya; Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, p. 13, n. 2; Ibn Taymiyya calls him a predecessor of al-Ashʿarī (after Michot, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 25, n. 4)).

147 There is a striking resemblance between Ibn Taymiyya's classification and a typology of one of Ibn Taymiyya's main enemies, namely Ibn ʿArabī, who in his *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* classifies people in six groups with respect to their belief in the veracity of the prophets. Jon Hoover, to whose monograph I owe my knowledge of Ibn al-ʿArabī's typology (*Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, pp. 46–47), referred to Ibn al-ʿArabī's typology to point to still another similarity between the two thinkers. It would be worthwile to study both typologies in a comparative way.

148 Ahmed, Shahab: Ibn Taymiyyah and the Satanic Verses, in: *Studia Islamica* 87 (1988), pp. 67–124, esp. pp. 100–105; see also Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 44.

149 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql,* vol. 8, pp. 242–243; vol. 9, p. 123; vol. 10, p. 270. *Mulḥid* (pl. *malāḥida*) is difficult to render in another language, because of its use in the senses of "deviator, apostate, heretic, atheist" (Madelung, Wil-

them as disbelievers, sometimes on the same level as the Christians and Jews – since they believe in some part of the Sharia and disbelieve in other parts of it[150] – or sometimes even classifies them as inferior to the Christians and Jews,[151] predicting that their future residence will be hell.[152] Yet "the people of distortion and interpretation" (I. 2), namely the majority of the *kalām* theologians and the Twelver Shiites,

---

ferd: Mulḥid, in: *EI²*, vol. 7 (1993), p. 546). Ibn Taymiyya denies that the philosophers have proven God to be the *Creator* of the world (see below, n. 152) and thereby that they have found what he considers the only valuable proof of God. Ibn Taymiyya's denial could thus be interpreted as a case of "ascription of atheism," although the philosophers themselves are far from professing atheism. I owe the distinction between "attributed atheism" and "professed atheism" to Kurt Flasch (Attributionsatheismus in Boccaccios Decameron VI 9: Guido Cavalcanti, in: Friedrich Niewöhner and Olaf Pluta (eds.): *Atheismus im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance*, Wiesbaden 1999, pp. 115–127, here 115–116).

150 Ibn Taymiyya in his famous fatwa against the Mongols (*Majmūʿat al-Fatāwā*, al-mujallad 28, Cairo, vol. 14, part 28, p. 285; also in: al-ʿAẓma, ʿAzīz: *Ibn Taymiyya*, Beirut 2000, p. 99); see Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, where he also counts the *mutakallimūn* among them (vol. 1, pp. 134–137, 177–178).

151 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 133. Michel cites a similar statement of Ibn Taymiyya's *Risāla fī Lafẓ al-sunna fī al-Qurʾān* (Ibn Taymiyya's Critique of Falsafa, pp. 4, 13, n. 3).

152 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, pp. 371–372. The tenet that Ibn Taymiyya ascribes to "the people of delusion and suggestion" corresponds to what was officially condemned by the Church in Medieval Europe as the "two contradictory truths," a religious and a philosophical, which were mainly attributed to the so-called Averroists, i. e., true and falsely alleged followers of Ibn Rushd. Ibn Taymiyya was, of course, not aware of the uproar the "double truth theory" caused in Europe, but also takes Ibn Rushd as one of his main targets to fight it, though proceeding from the latter's theologico-philosophical treatises and not his commentaries on Aristotle (see von Kügelgen, Dialogpartner). His fight against the "double truth" and philosophy, and Aristotelism as the worst of the philosophical theories (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 395–396; idem, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, pp. 151–152; vol. 8, pp. 181, 186, 189, 233; vol. 9, pp. 398–399 et passim), however, did not hinder Ibn Taymiyya from respecting Ibn Rushd as a thinker. Thus, he characterizes Ibn Rushd as one of the most intelligent philosophers (*ḥudhdhāq al-falāsifa*) (Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 10, p. 317; he does not call the philosophers by name, but from the context it is obvious that he counts Ibn Rushd among them; see vol. 3, p. 413; vol. 8, p. 181; vol. 9, pp. 69, 332–333). In a tract concerning the philosophers' proof of God as the first cause, he qualifies Ibn Rushd as "the nearest of them [the philosophers] to Islam" (*Majmūʿat al-Fatāwā*, al-mujallad 17, Cairo, vol. 9, p. 163; Hoover, Perpetual Creativity, p. 295). There and elsewhere, however, Ibn Taymiyya severely criticizes that Ibn Rushd only proves God as a condition (*sharṭ*) for the existence of the world, but not as its *Creator*

despite their belief that the prophets have come up with the truth, are also accused of heresy (*ilḥād*),[153] not least because of his conviction that a distortion of some parts of the revelation leads to a distortion of the whole.[154] Although Ibn Taymiyya rejects most of their theories, his judgment about them is, generally, slightly milder than his verdict on the theories of "the people of delusion and suggestion" (I.1).[155] He characterizes the theories of the latter, i. e., of the *falāsifa*, the Ismāʿīlīs, the theosophists (mainly the *ishrāqī* philosophers), and the intellectualistic mystics (mainly the "pantheists") as even less reasonable and more inconsistent.[156] So, for instance, he vehemently denies that God created the intellect as the first and noblest creature,[157] a conception that was transmitted as a saying of the prophet Muhammad and was widely acknowledged in mystical and theosophical circles.[158] No less harsh is his rebuttal of Neoplatonic and Peripatetic notions of supralunar intellects (see chapter 11c) and the philosophical concepts of human reason. Some of Ibn Taymiyya's main arguments against the latter will be considered in the next chapters that deal with his own concepts of perception and cognition.

(*Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql,* vol. 8, pp. 216–219; vol. 9, pp. 82–84; for a short analysis, see von Kügelgen, Dialogpartner, pp. 470–472).

153 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 5, p. 363; vol. 10, p. 270.

154 Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 134–137, 177–178.

155 Ibid., vol. 3, pp. 425, 431, 437; vol. 9, pp. 70–71, 334, 371–373; vol. 10, pp. 223, 228–229 et passim.

156 Ibid., vol. 3, pp. 417–418, 431; vol 9, pp. 111, 354–355; vol. 10, pp. 223, 228–229 et passim.

157 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 275–278; Ibn Taymiyya: *Kitāb Tafsīr sūrat al-ikhlāṣ*, ed. by al-Sayyid Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn al-Naʿsānī al-Ḥalabī, Cairo 1323/1905, pp. 58–59; see al-Alousī corrects Goldziher's presentation of Ibn Taymiyya's view (*The Problem of Creation*, p. 71).

158 Goldziher, Ignaz: Neuplatonische und gnostische Elemente im Ḥadīṯ, in: Joseph Desomogyi (ed.): *Gesammelte Schriften*, Hildesheim 1970 (reprint), vol. 5, pp. 108–114; al-Alousī mentions further possible sources for the Hadith and more instances where it is quoted (*The Problem of Creation*, pp. 69–73). For instance, it is cited and extensively commented upon by ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī in his refutation of the philosophers *Kashf al-faḍāʾiḥ al-yūnāniyya wa-rashf al-naṣāʾiḥ al-īmāniyya* (p. 162–168; Hartmann, Angelika: Kosmogonie und Seelenlehre bei ʿUmar as-Suhrawardī (st. 632/1234), in: Dieter Bellmann (ed.): *Gedenkschrift Wolfgang Reuschel, Akten des III. Arabistischen Kolloquiums, Leipzig, 21.-22. November 1991*, Stuttgart 1994, pp. 139–151; she hints to further treatments of the subject: idem, Eine orthodoxe Polemik, pp. 286–287).

10. Glimpses into Ibn Taymiyya's Critique of Logic in Connection with His Epistemology

10.1. The Particular and the Universal: Ibn Taymiyya's Nominalistic Attitude

There is one point Ibn Taymiyya and the philosophers seem to agree upon, namely that God is the necessary *existent*, the highest of all existent beings.[159] Yet, this impression is wrong; Ibn Taymiyya, on the contrary, insists upon disclosing that, in fact, the philosophers are incapable of proving that God is an *external existent* and thus are completely missing the essential knowledge through which the soul reaches perfection.[160] The cause of this failure, fatal since it results in heresy, is their instrument of reasoning, i. e., logic. As Ibn Taymiyya claims their method of deduction – namely, that a sound categorical syllogism has to consist of two premises, and that at least one of them has to be universal – is one of the main faults in their proofs of God's existence: [161]

> As for the Necessary Existent, blessed and exalted may He be, the syllogism does not prove what is characteristic of Him; rather, it proves a universal matter common to Him as well as to others. According to the logicians, what is proven by categorical syllogism is nothing but a universal, common matter having no bearing upon the Necessary Existent, the Lord of beings, may He be glorified and exalted. Therefore, their demonstration does not lead them to any knowledge of a matter which must be constant – whether it belongs to the Necessary Existent or to possible beings.[162]

God's existence, as Ibn Taymiyya clearly states, has to be particular (*muʿayyan*), because otherwise God would not be unique.[163] Moreover,

159 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 125; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 237; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 54.

160 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 131–150 et passim; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 236–251; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 52–71.

161 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 107; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 221–222; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 34, n. 46.

162 Al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 251; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 71 (I follow his translation); Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 150.

163 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 125, 150; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 237–238, 251; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 54, 71; Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 8, pp. 466–467; see also below, chapter 11.1. For a thorough analysis of this argument and Ibn Taymiyya's own proof of God's existence, see: Hallaq,

Ibn Taymiyya repeatedly states in his direct critique that universals exist solely intramentally (*post res*) and have no correlate whatsoever in the extramental world, the world of particulars[164] – a tenet that met opposition.[165] Hence, he vigorously argues against "radical" and "moderate realism" disclosing thereby a plain "nominalism" that he infers from the Koran.[166]

"Nominalism" and "radical" or "moderate realism" are terms that the historians of the "dispute on universals" in Latin scholasticism use to classify the different viewpoints on the existence and mode of the universals, such as genus or species. These terms are not without pitfalls in Latin scholasticism, since, as Alain de Libera has convincingly shown, the manner of understanding and looking at universals and particulars differs from author to author and cannot be understood solely from their respective epistemologies.[167] These terms have to be used all the more carefully in a context like the history of ideas in the Islamic world, where there was apparently no broader "dispute on universals." I would like, however, to argue that the concepts commonly associated with "nominalism" and "realism" existed[168] and that Ibn Taymiyya's statements on the "reality" of the universals fit to a certain extent into that dispute. My presentation is but a preliminary approach and I use these terms for lack of better alternatives. Further

---

Wael B.: Ibn Taymiyya on the Existence of God, in: *Acta Orientalia* 52 (1991), pp. 49–69. As to Ibn Taymiyya's rejection of Ibn Rushd's "Koranic proofs" of God's existence, see von Kügelgen, Dialogpartner, pp. 470–472.

164 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 9–10, 64–67; significantly shortened in: al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 215; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 24–25; Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 6, pp. 26–28; vol. 8, pp. 219–220.

165 The Moroccan scholar and *homme de belles lettres* al-Yūsī (see above, chapter 5) vehemently rejects the tenet of a solely intramental existence of universals. If someone accepts as knowledge only the extramental particulars perceivable by the senses, he has to reject all sciences, since "he does not know any juridical, theological, grammatical, or other rule (*qānūnan*)" and thus "only knows the Scripture and the Sunna" (al-Zabīdī, *Kitāb Itḥāf al-sāda*, vol. 1, p. 178). Al-Yūsī draws these inevitable consequences from al-Suyūṭī's *al-Qawl al-mushriq fī taḥrīm al-ishtighāl bil-manṭiq*, where the latter definitively severely simplified Ibn Taymiyya's concepts of universals and particulars (see chapters 5, 10.1 and 11.2–3).

166 See von Kügelgen, Ibn Taymiyyas Kritik, pp. 181–183, 206–209; see also Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 52.

167 De Libera, Alain: *La querelle des universaux de Platon à la fin du Moyen Age*, Paris 1996.

168 Von Kügelgen, Ibn Taymiyyas Kritik, pp. 219–220.

studies might develop more appropriate designations and markers of distinction.

Ibn Taymiyya's rejection of the existence of universals outside the mind, be it *ante res* as quiddities, for instance the species "horse," what would correspond to "radical realism," or *in rebus* as part of the particulars (*mawjūda fī al-aʿyān*),[169] what one might call "moderate realism," for example the assumption that two men share *in reality* features of the concept "human being,"[170] allows and leads him to dismiss his enemies' key concepts in metaphysical matters. There are, however, major parts of human knowledge about particulars where he himself, sometimes implicitly, sometimes explicitly, adheres to "moderate realism" and thus contradicts his absolute negation of it (see chapters 11.2–3).

On the basis of his rebuttal of the existence of extramental universals, be it *ante res* or *in rebus*, Ibn Taymiyya refutes much more than what would have been subsumed under "universals" in Medieval Europe. His concept of "universals" encompasses the Muʿtazilī and in part Shiite concept of the "nonexistent,"[171] the Platonic forms, the Aristotelian primary matter, the extramental existence of "duration" and "place," among other things,[172] and last but not least, the categories, "the essences of the species, the genera and the remaining universals" (*māhiyyāt al-anwāʿ wal-ajnās wa-sāʾir al-kulliyyāt*).[173]

Now we will examine Ibn Taymiyya's denial of the possibility of encompassing in a definition the "essence," the "reality" of a thing.

---

169 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 64 (not reproduced in al-Suyūṭī's *Jahd al-qarīḥa*).

170 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 6, pp. 26–27. He states that "we know with necessity that this individual man has nothing in himself from the other individual man, rather each of them is distinguished by his essence and his attributes (*mukhtaṣṣ bi-dhātihi wa-ṣifātihi*) and they have nothing in common whatsoever that is fixed outside [the mind]; therefore one of the two may exist while the other is inexistent and conversely and one may die while the other is alive and conversely." This statement is part of a critique Ibn Taymiyya launches against the element of universality with which Ibn Sīnā has invested the estimative propositions (see Marcotte, *Ibn Taymiyya et sa critique*, pp. 50–51). In *al-Radd* (pp. 9–10), Ibn Taymiyya claims that what the philosophers call the "essence" (*māhiyya*) of a thing would exist only intramentally and everyone would conceive it a little differently.

171 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 66. See also Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. xxiv–xxvii (see Knysh, Alexander D.: *Ibn ʿArabī in the Later Islamic Tradition. The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam*, Albany 1999, pp. 100–111).

172 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 66; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 215; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 24–25.

173 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, 64.

What he rebuts is thus the "real definition" *(ḥadd ḥaqīqī)* of the logicians by which they claim to grasp the "essence" of a thing[174] and thus its genus, species, and difference. One of his examples is their common definition of man as a "rational animal," maintaining that "rational" constitutes the difference (*faṣl*) marking the species.[175] He argues that the definition could just be "laughing animal,"[176] "laughing" being characterized by the logicians only as a proprium (*khāṣṣa*).[177] In addition, "rational" would not, as the philosophers claim, constitute a distinguishing essential attribute of a single species, because, as philosophers themselves hold, "rationality" characterizes angels and the supralunar intellects as well.[178] Ibn Taymiyya also points to the circularity of the "real definition".[179] With these examples, Ibn Taymiyya wants to demonstrate the conventional character or the relativity of "real definitions" and that, contrary to what the philosophers claim, they cannot grasp the "essence" or "reality" of a species or a genus.[180] Therefore, Ibn Taymiyya sees the "real definition" as

174 Robinson, Richard: *Definition*, Oxford 2003 (reprint), pp. 153–155.

175 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 8, 70 et passim; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 204, 216; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 7, n. 9, 26, n. 35. Porphyrius (Einleitung in die Kategorien, in: Aristoteles: *Organon*, transl. and with notes by Eugen Rolfes, Hamburg 1974, p. 3 (3b)) adds "mortal" and philosophers and later *kalām* theologians follow him in that (Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, vol. 1, p. 207; Avicenna, *Remarks and Admonitions*, p. 71). Ibn Taymiyya opposes that "mortal" is an attribute of every living being, let alone that man's life in the hereafter is eternal (*al-Radd*, pp. 57–57).

176 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 67. See for instance Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, vol. 1, pp. 210–212; Avicenna, *Remarks and Admonitions*, pp. 72–73.

177 It is noteworthy that the Moroccan scholar al-Ḥasan al-Yūsī who defended logic against al-Suyūṭī's repudiation (see above, chapter 5 and n. 165), wrote a treatise entirely devoted to the distinction between the *differentia specifica* and the *proprium*, entitled *al-Qawl al-faṣl fī al-farq bayna al-khāṣṣa wal-faṣl* (El-Rouayheb, Was there a Revival, pp. 12–13; this seems not to have been edited yet).

178 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 58. See van Ess, Josef: *Die Erkenntnislehre des Aḍudaddīn al-Īcī. Übersetzung und Kommentar des ersten Buches seiner Mawaqif*, Wiesbaden 1966, p. 371.

179 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 73–76, 10–11, 39–40, 59, 79–80; (much shortened al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 205, 211, 217; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 9–10, 18, 29).

180 It is obvious from these examples that Ibn Taymiyya was not interested in the questions the logicians dealt with when they established the differences between "difference" and "proprium", or correlating ones between "essential" (*bil-dhāt*) and "accidental" (*bil-ʿaraḍ*) or "essential" (*dhātī*) and "descriptive" (*waṣfī*) with Aristotle's modal syllogistic as their starting point. "Laugh-

"a wrong way in itself and distraction" (*ʿayn al-ḍalāl wal-iḍlāl*),[181] a waste of time that distracts from what benefits the soul,[182] and a corrupter of reason.[183]

Yet Ibn Taymiyya does not deny the usefulness of establishing concepts by inferring common features of particulars and thereby creating definitions. Thus, he explicitly accepts various types of nominal definitions, most of which are word-thing definitions.[184] He even admits their usefulness for the sciences, but he insists on their being a convention that several people have agreed upon: "Whoever reads the books of grammar, medicine, or other sciences has to know what the respective specialists mean by those terms and phrases."[185] However, the existing variety of definitions even within one field of knowledge, for instance the more than 20 definitions of "noun" in grammar and of "analogy" in jurisprudence proves for him that definitions are not the indispensable basis for understanding and forming judgments.[186]

Ibn Taymiyya expresses his conviction that man is incapable of formulating absolutely certain universal propositions, denying men the capacity to ever observe all particulars. Thus, he regards universals won by abstraction as fallible. As one example, he quotes the universal statement "animals move their lower jaws when they eat, for we have observed them and found them to do so" and falsifies it by the observation "that crocodiles move their upper jaws".[187] He thereby takes an

---

ing" had to be "accidental" or "descriptive," because otherwise the statement "every laughing being is necessarily a human" must, according to Aristotle's rules of necessary propositions, also be true when converted into the proposition "some humans are *necessarily* laughing," which is wrong (on this, see the penetrating exposition of Street, Arabic Logic, pp. 256–261).

181 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 75; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 217; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 28, n. 37. Concering the Koranic terminology of *ḍalāl* and *iḍlāl* see Rahbar, Daud: *God of Justice. A Study in the Ethical Doctrine of the Qurʾān*, Leiden 1960, pp. 86–90, 349–354; Izutsu, Toshihiko: *The Structure of Ethical Terms in the Koran. A Study in Semantics*, Tokyo 1959, pp. 196–199, 201–204.

182 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 31; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 208; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 14–15, n. 20.

183 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 32.

184 Von Kügelgen, Ibn Taymīyas Kritik, pp. 187–204.

185 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 49.

186 Ibid., pp. 8, 26; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 204; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 7–8.

187 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 159–160.; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 259; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 79–80, n. 119 (I follow his translation).

example that Ibn Sīnā, for instance, uses to discredit induction as a way of inference that can lead to certainty.[188]

Yet, although Ibn Taymiyya himself makes no explicit categorization, one can distinguish in *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* three categories of universals that Ibn Taymiyya holds to be absolutely true.[189] One consists of the axioms, i. e., the primary arithmetic, geometric, and logical principles, such as one being half of two, the total being more than the part, or the incompatibility of contraries.[190] Ibn Taymiyya considers them in *Naqḍ al-manṭiq* as *a priori* knowledge and in *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* as gained by the observation of one single particular.[191]

The conviction that all concepts, including the rational axioms, are inferred through sense perceptions, which is in fact one of the cornerstones of Empiricism, had already been upheld in Islamic realms since the tenth century, by, among others, the renowned Shii theologian Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (597/1201–672/1274), with whose writings Ibn Taymiyya was quite familiar.[192] Although he regarded these principles as certain, Ibn Taymiyya does not rank this knowledge and the sciences based upon them as something especially precious. He asserts their validity, refers to mathematics as the most valid (*aṣaḥḥ*) of the rational sciences,[193] and even admits in one place that it can help the soul to become "accustomed to sound knowledge, to valid and truthful propositions, as well as to valid syllogisms" and "to utter the truth

188 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, vol. 1, pp. 367–368; Avicenna, *Remarks and Admonitions*, p. 129.

189 Wael B. Hallaq already pointed out two of the categories, the "universal statements embodied in the revealed texts" and the primary principles (Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 30–31).

190 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 108–109. See ibid., pp. 133–134; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 238–239; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 56.

191 Ibn Taymiyya, *Naqḍ al-manṭiq*, p. 202; idem, *al-Radd*, pp. 108–109, 316; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 222–223, 317; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 36–37, 145–146. For Ibn Taymiyya's obvious difficulty to explain men's apprehension of the so-called self-evident principles and their being certain in spite of being universal, see Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. xxxi-xxxii and below, chapters 11.2–3.

192 Van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, pp. 188–189. That Ibn Taymiyya was well acquainted with the teachings of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī is obvious (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 15, 149; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 207, 250; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 13, n. 18; 70 , n. 103; Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 11 "Fihris al-aʿlām", s. v. *Ṭūsī*. See also Laoust, *Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques*, p. 97.)

193 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. I, p. 158; transl. by Michot, Vanités intellectuelles, p. 606.

in order to utilize it in the knowledge of that which is higher than mathematics".[194] Nevertheless, mathematics do not gain his profound respect; in fact, he places it below the natural sciences, because he regards it as being restricted to the intramental world and without use for the main aim of the human being: the knowledge of God and the perfection and salvation of the soul.[195]

The other category of universals that Ibn Taymiyya judges infallible is religious commands and prohibitions, such as "the two universal statements" (*qaḍiyyatān kulliyyatān*) of the Prophet Muḥammad: "Every inebriant is an alcoholic beverage, and every alcoholic beverage is prohibited."[196]

Thus Ibn Taymiyya accepts these two kinds of universals as certain, i. e., the revealed truths that, as a matter of fact, concern mostly the moral sphere, and the so-called self-evident first principles that involve some basic aspects of the extramental world. Still, there is a third category of universals that, on the level of his epistemology, contradicts his denial of universals *in rebus*, namely the universal propositions that are related to the "empirical matters" and that attribute essences and causal efficiencies to things (see chapter 11.2).

10.2. The "Uncontaminated" Reason (*ṣarīḥ al-ʿaql*)

Ibn Taymiyya's great scepticism toward universals won by inference and referring to the physical and the metaphysical world, however, is

194 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 136; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 240; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 58.

195 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 133–134; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 238; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 55–56. Ibn Taymiyya admits arithmetic to be a necessary science for the shares of inheritance, "but it is not a science that is sought for its own sake, nor does the soul reach perfection by means of it." (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 136–137; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 241; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 59). For Ibn Taymiyya's validation of astronomy see Michot, Vanités intellectuelles, p. 605; Michot, Yahya J.: Ibn Taymiyya on Astrology. Annotated Translation of Three Fatwas, in: *Journal of Islamic Studies* 11 (2000), pp. 147–208.

196 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 110–112, 299, 355–357; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 225, 328–328; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 38–39, n. 52, 157, n. 287–288 Ibn Taymiyya refers to the Hadith transmitted by Muslim (*kullu muskirin khamrun wa-kullu muskirin ḥarāmun*) (Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī: *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Liechtenstein 2000, vol. 2 (*Kitāb al-Ashriba*) *bāb* 7 (pp. 875–877, here p. 877); Wensinck, Arent Jan: *Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane*, Leiden 1936–1988, vol. 2 (1943), p. 79).

not a result of serious doubts about man's rational capacity. On the contrary, Ibn Taymiyya is convinced that man can reach true knowledge of particulars, and this conviction is the key to his affirmation that "clear reason" (*ṣarīḥ al-ʿaql*) congrues with sound religious tradition (*ṣaḥīḥ al-naql*).[197] He thus posits a faculty of true reasoning shared by all healthy human beings.[198] Ibn Taymiyya nowhere systematically exposes his own epistemology or explains what he categorizes under "clear reason," and this subject has not yet been exhaustively studied.[199] The following presentation is but an attempt to shed new light on some of its main features.

From Ibn Taymiyya's repeated comparison of *ṣarīḥ al-ʿaql* with the reasoning of his enemies, it is apparent that he sees his enemies' reason as contaminated by logic in most of its elements. Therefore, I render *ṣarīḥ al-ʿaql* as "uncontaminated reason." To translate it as "common sense," as is often done, is somewhat misleading, because it suggests a restriction of reason to what *everyone* is able to grasp and excludes what one *usually* would consider as a knowledge gained through inference or, in the terms of the theologians and philosophers, as an acquired (*muktasab*) knowledge. For Ibn Taymiyya, however, the spectrum of what a person endowed with sound reason might understand immediately is broader than "common sense," and the range of knowledge he considers necessary (*ḍarūrī*) in the sense of certain is wide. His view is based on two main epistemological assumptions, that of an inborn intelligence (*fiṭra*) whose soundness differs from individual to individual and that of two modes of knowledge.

197 Concerning the criteria and methodology Ibn Taymiyya uses to assess the soundness of reports from the prophet Muḥammad and his companions, see Ahmed: Ibn Taymiyyah and the Satanic Verses, pp. 78–86.

198 Abrahamov, in a footnote, already pointed out the similarity between the philosophers and Ibn Taymiyya in asserting "one kind of true reasoning" (Ibn Taymiyya, p. 272, n. 102). Yet, he wondered about this, since he understood Ibn Taymiyya's acceptance of reason as solely bound to revelation. In a later work, however, Abrahamov corrected his view, stating that Ibn Taymiyya apparently "also maintains the independent status of rational proofs" (*Islamic Theology, Traditionalism and Rationalism*, Edinburgh 1998, p. 51); see Hoover, to whom I owe the information on Abrahamov's change of view (*Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 30).

199 The case is similar to Ibn Taymiyya's assertion of God's existence, which he obviously considered so evident that his proofs have to be sought mainly in his refutations (Hallaq, Ibn Taymiyya on the Existence of God).

For Ibn Taymiyya, *fiṭra* has different connotations and is never described as such in his two refutations.[200] In the context of his discussions on the different ways of cognition, he clearly uses it in the universalistic sense of "innate intelligence" every human being is bestowed with by God. He holds that "rational knowledge is based upon sound and healthy natural intelligence"[201] and that as long as the innate intelligence is sound, it will not be affected by either a change of faith (*i῾tiqād*) or by passions.[202] In his refutations of the logicians, he mostly presents *fiṭra* as not being comprised *a priori* knowledge, but as being activated through the inner and outer organs of perception.[203] Sound *fiṭra* could

200 Several aspects are shown by Nurcholis Madjid, *Ibn Taymiyya on Kalām and Falsafa*, pp. 65–77; Hoover describes some of these various connotations mainly on the basis of other works of Ibn Taymiyya: *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, pp. 39–44. For Ibn Taymiyya's use of *fiṭra* in the sense of an inborn monotheism, see Hallaq, Ibn Taymiyya on the Existence of God, pp. 55–66, and as a cornerstone in regard to assert the freedom of choice, Holtzman, Human choice. For other universalistic and exclusivistic interpretations of *fiṭra* in Muslim theology and philosophy, see Josef van Ess: *Zwischen Ḥadīṯ und Theologie. Studien zum Entstehen prädestinatianischer Überlieferung*, Berlin and New York 1975, pp. 101–114 and Gobillot, Geneviève: *La fiṭra. La conception originelle; ses interprétations et fonctions chez les penseurs Musulmans = Cahier des Annales Islamologiques* 18 (2000).

201 *Mabnā al-῾aql ῾alā ṣiḥḥat al-fiṭra wa-salāmatihā* (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 323; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 321; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 150, I follow his translation).

202 Ibn Taymiyya, *Dar᾽ ta῾āruḍ al-῾aql*, vol. 1, p. 168. Ibn Taymiyya makes this statement in the context of asserting that clear, "uncontaminated" reason cannot contradict the scripture. For a French translation of the whole chapter (ninth aspect of the 44 aspects concerning the refutation of the rationalists' claim of the priority of reason over revelation), see Michot, Vanités intellectuelles, pp. 615–616.

203 Ibn Taymiyya, *Naqḍ al-manṭiq*, p. 194; idem, *al-Radd*, pp. 316, 108–109; Hallaq, Ibn Taymiyya on the Existence of God, p. 58. Elsewhere in *Naqḍ al-manṭiq*, however, Ibn Taymiyya presents the self-evident first principles as directly bestowed by God upon the souls at the beginning (p. 202, Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. xxxi); a passage in *al-Radd* might be interpreted in the same vein (pp. 302–303). Ibn Taymiyya's terms are ambivalent about knowledge of God's existence; an expression such as that the *fiṭra* testifies *(shahidat)* to it suggests *a posteriori* knowledge (*Dar᾽ ta῾āruḍ al-῾aql*, vol. 3, p. 129), whereas the expression of its "being rooted" (*markūz*) in the *fiṭra* (ibid., vol. 3, p. 72) suggests *a priori* knowledge. In his *Risāla fī al-Kalām ῾alā al-fiṭra*, Ibn Taymiyya develops a concept of *fiṭra* that does not depend on the senses (idem, in: *Majmū῾at al-rasā᾽il al-kubrā*, *al-juz᾽ al-thānī*, Beirut 1972, pp. 345, 348 et passim; French translation: Gobillot, Geneviève: L'Épitre du discours sur la fiṭra (*Risāla fī-l-kalām ῾alā-l-fiṭra*) de Taqī-l-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Taymīyya (661/1262–728/1328).

be described, then, as the predisposition and the faculty to correctly and immediately grasp true knowledge and to reject false knowledge. It enables man to apprehend the existence of God,[204] to distinguish the useful from the harmful[205] and the true from the untrue,[206] to know the causal efficiencies of things (see chapter 11.2), or to form sound concepts and judgments (see chapter 10.1, 11.2).[207]

Ibn Taymiyya admits, however, that there are great differences between people concerning the soundness of their innate intelligence and their organs of perceptions. Ibn Taymiyya connects these differences with the common distinction between two modes of knowledge: necessary (*ḍarūrī*) or evident (*badīhī*) knowledge, on the one hand, and acquired (*kasbī/muktasab*) or speculative (*naẓarī*) knowledge, on the other.[208] The first is regarded as immediate and "certain" (*yaqīnī*) and the latter as inferred and only "probable" (*ẓannī*). Ibn Taymiyya maintains this distinction for concepts (*taṣawwurāt*) and judgments (*taṣdīqāt*).[209] It is most likely that Ibn Taymiyya considered evident knowledge to be clear and "uncontaminated." Still, in his view the evident or speculative character of a concept or a judgment does not depend on the subject matter, but on the soundness of the innate intel-

---

Présentation et traduction annotée, in: *Annales Islamologiques* 20 (1984), pp. 29–53, here 31, 49, 52–53 et passim). See Hallaq, Ibn Taymiyya on the Existence of God, pp. 65–66.

204 Ibid.; Madjid, *Ibn Taymiyya on Kalām and Falsafa*, pp. 71–72. In *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql* he claims that the *fiṭra* understanding that God is above the world is shared by old and young and by every people, be they Muslims, Jews, Christians or polytheists (vol. 6, p. 12); see also above, n. 203.

205 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 428–430; Madjid, *Ibn Taymiyya on Kalām and Falsafa*, pp. 65–69.

206 For instance, Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 71; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 216; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 26–27; Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 9, p. 366.

207 See Hoover, who studied other writings of Ibn Taymiyya and came to similar conclusions in regard to Ibn Taymiyya's understanding of *ʿaql* (*Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, pp. 32–34), states that it is difficult "to pinpoint the exact relationship" between Ibn Taymiyya's concepts of *ʿaql* and *fiṭra* (ibid., p. 39).

208 For the development of this distinction, see van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, pp. 114–128; Marmura, Michael E.: Ghazali's Attitude to the Secular Sciences and Logic, in: George F. Hourani (ed.): *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science*, Albany 1975, pp. 104, 110, n. 13.

209 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 11, 13–14, 88–91; (al-Suyūṭī severely shortened Ibn Taymiyya's explanation: *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 205–206, 219–220; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 10–12, 31–32); see also chapter 11.3.

ligence and the senses. He regards them as belonging to "the relative, relational matters" (*min al-umūr al-nisbiyya al-iḍāfiyya*):[210]

> It is well known that people vary in mental aptitude more than they do in physical strength. The quickness and quality of one man's perception may be much greater than that of another. Such a man would then form a complete concept of the two terms so as to reveal through that complete concept the necessary attributes which would not be evident to those who cannot form such a concept. That in some propositions certain people need the middle, which is the indicant, while others do not, is an obvious matter. For many people the proposition may be sensory (*ḥiṣṣiyya*), empirical (*mujarraba*), demonstrative (*burhāniyya*), or multiply transmitted (*mutawātira*), while for others it may be known by means of investigation and inference.[211]

In this statement Ibn Taymiyya plainly expresses his conviction that the mental aptitudes of people differ. He holds that for some people there is no need to form a definition or a syllogism or an analogy in order to comprehend a concept or a judgment. Being evident knowledge, concepts and judgments thus become necessary and certain. He clearly states that sense perception, experience, demonstration,[212] and multiply transmitted reports provide immediate and therefore evident, certain (*yaqīnī*) knowledge.[213] In fact, Ibn Taymiyya also counts

---

210 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 13; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 205; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 11.

211 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 91; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 219–220; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 32 (I follow his translation; the additions in angular brackets are mine.).

212 Ibn Taymiyya does not explain what he means in this context by *burhān*. It could well be the first figure of categorical syllogism, which he considers to be spontaneously apprehensible (see chapter 11.3) or "the rational, demonstrative inferences mentioned in the Koran" (see chapter 12).

213 It is noteworthy that ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d. 429/1037–1038) exposes in his *Uṣūl al-dīn* that "deduction" (*istidlāl bil-ʿaql*), "experience and common practice" (*al-tajārub wal-ʿādāt*), "divine commands" (*al-sharʿ*), and "inspiration" (*ilhām*); "e. g. the taste for poetry, the knowledge of metre, the composition of melodies" (Wensinck, Arent Jan: *The Muslim Creed. Its Genesis and Historical Development*, London 1965, p. 259) may belong to the primary, necessary kind of knowledge, if God gives that knowledge directly to the heart (al-Baghdādī, Abū Manṣūr ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Tamīmī: *Kitāb Uṣūl al-dīn*, Beirut 1401/1981 (reprint, Istanbul 1346/1928), pp. 14–15; Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, pp. 259–260). Yet Ibn Taymiyya considerably deviates from him in several respects, adopting a terminology and tenets that evoke the epistemology of philosophers and "later" *kalām* theologians.

estimative propositions (*wahmiyyāt*) and widespread propositions (*mashhūrāt*) among the premises that can lead to certainty.[214] Ibn Taymiyya explains these different ways to gain knowledge in *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* and *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* and thereby uses several distinct philosophical terms and concepts.

11. Traces of the Rationalists' "Poison" in Ibn Taymiyya's Theory of Knowledge

11.1. Perception of the Senses, Estimations, Multiply Transmitted Reports, and Widespread Propositions

In accordance with early and also "later" *kalām* theologians and philosophers, Ibn Taymiyya divides the perceptions of the senses between those that can form immediate concepts of the outside world, such as "taste," "color," "odor" and "bodies that possess these attributes," on the one hand, and those that can form immediate concepts of one's own physical and psychological states, like "hunger," "satiety," "love," "hate," "joy," and "sadness."[215]

He further makes a distinction between individual sense perceptions and those apprehensions shared by all or some people, such as the sight of the sun and the moon or the sight of a local mountain or mosque.[216] According to his statement in *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn*, the sense perceptions include the apprehension of the primary arithmetic, geometric, and logical principles (see chapter 10.1). Ibn Taymiyya does not discuss the question of "errors of the senses" or false judgments about right perceptions.[217]

---

214 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 206, 396–437. This chapter is not summarized by al-Suyūṭī (Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 167, n. 307.1).

215 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 11 (in respect to the inner senses, he speaks also of "feelings," *mashāʿir*), 55–56, 92, 96. Here he states that, of the five powers, sight and hearing are the basis for the knowledge that separates man from animal; shortened or omitted by al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 205; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 10; Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 6, p. 108. Concerning the development of the classification of sense perceptions in *kalām* and *falsafa*, see van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, pp. 164–166.

216 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 92; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 32–33 n. 43.4.

217 This question was much disputed by several of the authors Ibn Taymiyya had read. Aristotle's view that the senses cannot err, but that the judgment rea-

He does not disqualify sense perceptions, especially those perceived by the spirit (*rūḥ*), that are not shared by everyone present at one place, e.g., seeing and hearing jinns or angels, or the perceptions that will occur only after death; indeed, he counts these perceptions of the hidden existences (*mawjūdāt ghāʾiba*) as certain knowledge (*yaqīniyyāt*) and identifies them with the estimations (*wahmiyyāt*) that "Ibn Sīnā and philosophers of his kind" reckoned as false. Ibn Taymiyya thereby refutes the tenet that these perceptions are but in the soul of the person who senses them and wants to assert the concrete existence of "hidden" existences in the sensible world, on the one hand, and the bodily sensible torments and blessings in the hereafter, on the other.[218] However, Ibn Sīnā's denial of the certainty of estimations that Ibn Taymiyya quotes to support his rebuttal does not touch upon jinns or angels, but apparently concerns illusions that Ibn Taymiyya himself also refutes.[219] Thus, Ibn Taymiyya rejects as corrupt estimative propositions (*qaḍāyā al-wahm al-fāsid*), propositions that affirm the existence of what exists neither inside nor outside the world.[220] He furthermore admits that Ibn Sīnā affirms the existence of true estimative propositions and, appar-

---

son forms about the perception might be wrong, was falsely transmitted by al-Rāzī, for instance van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, pp. 174–177.

218 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 6, pp. 109–111. In *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn*, Ibn Taymiyya does not expound his views on estimations. He asserts that he has already refuted at length the logicians' exclusion of the estimative propositions from the premises leading to certainty and that he has shown that they belong to the class of knowledge that innate intelligence can grasp immediately (*al-Radd*, pp. 206, 396; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 294; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 120–121). He most probably was referring to his statements in *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql* (vol. 6 et passim; see vol. 11 s.v.). Ibn Sīnā expounded his theory of the survival of the soul and his denial of the bodily resurrection in *al-Risāla al-Aḍḥawiyya fī amr al-maʿād*, ed. by Sulaymān Dunyā, Cairo 1368/1949; see Ibn Taymiyya's critique of Ibn Sīnā's hermeneutical approach in this tract, which he also presents in *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql* (Michot, A Mamlūk Theologian's Commentary).

219 Ibn Taymiyya (*Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 6, p. 101–111; see pp. 20–22) comments upon Ibn Sīnā's rather confusing passage on the estimative propositions in *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt* (vol. 1, pp. 353–355; see Inati's translation and explanation (Avicenna, *Remarks and Admonitions*, part 1, pp. 123–124). It is not the passage in which Ibn Taymiyya quotes Ibn Sīnā with a sharp difference about the wording in manuscripts that were known to the editor of *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, namely Sulaymān Dunyā (Marcotte, Ibn Taymiyya et sa critique, pp. 51–53). Roxanne D. Marcotte has shown that Ibn Taymiyya repeatedly misrepresented tenets of Ibn Sīnā in order to refute them (ibid., pp. 53–58).

220 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 6, p. 106.

ently, only disagrees with their denomination. Ibn Sīnā explains a true estimation as a knowledge that is not won by the senses, but triggered by a perceptible particular, such as a sheep's fear of a wolf without ever having seen one before.[221] Ibn Taymiyya calls this instinctive faculty simply "inner faculty" (*quwwa bāṭina*), "reason" (*ʿaql*), or "uncontaminated reason," and regards the estimative propositions as being certain in the innate intelligence (*fiṭra*) and natural disposition (*jibla*).[222]

The multiply transmitted reports (*mutawātirāt*) are defined by Ibn Taymiyya as relying on the apprehension of particulars through sight or hearing, i. e., through immediate knowledge.[223] This knowledge, such as the knowledge of the existence of Mecca or of the prophets Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad, reaches most people, but may miss those living in very remote places.[224] Not only "earlier" *kalām* theologians, but also the *falāsifa* and the "later" *kalām* theologians consider multiply transmitted reports to be certain.[225]

221 Ibn Sīnā, Abū ʿAlī: *Avicenna's* De Anima *(Arabic Text). Being the Psychological Part of* Kitāb al-Shifāʾ, ed. by Fazlur Rahman, London, New York and Toronto 1959, pp. 45, 184; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, p. 354 (Ibn Sīnā: Livre des directives et remarques (*Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa l-tanbīhāt*), traduction avec introduction et notes par Amélie M. Goichon, Beyrut and Paris 1951, p. 317); Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 6, p. 22 (he quotes here the passage from *al-Ishārāt,* but cites and discusses later on (*Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 6, pp. 47–55) parts of Ibn Sīnā's theory of the estimative faculty (*al-quwwa al-wahmiyya*) from *al-Shifāʾ* (*De Anima*, especially pp. 167, 168–169). Some main stages in the development of the judgments about estimative propositions in Muslim theology and philosophy are mentioned by van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, pp. 398–399.

222 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 6, pp. 50–55, 105–106.

223 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 302.

224 Ibid., p. 92; al-Suyūṭī was either working with another wording of *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* or else himself added that "the miracles of the prophets are known through multiple transmission" and that the negation of the reliability of the *mutawātirāt* leads to "heresy and unbelief" (*Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 220; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 32). In two passages in the edited manuscript of *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* (which contains marginals in Ibn Taymiyya's handwriting), Ibn Taymiyya mentions miracles in the context of empirical matters and says he has treated them elsewhere (*al-Radd*, pp. 300–301; see his *Kitāb al-Nubuwwāt*). Al-Suyūṭī does not mention these hints (see *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 315; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 143). Shahab Ahmed has shown that Ibn Taymiyya had a broader understanding of *tawātur* transmissions of prophetic sayings than the majority of the jurists (Ibn Taymiyyah and the Satanic Verses, pp. 84–85).

225 See, for instance, Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, vol. 1, p. 349; Avicenna, *Remarks and Admonitions*, p. 121; al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid: *Miḥakk al-naẓar*,

In contrast, the *falāsifa* and some "later" *kalām* theologians more or less doubt the certainty of the widespread propositions (*mashhūrāt*).[226] Ibn Taymiyya therefore tries to show that their distinction between axioms (*awwaliyyāt*) and widespread propositions is arbitrary.[227] He further shows that man by himself (*al-insān min nafsihi*) finds justice, sincerity, and knowledge more delightful than tyranny, falsehood, and ignorance and adduces arguments to prove that a judgment, such as "justice is good and tyranny is deplorable,"[228] can be grasped immediately and is thus certain.[229]

So one might already say that, in principle, Ibn Taymiyya regarded a broader spectrum of propositions as certain than the philosophers did.

---

ed. by Rafīq al-ʿAjam, Beirut 1994, p. 105; see Rudolph, Die Neubewertung der Logik, p. 79; van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, p. 398. For ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī, the *mutawātirāt* already included geographical and historical knowledge (al-Baghdādī, *Kitāb Uṣūl al-dīn*, pp. 11–12; Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, p. 257).

226 See, for instance, Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, vol. 1, pp. 342, 350–353; Avicenna, *Remarks and Admonitions*, pp. 119, 122–123. Ibn Taymiyya mainly refers to al-Rāzī's commentary on this work of Ibn Sīnā.

227 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 396–420.

228 Ibid., p. 423; see the following note.

229 Ibid., pp. 420–437. Hallaq summarized some of his arguments (*Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 167, n. 307.1); see van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, p. 400, for the discussion in philosophical and theological circles in general. They certainly deserve a thorough comparative study, not least with other of Ibn Taymiyya's own writings. In a tract published in a collection of Ibn Taymiyya's formal legal opinions, he expounds a theory of ethics comprising three levels: "rational" (*ʿaqlī*), "confessional" (*millī*) and "legal" (*sharʿī*) (Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿat al-Fatāwā*, al-mujallad 20, Cairo 1421/2001, vol. 10, pp. 37–43; transl. by Michot, Yahya J.: Textes spirituels d'Ibn Taymiyya. XIV. Raison, confession, loi. Une typologie musulmane du religieux, in: *Le Musulman* 27 (1996), pp. 24–29, here 24, 26–28). The "rational" level encompasses the basis of ethics, "that what all sons of Adam bestowed with reason agree upon, whether they were given a scripture (*lahum ṣilat kitāb*) or not" (*Majmūʿat al-Fatāwā*, al-mujallad 20, Cairo, vol. 10, p. 40). As one example among others, he mentions "justice," though admitting that its application depends on the concrete situation (ibid., p. 69). See also Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 42.

11.2. Empirical Matters and Natural Efficient Causation: Ibn Taymiyya as a "Moderate Realist"

Ibn Taymiyya's great concern with empirical matters (*mujarrabāt*) certainly has to be seen against the background of the treacherous ground he entered with this subject, namely the question whether or not natural efficient causation exists. Ibn Taymiyya affirms its existence and speaks even of "universal propositions." It is in this part of his theory of knowledge that he explicitly and implicitly confirms an essential tenet of Peripatetic epistemology, namely man's capability to grasp the essences of things, i. e., the universals *in rebus*. He starts by explaining that

> the generality of people has experienced that drinking water brings quenching and that decapitation brings death and that a strong blow causes (*yūjib*) pain. The knowledge of this universal proposition (*hādhihi al-qaḍiyya al-kulliyya*) is empirical (*tajrībī*). The sense apprehends one particular quenching and the death of one particular person and the pain of one particular person. The universal proposition that the same would occur to everyone who would be treated similarly is not known by sense, but by what is composed by sense and reason, and the sense here is not the hearing.[230]

Reading this paragraph, one is reminded of Ibn Taymiyya's rigorous denial of the possibility of establishing true universal propositions by abstraction through the observation of particulars, because no one is able to observe all particulars (see chapter 10.1). It looks like a plain contradiction and so does the consequence of this part of the Peripatetic epistemology on the ontological level. Ibn Taymiyya continues his explanation of empirical matters as follows:

> Those who do not affirm the causes (*al-asbāb wal-ʿilal*) among the *kalām* theologians, like al-Jahm [b. Ṣafwān] and those who agree with him in this, like Abū al-Ḥasan [al-Ashʿarī] and his followers, take the known [relation between two things] as a connection of one thing to the other [which is due] solely to the volition of the Mighty and Willing, without one being the cause (*sababan*) of the other or generating (*muwallidan*) it. Instead, the majority of the intelligent people (*al-ʿuqalāʾ*) among the Muslims and non-Muslims, the Sunnites among the *kalām* theologians, the jurists, the traditionists and the Sufis, and the non-Sunnites among

230 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 92–93. Ibn Taymiyya's whole elaboration on empirical matters is missing in al-Suyūṭī's summary.

> the Muʿtazilīs and others, affirm the causes (*al-asbāb*) and say: 'As the connection (*iqtirān*) [between two things] is known as one to the other, so it is known that there is in the fire a power (*quwwa*) that necessitates (*yaqtaḍī*) burning, and in water a power that necessitates refreshment. Likewise there is in the eye a power that necessitates sight and in the tongue a power that necessitates taste.' And they affirm the nature (*al-ṭabīʿa*) that is called *al-gharīza* (the implanted disposition), *al-naḥīza* (the natural disposition), *al-khulq* (the innate peculiarity), *al-ʿāda* (the habit), and [that is given] other similar names.[231]

Ibn Taymiyya leaves no doubt that he adheres to the conviction of "the majority of intelligent people."[232] He thereby explicitly admits one of the key theories of the Peripatetics, the theory of natural efficient causation, which, in contrast to his assertion, was far from having been adopted by "the majority" to which he refers.[233] Seen in this light, his

---

231 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 94 (The additions in angular brackets are mine); see Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 9, pp. 339–342. In one passage, in relation to the regular movements of the sun and the moon, Ibn Taymiyya explicitly speaks of God's custom (*ʿāda*), Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 272.

232 Ibn Taymiyya confirms this in addition by several Koranic verses (2:164; 7:57; 50:9), *al-Radd*, p. 270; see the very similar argumentation in Ibn Taymiyya's major fatwa on astrology, where he explicitly states that God sets "radiance and burning in the fire, purification and irrigation in the water, and the other similar blessings that He mentions in His Book" and harshly rebuts those *kalām* theologians who say "that God does these affairs with (*ʿind*) and not by (*bi-*) them" (Michot, Ibn Taymiyya on Astrology, pp. 155–156) and validates it also in *Minhāj al-sunna* and *al-ʿAqīda al-tadmuriyya* (Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, pp. 147, 157–159). Henry Laoust pointed to the "Aristotelian spirit" of Ibn Taymiyya "en s'efforçant de 'raisonner comme raisonne la nature' et de pénétrer le secret des choses" (*Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques*, pp. 167, 244–254). He refers to one of Ibn Taymiyya's juridical tracts where he speaks of the "essence", the "quiddity" of the thing (*māhiyyat al-shayʾ*) (Ibn Taymiyya, Kitāb al-Samāʿ wal-raqṣ, in: idem, *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil al-kubrā*, Cairo, vol. 2, p. 293). On the basis of several of Ibn Taymiyya's writings, Nurcholis Madjid also showed that Ibn Taymiyya was no occasionalist. His main interest, however, lies not in the logical implications, but in the differences in metaphysics between Ibn Taymiyya and his opponents (*Ibn Taymiyya on Kalām and Falsafa*, pp. 142–181). For the genesis and devolopment of occasionalism in Islam, see Ulrich Rudolph and Dominik Perler: *Occasionalismus. Theorien der Kausalität im arabisch-islamischen und im europäischen Denken*, Göttingen 2000, pp. 23–124.

233 Ibn Taymiyya himself admits that "there are people who reject the forces [*al-quwā* and the natures [*ṭabāʾiʿ*], as is the case with Abū al-Ḥasan [al-Ashʿarī] and those who followed him, among the companions of Mālik, al-Shāfiʿī, Aḥmad [b. Ḥanbal] and others" (Ibn Taymiyya, Fatwā on Human Reason in:

denial of the Aristotelian "real definition" (*ḥadd ḥaqīqī*) that is held to grasp the "essence" of a thing (see chapter 10.1) gains a new dimension.[234] Ibn Taymiyya obviously negates neither that a particular thing, a species, or a genus has a natural disposition peculiar to it – like the philosophers, he too calls these dispositions *ḥaqāʾiq* ("true natures", "essences")[235] and *māhiyya* (sg., "essence")[236] – nor that man's knowledge about them is certain. Ibn Taymiyya, thus, seems to accept the very substance of the Peripatetic theory of causality, namely the natural necessity of cause and effect inherent in the essence of things.

Coming back to Ibn Taymiyya's assertion that "empirical matters" are comprehended as universal propositions, we must uncover whether he distinguishes his claim from those of his enemies. He himself produces that confrontation:

> It is known that through the senses universal and general matters cannot be perceived. Sensory matters do not lend themselves to universal and general propositions which can serve as premises in apodictic demonstration (*al-burhān al-yaqīnī*). In their (the logicians') example 'Fire burns', etc., they do not know for certain the universality of this proposition. All they rely on is experiment (*tajriba*) and custom (*ʿāda*), which are of the same kind as analogy. If the universality of the proposition is known

Majmūʿat al-Fatāwā, Cairo, vol. 5, part 9, p. 153; Michot, Ibn Taymiyya on Astrology, pp. 155–156, n. 34 (I follow his translation, the Arabic terms in angular brackets are my additions)). In fact, the Muʿtazilīs negated the secondary, intermediary causes, assuming that God governs the world all by himself (Wolfson, Harry Austryn: *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, Cambridge and London 1976, pp. 520–543). This denial, however, concerns only the world, i.e., nature, as long as man does not intervene. In regard to man's acting in the world, most of them upheld an efficient causal relation between the act and the result, a theory they usually called *tawallud* (van Ess, Josef: *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra. Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam*, Berlin and New York 1991–1997, vol. 3, pp. 116–117, 250, 423; vol. 4, pp. 139, 475, 487, see also Index s.v. *tawallud*). See also below, n. 250.

234 For the role of causality in the Aristotelian theory of definition and demonstration, see, for instance, Madkour, Ibrahim: *L'organon d'Aristote dans le monde arabe, ses traductions, son étude et ses applications*, Paris 1969, pp. 125–127 (with further references).

235 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 26, 299; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 314; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 142 (he translates *al-ḥaqāʾiq al-mawjūda fī al-khārij* only as "extramental reality").

236 See above, n. 232; Henry Laoust holds that Ibn Taymiyya's logical terminology is largely taken from al-Ghazālī (*Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques*, p. 84).

> on the basis of the fact that fire possesses a power (*quwwa*) to burn, then the knowledge that every fire necessarily possesses this power is a universal judgment as well. Someone may argue: 'The stuff of fire (*al-ṣūra al-nāriyya*) must include this power, and whatever lacks this power is not fire.' Though this statement may be true, it does not conclusively ascertain that all things possessing this power will burn everything they encounter, albeit this is usually the case. (The burning ability of fire) is the object of analogy (*qiyās al-tamthīl*), categorical syllogism (*qiyās al-shumūl*),[237] custom, and imperfect induction – that is, if we grant them this. But how could this be the case when it is known that fire does not burn salamander stone, hyacinth, and objects coated with manufactured material? I do not know of any universal proposition that is based on sense perception which cannot be refuted, though universal propositions are not sensory. A sensory proposition would be of the type '*This* fire burns', since only particular things are perceived through the senses.[238]

In this paragraph of his "Refutation of the Logicians," Ibn Taymiyya appears less apodictic in asserting the causal efficiencies of things. His remark, however, that perhaps not everything will burn when it comes in contact with fire does not at all deny "burning" as the natural disposition of fire, but only states that there are things that have the natural disposition not to be consumed by fire. In fact, Ibn Taymiyya and the Peripatetic logicians agree on this. He himself admits it by asserting that one can also reach this truth by categorical syllogism.

In the frame of Ibn Taymiyya's discussion of man's will (*irāda*), which serves him also as a proof of God's existence, he again appears as a "moderate realist" as far as causality is concerned. He also accepts the Aristotelian tenet of the impossibility of an infinite regress in regard to final and efficient causes. After having established that every soul, i. e., every living being, has feeling (*shuʿūr*) and will, he distinguishes between the thing that is wanted because of something else (*murād li-ghayrihi*) and the one that is wanted for itself (*murād li-nafsihi/li-dhātihi*). To the former belongs food, for instance. It is wanted

237 *Qiyās al-shumūl* is an unusual term for the categorical syllogism and perhaps coined by Ibn Taymiyya himself, Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. xiv. The common one is *qiyās iqtirānī* or *qiyās ḥamalī*. R. Brunschvig assumes that Ibn Taymiyya wants to underline the claim that it encompasses the universal (Pour ou contre la logique grecque, p. 324).

238 Al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 314–315; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 142–143. (I follow his translation; the Arabic terms in angular brackets are my additions); Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 300 (the end of the paragraph is a little longer and the wording differs slightly).

because of its genus (*murād jinsahu*), namely the dispelling of hunger. Not everything, Ibn Taymiyya argues, can be wanted for something else, since that would lead to "an infinite regress of formal causes, and that is as impossible as an infinite regress of efficient causes, nay the more so."[239] Hence, there has to be something wanted and loved for itself and not as a genus and "this cannot be anything but a particular" (*lā yakūnu illā muʿayyanan*), and this particular is God. While God does not share anything with something or someone else, the other particulars have common, universal features. The universal feature, however, does not exist separately, but as a particular *in rebus* (*al-kullī lā wujūda lahu fī al-aʿyān illā muʿayyanan*).[240] Ibn Taymiyya could hardly have expressed more clearly in terminology and as a concept the congruity between the Peripatetics and himself.

Natural causality is a tenet Ibn Taymiyya upholds also in other writings, indeed, in a great number of his works, as Jon Hoover has recently shown in his eminent monograph on Ibn Taymiyya's concept of theodicy.[241] Hoover convincingly argues that this constitutes one side of the coin of Ibn Taymiyya's theodicy, that of the "human perspective." The other side is the "divine perspective," from which creation looks different, fully displaying God's omnipotence. Likewise, Ibn Taymiyya views human acts as a result of man's own will, power, and free choice, on the one hand, and as bound to God's will, on the other hand.[242] Hoover therefore regards Ibn Taymiyya's approach as "compatibilism."[243] To ensure "the responsibility of humans for their destiny," Ibn Taymiyya presents the visible world from the "human perspective" as organized in accordance with secondary causality that looks "natural."[244] Yet Ibn Taymiyya views secondary causality as instrumental from the "divine perspective." Though things behave in accordance with the causes God created, everything depends solely on His will. He is perpetually creating and willing from eternity for

239 *Tasalsul fī al-ʿilal al-ghāʾiyya wa-huwa mumtanīʿ ka-imtināʿ al-tasalsul fī al-ʿilal al-fāʿiliyya bal awlā*, Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 8, p. 465; see Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 147–148; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 249–250; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 68–70.

240 Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 8, pp. 464–467.

241 Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, pp. 133–134, 147, 156–165 et passim (see index, s. v. *cause*).

242 Ibid., pp. 136–156, 173–176 et passim (see index, s. v. *act*).

243 Ibid., pp. 154, 173 et passim (see index, s. v. *compatibilism*).

244 Ibid., p. 163.

wise purposes.[245] If God does not will something to happen that would result from a cause or a combination of causes He created, He does not perfect the combination of causes and conditions or He creates an impediment.[246] However, God does not alter the order He has fixed for the things, because otherwise He would undermine His own all-embracing wise purpose. Thus, He cannot create "contraries simultaneously in one place, and He cannot create a son before his father."[247] God's wise purpose, thus, entails that his creatures follow a fixed order and are bestowed with specific powers. The essences He bestowed things with, for instance His bestowal on fire of the power to burn, are their necessary concomitants and aren't lost when God does not will them to "act" or to "react," but are rendered ineffective by impediments God creates.

On the epistemological level – as far as the way to knowledge of causes and effects is concerned – Ibn Taymiyya does not deviate from the Peripatetic method. He also tries to grasp the universals that are shared by similar particulars. Even on the ontological level, there is a great similarity, since Ibn Taymiyya does not deny the existence of fixed essences and a fixed order of causes and effects. Furthermore, philosophers also hold that an effect depends on numerous conditions, i. e., other causes besides the main efficient cause, and can be hindered by impediments.[248] Ibn Taymiyya's harsh rebuttal of the existence of universals *in rebus* can, therefore, be motivated only by the great difference between the philosophers' and his own metaphysical theories. Whereas the philosophers conceive God as an inactive first cause and

245 Ibid., pp. 80–95. The Tunesian Islamist Rāshid al-Ghannūshī came to a similar conclusion in his study of Ibn Taymiyya's notion of predestination and free will, mainly on the basis of *Majmūʿ al-fatāwā* (without indicating neither the "title" of the writing nor the volume), *al-Ḥasana wal-saʾya* and *Risālat fī al-Iḥtijāj bil-qadar*. He interprets Ibn Taymiyya as viewing "God's will as an active part in the divine order" creating by the causes He Himself bestowed his creatures with (*al-Qadar ʿind Ibn Taymiyya*, London 1999, pp. 87, 91–92). I am grateful to Lutz Rogler for having provided me with a copy of this work.

246 Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, pp. 160–162.

247 Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, vol. 3, p. 103–104, here rendered in the concise wording of Hoover (*Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 133).

248 See, for instance, Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ, al-Ilāhiyyāt*, ed. by Ibrāhīm Madkūr, al-Ab Qanawātī and Saʿīd Zāyid, Cairo 1380/1960, vol. 1, p. 180; Marmura, Michael E.: The Metaphysics of Efficient Causality in Avicenna (Ibn Sina), in: idem (ed.): *Islamic Theology and Philosophy. Studies in Honor of George F. Hourani*, Albany 1984, pp. pp. 172–187, here 181–182.

the secondary causes as acting on their own,[249] Ibn Taymiyya views God, as Hoover has shown, as perpetually creating the secondary causes and their effects or impediments in compliance with His wise purpose.

In one passage of *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* concerning evil, this view is also very explicit. Ibn Taymiyya maintains that, when He knotted the causes of evil (*inʿiqād asbāb al-sharr*), God instructed the prophet Muḥammad which pious acts, such as prayers, repentance, or almsgiving, could repel its effect (*mūjab*).[250] Thus, an evil cause can be prevented from producing its evil effect due to the nature with which God bestowed the evil cause, but the actual connection between the causes and their effects, for instance an invocation of God that provokes the repelling of the enemy, depends on God's will and power.[251]

249 For a concise summary of these metaphysical holdings of the philosophers, see Fakhry, *Islamic Philosophy*, pp. 136–142, 158–166, 320–325; for a thorough analysis of the implied theories and their discussions, see Davidson, Herbert A.: *Proofs for Eternity, Creation and the Existence of God in Medieval Islamic and Jewish Philosophy*, New York and Oxford 1987.

250 In his *Risālat al-Wāsiṭa bayna al-khalq wal-ḥaqq*, Ibn Taymiyya also upholds that God is the one who creates causes and effects and counts invocation among the causes decreed by Him (Michot, Yahya J.: Ibn Taymiyya. Les intermédiaires entre dieu et l'homme (*Risâlat al-wâsiṭa bayna l-khalq wa l-ḥaqq*). traduction française suivie de "Le Shaykh de l'Islam Ibn Taymiyya; chronique d'une vie de théologien militant", in: *Le Musulman* Numéro hors-série de la revue (1417/1996), pp. 1–27, here p. 8; I am indebted to the author for this reference).

251 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 271–272. Noticeably, Ibn Taymiyya here in no way tries to confront the *falāsifa*, but instead even cites a statement of Ptolemy concerning the influence of prayer on the stars as evidence (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 272; I did not verify whether the citation is from Ptolemy; it could be from his authentic astrological handbook or the apocryphal one (see Endress, Die wissenschaftliche Literatur, vol. 3, p. 105)). In *Minhāj al-sunna* Ibn Taymiyya explains God's wise purpose behind seemingly bad things as leading to "invocation, humility, repentance … and softening of the heart" (Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 132). The same author has now thoroughly studied Ibn Taymiyya's view of the origin of evil (*Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, pp. 177–210).

11.3. Induction, Categorical Syllogism and Analogy: The Rational Balance in the Koran

Ibn Taymiyya treats his comparison between induction, analogy, syllogism, and other methods without reference to his views of causality. In consistency with his high esteem for particulars and his proof that it is impossible to observe every single particular of a genus in regard to the essence or property they share, he affirms that analogy and induction are not inferior to categorical syllogism as the philosophers claim.[252] He repeatedly tries to show that all concepts and judgments – be they reached by induction, analogy, syllogism, or other methods – are formed on the basis of particulars and not of universals.[253] He challenges the logicians' assertion that induction (*istiqrā'*) leads from particular to universal:

> As far as induction is concerned, it is certain if it is complete, in which case you will have reached a judgment about the common factor (*al-qadr al-mushtarak*) on the basis of what you have found in all the particulars. But this is neither an inference proceeding from particular to universal nor is it one proceeding from specific to general; rather, it is an inference that proceeds from one particular to another particular concomitant with it. For the existence of a judgment concerning each and every particular that falls under a universal necessitates that the judgment be concomitant with that universal.[254]

Ibn Taymiyya does not see induction as a way to reach certainty; elsewhere, he even adduces the same proof of this as Ibn Sīnā does (see chapter 10.1). His argumentation therefore seems to be in congruence with his nominalistic attitude of denying the existing of universals *ante res* and *in rebus* (see chapter 10.1). However, seen in the light of his theory of causality and his comparison between analogy and categorical syllogism (see chapter 11.2–3), his statement that induction is an

252 See, for instance, Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, vol. 1, pp. 365–370; Avicenna, *Remarks and Admonitions*, pp. 129–130; see also Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 114, n. 190.1, 117, n. 197.1.

253 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, (especially concise) pp. 300–303 (in fact, he treats that subject until the end of the book); slightly shortened by al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 314–316; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 142–145.

254 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 201; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 290; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 115–116. (I follow his translation except for the first sentence, where I want to stress Ibn Taymiyya's focus on the "common factor"; Hallaq renders *al-qadr al-mushtarak* here as "the entire class").

inference from one particular to another that, if it could be completed, would reveal their common factor, might be understood as an acceptance of the existence of universals *in rebus*.

Ibn Taymiyya lays much more stress on a comparison between the first figure of categorical syllogism (as it appears in Aristotelian syllogistics)[255] and analogy, the main method in Islamic jurisprudence. He wants to disprove the rationalists' assertion that, because of its inference from a particular to a particular, analogy is inferior to syllogism and that the latter alone can lead to certainty.[256] In fact, he asserts that the two methods can be converted into each other.[257] Al-Fārābī had already shown the possibility of transforming an analogy into a categorical syllogism and al-Ghazālī demonstrated it once again.[258] However, both of them and more explicitly Ibn Sīnā, probably Ibn Taymiyya's main source of Peripatetic logic, held syllogism in higher esteem.[259]

Analogy (*qiyās al-taʿlīl* or *al-tamthīl*), by Ibn Taymiyya's times, was already much advanced in comparison with the time of Aristotle and his Greek commentators.[260] Ibn Taymiyya mainly uses the *qiyās*

255 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 6.

256 See, for instance, Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, vol. 1, pp. 368–369; Avicenna, *Remarks and Admonitions*, pp. 129–130; see also Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 114 n. 190.1, 117 n. 197.1.

257 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 116 (*qiyās al-tamthīl wa-qiyās al-shumūl sawāʾ*), 121, 299, 351–364; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 230, 234, 314, 328–331; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 44–45, 50, 142, 156–159.

258 *Kitāb al-Qiyās*, in: al-Fārābī, *al-Manṭiq*, vol. 2, pp. 11–64, here p. 54–55. He already uses the example of the prohibition of *khamr*; idem, Kitāb al-Qiyās al-ṣaghīr, in: ibid., pp. 65–93, here p. 68; Street, Arabic Logic, p. 539; for a detailed analysis of al-Farābī 's arguments and his critique of analogy, see Schöck, Cornelia: *Koranexegese, Grammatik und Logik. Zum Verhältnis von arabischer und aristotelischer Urteils-, Konsequenz- und Schlusslehre*, Leiden and Boston 2006, pp. 342–372; van Ess pointed out that al-Fārābī dismissed the method of *ṭard* and *ʿaks* (*Die Erkenntnislehre*, p. 391); al-Ghazālī: *Kitāb al-Mustaṣfā min ʿilm al-uṣūl, bi-sharḥ Muḥibb Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Shakūr (al-Bihārī)*, Cairo, Bulaq 1322–1324/1904–1906, pp. 38–39; al-Ghazālī: *Miʿyār al-ʿilm fī fann al-manṭiq*, Beirut 1983, pp. 98–100, 109, see 123–124; Marmura, Ghazali's Attitude, pp. 105, 110, n. 14, 17; Heer, Ibn Taymiyah's Empiricism, p. 113; Rudolph, Die Neubewertung der Logik, pp. 77–79.

259 Ibn Sīnā equates analogy with the Aristotelian *parádeigma* (*tamthīl*) and considers it valable only for dialectical, not for demonstrative proofs (van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, p. 392); see the previous note.

260 For other forms of analogical inferences in jurisprudence, see Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 44, n. 59.1; Bernand, M.: Ḳiyās, in: *EI*², vol. 5 (1986), pp. 238–

al-taʿlīl (causational inference), and its subdivisions, the co-extensive analogy (*qiyās al-ṭard*) und the co-exclusive analogy (*qiyās al-ʿaks*).[261] Although he does not restrict its use to juridical questions in his refutations of logic and the rationalists, he nevertheless exemplifies it with a well-known case of co-extensive analogy from jurisprudence, which he presents at the same time as a piece of evidence of the possibility of converting it into the first figure of categorical syllogism. It is the example of the inference from the revealed prohibition of wine from grapes (*khamr al-ʿinab*) to wine from other fruits (*nabīdh*).[262] The inference relies on their common factor (*al-qadr al-mushtarak*), i. e., their intoxicating nature, which constitutes the *ratio legis* (*ʿilla*, *manāṭ*, *jāmiʿ*) in an analogy or the middle term (*ḥadd awsaṭ*) in a syllogism.[263] It can easily be given the form of a syllogism: "All inebriants are forbidden, wine from fruits other than grapes is an inebriant. Therefore,

---

242; see van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, pp. 382–394, for a summary of the devolopment of analogy in *kalām* theology.

261 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 371; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 332; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 161; Ibn Taymiyya, Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad: Risālat al-Qiyās, in: *Risālatān fī Maʿnā al-qiyās li-shaykhay al-islām Ibn Taymiyya wa-Ibn al-Qayyim*, ed. by ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Maḥmūd ʿUmar, ʿAmmān 1407/1987, pp. 11–89, here p. 14; Haqq, Sirajul: Ibn-Taimiyya's Conception of Analogy and Consensus, in: *Islamic Culture* 17 (1943), pp. 77–87; Jokisch, Benjamin: *Islamisches Recht in Theorie und Praxis. Analyse einiger kaufrechtlicher Fatwas von Taqī'd-Dīn Aḥmad b. Taymiyya*, Berlin 1996; Madjid, *Ibn Taymiyya on Kalām and Falsafa*, pp. 106–111; Al-Matroudi, Abdul Hakim I.: *The Ḥanbalī School of Law and Ibn Taymiyyah. Conflict or Conciliation*, London and New York 2006, pp. 72–74; Rapoport, Yossef: Ibn Taymiyya's Radical Legal Thought. Rationalism, Pluralism and the Primacy of Intention, in: Yossef Rapoport and Shahab Ahmed (eds.): *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, Karachi 2010 (he elaborates on *qiyās* and other juridical methods of Ibn Taymiyya, such as *istiḥsān* and the judgment according to *maṣlaḥa* and mentions further studies on Ibn Taymiyya's legal thought; I thank him for providing me with his article when it was in press).

262 In one passage in *al-Radd* (p. 116; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 230–231; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 44–45), Ibn Taymiyya does not explain *nabīdh*; elsewhere, however, he does, subsuming in it the wine made from the grains *(ḥubūb*) of wheat (*ḥinṭa*), barley (*shaʿīr*), rice (*ruzz*), or other things (*al-Radd*, p. 372; in al-Suyūṭī's abridgement, this clarification is missing; here he compares simply *khamr* [without the specification *al-ʿinab*] with *nabīdh*). For the usage of this inference in other of Ibn Taymiyya's writings, see Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 57–58, n. 146. See also above, chapter 10.1.

263 Ibn Taymiyya uses the four terms (*al-Radd*, pp. 116, 212, 372; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 230, 300, 333, Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 45, 127, 162); see below, n. 274.

wine from fruits other than grapes is forbidden."[264] This is exactly the example al-Ghazālī had already used.[265]

This rival seems to have inspired Ibn Taymiyya also in view of his interpretation of the balance spoken of in the Koran.[266] Still, whereas al-Ghazālī declared that logic, i. e., syllogistics in general, was that balance, Ibn Taymiyya warns in one place against understanding the balance as Greek logic[267] and states in another that it is "not limited to Greek logic."[268] This second, more moderate attitude is probably due to the fact that he himself explicitly identifies the balance with the inference (*qiyās*) itself, "be it the juridical (*al-sharʿī*) or the rational (*al-ʿaqlī*) one,"[269] that is with juridical analogy and syllogism. In another instance, he calls the balance the "common factor," the "universal quality in the mind" analogy, to which categorical syllogism and immediate insight can lead.[270] He thereby again appears as a "moder-

264 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 116 (al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 230–231; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 44–45; Heer, Ibn Taymiyah's Empiricism, p. 111; Ibn Taymiyya does not explicitly mention the conclusion; in the conclusion of my article "Ibn Taymīyyas Kritik", p. 211, I erroneously wrote "Trauben-Wein" instead of "Nabīdh-Wein"); see also above, n. 262. The co-exclusive inference would be to find a case where wine is inebriant, but not forbidden or where wine is not inebriant but forbidden (van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, p. 384).

265 Al-Ghazālī, *Kitāb al-Mustaṣfā*, pp. 38–39.

266 Al-Ghazālī dedicated a whole book to the proof that God taught man the main rules of syllogism in the Koran. See Rudolph, Die Neubewertung der Logik, pp. 86–88. For a partial translation into English, see al-Ghazālī: *Deliverance from Error. An Annotated Translation of "al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl" and Other Relevant Works of al-Ghazālī,* transl. by Richard Joseph McCarthy, Louisville 1980, Appendix III *al-Qisṭāṣ al-mustaqīm* ("the Correct Balance"), pp. 245–283. The title of the book *al-Qisṭāṣ al-mustaqīm* explicitly refers to the Koranic verse (17:35), where God urges man to give full measure and to weigh with the just balance.

267 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 373; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 333; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 162.

268 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 383; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 335; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 164.

269 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 373; it is not included in al-Suyūṭī's abridgement.

270 Ibn Taymiyya refers to two other verses of the Koran, namely 42:17 and 42:25, where God says that He sent down the scripture and the balance (*al-mīzān*) (*al-Radd*, p. 371; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 332; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 161; Madjid, *Ibn Taymiyya on Kalām and Falsafa*, p. 108 (he inadvertently referred to *al-Radd*, pp. 271–273, instead of pp. 371–373)). Ibn Taymiyya does not mention al-Ghazālī's work, but it is likely that he had the latter's interpretation of the balance in mind – firstly because of its usual interpretation as "justice," as he himself states, and secondly because he warns against under-

ate realist" and not a "nominalist." The following quotations support these assumptions:

> One of the greatest attributes of the intellect is the apprehension of similitude and difference. Once the intellect conceives of two similar things, it knows that they are alike, and thus it applies the same judgement to both of them, such as, for example when it observes two pools of water, two piles of soil, or two portions of air. The intellect thus applies a universal judgement (*ḥukm kullī*) to the common factor.[271]

Ibn Taymiyya then states in the course of his explanation of the co-extensive and the co-exclusive analogy:

> God said that He sent down the Balance just as He revealed the Book, so that people may uphold equity (*qisṭ*). The means by which similar qualities and measures are known belongs to the Balance. And so does that by which differences among different things are known.[272]

As an example, he mentions the prohibition of grape wine and what resembles it in respect to the reason for the prohibition[273] and concludes that

> the common factor – namely, the middle term[274] – is the Balance[275] which God has revealed into our hearts so that we may weigh one (thing) and treat it as the other. By so doing we will not draw a distinction between two similar things. Valid inference (*al-qiyās al-ṣaḥīḥ*) thus stems from

---

standing the balance as being Greek logic or at least as being limited to Greek logic.

271 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 371; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 332; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 160. The Arabic expressions in angular brackets in this and the following quotations are mine. Otherwise I follow Hallaq's translation.

272 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 371; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 332–333; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 161–162.

273 Al-Suyūṭī abridged the passage concerning the prohibition (see above, n. 262).

274 Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 162, translates *al-ʿilla* here as "middle term", and Ibn Taymiyya definitively uses it also in that sense (see Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 364; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 331; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 159) and not only in the sense of *ratio legis*. In this case, he obviously uses it in both senses.

275 He repeats this identification a little later in even more explicit terms: "The Balance is the sound inference (*al-aqyisa al-ṣaḥīḥa*) that encompasses equating two similar things and differentiating between two dissimilar things, whether the form of that inference is a categorical syllogism or an analogy. But the forms of analogy are the source, and they are more perfect [than the syllogism]. The balance is the common factor, namely the middle term (*jāmiʿ*)." (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 383; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 335; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 164).

> the justice God has commanded. He who knows the universal without knowing the particular will have possession of the Balance only. The purpose of the Balance is to weigh those matters existing extramentally, for if it were not for their particulars the universals would not be considered (*fal-kulliyyāt law lā juzʾiyyātuhā al-muʿayyanāt*[276] *lam yakun bihā iʿtibār*) – just as without the weighable objects the Balance would be needless. There is no doubt that if a weighable object is weighed against another object by means of the Balance – which is the common, universal quality in the mind (*al-waṣf al-mushtarak al-kullī*[277] *fī al-ʿaql*) – such weighing will be more perfect than that in which any of the individual particulars present in the mind is weighed in the absence of another.[278]

Ibn Taymiyya thus leaves no doubt that he considers the common factors to be the intramental universals. Besides their intramental existence, the common factors must, however, also have an extramental existence in the particulars, otherwise reason would be unable to grasp them. And Ibn Taymiyya clearly admits this here by speaking of "the universals' particulars."

Thus, Ibn Taymiyya reveals himself again as a "moderate realist." Like the Peripatetics, he also shares the conviction that the certainty of the conclusion is not dependent on the form, but on the premises, i. e., the subject matter.[279]

Nevertheless, Ibn Taymiyya tries to overcome the logicians by declaring their most cherished judgment, the first figure of the categorical syllogism, to be superfluous inasmuch as it would be conceivable by innate intelligence (*fiṭra*) and thus be immediate knowledge.[280] Despite the fact that rendering the first figure of the categorical syllogism as superfluous would render analogy superfluous as well – since the common factor can, in his view, be grasped without inference by

276 Al-Suyūṭī has *al-muʿayyana* (*Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 333).

277 Al-Suyūṭī has *al-kullī al-mushtarak* (ibid., p. 333).

278 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 372; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 333; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 162.

279 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 116, 121; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 230, 234; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 44–45, n. 60, 50, n. 67. See, for instance, Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, vol. 1, pp. 460–472; Avicenna, *Remarks and Admonitions*, pp. 148–151; al-Ghazālī, *Miʿyār al-ʿilm*, pp. 180–181.

280 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 297 (*al-fiṭra tuṣawwiru al-qiyās al-ṣaḥīḥ min ghayr taʿlīm*; he is speaking here of the first figure syllogism), 167, 200, 293–294; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 314, 266, 289, 313; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 141–142, n. 254, 88, n. 136, 114, n. 189, 141, n. 253.

people with good mental conditions[281] – he again forces an open door. One of his main opponents in logic, Ibn Sīnā, also held that the middle term of a syllogism, i. e., what is usually apprehended through an act of inference, can be an immediate knowledge. Ibn Sīnā calls the mental power that is able to spontaneously grasp the middle term at some instance *fiṭra* and at another *ḥads* ("intuition").[282] In addition, he considers it a kind of infallible understanding and thus superior to reflection, which can err,[283] a view that Ibn Taymiyya, again, advocates.[284] In fact, by the 13th century, *ḥads* and the *ḥadsiyyāt* had gained many supporters, although *ḥads* seems not to have been "a tool of scientific investigation that is to be honed and applied in order to solve problems, but rather a way of explaining, *post facto*, how a thinker hit upon the solution to a difficult problem."[285]

Ibn Taymiyya, too, regards *ḥads* as a means of apprehension providing evident, certain knowledge. He seems, however, to prefer not to count it as another kind of perception, and he apparently nowhere identifies it *expressis verbis* with *fiṭra*. Instead, he classes the *ḥadsiyyāt* as an experience, admitting that one might say that empirical matters relate "to the *very acts* of the experiencers," whereas the *ḥadsiyyāt* relate to experiences that are out of the reach of one's own acts, such

281 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 373–374; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 330; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 159; see also above, chapter 10.2.

282 Dimitri Gutas has translated and scrutinized Ibn Sīnā's many statements on *ḥads*, which all amount to equating the knowledge of the immediate grasping of the middle terms with *ḥads* ("intuition"), be it in "an infinitesimally short period of time" or "all at once" (*Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, pp. 159–176, esp. 163, 165); see Langermann who assumes that the slight difference in time did not concern the advocates of that way of understanding (Langermann, Tzvi: Ibn Kammūna and the "New Wisdom" of the Thirteenth Century, in: *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 15 (2005), pp. 277–327, 288–289, 292). For Ibn Sīnā's identification of *ḥads* with *fiṭra*, see Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, p. 170 and Gobillot, *La conception originelle*, pp. 128–129).

283 Ibn Sīnā, *De Anima*, p. 250; Davidson, Herbert A.: *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes on Intellect. Their Cosmologies, Theories of the Active Intellect, and Theories of Human Intellect*, New York and Oxford 1992, pp. 101–102; Langermann, Ibn Kammūna, p. 288.

284 It is questionable, however, whether Ibn Taymiyya would have agreed to count this immediate understanding among the "powers of prophethood" and to regard it as a "sacred power (*quwwa qudsiyya*) that is the highest rank of human powers", as Ibn Sīnā does (*De Anima*, p. 250).

285 Langermann, Ibn Kammūna, p. 296.

as the connection between the sun and the shapes of the moon.[286] Ibn Taymiyya, in fact, not did reduce *fiṭra* to "intuition" (*ḥads*) in the sense of the immediate grasping of the middle term. As a broader concept of "innate intelligence," it bears for him the meaning of "immediate insight"[287] into knowledge in general, be it scientific or religious.

There are, however, fundamental differences between Ibn Taymiyya's apprehension of analogy and categorical syllogism and their understanding by his enemies, some of which are mentioned in the following. Most followers of al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā regarded the celestial, active intellect (*al-ʿaql al-faʿāl*) as the "giver of the forms" (*wāhib al-ṣuwar*) to all matters in the sublunar world and a communicator of principal, abstract thoughts to the human mind.[288] For Ibn Sīnā, it is also the provider of the middle term and the conclusions to the human mind by *ḥads*.[289] Ibn Taymiyya, by contrast, vigorously rejects the whole theory of the celestial intellects and of the active intellect as the creator of sublunary forms and of the universal knowledge in the mind.[290] Furthermore, whereas for the Peripatetics the middle term in the categorical syllogism has to be an essential attribute, for Ibn Taymiyya this is not a necessary condition. Although his critique of the real definition does not lead him to the conclusion that particular

286 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 93, 302 (very similar and clearer in idem, *Naqḍ al-manṭiq*, p. 202); al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 316; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 144 (I do not follow Hallaq in his translation of *al-ḥadsiyyāt takūn ʿan afʿālihim* as "the former are *about* their acts", but understand it as "the intuitions are out of the reach of their [the experiencers'] acts," because of Ibn Taymiyya's explanation in *al-Radd* on p. 302). The example of the explanation of the moon's light seems to have been often the single concrete example of intuitive scientific knowledge cited by the advocates of *ḥads* (Langermann, Ibn Kammūna, pp. 287, 289, 291). For a relation between *ḥads* and experience, see Langermann, Ibn Kammūna, pp. 296–299.

287 I was inspired to choose "insight" as a translation by Davidson's (*Alfarabi*, p. 99) and Langermann's (Ibn Kammūna, p. 288, n. 31) preference for it as an English equivalent for *ḥads*.

288 Davidson, Herbert A.: Alfarabi and Avicenna on the Active Intellect, in: *Viator* 3 (1972) 109–178; idem, *Alfarabi*, see index, s. v. *active intellect*.

289 Davidson, *Alfarabi*, pp. 100–102.

290 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 102–106, 115; much shortened in: al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 220–221, 229; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 33, 43. He rebuts the theory of the originating power of the celestial spheres also in other writings, such as his tract about the philosopher's proof of God as the first cause, *Majmūʿat al-Fatāwā*, al-mujallad 17, Cairo, vol. 9, pp. 158–163 (see Madjid, *Ibn Taymiyya on Kalām and Falsafa*, pp. 158–181; Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 160).

things have no essences that make them belong to a species or genus (see chapters 10.1, 11.2), he also accepts attributes as common factors, which a Peripatetic would regard as accidental. This is a natural result of the equation of syllogism and analogy. The juridical analogy in particular often has premises given by a Koranic verse or a saying of the prophet Muḥammad, which Peripatetic logicians would not classify as essential attributes. Thus, jurists often take the faculty of upsetting good behavior as the *ratio legis* for the prohibition of alcoholic drinks other than grape wine, and Ibn Taymiyya does not deny but supports this;[291] upsetting good behavior is an attribute that might compromise many other things besides alcohol.

In further contrast to the logicians, Ibn Taymiyya held analogy in higher esteem than syllogism. He argues that in analogy there is always an original case of a particular, which makes it easier for the mind to understand the common universal.[292]

Another eminent disparity lies in the fact that Muslim philosophers regard syllogism as *the* way to establish God's existence, whereas Ibn Taymiyya denies to both kinds of inferences, syllogism and analogy, the ability to establish the knowledge of God and the prophecy (*ithbāt al-ʿilm bil-ṣāniʿ wal-nubuwwāt*) and acknowledges it only to inferences by signs or the *a fortiori* argument (see chapter 12).[293]

Still, for Ibn Taymiyya, the weakness of analogy and syllogism does not diminish their value. Ibn Taymiyya is convinced that "an authoritative wording of the prophets cannot be in conflict with a sound inference (*qiyās ṣaḥīḥ*), be it a juridical or a rational one."[294] Where there

291 Ibn Taymiyya also mentions it as a *ratio legis* (*al-Radd*, p. 372; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 333; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 162); see Bernand, Ḳiyās, p. 241.

292 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 364; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 331; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 159.

293 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 356; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 329; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 157–158. Ibn Taymiyya argues similarly in his *Risālat al-Qiyās* (p. 50) when he blames the philosophers and *kalām* theologians for their drawing of analogies between matters, such as the necessity of God and the necessity of the creatures, which, in fact, "impose the outmost difference." I share Jon Hoover's interpretation of this passage that "in matters of theological doctrine, Ibn Taymiyya argues that the juristic analogy is always invalid because it brings God and creatures into a relationship of direct comparison" (*Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 57).

294 *Fa-lā yakhtalifu nass thābit ʿan al-rasūl wa-qiyās ṣaḥīḥ – lā qiyās sharʿī* [analogy] *wa-lā ʿaqlī* [syllogism] (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 373; it is not included in al-Suyūṭī's abridgement); see his *Risālat al-Qiyās*, where he also states that what is in the Sharia cannot contradict the sound inference (p. 14); for further

seems to be a contradiction, there are three possibilities on the side of the wording (*naṣṣ*): either the indicant established on the basis of the wording is corrupt, or the wording itself is not authoritative, or the indicant is not in conformity with what it is meant to indicate. On the side of the inference, one or all of the premises can be corrupt. Ibn Taymiyya here explicitly refers to his *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql*.[295]

In fact, in order to save theology from philosophical inferences that are based on the common factor, Ibn Taymiyya would not have needed to deny the universals *in rebus*. He could have simply argued that syllogism is not fit for the investigation of God, just as juridical analogy is not fit for it, since God has no like and cannot be placed on an equal footing with other particulars. The reason for Ibn Taymiyya's rejection of syllogistic logic therefore seems to lie in his holistic view of the basis and consequences of Peripatetic reasoning.

12. Methods of Inferences Adopted from the Early *kalām* Theologians

There are other methods of inference that Ibn Taymiyya indeed adopts from the early *kalām* theologians.[296] He presents them as an ostensible challenge to the Peripatetic logicians, who restrict the methods of inference to syllogism, induction, and analogy[297] and who see these as

references, see Rapoport, Ibn Taymiyya's Radical Legal Thought, ch. Legal Theory. Correct Analogy and Qurʾānic Rationalism.

295 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 373 (the passage is not included in al-Suyūṭī's abridgement); see his slightly less differentiated position in the *Risālat al-Qiyās* (p. 14, translated and commented upon by Rapoport, Ibn Taymiyya's Radical Legal Thought, chapter: Legal Theory. Correct Analogy and Qurʾānic Rationalism, n. 261.)

296 They ressemble methods from Stoic logic. For parallels between the logic of the early *kalām* theologians and the stoics, see van Ess, Josef: The Logical Structure of Islamic Theology, in: Gustave Edmund von Grunebaum (ed.): *Logic in Classical Islamic Culture. First Giorgio Levi della Vida Biennial Conference; May 12, 1967*, Los Angeles, Wiesbaden 1970, pp. 21–50, here p. 27. Still, it is unclear whether Stoic logic and philosophy has been appropriated by Muslim theologians, see Gutas, Dimitri: Pre-Plotinian Philosophy in Arabic (other than Platonism and Aristotelianism). A Review of the Sources, in: *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt* 36 (1994), pp. 4939–4973, 4959–4962.

297 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 162; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 261–262; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 83, n. 126. See for instance Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wal-tanbīhāt*, vol. 1, pp. 365–369; Avicenna, *Remarks and Admonitions*, pp. 129–130.

the sole methods to prove God's existence. Ibn Taymiyya blames them for not taking into account inference by signs or indicators, wherein the existence of one particular entails the absence of the other and vice versa.[298] Ibn Taymiyya calls it "God's method of proof through signs" (*istidlāluhu taʿālā bil-āyāt*),[299] and considers it an immediate – that is a *fiṭrī* knowledge – insofar as the signs indicate the existence of one Creator.[300] He cites the examples that the existence of daylight indicates the rising of the sun (an inference which he supports also by God's signs in the Koran)[301] and that the rising of one star indicates the setting of another.[302] Here again, Ibn Taymiyya implicitly assumes that God has created a stable order of nature. He explains that this kind of inference could be understood either as that from a particular to a particular ("that from a particular rising of the sun there is a particular daylight") or as "an inference that proceeds from universal to universal" ("that from the genus of daylight there follows the genus of the rising of the sun").[303] By speaking of a "genus of daylight" and of the genus as a universal, Ibn Taymiyya is once again accepting what he otherwise so vehemently rejects.

The other kind of inference, which he blames his enemies for neglecting, is the *a fortiori* argument (*qiyās al-awlā*; *via eminentiae*), which was used, as Ibn Taymiyya emphasizes, by the early Muslims (*salaf*).[304] He also calls it "the method of the prophets" (*ṭarīqat al-anbiyāʾ*) and holds that "the rational, demonstrative inferences mentioned in the Koran" (*al-aqyisa al-ʿaqliyya al-burhāniyya al-madhkūra fī al-Qurʾān*) are of this kind.[305] In fact, this kind of inference is restricted to establish that God "has no like, and He

298 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 163–165; shortened: al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 262–264; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 84–85, n. 128–131.

299 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 151; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 252; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 71, n. 107.

300 Hallaq, Ibn Taymiyya on the Existence of God, pp. 58–60.

301 Koran (17:12); Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 151; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 252; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 71.

302 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, 163–165; shortened: al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 262–264; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 84–85, n. 128–131.

303 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 163; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 262; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 84.

304 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, p. 154; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 255; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, p. 74, n. 111. *A fortiori* arguments were used, for instance, by Ibn Ḥanbal (Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, pp. 59–60, n. 150).

305 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 150, 157; al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, p. 252; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 71–72, n. 106–107.

cannot be subsumed under a universal whose instances are equal; the unblemished perfection affirmed of others is, *a fortiori*, affirmed of Him."[306] Jon Hoover has shown that Ibn Taymiyya uses the *a fortiori* extensively to prove God's wisdom and justice and thereby often draws inferences from human characteristics to display what applies all the more to God.[307] Obviously, in Ibn Taymiyya's eyes "the *a fortiori* argument preserves the unlikeness between God and creatures, which univocal use of analogy and syllogism fails to respect."[308] Ibn Taymiyya, thus, displays here a nominalistic attitude suggesting that "there is no longer any similarity between the referents of identical names when they are particularized in the Creator and the creature apart from the very names themselves."[309] Both of these two methods – the inference by sign and the *a fortiori* argument – reveal that Ibn Taymiyya conceives the Koran as bearing in itself rational proofs drawn from or concerned with the *ontological* sphere. Analogy included (see chapter 11), Ibn Taymiyya thus identifies three methods of inference mentioned in the Koran.

In fact, as has already been demonstrated several times, Ibn Taymiyya gives priority to scripture if it conflicts with reason.[310] His arguments rest on the presumption that "reason has proved the truth of scripture and the necessity of accepting that which the messenger has related."[311] Therefore, it cannot be given priority, because that would contradict its own verdict of the truth of scripture. However, when Ibn Taymiyya asserts that "the message brought by the apostle conforms with sound

306 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Radd*, pp. 150, 154–157, 350–351; shortened: al-Suyūṭī, *Jahd al-qarīḥa*, pp. 252, 255; Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya*, pp. 71, 74–75.

307 Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, pp. 56–62, 130–135, 156 et passim (see index, s. v. *highest similitude*).

308 Ibid., p. 62. See Wael B. Hallaq, who distinguishes between analogy and the *a fortiori* argument, arguing that in the latter case, in contrast to analogy, the similarity is no prerequisite and that "the *a fortiori* argument is asyllogistic, and has virtually nothing to do with the category of analogical inferences" (Hallaq, Wael B.: *A History of Islamic Legal Theories. An Introduction to Sunnī* uṣūl al-fiqh, Cambridge 1997, p. 99)

309 Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, p. 51.

310 Heer, The Priority of Reason, pp. 190–191.

311 *Al-ʿaql qad dalla ʿalā ṣiḥḥat al-samʿ wa-wujūb qubūl mā akhbara bihi al-rasūl ṣallā Allāh ʿalayhi wa-sallam*, Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 1, p. 170; Heer, The Priority of Reason, pp. 190–191. (I follow his translation). See Michot, *Lettre à Abū l-Fidāʾ*, pp. 18, 57–58; Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy*, pp. 30–32.

tradition and uncontaminated reason,"[312] he does not limit reason to the teachings of the Koran and the soundly transmitted deeds and utterances of Muḥammad and his companions. "Uncontaminated" reason can lead man to truths independently from revelation, as has been shown in the last chapters. Still, revealed truths remain the touchstone. Scripture can correct errors, i. e., conclusions that reason has falsely considered true. Scripture is thus the ultimate measure of truth.

Conclusion

Ibn Taymiyya's critique of the rationalists, on the one hand, and his own epistemology, on the other, have to be seen against the background of the philosophical terminology, categories, and concepts which dominated wide realms of knowledge at his time. Many eminent *kalām* theologians and Sufis had accepted Peripatetic logic as *the* rational method to reach truth. Each of them, however, rejected philosophical metaphysical tenets that they saw in conflict with essential religious dogmas. Nonetheless, their own theories were more or less markedly imprinted by philosophy. Ibn Taymiyya did not escape this rule. As our glimpses into his struggle for and against reason have shown, intense preoccupation with the writings of the rationalists left distinct imprints on his terminology and on a key concept of his epistemology and ontology. Al-Dhahabī's somewhat polemical statement about Ibn Taymiyya's addiction to the poison of the philosophers was not completely ill-founded.

On the other hand, Ibn Taymiyya himself regarded logic and philosophy as a great danger, i. e., as a kind of poison that corrupts reason and distracts from what benefits the soul. He would certainly have vigorously disputed any influence of the philosophers and the late *kalām* theologians on his own doctrines, let alone being called a philosopher. In his two closely interlinked works, *al-Radd ʿalā al-manṭiqiyyīn* and *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wal-naql*, he harshly criticizes the philosophers' ways of reasoning and concept of reason in general, dismissing the claim that Peripatetic logic is the sole and universal means to truth.

Although he decisively denies its universality, his struggle against logic does not lead him to negate the existence of a universal canon

312 *Al-Qawl alladhī jāʾa bihi al-rasūl wa-huwa al-muwāfiq li-ṣaḥīḥ al-manqūl wa-ṣarīḥ al-ʿuqūl*, Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql*, vol. 9, p. 67.

of true understanding. Instead, he posits a faculty of true reasoning shared by all healthy human beings, the "clear reason" that is uncontaminated by Peripatetic logic, and he asserts the complete congruence of its knowledge with that of "sound religious tradition." Ibn Taymiyya gives no systematic account of his concept of "clear reason" and his epistemology in general, but his many statements concerning the immediate ways to true knowledge and the methods of cognition and inferences he considers capable of producing true knowledge allow a rather precise idea of it. If my understanding of some of the main features of Ibn Taymiyya's epistemology is right, the "uncontaminated reason" comprises more than mere "common sense." Indeed, Ibn Taymiyya diverges much less from some major Peripatetic epistemological principles and interlinked ontological assumptions than he often pretends to do, especially in the case of his overall denial of an extramental existence of the universals.

Yet Ibn Taymiyya himself states at the very beginning of his "Refutation of the Logicians" – right after his declaration that logic is superfluous – that he first considered the propositions of logic as true and then discovered the falseness of "some of them," thereby clearly stating that he holds others to be true, and he frankly admits it in regard to the form of the first figure of categorical syllogism. Other points of congruity, however, are not mentioned. Among the main ways that provide immediate, i. e., certain, evident knowledge, Ibn Taymiyya counts sense perceptions, experiences, multiply transmitted reports, and widespread propositions. By including widespread propositions among immediate knowledge, he regarded a broader spectrum of knowledge as certain than that regarded by the philosophers and some "later" *kalām* theologians.

But the remaining congruity is great. Ibn Taymiyya's belief in the truth of sense perception was, in principle, shared by friend and foe, although his conviction that concepts are formed directly by the senses was rather uncommon. In addition, Ibn Taymiyya left open some questions that were much disputed, namely how to conceive "errors of the senses" or false judgments about right perceptions. The distinction Ibn Taymiyya adopts between necessary knowledge and acquired knowledge had been made already in the early times of Muslim theology and was also held by the *falāsifa*. He is, however, closer to the "later" *kalām* theologians and the philosophers in asserting that certain knowledge is provided not only by sense apprehensions and multiply transmitted reports, but also by experience. He shares the conviction

that some people are able to form concepts and judgments by immediate insight, i.e., without cogitation. The most striking congruity between Ibn Taymiyya's teaching and the theories of the philosophers, however, is the tenet of an extramental existence of the universals in the particulars and man's principal capacity to gain a true concept of them. This adherence to "moderate realism" stands in sharp contrast to his nominalistic attitude of denying any extramental existence of universals whatsoever in the course of his direct rejection of the real definition and the rules of syllogistic logic.

The "moderate realism" he reveals while explaining the causality of empirical matters and the common factor (*ratio legis*/middle term) on which the judgments of the juridical analogy and the philosophical syllogism are built rests on two main assumptions he shares with the Peripatetics. The first assumption is that there are similar particulars that are bestowed with powers or essences that are specific to their genus or species; and second, that their powers to "act" or "react" can be hindered by impediments.

On the basis of other writings of Ibn Taymiyya, Jon Hoover has convincingly shown that Ibn Taymiyya tried to give man the responsibility for his destiny without denying God's omnipotence. Causality thus looks "natural" from the "human perspective" while it is "instrumental" from the "divine perspective." God can, if He wills, hinder a cause from producing its effect by creating an impediment, or He can neglect to perfect the combination of causes needed for the effect. Still, in view of His all-embracing wise purpose, He will not change the order and natures He fixed for His creatures. Against this background of "compatibilism," Ibn Taymiyya's denial of the existence of universals *in rebus* gains no plausibility. That a cause can be hindered from producing its effect by an impediment or an imperfect combination of causes is not alien to the philosophers' view of causality. The difference lies in the explanation of such an impediment, and on this level, there is doubtless a huge gap between Ibn Taymiyya's and the philosophers' view of God and the universe.

The denial of the existence of universals *in rebus* also gains no plausibility if one takes into account Ibn Taymiyya's doctrine that God has no like. Since analogy and syllogism are built on the parity of the subjects of their propositions, he excludes analogy and syllogism as means to prove God's existence or to make statements about Him and thus takes a nominalistic attitude. He assumes, however, that God's creatures are not unique in kind, i.e., that they share common attributes,

the universals *in rebus*, and that they can, therefore, be placed on an equal footing. Thus, it would have been enough to reject the rationalists' use of syllogism in the realm of theology.

His apologetic rebuttal of a key tenet of the Peripatetics that he himself adheres to is probably due to a holistic view that takes into account the foundations and the consequences of Peripatetic reasoning. It is thus comprehensible that he refers to the Koran as the authoritative source of the rational methods he himself counts among the demonstrative inferences, dismissing Peripatetic logic as a balance established by but one individual. In his two refutations, he expounds three kinds of such rational inferences that he considers capable of leading to true knowledge within and beyond the scope of revelation: 1) the inference by signs, 2) the *a fortiori* argument, and 3) the inference based on the "common factor," i. e., analogy and the first figure of the categorical syllogism. His equation of the last inference with the balance that God revealed to the hearts of men and spoke of in the Koran is reminiscent of al-Ghazālī's "correct balance". Yet whereas the latter identified this balance with Peripatetic syllogistics in general, Ibn Taymiyya warns against understanding it as such or at least underlines that it is "not limited to Greek logic," a statement that might reflect his acknowledgement of the search for the middle term. At any rate, the knowledge reached by these three kinds of inferences has an unmistakable corrective in the sound religious tradition, for God will not contradict himself. Outside the scope of revelation, there is no such absolute measure for true reasoning.

Seen as a whole, the philosophical elements in his own epistemology and the interlinked ontological theory should certainly not be overestimated. Ibn Taymiyya did not take over whole theories as such, but only tenets of his opponents that were functional for his own vision of God, man, and the universe. In regard to the deconstruction of the arguments of his rivals, Ibn Taymiyya is adroit. The fact that, in spite of their acuity, his refutations were apparently not much appreciated and transmitted outside the Ḥanbalī circles until the turn of the 19th to the 20th century is probably due to his extremist tendency to refute every theory and to offend everyone whom he considered guilty of not following his own, right path. Thereby, he discredited a wide range of theological, philosophical, and mystical reasoning about the divine world in his time and for many centuries to come.

Islamic Theology, Philosophy and Law

Debating Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya

Edited by
Birgit Krawietz
and Georges Tamer

in collaboration with
Alina Kokoschka

De Gruyter

ISBN 978-3-11-028534-5
e-ISBN 978-3-11-028540-6
ISSN 1862-1295

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A CIP catalogue record for this book has been applied for at the Library of Congress.

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über http://dnb.dnb.de abrufbar.

© 2013 Walter de Gruyter GmbH, Berlin/Boston

Druck: Hubert & Co. GmbH und Co. KG, Göttingen
∞ Gedruckt auf säurefreiem Papier

Printed in Germany

www.degruyter.com