

SOME RARE EAST EUROPEAN BOOKS

on the Bible, Semitology, Ancient Near East
and the Mediterranean Archaeology
available from

The Enigma Press, ul. Borsucza 3/58, 30-408 Kraków, Poland

E-mail: zjkapera@vela.filg.uj.edu.pl

II

13. Rudolf MEYER, *Gegensinn und Mehrdeutigkeit in der althebräischen Wort- und Begriffsbildung*, Berlin 1979, 8*, pp. 31. Paper. USD 6.00
14. Lubor MATOUŠ, Marie MATOUŠOWA-RAJMOVÁ, *Kappadokische Keilschrifttafeln mit Siegeln aus den Sammlungen der Karlsuniversität in Prag*, Prag 1984, small 4*, pp. 186, ills. Bound. USD 60.00
15. Kazimierz MICHĄŁOWSKI, *Opera minora*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1990, in big 8*, pp. 891. Bound. [Collection of all essays of K. M. from the period 1926-1960 in French, English, German and Polish concerning the Mediterranean archaeology, especially the Polish excavations in Egypt, Nubia and Syria]. USD 80.00
16. Kazimierz MICHĄŁOWSKI, Michał GAŁIKOWSKI, eds., *Studia Palmyreńskie / Études palmyréniennes*, vol. VIII, Warszawa 1985, 8*, pp. 164, illustrated. Paper. [Essays on Palmyre in English and French]. Price: USD 20.00. Set: volumes 1-8, USD 150.00 [some contributions in the series also in Polish].
17. Peter NAGEL, *Die Thomaspsalmen des koptisch-manichäischen Psalmenbuch*, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, Berlin 1980, 8*, pp. 143. Paper. Price: USD 20.00
18. M. NOWACZYK, Z. STACHOWSKI, eds., *Language - Religion - Culture*. In Memory of Professor Witold Tyloch, Warsaw 1992, 8*, pp. 104. Paper. Price: USD 12.00
19. PALESTINSKIY SBORNIK, vol. 29 (92), *Istoriya i filologiya* [in Russian: Palestinian Studies; French summaries], Leningrad 1987, big 8*, pp. 200. Paper. Price: USD 18.00
20. A. V. PAYKOV A, *Legendy i skazaniya v pamjatnikach siriyskoy agiografii* [in Russian: Legends and Tales of the Syrian Hagiography], [= PALESTINSKIY SBORNIK vol. 30 (93)], Leningrad 1990, big 8*, pp. 141. Price: USD 18.00
21. Ryszard RUBINKIEWICZ, *L'Apocalypse d'Abraham en vieux slave*. Introduction, texte critique, traduction et commentaire par..., Lublin 1987, big 8*, pp. 288 [including photographic copy of the manuscript B (Sin. 211) on pp. 227-256]. Paper. USD 35.00
22. SEMITOLOGICHESKIY STUDII. [Vol. III]. *Studia Semitica*, Tbilisi 1987, big 8*, pp. 144. Paper. [Essays in Georgian and Russian on Semitic linguistics and Caraim inscriptins]. Paper. USD 20.00

Attention: postage and packing included in price of books.

FOLIA ORIENTALIA

VOL. 34

1998

PL ISSN 0015-5675

RUTH MAS

University of Toronto*

QIYĀS: A STUDY IN ISLAMIC LOGIC

Once Islam's metaphysical doctrines were firmly grounded within the Ash'arite school (*kalām*), the subsequent discussions which flourished provided an exegetical forum concerning the proper application of the Greek syllogism. The Aristotelian syllogism bestowed a degree of refinement upon Islamic thought hitherto unknown. Consequently, the adaptation of syllogistic logic into the monotheistic structure of Islamic thought should be considered in the context of the theologically accepted occasionalist and atomistic philosophy of the Ash'arites. It was a juxtaposition that bore the earmarks of polemical disputes concerning the proper application or understanding of Greek logic and, more specifically, the Aristotelian syllogism. These discussions were the result of the theologically motivated defense of the concept of divine omnipotence that solely actuated existence, events, miracles and their causal links. It follows, then, that the Ash'arites did not accept the doctrine of natural causation where phenomenal acts proceeded from a *thing's* quiddity. In their view, action could only belong to a voluntary agent, God. Causal efficacy resided solely with God's divine will and contingent atoms and accidents were created *ex nihilo*. Thus, no causal uniformity in nature was inherently possible.

The scope of logic and science, however, lay outside the realm of occasionalist and atomist views, but was nevertheless attractive to some of the thinkers of the time. Consequently, attempts were made to incorporate logic into the "workings" of jurisprudence and thus expand its application. There remained the task of determining the proper limits and application of

* I would like to extend my gratitude to Wael B. Hallaq and Jeffrey H. Sims for their close readings of earlier versions of this paper.

the syllogism so as to define and categorize the term *qiyās* (a method of inference). All of this was attempted under the questionable notion that logic could remain doctrinally neutral and, at the same time, could be used to the advantage and defense of religion.¹ Eventually, the supposed neutrality of logic was vehemently called into question.

The use of analogy formed part of the Qur'ānically derived juridical system. Complications arose once the syllogism was introduced. Suddenly, metaphysical assumptions were questioned; this gave rise to the ambiguous relationship between analogy and the syllogism especially when attempting to define *qiyās*. Apprehensive of the fact that most modern scholars of Islamic law have translated *qiyās* as analogy, Wael B. Hallaq has argued that a variety of arguments surrounding this term have been suppressed, and that translating "analogy" for *qiyās* is not accurate: "*Qiyās* thus cannot be given the fixed definition of analogy. Instead, it should be regarded as a relative term whose definition and structure vary from one jurist to another."² Such an error is understandable since analogy (also a form of inference) has been subsumed under *qiyās* and was the only argument that was 'universally embraced' by Sunnī jurists.³ *Qiyās*, denotes a way of inferring something from another, and is derived from the logical sciences which embraces both the syllogism and analogy. The concern here is to determine the central method by which juridical *qiyās* was endowed with "a wider definition as to include formal arguments".⁴

We will trace the introduction of the syllogism and the problems posed by its practical application to three thinkers: the philosopher Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī (d. 950), the theologian/jurist Abū-Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), and the Ḥanbalī jurist Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1263). Al-Fārābī is considered the first and greatest commentator on Aristotelian logic, a logician in his own right. Because he is instrumental in helping to introduce Aristotelian thought to Islamic literature, his work will proffer a point of departure for our other two thinkers who, themselves, provide the focal points of this discussion. Following al-Fārābī, al-Ghazālī recognized the dichotomy existing

¹ Michael E. Marmura, "Ghazālī's Attitude to the Secular Sciences and Logic" in *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science*, G.F. Hourani, ed. (Albany 1975) p. 101.

² Wael B. Hallaq, "Non-Analogical Arguments in Sunni Juridical Qiyās," *Arabica* 36 (1989) 305.

³ Ibid., p. 288.

⁴ Ibid., p. 306.

between logical and onto-logical realms, and attempted to relate Ash'arite theology and jurisprudence to Greek syllogistics without relying too heavily on the notion of causality. The uncomfortable discrepancy that arose in Ghazālī's thought was unavoidable. Finally, we shall turn to Ibn Taymiyya who is perhaps the most polemical thinker of the three. His astute attack on the Aristotelian syllogism and the metaphysical contents which accompanied it were echoed several centuries later by the Scottish philosopher David Hume (d. 1776), albeit in a different metaphysical context.

AL-FĀRĀBĪ

The first expositors of Hellenized Arabic logic were known as the "School of Baghdad", a group of Syrian Christian scholars/logicians. During the 9th and 10th century they gradually introduced Greek texts into the Islamic environment, mingling philosophical techniques with the authoritative (revealed) stature of the Qur'ān. Al-Fārābī, the only Muslim member of the "School of Baghdad," carries the notable distinction of having brought Greek thinking closer to Islamic understanding, which, then pivoted around the codification and clarification of Qur'ānic expression. As an inheritor of Aristotelian logical treatises from the Syrian environment, al-Fārābī was first and foremost a commentator of Aristotelian texts;⁵ his commentary on Aristotle's *Organon* served as the work of reference for other Muslim scholars.

Al-Fārābī's work, however, goes further in analogical reasoning than does Aristotle's own. In fact, as Nicholas Rescher indicates,⁶ al-Fārābī produces unique ideas not present in the Aristotelian original, and was dedicated to the inclusion of analogical inferences (transference). He explains that, "[i]n place of Aristotle's stress upon scientific syllogism" we find that

⁵ For example, "kitāb al-tawṭī'a fī 'l-manṭiq" (Preparation for Logic) in *al-manṭiq 'inda al-Fārābī*, Rafīq al-'Ajam, ed. (Beirut 1985) and "kitāb al-madkhal ilā 'l-manṭiq" (Introduction to Logic). For translation and discussions of several of al-Fārābī's logical commentaries also refer to D. M. Dunlop, "Al-Fārābī's *Eisagoge*," *The Islamic Quarterly* 3 (1956) 117-138; "Al-Fārābī's Introductory *Risalah* on Logic," *The Islamic Quarterly* 3 (1956-57) 224-235; "Al-Fārābī's Paraphrase of the *Categories* of Aristotle" *The Islamic Quarterly* 4 (1958) 168-197. For an extensive bibliography on al-Fārābī, see Nicholas Rescher, *The Development of Arabic Logic* (Pittsburgh 1963) pp. 122ff.

⁶ Al-Fārābī's *Kitāb al-qiyās al-ṣaghīr* (English translation: *Al-Farabi's Short Commentary on Aristotle's Prior Analytics*, Nicholas Rescher, tr. [Pittsburgh 1963]).

the emphasis is put upon the "syllogistic arts", and we are given elaborated defenses of "laxity" (or generosity) in the acceptance of syllogistic premisses.⁷ Al-Fārābī's original contribution to analogical inference lay in his systematization of inductive reasoning under the rubric of the categorical syllogism.⁸ His intent was to raise the strength of analogy to that of a first order Aristotelian syllogism, i.e. a syllogism which does not deviate from the Greek rendering of two premises, a middle term, and the production of new knowledge which in turn may serve as a premise for further inferences.

Drawing general or universal conclusions from premises generated by the scientific study of experience bodes well with the analogical framework of likewise generating general conclusions from particular instances of human experience—foreshadowing the methods of induction not yet fully developed in Western philosophical history. This commensurability between the formal syllogism and analogy is defended by al-Fārābī when he uses what he calls "inference by transfer" or, as he notes of the *mutakallimūn*, "inference from evidence to the absent",⁹ or, as Kant would have it, from the phenomenal to the noumenal realms. The act of transference requires that the syllogism have a middle term, what analogy calls similarity. Al-Fārābī further contends that, "[i]f we are determined to have the 'transfer' be correct, then it is necessary that the 'matter' which is similar in the two [compared] objects be investigated."¹⁰ He presents a case depicting the (evident) createdness of animals or plants with the (absent) notion of createdness in the sky and the stars, and sets out to establish not only a middle term that denotes similarity, but one which also speaks of relevance.¹¹ If both similarity and relevance obtain, then analogical inference takes on the form and strength of a first order syllogism, and a causal connection is established.¹²

However, problems still arise when similarity might appear to obtain, but, in fact, does not. When this happens, analogical reasoning contains at least one faulty premise that has not been detected by those forwarding an analogical argument. Al-Fārābī refers to this distinction as the method of "raising" whereby conclusions are raised but do not obtain upon further logical

⁷ Ibid., p. 40.

⁸ Ibid., p. 43.

⁹ Ibid., p. 93ff.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 95. Square brackets are Rescher's.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 94.

¹² Ibid., p. 96.

investigation.¹³ However, leaving room for a legitimate analogy, al-Fārābī then speaks of the method of "finding".¹⁴ 'Simply stated, al-Fārābī reminds the reader that, "[i]f one establishes a judgement by 'raising' it does not necessarily result that when one 'finds' this thing [which is 'raised'] one will 'find' the judgement [to be true]; rather it is the converse of this that is necessitated, namely if one 'finds' the judgement, one 'finds' [also] the thing [in question]".¹⁵ In this sense, al-Fārābī anticipates harsh criticisms against the analogy that he does not necessarily accept.

Legally, inductive and analogical arguments were converted into syllogisms making the cause or similarity in analogy the middle term in the syllogism",¹⁶ which compounded the difficulty of defining and determining the exact limits of *qiyās*. The force of the inferences made in an analogy is identical to those of a first figure syllogism because the similarity ('*illa*') is the subject term in the major premise and the predicate term in the minor.¹⁷

If the '*illa*' is absent when the judgement is absent...and present when the judgment is present...the '*illa*' is all the more true. If one removes animality, for example, from a thing, then one removes from this thing the property of being a man. But it is not necessarily true that if one finds an animal he also finds a man. Rather the converse is true; if one finds a man it necessarily follows that one finds an animal.... To establish the truthfulness of a matter by the method of non-existence, it necessarily follows that when the '*illa*' is found the judgement is also found.¹⁸

In order to ensure valid conclusions from an analogy (following this reasoning) the similarity ('*illa*'), has to be relevant to the two cases; the judgements must be true of any case if it has the same '*illa*'; the '*illa*' itself must be found and verified in each of the cases considered; it must be established that the judgement exists in all cases which possess an '*illa*' in common.¹⁹

¹³ Ibid., p. 104.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 104.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 103.

¹⁶ Wael B. Hallaq, "The Development of Logical Structure in Sunni Legal Theory," *Der Islam* 64 (1987) 43, n. 4.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 49.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 49.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 50.

According to Hallaq, al-Fārābī's importance lies in the fact that he placed heavy emphasis on the necessity and importance of the 'illa in all inferences: "For a complete inference and for achieving a high degree of certainty he insists that an 'illa must accompany the judgement."²⁰ This became the standard point of departure for many of the Sunni legalists that followed.

Al-Fārābī's marriage of analogy to the first order syllogism exists within a neo-Platonic and Aristotelian framework of metaphysics, replete with positive inclinations concerning the notions of cause and effect, and its pedagogical import for both logic and onto-logic. Thus, his legal concerns cross both «Islamic and Greek boundaries at their very source, and are less tied to simply the *a priori* sensibilities demanded by the more literal readings of the Qur'ān that were adhered to by the *mutakallimūn*. Al-Fārābī managed to transform analogy into a first-figure syllogism, setting a standard, so to speak, by which the legal process could be developed. However, the unfolding study of logic in Islam did not go unnoticed. Already the seeds of opposition were planted by the religious orthodoxy and later, al-Fārābī would become the focus of attacks directed against the "School of Baghdad".²¹

AL-GHAZĀLĪ

The growth of logic in the 10th century was concordant with the advance of the medical sciences and consequently it gained support with a wider audience. Al-Fārābī had maintained, in accordance with his Neo-Platonic Aristotelian emanative position, that Allah was the God of metaphysical (i.e. causal) statements and that the Qur'ān had to be interpreted metaphorically. This, along with discussions on logic and other sciences, was nonetheless accused of being un-Islamic,²² and the theological milieu remained highly

²⁰ Ibid., p. 50.

²¹ Al-Fārābī wrote a defense of logic based on the sayings of the Prophet. For the opposition of Muslims to Greek logic see Ignaz Goldhizer, "The Attitude of Orthodox Islam Toward the 'Ancient Sciences'" in *Studies in Islam*, Merlin L. Swartz, tr. and ed. (New York, 1981) pp. 185-215. For an examination of the polemic against the "School of Baghdad" see Solomon Pines, "La philosophie orientale d'Avicenne et sa polémique contre les Baghdadiens," in *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age* 19 (1952) 5-37.

²² Michael E. Marmura, "Ghazālī's Attitude to the Secular Sciences and Logic," p. 101. See also Marmura's English/Arabic parallel translation of Ghazālī's *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa* (*The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, [Provo, UT 1997]).

antagonistic to the Greek "foreign"/heretical sciences. Al-Ghazālī seems to have contributed to the Ash'arite school of *kālām* that supported occasionalist and atomist views of reality.²³ In doing so they rejected the concept of natural causation (i.e., arguing from cause to effect and from effect to cause) that maintained that phenomenal acts advance from a thing's quiddity. The Ash'arites held the occasionalistic view that only divine will held the power to cause. It was in this manner, that they upheld the concept of divine omnipotence.²⁴

Al-Ghazālī's position was largely formed by both his philosophical preparation and his theological convictions. Despite his affiliation with the Ash'arite school of *kālām*, and the more dogmatic confines of Sunnī jurisprudence, his thought still reflects a strong involvement with Greek Aristotelian formal logic. Naturally, al-Ghazālī as a jurist/theologian was very much interested in the logical questions that legal discussions could comprise. The attraction that the foreign sciences held for al-Ghazālī was in direct relation to their usefulness in furthering the cause of theology.

Al-Ghazālī raised the possibility that these sciences could be demonstrably true and that they might have some bearing on religion, i.e., that when the specialized sciences (mainly logic and physics) offered demonstrations which conflicted with the literal readings of scripture, the latter must alter their status to one of metaphor.²⁵ And because al-Ghazālī held the view that God could not actuate something self-contradictory, literal readings should therefore be subjected to demonstrable proofs where and when they appear to exist. For example, when dealing with some of the well established facts of cosmology such as eclipses he writes: "[t]hus, when one who studies these demonstrations and ascertains their proofs, deriving thereby information about the times of the two eclipses, their extent and duration, is told that this is contrary to religion, *he will not suspect this science, but only religion.*"²⁶

However, al-Ghazālī also wanted to maintain that logic and the sciences were doctrinally neutral, particularly where the world of natural causation was concerned, and especially where they attempted to redefine the ontological stature of the Qur'ān. He states: "As for their logical sciences, none of these relates to religion either by way of denial or by affirmation. They

²³ Ibid., p. 100.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 100.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 101.

²⁶ Marmura, ed. and tr., *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, p. 6. Italics mine.

are no more than the study of the methods or proof and standards of reasoning, the conditions of the premises of demonstration and the manner of their ordering, the conditions of correct definition and the manner of its construction.”²⁷

In rejecting “the principle of necessary causal connection” which was “the cornerstone of Aristotelian demonstrative science,” al-Ghazālī entered into a paradox viz. the logical sciences to which he was committed.²⁸ How can logic and science adjudicate scriptures, but remain doctrinally neutral in its first principles? Marmura has argued that, in reality, al-Ghazālī’s intent was not to indicate that demonstrative logic is philosophically uncommitted. Instead, his purpose lay in the impossible attempt to prove that its philosophical commitment is not given to an Aristotelian metaphysic. Thus, “Ghazālī’s position, if pursued, destroys his...thesis.”²⁹ He adds:

If Ash‘arite causal theory is the true one, then it alone can justify the epistemological claims of natural science. Thus demonstrative natural science becomes doctrinally committed and—astounding as this may appear—committed to Ash‘arite occasionalism.³⁰

Al-Ghazālī was evidently reacting against what was then the well established refusal on the part of the *uṣūlists* of the time, to integrate useful aspects of formal logic (i.e., the syllogism) into law. Attempting to avoid a contradictory position where logic is concerned, al-Ghazālī maintained that logic could be disengaged from the heretical metaphysical framework in which it was imbedded and be used as a tool or method in the realm of *uṣūl al-fiqh*. Whether he did so successfully or not is questionable.

The answer given by al-Ghazālī is motivated by theological reasons first and foremost.³¹ It is based on the apparent eternal nature of the natural world

²⁷ Marmura, “Ghazālī’s Attitude to the Secular Sciences and Logic” op. cit. 103. For the original in Arabic, see *al-Munqidh min al-Dalāl*, F. Jabre, ed. (Beirut 1959) p. 22.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 102.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 109. Ghazālī runs into this paradox in the 17th Discussion (On Causality and Miracles) of his *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa*. Here he defends two different causal theories that allow the possibility of miracles while ignoring that one precludes the other.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 109.

³¹ Michael E. Marmura, “Ghazālī and Demonstrative Science,” *Journal of the*

implied by emanationist (causal) theories which attempt either to lower God’s eternity to the finite stature of the world, or raise the finitude of the world to God’s eternity, much in the way al-Fārābī attempted to move from “evidence to absence”. Both would be contradictory statements about the sovereign nature of God as stated in the Qur’ān. Instead, al-Ghazālī attempts to jettison the metaphysical aspects of Greek thinking, while harmonizing its logical tools with Ash‘arite legalism: a questionable application of logic.

Al-Ghazālī’s reformulation of the Greeks’ tools of reasoning (*qiyās/syllogism*) relates primarily to matters of law which denote items given to “less clear speech” as opposed to “clear speech”.³² These ambiguous legal aspects might suggest (1) finding a text relevant to the new case in the Qur’ān or Ḥadīth; (2) discerning the essential similarities or *ratio legis* (called *‘illat al-ḥukm*) between two cases; (3) allowing for differences (*furuq*) and determining that they can be discounted; and (4) extending or interpreting the *ratio legis* to cover the new case. But under the auspicious abilities of *qiyās* that bore some affinity with *a fortiori* forms of reasoning, al-Ghazālī endeavored to include analogy, and *argumentum a simile*.³³ Al-Ghazālī demarcates the *qiyās* from analogy only on the basis that the former bears certain knowledge, while the latter renders only probable inference.³⁴ Marmura is correct to suggest that the distinction rests on rather arbitrary conditions—that is, on “how strictly we wish to define “demonstration”. Al-Ghazālī’s insistence on converting analogy to a first figure syllogism, a reformulation of al-Fārābī’s systemization of inductive reasoning, intentionally grounded legal theory in an Aristotelian framework of knowledge. Here an awareness of the dubious relationship between analogy and the syllogism (illucidated as *qiyās*) uncovers an inconsistency in the metaphysical system that supported it.

We can leave aside the dichotomous application of logic given by al-Ghazālī who found it relevant in worldly (legal) affairs, but troublesome when impinging on established metaphysical norms, i.e., Ash‘arite theology (viz. the circumstances of God’s unlimited freedom). Al-Ghazālī’s defense and exercise of logic for theological purposes, was an important link to the

History of Philosophy 3 (1965) 186ff.

³² Hallaq, “Non-Analogical Arguments in Sunni Juridical Qiyās,” p. 288.

³³ Ibid., p. 303.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 304. See also Marmura, “Ghazālī and Demonstrative Science,” p. 201.

survival of the relationship between logic and theology in medieval Islam. This distinction finds less sympathy, however, with the jurist Ibn Taymiyya, who feels that both *qiyās* and analogy are on equally nebulous grounds.³⁵

IBN TAYMIYYA

Ibn Taymiyya is best considered a dogmatic theologian and a jurist, one who often levelled polemical accusations at Greek logic. Like al-Ghazālī, Ibn Taymiyya was concerned with God's unlimited power and freedom of the divine will, and so rejected causal theories which would tie God explicitly to the natural world. His polemical stance was directed at a variety of theological and philosophical positions, all of which endeavoured to disclose some form of positive hermeneutic about God's involvement (causality) with his world. Thus, all forms of unitary exposition (universals) were rejected as conventions (nominal) by Ibn Taymiyya.³⁶

In Ibn Taymiyya's view, establishing a unitary field of thought that linked God's cause with his worldly effects (e.g., emanative and or pantheistic theology) was impossible given some of the fundamental problems of the syllogism itself—problems which were, according to him, not critically examined. Ibn Taymiyya's position rested on its own universal premise: that under no conditions can universals (of any kind) be established outside the mind of the one who experiences. Doubtless, the exception here is prophecy. This amounted to a rejection of universals altogether, i.e., an anti-realist and nominalist position in metaphysics which claims that where universals flourish in logical discourse, they do so only mentally, and not (in any sense) in reality. Thus, universals can be established so long as it is understood that they function pragmatically within the specific needs of a given context, that which still demands a medium for human communication. Universals cannot obtain either metaphysically, or theologically, where there is open and full communication with God. The substance/accident debate collapses in Ibn Taymiyya's

³⁵ Hallaq, "Logic, Formal Arguments and Formalization of Arguments in Sunni Jurisprudence," p. 322.

³⁶ Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyyah Against the Greek Logicians* (Oxford 1993) p. xiv. This is a translation of *Jahd al-Qarīḥa fī Tajrīd al-Naṣīḥa*, which is itself an abridgement of *al-Radd 'alā al-Mantiqīyyīn* by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī. Suyūṭī's abridgment served to rid Ibn Taymiyya's original text from all metaphysical and theological discussions, bringing greater focus to Ibn Taymiyya's critique of logic. It will be hereafter referred to as *Jahd al-Qarīḥa* in the main text.

nominalist schematic. Essence and accident are but arbitrary and relative demarcations set apart from each other in accordance with usage. Ibn Taymiyya writes: "Furthermore, there is no doubt that what the logicians held concerning the theory of definition (*ṣinā 'at al-ḥadd*) is of their own invention...Accordingly, it is necessary for them to distinguish between what in their opinion is essential and what is not...whereby they deem one attribute, to the exclusion of the other, to be of the essence."³⁷

There is undoubtedly a strong element of relativism in Ibn Taymiyya's epistemological thinking, especially as he contends that "[p]eople differ in their faculties of perception in a way that cannot be standardized".³⁸ Other crucial questions remain, however, such as, how does Ibn Taymiyya develop this line of argumentation against the syllogism, and how consistent does it leave his own metaphysical outlook? Or, stated otherwise, how can he avoid drawing sceptical conclusions if he cannot affirm some form of universal that is more than merely conventional? Before attempting to answer these questions we should first examine Ibn Taymiyya's displeasure with Greek syllogistic reasoning as it interferes with Muslim orthodoxy.

In his *Jahd al-Qarīḥa*, Ibn Taymiyya attacks the most delicate aspects of the syllogism—its *definitions* and *concepts* which support its larger (conceptual) relations. It is a wise strategy employed by Ibn Taymiyya, simply because in order for a syllogism to function correctly (demonstrating true, false or even probable conclusions) an agreement must be reached concerning the definitional terms (i.e., the universality of its contents). Here, according to Ibn Taymiyya, philosophers and theologians, whether dealing with an analogy or a syllogism per se, assume too much in the way of universal terms that denote extramental realities. Ibn Taymiyya is unequivocal: "[t]he universal exists only in the mind. If the particulars of a universal exist in the extramental world, then this will be conducive to the knowledge that it is a universal affirmative."³⁹

The ideas penned by Ibn Taymiyya evoke Hume who also interrogated both philosophy and theology on the matter of universals and their relationship to the external world. In Book 1 (Of the Understanding) of his *A Treatise of Human Nature*,⁴⁰ Hume reduces the perceptions of the human mind

³⁷ Ibid., p. 13, par. 19.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 11.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 129 par. 225.

⁴⁰ David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (London 1969) p. 49ff.

to what he calls impressions and ideas. Impressions are more immediate in their presence before the mind and feed our ideas that are faint and subject to greater discontinuity. Because Hume is considered an empiricist, both impressions and ideas are necessarily derived from the external world. He writes: "Now since nothing is ever present to the mind but perceptions, and since all ideas are derived from something antecedently present to the mind; it follows, that 'tis impossible for us so much as to conceive or form an idea of any thing specifically different from ideas and impressions."⁴¹ As is the case with Ibn Taymiyya, ideas and impressions are unable to form universals that can be placed back upon the external world. Hume writes: "we can never really advance a step beyond ourselves, nor can conceive any kind of existence, but those perceptions, which have appeared in that narrow compass."⁴²

The logical conclusion of this position implies that nothing new in the way of knowledge could ever arise from syllogistics. Where definitions break down, so too does the idea of advancing new knowledge. This assault also comes very early on in Ibn Taymiyya's *Jahd al-Qarīḥa*, more precisely, within the first chapter where he feels that the links logicians make between concept and definition is too pronounced. Ibn Taymiyya feels that concepts that belong to this or that vocational field are nothing more than an arbitrary invention of the logician.⁴³ In a rather dogmatic view of conception (which has no need of formal definititons), Ibn Taymiyya writes:

... all the communities of scholars, advocates of religious doctrines, craftsmen, and professionals know the things they need to know, and verify what they encounter in the sciences and the professions without speaking of definitions. We do not find any of the leading scholars discussing these definitions—certainly not the leading scholars of law, grammar, medicine, arithmetic—nor craftsmen, though they do form concepts of the terms used in their fields. Therefore, it is known that there is no need for these definitions in order to form concepts.⁴⁴

By attacking the heart of the syllogism (identity), Ibn Taymiyya is left with the circular question of just how legitimate rational concepts are estab-

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 116.

⁴² Ibid., p. 116.

⁴³ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Against the Greek Logicians*, p. 13.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 7.

lished at all. He might agree that this presents a problem of sorts, but it is his dogmatism (or faith) which rescues him from having to deal with the problem of phenomena more earnestly. His argumentative style appears to suggest that while definitions are necessary for the articulation of logical concepts, the necessary definitions of existence are already established within the Qur'ān and have no need of logical analysis. Ibn Taymiyya writes:

He who reads treatises on philology, medicine or other subjects must know what their authors meant by these names and what they meant by their composite discourse; so must he who reads books on law, theology, philosophy, and other subjects. The knowledge of these definitions is derived from religion, for every word is found in the Book of God, the exalted, as well as in the Sunnah of His Messenger.⁴⁵

Thus syllogism/analogy, whether probable or certain, still function by way of universal definitions, that which Ibn Taymiyya believes to be ultimately fictitious. Ultimately, a wider definition cannot be bestowed upon *qiyās*—Ibn Taymiyya does not care for syllogistics at all.

CONCLUSIONS

We have seen that the Greek syllogism underwent a variety of modifications in the Medieval Islamic environment. The involvement of analogical reasoning with syllogistics was an attempt to aid the process of legal reasoning, to be sure, but it was the a priori metaphysical assumptions which demarcate our three thinkers most forcefully. Having metaphysical disputes engenders discrepancies in the revealed nature of the Qur'ānic law especially when these are ambiguous and not so self-evident. Metaphysics is inevitably going to affect one's understanding of logic (syllogistics) and the rational limits of its application. An understanding of God presupposes at least some estimation of his will in legal/social expectations.

Al-Fārābī's stature within the "School of Baghdad" as the only Muslim presented him with the opportunity to delve into a study of Aristotle. To label him purely a transmitter of Greek thought into the Islamic context ignores the contribution he made to Aristotelian logic especially viz. analogi-

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 21.

cal reasoning. He successfully raised the strength of analogy to that of a first order syllogism thereby insisting that the *'illa* must exist along with a judgement in all inferences. Inevitably, al-Fārābī's departure from the *a priori* interpretation of the Qur'ān attracted much adversity from literalists. It is to al-Fārābī that thinkers such as al-Ghazālī and Ibn Taymiyya owe their whole point of departure.

In his article, "Ghazālī's Attitude to the Secular Sciences and Logic", Michael Marmura has stated:

The matter of the syllogism involves the epistemological status of its premises; the form, the rules for valid inference. To take the formal aspect first, the philosopher's logic is the more comprehensive as it includes, for example, the Aristotelian figures which, prior to Ghazālī, were not included in *nazar*. It also included a more precise formulation of analogical reasoning which, for example, Alfārābī reduced to the first Aristotelian figure and which, probably following him, Ghazālī urged his fellow theologians to adopt.⁴⁶

Al-Ghazālī could not deny, at least at the level of social and legal disputation, the auspicious utility of the syllogism, replete with its probable analogies. It is only at the metaphysical level (causality) where al-Ghazālī becomes uncomfortable with the encroachment of the Greek tools (logic) upon the Muslim texts. If scriptures conflict with the "findings" of the syllogism, then (unlike with Hume and his aversion to religion) the Scriptures are to be assigned metaphorical readings. The dissonance produced by religion and logic is diffused, and the syllogism can remain a welcome addendum to the legal ambiguities pondered by the jurists.

With Ibn Taymiyya we saw that all legitimate definitions proceed from the Qur'ān when legal and/or existential conceptions are being formed. His attack on causality and modal logic, employed mainly by philosophers (but also by theologians) places him in an a-causal agnostic position where the explication of metaphysics is concerned. One could almost assume that, in relation to logic, analogy and syllogistic proofs, the words of David Hume could be supplanted into the pen of Ibn Taymiyya who resisted all such logical attempts at a definitive metaphysical reconstruction:

⁴⁶ Marmura, "Ghazālī's Attitude to the Secular Sciences and Logic," p. 105.

But can a conclusion, with any propriety, be transferred from parts to the whole? Does not the great disproportion bar all comparison and inference from observing the growth of a hair? Can we learn anything concerning the generation of a man? Would the manner of a leaf's blowing, even though perfectly known, afford us any instruction concerning the vegetation of a tree?⁴⁷

And elsewhere;

If we see a house, Cleanthes, we conclude, with the greatest certainty, that it had an architect or builder because this is precisely that species of effect which we have experienced to proceed from that species of cause. But surely you will not affirm that the universe bears such a resemblance to a house that we can with the same certainty infer a similar cause, or that the analogy is here entire and perfect. The dissimilitude is so striking that the utmost you can here pretend to is a guess, a conjecture, a presumption concerning a similar cause, and how that pretension will be received in the world, I leave you to consider.⁴⁸

Ibn Taymiyya would undoubtedly agree with much of this, but would reject Hume's sceptical ethos by maintaining revealed Qur'ānic foundations. Indeed, he would take literally Hume's ambiguous statement, "Let us fix our attention out of ourselves as much as possible: Let us chase our imagination to the heavens, or to the utmost limits of the universe".⁴⁹ However, it would not be adverse to state that Ibn Taymiyya was also a sceptic, "a sceptic who was saved by religion",⁵⁰ but nevertheless a sceptic. Thus his bid to question identity goes only so far. In the face of outright scepticism, then, comes outright faith.

⁴⁷ Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (Cambridge 1973) p. 16.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁴⁹ Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, p. 116.

⁵⁰ Hallaq, *Ibn Taymiyya Against the Greek Logicians*, p. xxxix.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Al-Fārābī. *Al-Fārābī's Short Commentary on Aristotle's Prior Analytics*. Nicholas Rescher, tr. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963.
- Dunlop, D. M. "Al-Fārābī's *Eisagoge*." *The Islamic Quarterly* 3 (1956) 117-138.
- _____. "Al-Fārābī's Introductory *Risalah* on Logic." *The Islamic Quarterly* 3 (1956-57) 224-235.
- _____. "Al-Fārābī's Paraphrase of the *Categories* of Aristotle." *The Islamic Quarterly* 4 (1958) 168-197.
- Fakhry, Majid. *A History of Islamic Philosophy*. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.
- Goldhizer, Ignaz. "The Attitude of Orthodox Islam Toward the 'Ancient Sciences,'" in *Studies in Islam*, Merlin L. Swartz, tr. and ed. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981, pp. 185-215.
- Hallaq, Wael B. "Legal Reasoning in Islamic Law and the Common Law: Logic and Method," *Cleveland State Law Review* 34 (1985-86) 79-96.
- _____. "The development of Logical Structure in Sunni Legal Theory." *Der Islam* 64 (1987) 44-67.
- _____. "Non-Analogical Arguments in Sunnī Juridical Qiyās." *Arabica* 36 (1989) 286-306.
- _____. "Logic, Formal Arguments and Formalization of Arguments in Sunnī Jurisprudence." *Arabica* 37 (1990) 315-358.
- _____. *Ibn Taymiyya Against the Greek Logicians*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.
- Hume, David. *A Treatise of Human Nature*. London: Penguin Books, 1969.
- _____. *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. Richard H. Popkin, ed. Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1980.
- Marmura, Michael E. "Ghazālī and Demonstrative Science." *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 3 (1965) 183-204.
- _____. "Ghazālī's Attitude to the Secular Sciences and Logic." in *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science*. G. F. Hourani, ed. Albany, New York 1975, pp. 100-111.
- _____. *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*. Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1997.
- Pines, Solomen. "La philosophie orientale d'Avicenne et sa polémique contre les Baghdadiens." *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age* 19 (1952) 5-37.
- Rescher, Nicholas. *Studies in the History of Arabic Logic*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963.
- _____. *The Development of Arabic Logic*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963.
- Weiss, Bernard G. *The Search for God's Law, Islamic Jurisprudence in the Writings of Sayf al-Din al-Amidi*. Utah: University of Utah Press, 1992.

FOLIA ORIENTALIA
VOL. 34 1998
PL ISSN 0015-5675

BARBARA MICHALAK-PIKULSKA

SU'AD AL-SABAH - IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE FEMALE

Dr. Su'ad Al-Sabah is a representative of the Arab female elite. She is an outstanding poet and by education a specialist in the field of economics. By nationality a citizen of Kuwait, she graduated from the University of Cairo and continued her studies in Great Britain. She is an active member of many organizations including: Human Rights, the Arabic Thinkers Club, the Organization of Unity, Islamic Women. She represents, in a distinct way love poetry, which however, considering its character, form of utterance and formal shape transcends both traditional Arabic forms as equally their female European counterparts. Although the subject area and range are embraced within the question of love, Su'ad Al-Sabah's poetry is extended distinctly by the expanse of events felt here.

The poetry of space exceeds the strict cultural expressions of a particular place, person and his experiences. The state of being open, with a poetic center and not the senses, in trust to that experienced. The acceptance of various associations, replies and also the autonomous contents which arrive from various sides unhesitatingly. The gathering of it all into one information field of the event. Impressions, observations and reports, although concentrated round a love object, are not judged. Their order of account is identical to the glow of lyrical expression. Certainty of experience is almost the dictate of the report.

In the poem "**Love in the open air**"¹ the poet presents the wonderful spiritual state of a woman in love and a poet, who through love, becomes an unconstrained human being - free. There is no room here to decide whether such a state is in fact objective, we know and we accept the transitory nature of life itself, therefore we accept at the same time love even though its per-

¹ Su'ad Al-Sabah, *In the Beginning was the Female*, Beirut 1994, p.72,