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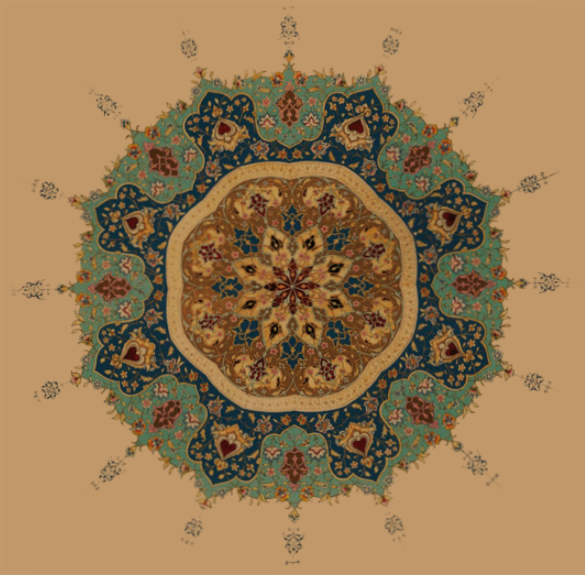

Edited by

Aaron SPEVACK

The American Society of Islamic
Philosophy and Theology

Abdulrahman Bajodah (University of British Columbia)

Knowing the World, Knowing God: Ikhwān al-Ṣafā's Aristotelian Theory of Human Intellection

The pursuit of knowing God is not separate from the way we know the sensible world from which we infer the existence of the divine itself. This is a central thesis of Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-Ṣafā [The Epistles of the Brethren of Purity], allegedly composed by an Arabic and Islamic philosophy group called Ikhwān al-Ṣafā (Brethren of Purity) around the end of the 9th and the beginning of the 10th century. For the group, our intellection of the sensible world is the source of our rational ability to demonstrate its creation by God. Understanding the process of intellection is an epistemological concern that takes center stage in Ikhwān al-Ṣafā's philosophy due to their Islamic belief in the existence of God as the creator of the world. The challenge for Ikhwān al-Ṣafā is to articulate a coherent theory of human intellection that at the same time preserves their commitment to God's incomparability (tanzīh). What must the intellect be like in order to know that God exists without violating the condition of

God's transcendence? I argue in this essay that unlike the Mu'tazilites, who unsuccessfully employed atomistic conceptions to preserve God's incomparability, Ikhwān al-Ṣafā succeed in preserving God's incomparability by relativizing the hylomorphism of Aristotelian psychology, which underlies their theory of human intellection. Ikhwān al-Ṣafā meet the challenge of providing a coherent theory of human intellection that does not violate the Islamic creed of God's incomparability.

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Ahmed Meiloud (American University of Kuwait)

Beyond *Naskh*: A New Framework of Coherence

This paper studies the modern challenges to the concept of abrogation (*naskh*), arguing that these challenges have progressively eroded its hegemonic position within Islamic discourses. Abrogation has, for centuries, played a critical role in the Islamic legal philosophy, giving scholars a dexterous device to harmonize discordant indicants, in a general framework, where God privileges subsequent revelations over preceding ones. The Holy Qur'an, for example, is not per se a textual landscape, where abrogation is enacted in a localized fashion for specific pedagogical reasons. The Qur'an itself (that is in its entirety) is both the most important and final act of divine abrogation. This view of revelation was the central unifying rubric through which Muslim legal theorists, jurists, Qur'anic exegetes and ordinary Muslims accepted the logic of divine law and their relationship to it.

Yet, this well-established paradigm has now been unsettled by criticism both from outside secular voices and from within the Islamic revivalist camp. Against this established paradigm rose five competing counter theories, ranging from whose which fault the traditional understanding of abrogation, to those which outrightly reject it. I shall call these counter theories: No-abrogation Theory (Jabri, Shahrur), Dialectic Theory (Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid), Didactic Theory (Abdullah Saeed), Punitive Theory (Mahmoud Taha) and *Maqasidic* Theory (Jasir ʻAwda). While all these theories have contributed to upsetting the traditional paradigm, only the *maqasidic* theory has the persuasive power to fully refute and replace it. Although all four theories appealed to non-specialists, two of these (no-abrogation theory and didactic theory) hold very little persuasive power for specialists. They do not only violate legal consensus; but they, more importantly, rely on previous arguments which have been debated and discredited. The authors of the other two theories (dialectic and punitive) questioned critical elements of the Islamic creed, thereby excluding themselves as reasonable interlocuters within the discursive tradition.

Furthermore, all these four theories were weakened by their reliance on the linguistic methods of the traditionalists. Despite their bold attempts to beat tradition at its own game (linguistic analysis of the revelation), these theories opened themselves to sustained attack from a vast and well-established tradition of linguistic debates. Their strength was, therefore, their Achilles' heel. By resorting to linguistic analysis to invalidate claims of abrogation, these theories equated their claims with those of the traditionalists. As a result, voices simply entered the cacophony of linguist arguments as the most

recent and the least convincing. The *Maqasidists*, however, take the debate into a different territory. They remove it from the area of language to the area of rational reasoning and, within that niche, to the well-defined, less restrictive, albeit historically marginal, area of legal aims (*maqasid*). The outcome is very clear. The traditionalists have to debate these *maqasidists*, not on the traditionalists' own turf (linguistic claims) but in the area of legal theory. This gives the *maqasidists* a critical edge and allows them to enlist the help of arguments from within and without the field of jurisprudence.

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Ali S. Harfouch (American University of Beirut)

Towards an Islamic Liberation Philosophy

What is left of a philosophy if it does not evoke awareness? And what is to be said about a political philosophy whose aim is not emancipation? In this paper, I will make two interventions towards the resolution of these questions. The first, is an inquiry into what Enrique Dussel calls "the philosophy of liberation". The second, is an inauguration of what I will call an "Islamic philosophy of liberation". I will begin with the observation that a philosophy of liberation implies a deviation of the status-quo (the colonial situation) from what ought-to be. That is to say, it affirms a return to turning towards an alternative condition. From that observation, I turn to my first argument, that a philosophy of liberation must take the form of an existentialist philosophy. That is, to take as its subject: the concrete political and eexistential situation of the oppressed person. I will then try to delineate what constitutes that original condition. I

present Soren Kierkaggard's two observations. First, that man is a being capable of "intellectual action"; a reflection on Truth as expressed in the "I am" . Through it, we affirm our ontological contingency and concomitantly the question of a transcendence. Second, and just as importantly, Kierkaggard's observation of man as being capable of "actual action"; an embodiment of Truth as expressed in the "I become". Turning the Christian existentialist, Gabriel Marcel, this entails a requires a praxis of "creative fidelity", that is to say, a fidelity to transcendence.

The second argument identifies the problems faced, thus far, with existential and liberation philosophies. In short, the question: I become what? What is implied and sought-out in this becoming? The problem for existentialist philosophers has been its propensity towards nihilism in the absence of 'transcendence'. Nihilist emerges from continuity of a proclaimed secular metaphysics of "self-assertion". Latent behind this declared self-affirmation is a process which "flattens" and claims sovereignty of the world, and curtails an immanent negation of transcendence.

What, then, would an alternative existentialist and liberatory philosophy of liberation look like? I turn to my third argument. I will argue that an alternative existentialist philosophy can be found in Islamic political philosophy. I explore three key Qur'anic concepts. First, the original condition as fitra. Second, the concept of tawhid and transcendence. Third, the notion of 'ubudiyyah or theology as the praxis of worship. Tawhid, as both a negation and affirmation, illuminates the boundaries of any temporal order by exposing its contingency. Tawhid that is operational: comes from the root word

wahhada, which means to declare to be one or, in terminological use, the action of declaring God to be One. Fitra affirms the non-secular and primordial man whose existential covenant is a prehistoric covenant with God as Rabb, Sovereign. In its affirmation of man as a primordial self whose covenant is with God, we affirm new possibilities for self-affirmation and authenticity.

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Ayse Betul Tekin (Yalova University)

Divisions of Existents in Post-Classical Islamic Thought: Prolegomenon of *Tajrīd*

Division of existents (*taqsīm al-mawjūdāt*) was one of the crucial issues that differentiated Muslim philosophers and theologians. It was variously discussed by post-classical scholars, including Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210), Qādī Baydāwī (d. 1286), and Shams al-Dīn Isfahānī (d. 1349). In this paper, I will look at al-Isfahanī's presentation of the division of existents according to theologians and philosophers. Al-Isfahanī discussed this issue in the prolegomenon of his *Tasdīd al-Qawā'id fi Sharh Tajrīd al-'Aqāid* (Supporting the Principles in the Commentary of Abstraction of the Belief), a commentary on Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī's (d. 1274) summa of theology. This presentation is significant since it was copied as a separate treatise during the Ottoman period. I will examine some of the sources of al-Isfahānī's presentation as well as its reception by other glossators of the *Tajrīd* such as Sayyid Sharif al-Jurjānī (d. 1413) whose gloss was taught in Ottoman madrasas. I will also look at the discussions on division of existents in the superglosses of

Hatibzādah (d.1496) and Tashkoprizādah (d.1561). In these glosses there are philosophical discussions on the meaning of division (*taqsīm*), existent (*mawjud*), body (*jism*) and so on. They all agree that here division (*taqsīm*) means the division of universal to particulars, not the division of whole to its parts. The superglosses cite Jurjānī's view in *al-Sharh al-Mawāqif* and they also share Taftazānī's (d.792/1390) view in *Sharh al-Maqāsid*. After these kinds of citations, they give objections to them and then their opinion on a certain problem. By attending to the web of texts referred to, I will provide a map of texts in which the notion of existents was analyzed and debated.

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Dr. Ernestas Jančenkas (Vilnius University)

The Transcendence of Imagination in al-Fārābī's and Ibn Sīnā's Philosophy

Usually when the concept of *mundus imaginalis* is invoked the Post-Avicennan philosophy comes to mind. Although it is recognized that imagination plays a key role in the Classical Arab philosophers' theories on religion, however, this nexus of religion and imagination is usually treated with suspicion. It is assumed that suggesting imagination to be the source of religion implies that religion is imaginary. In fact, this suspicion goes back to Ibn Ṭufayl who accuses al-Fārābī of dissimulation. But as I will attempt to show in my paper, imagination is given a status almost on a par with the intellect in certain cases, specifically when it comes to the latter's privileged status vis-à-vis the immaterial realm.

This paper will contend that certain crucial elements of the well-developed theory of the *mundus imaginalis* are already found in the philosophical works of al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā. In fact, as will be shown, the concept of the world of the imagination itself can already be found in Ibn Sīnā's *Išārāt*. The paper will seek to demonstrate that al-Fārābī was not dismissive of the epistemological value of imagination, quite the opposite, in a certain key passage of his *Siyāsah al-madaniyyah* he suggests that imagination can be used to access unadulterated truth without the use of the human intellect. People whose imagination has reached the highest rank are able to access the truth by imagining it. Al-Fārābī seems to suggest there that it is their righteous disposition which allows them to finally attain the Truth by employing their imagination. Since the latter notion is not fully developed it was never reconciled with al-Fārābī's general epistemology, namely the notion of truth as something abstract and intelligible while the image (in the sense of *al-miṯāl* or *mythos* in general) is considered to be at best an approximation to the said truth.

Ibn Sīnā inherits this theory along with the bifurcation of the intellect/philosophy and imagination/religion. He develops these ideas further and grants imagination a new heretofore unseen role. Since certain notions from the *Theology of Aristotle* found their way into Ibn Sīnā's philosophy it forced him to grant a new role to imagination in the afterlife. According to this theory heaven and hell are experienced in the afterlife with the help of imagination which requires the service of the heavenly bodies as surrogates for the organ of the imagination. Since these notions are proposed in his *Išārāt* it is difficult to agree with H. Davidson who suggest that Ibn Sīnā may be

dissimulating when the latter proposes these notions, granted he does this with epistemological caution betraying his own reservations. In this manner we can say that the notion of imagination or the imaginary realm which transcends the material realm so prevalent in the latter Islamic philosophy is found in its rudimentary form in the philosophy of al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā.

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Hussein Ibrahim (Ludwig-Maximilians University)

The Binary between Philosophical Quietism and Activism: The Risāla-yi Sih Aṣl of Mullā Ṣadrā al-Shīrāzī (d. 1045/1636)

The proclamation of Shiʿism as the official state religion of Safavid Iran (1501-1736) featured the first chief event leading to the revival of the political conscience of Shiʿite philosophers and jurists. Religious positions in the government were created and the collaboration of Shiʿite jurists was demanded in order to foster Shiʿism within the state and maintain the new religio-political order. Accordingly, a pivotal controversy was stimulated among the ʿulamāʾ, concerning the legality of their involvement in politics, as political isolation was the common stance among the Shiʿite ʿulamāʾ prior to the Safavid era.

This paper examines a controversial binary position between clerical-philosophical quietism and activism as approached by the Safavid sage Mullā Ṣadrā al-Shīrāzī (d. 1045/1636). It situates his Risāla-yi Sih Aṣl (The Epistle of the Three Foundations)1 within a sociopolitical framework in order to understand his philosophical

and religious position in dealing with the ruling system. The epistle represents the Sadrian approach to political affairs and was written to critique the Sultans' jurists whom Mullā Ṣadrā calls, "the ʿulamāʾ of rituals". However, the text is not just a critique of a group of "materialistic ʿulamāʾ" or of the clergy-court mutually beneficial relationship, but also an implicit attack on the ruling system by a philosopher who was under religio-political siege.

Sih Aṣl is born of an integrative epistemology that combines three structural components, namely, demonstrative proof (burhān), mystical unveiling (ʿirfān), and divine revelation (Qurʾān). Therefore, this paper explores the epistemic foundations of Mullā Ṣadrā's practical philosophy in the sense of examining how his political and ethical thoughts arise from Shiʿite theological and jurisprudential commitments in conversation with the Islamic philosophical tradition. Through investigating the ethical and political elements of Sih Aṣl, I discuss how Mullā Ṣadrā's contribution is deployed under psychological and eschatological thematic umbrellas as part of what I call "transcendent practical philosophy." In addition, I prove that Mullā Ṣadrā's text presents a methodological and thematical shift in engaging with the political authority, as the Shah is no longer Sunni, but rather belongs, albeit exoterically, to the Shiʿite sect. This is pivotal in showing the practical engagement of Mullā Ṣadrā in public and political affairs, especially that Mullā Ṣadrā is widely considered to be an apolitical theoretical philosopher and mystic in academia. In this regard, I argue that Mullā Ṣadrā upholds the duality of the quietist and activist trajectories when dealing with the political circumstances and uses philosophical notions as tools when critically approaching the

Safavid political authority. I consequently conclude that Mullā Ṣadrā's public intellectual interaction with the Safavid authorities and clerical circles had created a unique form of clergy-state relationship where quietism and activism coincide. This derivation helps us better understand how Mullā Ṣadrā presents his philosophical and religious discourses as a way of life, where political commitments are produced in an ethical manner. Ultimately, this paper traces some lines of Mullā Ṣadrā's impact on clergy socio-political role and the clergy-state relationship in the twentieth century through philosophers who are well known to have upheld the Sadrian thought. In this context, I show how what was theorized by Mullā Ṣadrā in his Sih Aṣl concerning the role of the clergy was later practiced in Iranian seminaries and public politics in the hands of Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Tabātabāʾī (d. 1402/1981) and Rūḥullāh al-Khumaynī (d. 1409/1989).

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Huzaifa Taquee

Siyasah and the Caliphate in the Political Philosophy of the Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'

The Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' are most famously known for their encyclopedic coverage of various sciences and they occupy a prominent station in the history of Islamic philosophy's engagement with Greek sciences. Of the entire fifty-two epistle corpus however, there is no single epistle dedicated to governmental politics or statecraft. However, we find relevant passages scattered throughout the entire corpus. Hamid Enayat surmises that this could be one

reason that the Rasail have rarely been studied as a political work.1 A few modern scholars, Enayat included, have tried to fill the gap in the lack of attention in western scholarship to the political thought of the Ikhwān al- Ṣafā'. Thus, this paper aims to extrapolate the political philosophy scattered throughout the Rasail. It will highlight the central role of religion generally and sharia, more specifically, in the Rasā'il's conception of an Islamic polity while also trying to understand the practical functions of the ruler/imam after the wādi' al-sharī'a (lawmaker [Prophet])2. Through this, it attempts to contextualize the references to siyāsah in the epistle on ethics within the larger discussion on the ethical subjectification of both the ruler and the ruled which will also give us insight into the type of subject the Ikhwan envisioned in an Islamic society.

This paper will also consider the political thought of famous Sunni thinkers such as al-Ghazali, al- Mawardi, Nizam al-Mulk, and al-Juwayni in order to derive a comparative model against which we can understand important features from the Rasā'il. It will focus specifically on three key features of the Rasā'il's political thought: 1) ethical refinement and subjectification 2) prophethood and kingship and 3) foundations for a long-lasting polity.

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Kenan Tekin (Yalova University)

Reconsidering the Classical Theory of Science: Ṣadr al-Sharīʿa, Taftāzānī and Their Interlocutors on the Issue of the Subject Matter

Post-classical period witnessed intense debates on aspects of the Aristotelian theory of science. Among them one set of challenges

concerned the issues of subject matter (*mabāhith al-mawdūʿ*). According to the Aristotelian theory, all sciences had a subject matter which distinguished them from other sciences. The subject matter was typically thought of as having a unity, be it real or perspectival. Absolutely and perspectivally (*iʿtibāran*) one and the same thing could not be the subject matter of multiple sciences. These assumptions of the classical theory were challenged by Ṣadr al-Sharīʿa (d. 747/1346) in the introduction of his *al-Tawḍīh*, a commentary on his legal theory text *al-Tanqīḥ*. Therein, he raised three issues: whether the subject matter of a science can be multiple, what restricting subject matter of a science means, and whether one thing can be the subject matter of multiple sciences. This commentary of Ṣadr al-Sharīʿa stimulated many supercommentaries and glosses. The section on the issue of subject matter drew particular attention in the following centuries. This was in small part due to Taftāzānī's (d. 792/1390) *al-Talwīḥ*, the most well-known supercommentary on *al-Tawḍīh*. In his interpretation of the issues of subject matter, Taftāzānī defended the classical theory of science against Ṣadr al-Sharīʿa's criticisms and rejected the latter's alternative propositions. Taftāzānī's objections, in turn, provoked others to defend Ṣadr al-Sharīʿa's three views. Noteworthy, among such defenses is a treatise by Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Bukhārī (a.k.a. ʿAlā al-Dīn al-Bukhārī, d. 841/1438), which was described as "A Treatise on Removing Objections of the Author of *al-Talwīh* on the Three Issues Invented by the Author of *al-Tawḍīh*." In addition to this treatise, there were superglosses on Taftāzānī's *Talwīḥ* in which the said issues were discussed, especially by Ottoman scholars. Among them, Molla Hüsrev (d. 885/1480) maintained a defense of

Ṣadr al-Sharīʿa, while Hasan Çelebi (d. 891/1486) agreed with Taftāzānī on some issues. In this paper, I will analyze debates on the issue of subject matter by first presenting Ṣadr al-Sharīʿa's views on the three issues, and then looking at its critique by Taftāzānī. This will be followed by an analysis of al-Bukhārī's treatise and Molla Hüsrev's glosses. The paper will shed light on post-classical scholars' contributions to an important aspect of the classical theory of science.

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Laura Hassan (University of Oxford)

Ashʿarism and The Problem of Immaterial Substance

Across generations of classical Ashʿarī scholars, the physical theory of atomism provided the essential framework within which doctrines of the God-world relationship were developed and defended. The whole spectrum of physical and psychological phenomena was accounted for through the simple binary of homogenous matter and its inherent accidents. The Ashʿarīs are famous in particular for their applications of the atom-accident ontology in their occasionalist vision of the God-world relationship. More generally, the theory undergirds the extreme theocentricity of the school. Yet Ibn Sīnā's critique of atomism, and the growing presence of his ontology in the intellectual milieu of the Islamic world, brought serious challenges to the use of that paradigm. In particular, post-Avicennan theologians beginning with Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) and Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī (d. 631/1233) repeatedly express the difficulty of disproving the existence of

immaterial substances. Yet admission of the existence of even a single immaterial existent apart from God causes the kalām proof for God par excellence–the proof from accidents –to collapse. Post-classical Ashʿarīs did of course have recourse to a variety of other methods for establishing both the world's creation ex nihilo, and the existence of a Creator God. However, the proposed paper approaches a slightly different problem, namely, the question of why the problem of immaterials does not appear to have troubled earlier Ashʿarīs, despite the presence within their intellectual environment of a number of alternative cosmologies which incorporated various kinds of immaterial entities. The thought of early Ashʿarīs such as Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ṭayyib al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013)will be considered, as well as Abū Ḥāmidal-Ghazālī's (d. 505/1111) unique approach to the problem in his Iqtiṣād, in an attempt to determine how these theologians conceived of the defence of their ontology. Through this study, I will stress the more general point that the level of a philosopher's engagement with alternatives to her own worldview is proportionate to the proximity of those worldviews, as well as to their intellectual appeal. In the case under discussion, the proximity of Ibn Sīnā's philosophical system, which held such great theological appeal in many respects, is what called the mutakallimūn to attend to the problem of immaterials, which had occupied a rather peripheral place in their discussions of ontology for generations.

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Lilian Abou-Tabickh, (University of Toronto)

How Significant is the Term "Condition" (ḥāl) To Understanding Ibn Khaldūn's Political Ideas? Al-ʿaṣabiyya as an "Essential Condition" of Human Association Abstract

In this presentation, I offer a new interpretation of the term al-ʿasabiyya by situating it among the "essential conditions" of human association, necessary for the preservation of human civilization. Political authority is necessary for human beings, but by order of existence, Ibn Khaldūn argues, it is acquired only by al-ʿaṣabiyya. Al-ʿaṣabiyya is a power of unity and agreement between individuals and groups built to gain political authority. It is the required condition (sharṭ), which, by means of its power, attains the goal of rulership. The examination of the different textual circumstances shows that the sort of al-ʿaṣabiyya that "guarantees" political authority is a composite of different ʿaṣabiyyāt, one of which is the leading ʿaṣabiyya. That is, al-ʿaṣabiyya must be a composite to guarantee superiority and political authority. This ʿaṣabiyya is based on manufactured connections and constructed compassion. The construction of this ʿaṣabiyya happens by thinking because the intention to create something, he says, requires thinking about the order of things and an awareness of the reason, cause, or condition (sharṭ) of that thing. Therefore, in the political context, it shows that Ibn Khaldūn uses the term al-ʿaṣabiyya in the sense of the "grand" ʿaṣabiyya and not the "natural" ʿaṣabiyya, which is based on the natural feeling of compassion and care for relatives, and no one can eliminate. Unlike the scholarly literature, this presentation shows that al-ʿaṣabiyya is not based on natural or quasi-natural forces, but human thought, intention, and action. It also shows that al-ʿaṣabiyya is not specific to the political and historical experiences of the

Bedouins, the psychology of tribal and unstable societies of North Africa, or the social values of Muslim societies.

This interpretation is based on Ibn Khaldūn's rhetorical style, philosophy of language, and approach to history and interpretation. It is an interpretation that is guided by the way he uses the language to communicate his ideas. Therefore, unlike preeminent interpreters of Al-Muqaddima, it does not situate him in relation to ancient Greek philosophy, Islamic theology, or modern sociology, nor does it locate his thought within categories established in realism, dialectical materialism, historical anthropology, or world-systems theory. Instead, I attempt to understand the particular meaning that he gives to the term ḥāl by examining the different textual and contextual circumstances. This approach is apparently compatible with that of Ibn Khaldūn himself, who states that knowledge of the meaning of words alone is insufficient because "[w]hat still requires indication are the requirements of a particular situation, called "the spread of the situation" (the circumstance: bisāṭ al-ḥāl)."

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Mehmet Fatih Arslan (Istanbul University)

Dancing with Devil or Chanting with Angels?: al-Rāzī's Employment of Philosophical Arguments in Discussion of Divine Attributes

This study examines al-Rāzī's (606/1210) discussion of the ontological status of divine attributes and aims to demonstrate to what extend he was influenced by philosophical theories and discussions. One of al-Rāzī's harshest critics, Ibn Taymiyya

(728/1328) claimed that al-Rāzī applied the rational proofs so excessively that he ultimately developed a philosophized understanding of divine attributes which deviates from the path of Ahl al-Sunna. Ibn Taymiyya thus holds that al-Rāzī corrupted Ashʿarī theology. This study argues that Ibn Taymiyya's accusations about al-Rāzī's abandonment of Sunnī path are overstated. On the contrary, the findings of this study attest that al-Rāzī constantly struggled to defend Sunnī theory of divine attributes against philosophers and the Muʿtazila. Ibn Taymiyya's allegations about introducing philosophical arguments and "excessive" rational proofs are nevertheless credible to a certain extent. Al-Rāzī did employ many distinctive and novel philosophical concepts and ideas. Among the multiple changes he proposed, his key contribution was to describe the attributes as relations (al-nisab) which is a modification of Avicennian principle about the emanation theory and God's munificence. This principle was associated with formula whereby the attributes can be regarded as possible in themselves and necessary by the essence (ḏāt) of God which is also an adaptation of Avicennian formula about the ontological status of the divine intellects. Furthermore, for the sake of consistency, al-Rāzī also abandoned certain Sunnī principles such as the idea that eternality should be considered God's most exclusive attribute.

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Mohammad Karimi

A comparison between Plantinga's view and Ash'ari's view of essence and attributes/properties of God

Alvin Plantinga believes that the doctrine of divine simplicity in the tradition of classical theology has two problems, the second of which is more enduring. First, if God is the same as His properties and the properties are the same (according to classical theism), then God has only one attribute. He says this result is inconsistent with the basic teachings of the divine religions and classical theism; Because in classical theism, he has both power and benevolence and other properties. Second, if God is equal with His properties and (in fact) every attribute is an attribute, then He is an attribute. As a result, God has no more than one attribute: 'Himself.' This is while no "property" is the creator of the universe and no "property" can be the omniscient and .... If he is an attribute, then he cannot be a person, but an abstract and causally inert essence. As a result, in his view, the doctrine of simplicity is a false idea. In the tradition of Islamic theology about a thousand years ago, people like Abul Hassan al-Ashʿari, the founder of Ashʿarite thought, made similar critiques of Plantinga. Ashʿari believes that if God is the same as His properties, it is necessary to be able to ask for help from the divine knowledge and say in the place of prayer: O God's knowledge (O knowledge) forgive me, which is intuitively rejected. al-Ashʿari critique shows that the promise of the equality of God and His properties entails the impersonality of God, and that God's knowledge is incapable of helping anyone. Plantinga is a Platonic realist, so the features in his system of thought are universal, necessary, and causally inert, and their equality is indefensible with God. The present study, after comparing the two perspectives, shows that the Ashʿarite critiques of the doctrine of simplicity, at least in terms of the corrupt apparatus of the doctrine of simplicity, are no

different from those of Plantinga; But his view of metaphysics of the properties of God is different from that of Plantinga. The Ashʿarite view of the metaphysics of divine properties is close to tropism; Because by rejecting simplicity, he introduces the divine properties as old, distinct from nature and distinct from each other, and they are particulars.

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Moiz Hasan (University of Notre Dame)

Epistemological Foundations of Pre-Modern Islamic Science: Cross-Fertilizations Between Astronomy, Philosophy, Theology, and Sufism in the Works of Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 815/1413)

The scientific achievements of pre-modern Islamic scholars are relatively well known. Less well known, though of comparable importance, are the philosophical foundations on which these stand. In this paper, I examine the epistemological foundations of scientific knowledge, and its significance (philosophical, historical, and historiographical), in the relatively understudied post-classical Islamic period. I focus on the works of Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413), a distinguished Ashʿarite theologian and polymath, who was equally acclaimed for his scientific and non-scientific works.

The paper presents Jurjānī's vision of the mathematical sciences, particularly astronomy, and its epistemological underpinnings. I show how many of Jurjānī's ideas and lines of reasoning inevitably draw, in varying degrees, from intellectual sources as diverse as theology (kalām), philosophy (falsafa), jurisprudence (uṣūl al-fiqh), and Sufism (taṣawwuf), the extent and nature of cross-fertilizations

between these intellectual currents, and the manner in which Jurjānī can combine different approaches to knowledge into a coherent epistemological scheme.

Of significant philosophical import is the contribution Jurjānī makes in resolving two, specific problems in the philosophy of science of his time: the status of mathematical entities, and that of astronomical models and their relation to reality. Combining elements of his epistemology with tenets of theoretical astronomy, he adopts what can be called a philosophically realist, moderately skeptical yet pragmatic attitude towards astronomical conclusions. He took the goal of astronomy to describe the world. Yet, he recognized that conclusions satisfying the stringent criteria of conclusive demonstration are often unlikely to be attained in astronomy, so that astronomers are well-advised to strive for a more approximate kind of knowledge that is persuasive. To be sure, he understood some judgments of astronomy to be certain or "beyond any doubt." However, the more typical standard of astronomical knowledge he set out was not that of "certainty," but of conclusions that could adequately account for the phenomena and were consistent with some of the physical principles of the time. I establish that Jurjānī's solution lies in the specific manner he addresses epistemological issues concerning knowledge, truth, and reality, its distinctive feature being a turning away from the Avicennian theory of true knowledge based on the Active Intellect to a more "economical, human-centered epistemology" built on his novel understanding of the key concept of nafs al- amr (lit., the thing itself).

Finally, Jurjānī's project, I argue, is equally significant for historiographical reasons, for it provides a yet further addition to the mounting evidence that cuts through many of the prevalent grand narratives that often belittle philosophical activity in the post-classical Islamic era, or posit essentialist (often antagonistic) relation between Islam and science.

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Muhammad Umar Riaz Abbasi (National University of Modern Languages Islamabad)

Peace, Reconciliation, and Justice in Global Perspective

Establishing stable and lasting peaceful relations between rival sides to an intractable conflict requires the construction of a culture of peace through the processes of peace-making and reconciliation. This is the peace-building process, which in essence is a long process of major societal change involving building a new socio-psychological repertoire that allows reaching an agreement with the adversary and enables the formation of an allied relationship based on mutual trust and acceptance, cooperation, and consideration of mutual needs. Succeeding in this challenging socio-psychological endeavour may provide hope for a better life with no bloodshed and suffering.

Justice is a key element to reconciliation. We have to spend a great deal of time explaining why justice alone is not enough for reconciliation, and peace but it is important to state clearly that without justice, no reconciliation is possible and without both of these peace cannot be established. Unfortunately, many people think

that we must make a choice between justice and reconciliation because the two are not compatible, and we can have either justice or reconciliation for sustainable peace. The purpose of this article is to elaborate this perspective and demonstrate that justice is a part of reconciliation, and reconciliation is a part of justice. In other words, reconciliation is impossible without justice and justice is impossible without some form of reconciliation. I will highlight this fact that justice and reconciliation are the keys to open the door of peace. In this article I have adopted analytical and critical methodology of research to find out that how justice and reconciliation can play a vital role to resolve the issues through negotiations, mediation, arbitration and litigation.

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Nabil Yasien Mohamed (University of the Western Cape)

Ghazzali's Skepticism and Quest for the Foundations of Knowledge

In this research paper we aim to display Ghazālī's engagement with a methodological skepticism to establish the foundational truths and the reality of a higher faculty of knowing. For a paradigmatic figure like Ghazzali, the foundationalism present in his popular and well-studied text, *al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl* has hardly been the subject of investigation. To prevent an infinite regress in logical reasoning, Aristotle emphasised the importance of first principles and Descartes established the *cogito;* likewise, Ghazālī sought to establish the foundations of knowledge through taking his own brand of skepticism to its absolute conclusions. Ghazzali's sceptical

engagement with the epistemological sources of *taqlid,* sense perception and necessary truths are important to evaluate Ghazzali's theory of knowledge and acquisition of certainty. To understand his foundationalism and vindication from a skeptical frame of mind, the concepts of 'divine light' and *fiṭrah* are relevant to understand how he couched foundational knowledge; and our reliance on God's grace for our faculties of apprehension.

A rarely addressed discussion in the *Munqidh* is the metaphysical dimension of certainty. In the *Munqidh*, Ghazālī states that certainty is "seeing things as they *really* are", which is the reality *(haqīqa)*, the essence *(dhat)*, quiddity *(māhiya)* or spirit *(rūḥ)* of a thing as oppose to the thing itself. In contradistinction to Greek Skepticism, Ghazālī's skepticism was not a denial or the suspension of the assertions of reality; neither was it a denial of Muslim doctrine but a methodological attempt to establish the foundations of knowledge. Our evaluation of his skepticism does not merely assume it to be akin to atheism, a denial of all systems of knowledge, or a secularist wishing to free themselves of religious authority, but we shall read it as a process of critical human inquiry. It is not skepticism for its own sake. Ghazālī is normally either viewed as experiencing a psychological/existential skepticism or engaging in a methodological skepticism aimed at establishing certainty. Doubt is essential to human consciousness itself not just a feigned operation. Thus, in our study we pursue a dual approach; we primarily focus on his methodological skepticism as a means of attaining truth and certainty but recognise the existence of a psychological skepticism as well. Besides the *Munqidh*, this paper will evaluate Ghazzali's

attitude to doubt in other sources such as the *Mīzān al-ʿamal*, the *Kitab al-ʿilm* and *Al-Iqtiṣād fi al-iʾtiqād.*

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Nazif Muhtaroglu (Mimar Sinan University)

A Modal Argument for the Uniqueness of God

One of the classical arguments for the existence of God is the ontological argument. In the second half of the twentieth century, this argument was updated, and triggered new philosophical discussions under the title of "modal ontological argument." These discussions have expanded with the emergence of the modal versions of the cosmological argument. However, despite the intense interest in arguments for theexistence of God, the contemporary scholarship in the philosophy of religion largely overlooks the problem as to whether God is unique or not. In this paper, I aim to update Taftazānī's argument for the uniqueness of God by means of the conceptual toolsof the possible world semantics. Taftazānī's argument is known as burhān al-tamānu in the Islamic kalām, and aims to show that postulating two omnipotent gods will result in contradictions due to a possible conflict between the two divine wills. The term tamānu refers to the conflict between these wills. So, I argue that this argument, supplemented by the conclusion of the modal ontological or cosmological argument, shows that there is only one God. I call this extended argument "A Modal Argument forthe Uniqueness of God."

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Nora Jacobsen Ben Hammed (Bard Collage)

Practicing Philosophyand Intellectualizing Sufism: Riyāḍain Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's Sharḥal-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt

One of the key features of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's (d. 606/1210) developed philosophical theology is his repeated description of two ways to approach knowledge of God, namely through the exercise of discursive reasoning (al-naẓar wa-l-istidlāl), and through spiritual practice and striving (al-riyāḍa wa-l-mujāhada). While each way is distinct, the two are most effective when combined, each supplementing the other to allow the seeker to approach the Divine and to ensure eternal felicity of the soul. Although the way of theoretical reasoning, modeled on a fusion of the intellectual traditions of theology and philosophy, is relatively clear, what exactly Rāzī intends by riyāḍa remains obscure, most often stated without concrete explanation in his theoretical works. The first reference point for the use of riyāḍa is naturally the Sufi tradition, which developed various forms of riyāḍa to tame the lower self (nafs) and aid the seeker in their quest for knowledge of, and union with, the Divine. In his doxography of beliefs that fall within and outside of Islam, Iʿtiqādāt firaq al-Muslimīn wa-l-mushrikīn (The Beliefs of Muslim and Non-Muslim Sects), Rāzī writes that it is a mistake to leave the Sufis out of an account of Islamic groups (firaq) for "the Path to knowledge (maʿrifa) of God is purification (taṣfiya) and detachment (tajarrud) from bodily connections." Rāzī's description of the dual utility of the Sufi tradition for extraction from the material realm and refinement of the self are indeed emblematic of his understanding of the use and efficacy of spiritual practice

(riyāḍa) in the pursuit of knowledge of God.Yet the most resounding influence on Rāzī's developed notion of the two-fold Path and its use of riyāḍais al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt, Ibn Sīnā's (d.428/1037) last work that melds Sufi terms and concepts with the philosophical tradition (falsafa), and upon which Rāzī wrote a commentary early in his career in the year 576/1180. In contrast to other scholars who have dismissed Rāzī's turn to Sufism as a late, non-intellectual conversion or who have falsely subsumed it under the Avicennian concept of intellectual intuition (ḥads),this paper engages in a careful examination of Rāzī's Sharḥal-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt and argues that Rāzī, at an early stage, repurposes various concrete forms of spiritual practice (riyāḍa) as vital for the completion of the seeker's intellectual-spiritual ascent to God. It further explores how Rāzī understands the last sections of the work to be a representative description of a peak human experience undergone by the seeker on the Path (al-ṭarīqa), a way to a higher Truth undertaken both more traditional forms of Sufism and by the metaphysical investigations of the philosophers (Muslim and otherwise).

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Nuruddin Al Akbar (Universitas Gadjah Mada)

Ibn Taymiyyah and Post-Normal Science

This study seeks to place Ibn Taymiyyah's intellectual project in line with the development of post-normal science discourse. Ibn Taymiyyah's scholarly project is often identified as a continuation of the chain of criticism that al Ghazali has made of Aristotelian

metaphysics embraced by many Muslim philosophers such as Ibn Sina and also Farabi. Ghazali believed Aristotelian metaphysics did not reach a certain level but was merely speculation. For Al Ghazali, the speculative Aristotelian metaphysics is unfortunately considered to be absolute truth so that Islamic teachings are forced to submit to it.

Ibn Taymiyyah radicalized the Al Ghazali project which was considered to have not touched its roots, leaving Aristotelian logic untouched. Like Al Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyyah believed that Aristotelian logic which tended to be a closed system was problematic because it made people feel that they had arrived at a certainty of knowledge even though they were not. So instead Ibn Taymiyyah offered an inductive approach as an alternative. Inductive methods are considered more convincing because it is based on experiments, but at the same time does not have any pretensions for being dogmatic because there is always the possibility that new findings will dynamize one's way of thinking. His emphasis on induction also influenced Ibn Taymiyyah to defend the idea of *ijtihad* and reject the concept of *taqlid* (blind imitations) because *taqlid* also assumed a closed system.

Ibn Taymiyyah's intellectual project is in line with the development of discourse among some intellectuals who promote the discourse on post-normal science as a strategy to face the post-normal times' era. The concept of Post-normal times refers to a period were characterized by uncertainty, complexity, and unmanageable situations. The "old" knowledge system that relies on the logic of modern science that emphasizes certainty is not sufficient

to deal with these new situations. Contrary to modern science, Post-normal science seeks to affirm uncertainty, complexity, and also unmanageability. The implication is that post-normal science is open-ended rather than a closed system.

One thing that is important in Ibn Taymiyah's intellectual project which can be one of the inspirations for the development of post-normal science is Ibn Taymiyyah's strong belief in the idea of integrating knowledge. The integration here is that the system of ethics extracted from the Quran and Sunna can be an essential source of ethics to prevent potential defects in the development of non-religious knowledge. In this context, Ibn Taymiyyah has anticipated the potential for scientific instrumentation which is vulnerable to making it a mere tool of power rather than being of practical use as a means of improving the quality of human life and environmental preservation. This tendency, for example, can be found in his work "*al-Hisbah*", where Ibn Taymiyyah seeks to create a structural strategy based on Islamic ethics to prevent potential "defects" in the market system that has the potential to give birth to dehumanization and ecological crises.

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Sayed Hassan Akhlaq (Coppin State University)

The Shared Concepts of Mulla Sadra and James on Philosophy and Truth

Mulla Sadra (1571-1636) and William James (1842-1010) came from two different traditions: one a Muslim Philosopher, the other the father of American psychology; but both were original and

leading thinkers. Mulla Sadra introduced a new philosophy The Transcendental Wisdom and James developed Pragmatism. Both figures made most important philosophical contributions contemplating on the concept of truth and history of philosophy.

Mulla Sadra's philosophy is a combination of Islamic theology, Peripatetic and Illustrative Philosophies of Islam, and Sufism. Attempting to transcend the simple dichotomy between *falsafa* and Sufism, Sadra developed ways of promoting harmony among reasoning, intuition, and revelation. Metaphysics of change was a path for him to revolutionize the doctrine of existence and the demonstrations of the truth. James set out the metaphysical view "neutral monism," which highlights a fundamental "stuff" that is neither material nor mental. In *Pragmatism*, he presents systematic views about truth, knowledge, reality, religion, and philosophy which turns toward a mystical transcending the fixed concepts and embracing the revealing reality. He also attempted to overcome the dichotomy of empiricism and rationalism.

This paper presents a detailed discussion on commonalities between Mulla Sadra and James. The first section illustrates on the shared perspectives of Mulla Sadra and James on the truth which turns away from ratiocinative philosophy, verbal solutions, fixed principles, and closed systems. Truth can be learnt through concreteness, facts, action and many manifestations. The second part studies the shared concerns among these philosophers to introduce a harmony between philosophy and science, philosophy and religion, philosophy and intuition, and philosophy and human experience. They also wanted to find the commonalities among vary

philosophical traditions. The last section of this paper called "inspirations" explains how those shared ideas and concerns serve two aims: mutual understanding between two different philosophies as well as enhancing our comprehension of truth. The main source of my paper consist of orginal works of both philosophers: *Al-Shawahid al-rububiyya fi manahij al-sulukiyya [Divine Witnesses along the Spiritual Path]* and *Pragmatism.*

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Zahra Hosseini (Azarbaijan Shahid Madani University)

Otherness of God in Avicenna's Philosophy

Transcendence of God has been a fundamental opinion of Western religions and classical theism that believe in God's separation from the world. However, the meaning of transcendence has changed over the time and does not seem an explicit concept. The article examines Avicenna's view on transcendence of God. God in Avicenna's works is wholly separated from the universe, and absolutely transcendent in his existence. As such He is also semantically and epistemologically transcendent. Most of his divine attributes are expressed with negative propositions, which shows Avicenna's tendency toward apophatic theology. Moreover, Avicenna has a special view about the affirmative attributes. He believes that they are semantically the same, while they have distinct meanings for other existents. Therefore, it seems that the Avicennan deity not only has a quantitative difference with human, but His attributes are qualitatively other than human traits. Avicenna finds Him wholly other than the humankind; therefore, he cannot explain

the meaning of praying and talking to such an impersonal God as accepted in Islam. In Avicennan philosophy, man is deprived from connecting to God because of His otherness. In this regard, Avicenna has replaced the active intellect instead of God for every connection. It seems that there is a deep distance between the conception of God in Avicenna's philosophy and Islamic concept and it is inconceivable to conform the Necessary Existent and Allah.

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