



BRILL

A Twelfth-Century Controversy on Mānkdīm's *Ta'liq Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamsa*: Zaydis Debating Accidents, Attributes, and Optics

*With an editio princeps and an English Translation of al-Ajwiba al-qaṭ'īyya
'an al-masā'il al-'udhariyya by al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Raṣṣās
(d. 584/1188)*

Hassan Ansari | ORCID: 0000-0002-3048-8399
Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton NJ, USA
afarhang1349@ias.edu

Jan Thiele | ORCID: 0000-0002-8865-5997
Instituto de Lenguas y Culturas del Mediterráneo y Oriente Próximo, CSIC,
Madrid, Spain
jan.thiele@cchs.csic.es

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Abstract

In this article, we present a so far unstudied epistolary exchange between two sixth/twelfth-century Zaydis from Yemen on Mānkdīm's famous *Ta'liq Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamsa*. In the text, which survives in a unique manuscript, al-Ḥasan al-'Udhari raises objections against passages from the proof for the createdness of the world and from the chapter on beatific vision in the *Ta'liq*, touching upon issues related to accidents (*a'rāḍ*), attributes (*ṣifāt*), and sense-perception. Al-'Udhari's objections are refuted by al-Ḥasan al-Raṣṣās, who was possibly his teacher. The debate is of interest for studying the sixth/twelfth-century Zaydi reception of Mu'tazili teachings, as is evident, but it also serves as a valuable testimony to the Zaydi engagement with other intellectual traditions, including proponents of Greek-derived logic and Ash'ari arguments against Mu'tazili theories. Our article first situates the text and its arguments in

its historical and intellectual context, then offers an English translation, and concludes with a critical edition of the epistolary exchange.

Keywords

Zaydis – Mānkdim Sheshdīw – al-Ḥasan al-Raṣṣās – al-Ḥasan al-'Udhārī – Mu'tazilis – Ash'aris – grounds of properties – logic – sense-perception – optics

1 Introduction

One of the most important systematic accounts for the study of the doctrines of the Bahshami branch of Mu'tazilism is *Ta'līq Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamṣa* by *al-sharīf* al-Mustazhar bi-llāh Qiwām al-Dīn Abū l-Ḥusayn Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Ḥāshim al-Ḥasanī al-Qazwīnī, sometimes referred to in historical sources as Ibn al-A'rābī, and much better known as Mānkdim Sheshdīw (d. ca. 425/1034). Since its 1965 publication in the edition of 'Abd al-Karīm 'Uthmān,¹ the text has been repeatedly reprinted and productively used by many modern scholars of Mu'tazili and specifically Bahshami theology. In line with the text's attribution among the majority of scholars in the 1960s and 1970s, 'Uthmān had published the text as 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Hamadhānī's (d. 415/1025) *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamṣa*. In an 1979 article on the *Ta'līq Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamṣa*, Daniel Gimaret rectified this erroneous attribution along with other confusions of previous scholars regarding the work's textual relationship to other Mu'tazili works.² He demonstrates that the text published by 'Uthmān is in fact Mānkdim's recension of or commentary on 'Abd al-Jabbār's *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamṣa*, which in turn is the latter's autocommentary on his own *Uṣūl*, rather than a commentary on other homonymous Mu'tazili works.³

Appealing to the substantial number of manuscripts that have been preserved of the *Ta'līq*, Gimaret alerted to the fact that the text enjoyed a great

1 Mānkdim Sheshdīw, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamṣa*.

2 Gimaret, "Les *Uṣūl al-ḥamṣa*".

3 A fragment of 'Abd al-Jabbār's autocommentary has possibly survived in a Karaite manuscript, preserved in St Petersburg, National Library of Russia, Firk. Arab. 259; see Schmidtke, "Mu'tazili Manuscripts", pp. 407–412, no. 8. Mānkdim's supercommentary was the product of his lectures on 'Abd al-Jabbār's *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamṣa* and penned down by his students, hence the name *Ta'līq*. For a case study on a *Ta'līq* style of commentary see Ansari & Schmidtke, "The Zaydī Reception of Ibn Khallād's *Kitāb al-Uṣūl*" (reprinted in Ansari & Schmidtke, *Studies in Medieval Islamic Intellectual Traditions*, chapter 5).

popularity among the Zaydis of Yemen. Also, he shows that the text's impact is confirmed by two other commentaries that depend on Mānkdm's *Ta'liq*. The first was written between the late fifth/eleventh and early sixth/twelfth century by a Zaydi from Northern Iran, Abū Muḥammad Ismā'īl b. 'Alī b. Ismā'īl al-Farrazādhī, and survives in manuscript form. The second was written by a Yemeni Zaydi who lived in the first half of the eighth/fourteenth century, al-Qāsim b. Aḥmad b. Ḥumayd al-Muḥallī. Al-Farrazādhī's commentary, equally titled *Ta'liq Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamsa*, is a commentary on 'Abd al-Jabbār's *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamsa*. Yet a significant amount of passages exhibit so close similarities with Mānkdm's that Gimaret concludes that, even in the absence of any mention, al-Farrazādhī must have used Mānkdm as a source. Al-Qāsim al-Muḥallī's text is in turn a commentary on Mānkdm's *Ta'liq*. Al-Muḥallī cites Mānkdm explicitly—he even records textual variants from different copies of the work—and adds an additional textual layer, in which he also appeals to doctrinal developments that occurred after Mānkdm's times: al-Muḥallī refers often to the Mu'tazilis Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī (d. 436/1044), Rukn al-Dīn Maḥmūd Ibn al-Malāḥimī (d. 536/1141) and the Ash'ari Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210). Two additional Yemeni commentaries on Mānkdm's *Ta'liq*, not explored by Gimaret, illustrate the ongoing engagement with the text: 'Abdallāh b. al-Ḥasan al-Dawwārī's (d. 800/1397–98) *Nihāyat al-wuṣūl ilā ma'ānī Sharḥ al-uṣūl* and 'Alī b. Yaḥyā al-Ḥusaynī's *Nihāyat dhawī l-'uqūl 'alā Sharḥ al-uṣūl*.⁴

In this article, we present an additional, and to our knowledge as yet unnoticed commentary upon Mānkdm's *Ta'liq Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-khamsa*.⁵ The text

4 For the former, see al-Wajīh, *A'lām*, vol. 1, p. 550; for the latter, see the description of the only surviving manuscript copy in al-'Izzī, *Fihrist*, p. 24, no. 5.

5 This commentary was identified by Hassan Ansari, when he visited the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, as part of consulting systematically the collections of Yemeni manuscripts in European libraries (for more details see Ansari & Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", pp. 114–115). The text is recorded in Grünert's handwritten inventory of the collection (Grünert, *Kurzer Katalog*, p. 38, no. 143) with its title, "al-Raṣṣāṣ" as author (leaving it ambiguous to which member of the family this refers), and "induced" ("veranlasst") by "al-Ḥasan b. Nāḍir (*sic*) b. Ya'qūb al-'Udhari", while it is missing in the inventory of al-Ḥasan al-Raṣṣāṣ's writings in Thiele, *Theologie*. A catalogue of the Vienna Glaser collection is still an important desideratum for completing the picture of surviving Zaydi manuscript copies. In the framework of the "Mu'tazilite Manuscript Project", Gregor Schwarb started compiling a bibliography of Zaydi-Mu'tazili works, aggregating the information of published catalogues, scholarly literature, and available hand lists (such as Grünert's or the list of manuscripts digitized by the Zayd b. 'Alī Cultural Foundation; see Schwarb, "Un projet international"). It was continued under the aegis of the ERC AdG "Rediscovering Theological Rationalism in the Medieval World of Islam", directed by Sabine Schmidtke, of which we were team members. Unfortunately, the work was never completed. Although the authors of this paper cited a draft of the work in earlier publications, we no longer see value in referencing

in question, titled *al-Ajwiba al-qaṭ'īyya 'an al-masā'il al-'udhariyya*, is of interest for studying the sixth/twelfth-century Zaydi reception of Mu'tazili teachings, as is evident, but it also serves as a valuable testimony to the Zaydi engagement with other intellectual traditions, including proponents of Greek-derived logic and Ash'ari arguments against Mu'tazili theories. Perhaps, the description "commentary" is somewhat misleading for our text, because it differs significantly from the commentaries listed above. Instead of being an exposition and explanation of the entire *Ta'līq*, the text presented here is very short and does not engage with the entire *Ta'līq*. Rather, it consists of an epistolary exchange between two scholars from the sixth/twelfth century, in which one raises objections to three specific passages from Mānkdim's text, to which the other responds. The two scholars were Zaydis from Yemen, among whom Bahshami theology had found a receptive intellectual milieu during these times. Copies of Bahshami texts like Mānkdim's *Ta'līq* were brought, along with many other works, from the centres of Zaydi learning in Northern Iran to Yemen, where local scholars embraced their doctrines and built on them their own literary tradition. Nonetheless, the adoption of Bahshami theology was never uncontested among Yemeni Zaydis, and it faced the suspicion of being a deviation from what some members of the community considered the authentic teaching of early Zaydi authorities. In addition, even though Mu'tazili doctrines dominated the sixth/twelfth-century theological discourse of the Yemeni Zaydis—contrary to the trend in the Sunni milieu—they were not isolated from contemporary intellectual debates in the Sunni world that challenged Mu'tazilism. The text presented here illustrates this connection.

The person who raises the three objections against the *Ta'līq* is named al-Ḥasan b. Nāṣir b. Ya'qūb b. 'Āmir al-Shatawī (or: al-Shitwī) al-'Udhari al-Hamdānī (fl. late sixth/twelfth century), and his contemporary al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Raṣṣās (d. 584/1188) speaks in defence of Mānkdim, rebutting al-'Udhari's critique. Little is known about al-Ḥasan al-'Udhari's life.⁶ He served as the secretary to the Imam al-Manṣūr bi-llāh 'Abdallāh b. Ḥamza (r. 593–614/1197–1217), who was a student of al-Ḥasan al-Raṣṣās and promoted—even violently—Bahshami theology under his reign.⁷ We don't

it for information that is available in catalogues and other scholarly literature, as its publication has not materialized.

6 Al-Ḥasan al-'Udhari had three sons who participated in scholarly activities in Imam al-Manṣūr bi-llāh's entourage: 'Imrān (d. after 630/1232), Mas'ūd (alive 633/1236), from whose pens we possess several manuscript copies, and As'ad. See Ansari & Schmidtke, *Studies in Medieval Islamic Intellectual Traditions*, pp. 30, 82, 136–7, 166, 182, 238).

7 Al-Manṣūr bi-llāh's *sīra* mentions al-Ḥasan al-'Udhari several times; see Ibn Di'tham, *Sīra*, vol. 2, p. 83, vol. 3, pp. 485, 509.

know of any writings by al-Ḥasan al-ʿUdhārī other than his epistolary exchange with al-Raṣṣās about Mānkdm̄'s *Ta'liq*.

Al-Ḥasan al-ʿUdhārī's interlocutor, al-Ḥasan al-Raṣṣās, is much better known. Although biographical information about him are rather scarce, we have a detailed picture of his teachings, as they have been preserved in a substantial amount of writings. During his relatively short life, al-Ḥasan al-Raṣṣās was instrumental in developing the doctrinal underpinnings of the emerging Bahshami strand among Yemen's Zaydis, which came to be the theological mainstream thanks to its promotion by the Imam al-Manṣūr bi-llāh. Apart from some works on legal methodology, most of al-Raṣṣās's writings deal with rational theology (*kalām*). In particular, he put great emphasis on metaphysical issues: he wrote treatises specifically devoted to *kalām* atomism, causality, as well as a systematic exposition of the Bahshami theory of *aḥwāl* (literally: "states"), which attempted to explain the ontology of the characteristics of beings.⁸ These are indeed subjects of equally central concern to *falsafa*, that is, philosophy in the Aristotelian and/or Neoplatonic tradition. As Greco-Arabic philosophers developed their theories in a distinct conceptual and epistemological framework, al-Raṣṣās in some of his writings critically engages with them. He does so in a treatise discussing the essence-existence distinction, in several refutations of hylomorphism, in rebuttals of the doctrine of the eternity of the world, as well as in a refutation of al-Ghazālī's (d. 505/1111) *Maqāsid al-falāsifa*. The biographical literature also credits al-Raṣṣās with a work entitled *Munāqadat ahl al-mantiq*. This work, which might be identical with al-Raṣṣās's refutation of al-Ghazālī's *Maqāsid*, indicates that it had a specific focus on formal logic.⁹ *Kalām* had developed its own patterns of argumentation, typically (though not exclusively) in a not less sophisticated form of analogical reasoning. It was only gradually from the late fifth/eleventh century onwards that practitioners of *kalām* started advocating the adoption of Greek-derived logic.¹⁰ Al-Raṣṣās lived consequently in a period in which the acceptability of formal logic was still controversially negotiated. He actively participated in this debate, with the abovementioned treatise, in which he apparently attacked al-Ghazālī as one of the prominent advocates of incorporating syllogistic logic into *kalām*.¹¹ Unfortunately, this refutation is lost, but we

8 For a study of al-Raṣṣās's biography and his metaphysical teachings, see Thiele, *Theologie*.

9 For al-Raṣṣās's critical engagement with *falsafa* and *falsafa*-infused *kalām*, see Ansari & Schmidtke, "Sixth/Twelfth-Century Zaydī Theologians of Yemen Debating Avicennan Philosophy".

10 van Ess, "Logical Structure"; El-Rouayheb, "Theology and Logic".

11 Ansari & Schmidtke, "Sixth/Twelfth-Century Zaydī Theologians of Yemen Debating Avicennan Philosophy", pp. 240–241n48.

will see that one of al-'Udhari's objections and al-Raṣṣās's response to it offer a glimpse of these two scholars' familiarity logic.

The existence of an epistolary exchange between al-'Udhari and al-Raṣṣās on Mānkḍīm's *Ta'līq* is not attested in any sources. The response's attribution to al-Raṣṣās in the text's unique copy is however authentic, as corroborated by a quotation of al-Raṣṣās's lost treatise, titled *The Twenty Questions (al-Masā'il al-'ishrūn)*, which is also cited in other writings of his.¹² Possibly, al-Ḥassan al-Raṣṣās used Mānkḍīm's *Ta'līq* as a textbook in his study circles. This is suggested by the introduction of al-Raṣṣās's *al-'Ashr al-fawā'id*, where he reports—without explicit reference to Mānkḍīm, though—that he was asked by some of his acquaintances to elaborate on a thought experiment, which is indeed found in the *Ta'līq*.¹³ Perhaps, al-Ḥassan al-'Udhari attended al-Raṣṣās's classes on the *Ta'līq* and presented his critical remarks on the text in this context to al-Raṣṣās.

Al-'Udhari's first question relates to a claim that is found in Mānkḍīm's proof for the creation of bodies, which traditionally started from the observation that bodies are positioned in space such that they are either composed or separated from each other, either moving or resting. The atomist ontology of *kalām* explained these spatial as well as other qualities of bodies by accidents (*a'rāḍ*) that subsist in the atoms from which bodies are composed. The proof for the creation of bodies argues that spatial qualities are a necessary condition for bodies to exist, because we cannot conceive of their existence without either resting in some position in space or moving from one position to another, nor without being either composed with or separated from other atoms. Since these spatial qualities are changing, consequently temporal, and hence, according to the theologians' reasoning, created, it was concluded that bodies that necessarily carry these created accidents must be created, too.

Mānkḍīm responds in the *Ta'līq* to a series of objections in order to preclude that being composed (*mujtami'*), as one of the spatial qualities of bodies, could possibly be the effect of other causes than accidents. Al-'Udhari's question relates to Mānkḍīm's argument against one of these objections, namely why the bodies' composition cannot possibly be caused by an agent (*li-ma lā yajūzu an yakūna l-jism mujtami'an bi-l-fā'il*).¹⁴ The formula *bi-l-fā'il* refers to that which agents produce immediately by virtue of their autonomous acts.

12 Al-Raṣṣās cites *al-Masā'il al-'ishrūn* in *Kayfiyyat kashf al-aḥkām wa-l-ṣifāt 'an khaṣā'is al-mu'aththirāt wa-l-muqtaḍiyāt* and *al-Kāshif li-dhawī l-baṣā'ir 'an ithbāt al-jawāhir*. For a partial reconstruction of the work's contents see Thiele, *Theologie*, pp. 37–38.

13 Ansari, Khalkhali, and Thiele, "Why Humans Refrain from Lying", pp. 426–427.

14 Mānkḍīm Sheshdīw, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamṣa*, pp. 100–101.

Mānkḏīm argues that an agent cannot immediately cause a body to be composed, rather than by virtue of creating in it an accident as the actual cause of the body's composition, because this would carry the false implication that the same agent who causes the body's composition causes also the body to exist. The problem behind this implication is that humans do have the capacity to cause a body's composition, but not the capacity to create bodies, according to Bahshami doctrines. But why does causing an object's attribute without creating an accident in it imply that whoever causes this attribute is also the very object's creator? Mānkḏīm substantiates his claim with the example of speech, whose pragmatic features—commanding, prohibiting, or informing—are conceived of as attributes of speech: whoever makes his speech a command, a prohibition or a statement, Mānkḏīm argues, also creates the speech itself; and unlike our own speech, we cannot cause other persons' speech to be a command, a prohibition or a statement, since we do not create their speech.

Now, what is noteworthy in al-'Udhari's objection is the formal nature of his argument. He raises the question whether or not Mānkḏīm's proposition ("Whoever is capable of causing an object to have an attribute without creating a distinct entitative cause (*ma'nā*) is capable of creating the object itself.") is convertible—in other words whether or not interchanging the proposition's subject and predicate leads to another true proposition—and if so, whether it converts into a universal or particular affirmative. Al-'Udhari's critical question adopts consequently the form of Greek-derived logic, that earlier theologians had long opposed.

Al-'Udhari argues that either option, that is, the proposition's conversion into a universal or a particular affirmative, results into false propositions or contradictions. Converting it into a particular affirmative would contradict Mānkḏīm's own example of speech that humans create and cause to have an attribute without the need of creating an accident in it. Its conversion into a universal affirmative, in turn, would lead to two absurdities. If no accidents were required for bodies to be combined or separated, they could be both at the same time, because only the coming into being of an accident's contrary annihilates its existence and inhibits the conjunction of two incompatible states of affair. The other absurd corollary would be to assume that necessary causes could exist without being effective.

In his response, al-Raṣṣās likewise frames his argument within the formal structure of Greek-derived logic, rather than relying solely on the *kalām* argumentative style he typically employs. Al-Raṣṣās addresses the question of the proposition's convertibility, arguing that it can indeed be converted into a particular affirmative. To support his claim, al-Raṣṣās first presents a scenario where the proposition's conversion would lead to a false statement:

God's capability to create bodies, coupled with His incapability to combine or separate these bodies without creating an accident within them. From this, he derives the correct conversion of the proposition into a particular affirmative: "Some who are capable of creating an object are also capable of creating an attribute of it without creating a distinct entitative cause within it." Al-Raṣṣās then counters al-'Udhari's objections by asserting that this proposition is true in the context of human creation of speech. He argues that not every speaker is capable of creating an attribute of their speech, such as whether it is a command, prohibition, or statement. The backdrop supporting this claim is the Bahshamis' doctrine that these attributes require intentionality on the part of the speaker—something that is absent in the case of a sleeping person, whose speech is random and purposeless. Hence, al-Raṣṣās concludes that the proposition's conversion into a particular affirmative is both valid and applicable in this context. Al-Raṣṣās ultimately agrees with al-'Udhari that Mānkḏīm's proposition does not convert into a universal affirmative. However, he believes that al-'Udhari's arguments lack sound reasoning and, as a result, he contradicts several claims made by al-'Udhari in his objection.

The second thematic unit of al-'Udhari's objections against Mānkḏīm concerns issues related to optics. Mānkḏīm discusses these questions in the chapter on beatific vision.¹⁵ However, the controversy over whether or not humans will see God through visual perception at the Last Judgment is not of any concern for al-'Udhari. Instead, he focuses on technical questions about the nature of human visual perception. Notably, this part of al-'Udhari's objections echoes arguments of Ash'ari theologians, as we will see now in more detail.

To begin this part, al-'Udhari quotes Mānkḏīm's claim that sense-perception (*idrāk*) is not an accident or entity that subsists in the human body and causes it to perceive objects. In accordance with the Bahshami theory of sense-perception, Mānkḏīm argues that if sense-perception were an accident, we would have to concede that in the absence of this accident, sense-perception would be impossible even if a person has sound senses, an object of perception exists, and no obstacle prevents the object's perception. Al-'Udhari has nothing to object, but he contrasts this claim with the opinion of an "opponent", and even if he does not name him explicitly an Ash'ari, the position can be clearly identified as Ash'ari: the "opponent's" doctrine acknowledges that sound senses, the absence of obstacles, and the presence of an object of perception are required for humans to perceive, but these are not sufficient conditions because a supplemental cause is needed for humans to be able to

15 The chapter, titled "on the negation of [beatific] vision" (*faṣl fi naḡy al-ru'ya*), is found in Mānkḏīm Sheshḏiw, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamṣa*, pp. 232–261.

perceive. The backdrop of this theory was the Ash'aris' occasionalism, which allowed for the conception that human sense-perception ultimately depends on God, rather than merely the conjunction of physical circumstances.¹⁶

Despite mentioning this Mu'tazili-Ash'ari controversy, al-'Udhari does not enter into the debate whether or not sense-perception is an accident. Rather, he is concerned with conceptions of the mechanics of human visual perception. The Bashshamis' understanding rests on the idea that visual perception depends on rays, incorporating earlier considerations of Mu'tazili thinkers, who sought to support their theory of rays with a hypothesis about the optical process that allows us to view our reflection in a mirror.¹⁷ Mankdim's *Ta'liq* also contains a description of this process, and it is this passage that al-'Udhari selects for his second objection.¹⁸ Accordingly, a ray emanates from the beholder's eye, strikes the mirror, acts as an eye there, and reflects a ray back through which we see ourselves. Al-'Udhari objects that this theory is mere speculation as nothing proves the emanation of rays from human eyes. Rather, according to al-'Udhari, the following arguments speak against the theory: either parts of the visual power or the entire visual power would have to exit the beholder's eye, resulting in the perception of the reflection being either weakened or completely impossible, due to the eye's loss of visual power.

Al-'Udhari's final objection targets the conception of the gaze as a thin body (*jism raqiq*) and questions to what extent this conception can account for visual perception, without explicitly referencing the *Ta'liq*. He objects that if this conception were true, neither of the gaze's two qualities—its corporeality and its thinness—could account for our perception: either we would have to concede that every body is perceiving, or every thin body, including air, which does not perceive. A third hypothesis, namely grounding visual perception in a combination of the gaze's thinness and its striking a reflective object, would likewise entail that air perceives whenever it touches a mirror. An additional problem arises from the conception of the gaze as a body, according to al-'Udhari: once it strikes the mirror, we would be forced to acknowledge the existence of two bodies—the mirror and the gaze—in the same locus of being, which is absurd.

In fact, al-'Udhari's objections challenge those elements of the Mu'tazili conception of visual perception—and, ultimately, their arguments for rejecting beatific vision as a sensory experience—that were also at the centre of Ash'ari criticism. To recognize these parallels, we compared al-'Udhari's objections

16 See Gimaret, *Doctrine*, p. 177.

17 For early discussions in *kalām* on this optical process see al-Ash'ari, *Maqālāt*, p. 434.

18 Mankdim Sheshdiw, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, p. 249.

with the chapter on beatific vision in one of the most popular and influential Ash'ari theological manuals, al-Juwaynī's (d. 478/1085) *Kitāb al-Irshād*. The first section of al-Juwaynī's chapter attempts to demonstrate that sense-perception is an accident, the doctrine to which al-'Udhari appeals at the beginning of his remarks related to sense-perception.¹⁹ Earlier, we identified the "opponent", as al-'Udhari refers to the proponent of this doctrine, as a representative of Ash'ari theology and explained the basis of the conception of sense-perception as an accident, rooted in the school's occasionalism.²⁰ A little later, al-Juwaynī argues against the Mu'tazili doctrine that visual perception occurs on condition that a ray emanates from the beholder's eye and strikes an object. In this context, he rejects their theory of mirroring and their conception of rays as thin bodies. Like al-'Udhari, al-Juwaynī seeks to demonstrate the absurdity of the theory of rays.²¹ Indeed, this theory posed a challenge to the Ash'ari doctrine that beatific vision entails the actual visual perception of God, as they could hardly claim that a ray, conceived as a thin body, could strike God without attributing corporeality to Him.²²

Al-Raṣṣāṣ counters al-'Udhari's objections by dividing them into two "questions". First, he defends the idea that sense-perception only depends on the soundness of our sense organs and on the absence of obstacles that would prevent us from perceiving an object. To support this claim, al-Raṣṣāṣ argues that we perceive object even when we are unaware of it. For example, we can be distracted by deliberating on something completely distinct from an object we see—and still perceive it. Similarly, our senses also function when we are sleeping: the proof is that we wake up from flea bites or loud sounds, demonstrating that consciousness is not required for sense-perception to operate. He concludes that the act of sense-perception generates knowledge of the object we perceive, but we do not need to be aware of the act of perceiving itself, as the occurrence of unconscious perception proves. In how far does this respond to the question whether or not sense-perception is an accident? Al-Raṣṣāṣ's answer is somewhat implicit and we tend to explain it as follows: it seems to suggest that sense-perception correlates with an accident, but this accident is not sense-perception itself, but rather knowledge of the perceived object, of which the Bahshami theory indeed conceived as an accident.

Al-Raṣṣāṣ then turns to al-'Udhari's attempt to challenge Mānkdim's theory of the physical process of viewing one's reflection. First, he corrects a

19 al-Juwaynī, *al-Irshād*, pp. 166–167.

20 See also Gimaret, *Doctrine*, p. 171.

21 al-Juwaynī, *al-Irshād*, pp. 169–173.

22 See also Gimaret, *Doctrine*, pp. 174, 179–181.

misrepresentation in al-ʿUdhari’s critique of the Bahshami theory: it is not of the gaze but rather of the visual ray that Bahshamis conceive as a thin body. In case of humans, this visual ray has not the sufficient strength for their eyes to see and therefore depends on rays of light to which they are connected—the reason why humans see less the weaker light is. On this backdrop, al-Raṣṣās counters, al-ʿUdhari’s objection is pointless. Whenever a visual ray—and not the gaze—emanates from the beholder’s eye, it connects the eye with the object of perception, similar to a thread extending between the two. The reflective object then reflects the ray back to the beholder’s eye. As a result, the beholder’s eye and the object of perception are neither disconnected, nor does the ray’s emanation from the beholder’s eye weaken and, let alone, use up the beholder’s capacity to see.

Al-Raṣṣās then comes back to correct al-ʿUdhari’s misunderstanding of the conception of the gaze. It denotes the movement of the iris that occurs when the beholder directs it towards their object of perception. As every movement in the framework of *kalām* atomism, al-Raṣṣās, argues, it is consequently an accident (*ʿaraḍ*) and cannot conceivably be a body, so the conception supposed by al-ʿUdhari is incoherent and inaccurate.

With regard to al-ʿUdhari’s critique that Mānkdim’s theory implies that every thin body must be perceiving, al-Raṣṣās counters that the ray itself is not seeing. Resonating the Bahshami theory of sense-perception, he claims that being perceiving is a quality of living beings that occurs whenever there is an object of perception and on condition that no obstacles or defects prevent them from perceiving it. Accordingly, the presence of a ray enters into the definition of the conditions for visual perception, since the lack of rays are indeed a defect. Consequently, the mere presence of a thin body and even of rays are not sufficient for the occurrence of perception, as it requires a living being capable of perception.

Finally, al-Raṣṣās rebuts al-ʿUdhari’s last objection. He counters that the claim that reflection occurs whenever a ray strikes a reflective object does not imply the presence of two bodies in the same locus. Instead, the ray only touches the surface of the reflective object, which means that the two bodies are in the closest possible vicinity without any spatial distance in between. Yet neither body shares its locus with the other.

A question that remains to address is how the debate between al-ʿUdhari and al-Raṣṣās can be explained. We largely exclude the hypothesis that al-ʿUdhari himself was an Ashʿari. His later position as a secretary at the court of Imam al-Manṣūr bi-llāh seems incompatible with this. The Imam himself was a fervent promoter of Muʿtazili doctrines. To be sure, we know of various instances where Muslim courts acted as patrons of representatives from

opposing intellectual currents. Yet the reign of al-Manṣūr bi-llāh was characterized by consolidating and securing the dominance of Bahshami theology, even through the use of force against its detractors. In any case, our text clearly shows that Zaydi theologians of that time were familiar with contemporary Ash'ari doctrines and arguments. Possible points of contact could have been Shafi'is in their vicinity or texts they were able to access. These texts may also include Mu'tazili works that record Ash'ari arguments and then refute them.²³ *Kalām* is characterized by a dialectical culture of debate with both real and fictional intellectual opponents. Thus, al-'Udhari's role as a proponent of Ash'ari arguments could be understood as an exercise and practice within this culture of debate.

In the following we provide a translation and edition of al-'Udhari's objections and al-Raṣṣās's responses. The translation and edition are based on what seems to be a unique manuscript copy. The text is preserved in a multitext codex, which is in possession of Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, MS Cod. Glaser 215, fols 1v–6r. The manuscript was possibly produced in the eighth/fourteenth century by a single hand. The codex has been described by Hassan Ansari and Sabine Schmidtke in the framework of their editions of other texts contained in it.²⁴ A digital copy of the codex has been made openly accessible in the framework of the “Zaydi Manuscript Tradition” project.²⁵

2 Translation

Decisive Answers to al-'Udhari's Questions

Written by the High Master, the Unique Scholar, al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Raṣṣās, Asked to him by the High Master, al-Ḥasan b. Nāṣir b. Ya'qūb al-'Udhari

23 For example, Ibn al-Malāḥimī, *Mu'tamad* contains a chapter on beatific vision that engages in a detailed fashion with the Ash'ari theory of sense-perception (specifically pp. 434–474).

24 Ansari & Schmidtke, “Sixth/Twelfth-Century Zaydi Theologians of Yemen Debating Avicennan Philosophy”, p. 245.

25 The project, curated by Sabine Schmidtke and Hassan Ansari and based at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, NJ, records the digital copy under the number ZMT 00464; images are available online via the project's partner Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMML) at <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/140547>.

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds, may He bless the master of the messengers, Muhammad, and his righteous family, and His peace be upon him and them all.

The master Mānkḍīm said in the first premise²⁶ of his *Commentary*: “Whoever is capable of causing an object²⁷ to have an attribute without creating a distinct entitative cause (*maʿnā*)²⁸ [within this object] is capable of creating the object itself.”²⁹ Does this proposition convert into a universal affirmative or into a particular [affirmative]? If it is said: “It only converts into a particular affirmative, because it is not [true] that whoever is capable of creating an object is also capable of causing it to have an attribute without creating a distinct entitative cause within it”, we object: “But we are actually capable

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- 26 Al-Udharī refers to the first “premise” (*daʿwa*, pl. *daʿawī*) of a much-employed proof for the existence of God in *kalām* theology. The proof is attributed to the early Muʿtazili theologian Abū l-Hudhayl. It establishes the existence of God by arguing that the world is made up of created bodies, a claim that presupposes a divine Creator. The temporal existence of bodies is demonstrated by the following four “premises”: (1) bodies are combined, separated, moving or resting by virtue of entities, that is, accidents inherent to them; (2) accidents are created and have temporal existence; (3) bodies cannot possibly be free from accidents nor precede them in existence; (4) if bodies necessarily carry accidents that have temporal existence, they must have temporal existence, too; see Davidson, *Proofs for Eternity*, pp. 134–143. The proof for creation from accidents in its typical structure is found in Mānkḍīm Sheshḍīw, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, pp. 95–115.
- 27 Our translation “object” for *dhāt* follows the suggestion of Dhanani, *Physical Theory*, pp. 29–33. The term *dhāt* was also used as the Arabic equivalent for the Aristotelian notion of “essence”. In the context of *kalām*, *dhāt* is almost synonymous to *shayʿ*, i.e. “thing” or “entity”, and denotes that which can be an object of knowledge (*maʿlūm*) and of predication (*al-mukhbar ʿanhu*), something that also implies its possible description by specific qualities or attributes (*ṣifāt*, sing. *ṣifa*). See also Frank, *Beings*, pp. 22–23.
- 28 *Maʿnā*, pl. *maʿānī* refers in the terminology of *kalām* to accidents (*aʿrād*, sing. *ʿaraḍ*). The term *maʿnā* is said to have been introduced by Muʿammar b. ʿAbbād al-Sulamī (d. 215/830), who formulated the controversial theory that bodies possess their qualities by virtue of infinite chains of *maʿānī*. Although Muʿammar’s theory was later rejected, the term *maʿnā* was adopted for accidents, which were believed to determine the changeable qualities of atoms and bodies, including colour, taste, their position in space or their movement. *Maʿnā* was also translated as “causal determinant” (Frank, “*Al-Maʿnā*”), or “entitative attribute” (Frank, “The Aṣʿarite Ontology”, followed by Dhanani, *Physical Theory*). Key does not consider Frank’s understanding of *maʿnā* to be wrong, but rather too limited to a specific context of meaning, and suggests “mental content” (Key, *Language between God and the Poets*). In our opinion, however, this does not work as a translation in the sentence above. While Key argues that *maʿnā* can (though not necessarily should) be translated uniformly, Bennett, “Introducing the *Maʿānī*” leaves the term untranslated, concluding that “the realm of *maʿānī* was a site for constant theoretical inquiry, irreducible to a single doctrinal or disciplinary tradition” (p. 94).
- 29 Mānkḍīm Sheshḍīw, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, pp. 100–101.

of creating speech and we are capable of causing it to have an attribute without creating a distinct entitative cause [within it].” And if it is said: “It converts into universal affirmative”, it would necessarily follow that bodies are combined and separated at the same time, or that a necessary cause would exist without its effect. An example of this would be (*wa-mithāl dhālika*) if we presumed that the Creator, Exalted, would produce a combined body without [creating an accident of] combination, because He is capable of producing [the body]. And we would then have to presume that He creates a body and [an accident of] combination within it, and that thereafter he wants to separate [the body] without creating [an accident of] separation within it. The result would be either that the two [i.e., combination and separation] would exist simultaneously, or [only] the [accident of] combination, or [only] the [accident of] separation. Yet if combination and separation existed simultaneously, the body would be combined and separated at the same time; if combination existed without separation, God could not possibly be powerful; and if [only] separation existed, [we would have to concede] a necessary cause without effect.

Then he [i.e., Mānkḏīm] said in the section on visual perception: “Sense-perception is not an accident (*ma'nā*), because if it was an accident, we would not see that which is in front of us, even provided that our senses are sound, an object of perception exists and no obstacle [prevents us from perceiving it].”³⁰ The opponent³¹ asserts [exactly] this: that humans can see when their senses are sound, there are no obstacles [to perception], and an object of perception exists. However, these conditions do not cause sense-perception [in his opinion]. Elsewhere he [i.e. Mānkḏīm] said on this issue: “The visual ray emanates from the beholder’s eye (*nuqtat al-nāẓir*), it then strikes the mirror and operates like an eye (*ʿayn*), it is then reflected, and the human being sees his face.”³² What proves that something emanates from the eye and strikes the mirror? If it is said: “A human being sees things like threads that depart from his eye”, we respond: “Does the entire gaze (*naẓar*) or parts of it [emanate from it]?” If it were parts of his gaze, it would follow that when [these

30 Mānkḏīm Sheshḏīw, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, p. 255.

31 “Opponent” refers to Ashʿari scholars, who claimed that vision is an entity that God creates in humans. This occasionalist theory of vision implies that even in the presence of all necessary conditions, humans cannot see unless God creates in them an entity of vision. A Bahshami rebuttal of this theory is found in ʿAbd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, vol. 4, pp. 50ff. For an Ashʿari refutation of the Bahshami theory, see al-Juwaynī, *al-Shāmil*, pp. 688–689.

32 See Mānkḏīm Sheshḏīw, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, p. 249: “We say: It is as if he were facing his own face, because the ray emanates from his eye, strikes the mirror, operates like an eye, and then it is reflected back. Hence, he sees his face as if he were facing it.”

parts] strike the mirror, and the human sees his face, his gaze would be feeble, because he lost parts of his gaze. If it was his entire gaze, it would also follow that he could not possibly see the mirror whilst perceiving his face, because his entire gaze would subsist in the mirror. Furthermore, they claim that the gaze is a thin body. They should be asked: “What induces and causes [the gaze to perceive]?” If it was by virtue of its corporeality (*li-kawnihi jisman*), every body would be perceiving. If it was by virtue of [the gaze’s] thinness, we would have to concede that air perceives, since [air] is a thin [body]. And if the cause for [its being perceiving] was its thinness and its striking some reflective object (*ittiṣāluhu bi-kull ṣaqīl*), it would be necessary for air to be perceiving whenever it strikes a mirror: because then, the cause [for it’s being perceiving]—namely thinness and the mirror’s reflectivity—would be present. Moreover, if the gaze was a thin body, it would necessarily occupy space. Yet the mirror [also] occupies space, wherefore two bodies would occupy the same locus of being (*jiha*), and this is absurd.

[This is] the answer to the first question, and with God is success: The proposition mentioned by the Master Mānkdim, may God be pleased with him, is a universal affirmative proposition that only converts into a particular affirmative. For when we say: “Whoever is able to cause objects to have an attribute other than [the attribute of] existence without creating an accident within them is also capable of creating these very objects”, this does not entail that whoever is capable of creating objects is also able to cause them to have an attribute other than existence without creating a distinct entitative cause within them. The reason is that God Exalted has the capability to [create] the body itself before he brings it into existence, but He is not able to make it combined without [creating] a distinct entitative cause, that is, combination. If He were able to make the existing [body] combined without creating a distinct entitative cause, He would not be able to separate it as long as its existence continues. The reason is that objects cannot possibly be deprived from actual attributes caused by an agent as long as their existence continues, as is shown in a section of the *Twenty Questions* and elsewhere.³³ Yet it is established that there is nothing combined that cannot be separated, because the shared ground for the possibility [of combination and separation] is [the bodies’] occupying space and similarity. Consequently, the proposition only converts into a particular affirmative. Then it should be said: “Some who are capable of creating this [object] are also capable of causing it to have an attribute without creating a distinct entitative cause within it.” This is known from speech:

33 Al-Raṣṣās refers in *al-Kāshif li-dhawī l-baṣā’ir ‘an ithbāt al-jawāhir to al-Masā’il al-‘ishrūn* for a demonstration of the same claim he is making here; see Thiele, *Theologie*, p. 37.

whoever is capable of creating it is also able to cause it to be a command or a statement, whenever he does it knowingly and is not unaware of it. He can do this without creating a distinct entitative cause within it. Yet this is not applicable to things other than speech, and even not universally to speech. Actually, a sleeping or unconscious [human] is capable of creating speech whilst sleeping or being in a state of unawareness, but he cannot possibly cause [his speech] to be a command or statement whilst sleeping or being in a state of unawareness. Rather, speech produced whilst sleeping or being in a state of unawareness has merely the form of commands and statements, but it has not the characteristics (*ḥukm*) of commands and statements, because the characteristics of commands and statements exist [only] when the agent wants that which he commands and when he conveys information to someone. Yet whoever sleeps or is unconscious cannot possibly be willing—[precisely] because he is unconscious and unaware—and, [in addition], willing something is only possible if it first comes to mind. So even if the said [proposition] is applicable to speech, this does not entail that the conversion of the proposition is a universal one, because speech is not equivalent to all acts, but rather only one [type] among others. Thus, even if we accept his claim, it still converts into a particular affirmative only. If we say: “Not everybody who is capable of [creating] an object is [also] able to cause it to have an attribute without creating a distinct entitative cause within it”, then this does not mean that whoever is capable of creating speech—which is one among other [types] of acts—cannot possibly cause it to be a command or statement without [creating] a distinct entitative cause. The reason is that particular negative propositions do not contradict particular affirmatives, specifically in a matter of possibility (*fī māddat al-inkān*).³⁴ And [indeed], our affirmation “whoever is capable of creating an object can cause it to have an attribute without creating a distinct entitative cause, as in the case speech” is a particular affirmative proposition. Consequently, it is not in contradiction with saying that “not everybody who is capable of creating an object can [also] cause it to have an attribute without [creating] a distinct entitative cause”. Rather, the two [propositions] are concurrently true.

Now, with regard to the conversion of [the proposition] into a universal one, his claim is false and contradictory. He presumes that God Exalted first

34 A particular negative proposition and a universal affirmative proposition are contradictory. “Matter of possibility” refers to the modality of the relation between the subject and the predicate of a logical proposition. When the relation between the subject and the predicate of a logical proposition is neither necessary nor impossible, the matter of the proposition is possible. An example would be the attribution of the predicate “writing” to the subject “human being”.

creates a body and an [accident of] combination within it, and then wants to separate it without creating within it an [accident of] separation, and he eventually concludes: “The result would be either that the two [i.e., combination and separation] exist simultaneously, or [only] the [accident of] combination, or [only] the [accident of] separation.” Consequently, he first presumes that an agent wants to cause [a body] to be separated without [creating] an [accident of] separation, and second he presumes that an [accident of] separation exists and that the agent wants its existence, since he says: “Either the two exist simultaneously, or only one of them, and if the [accident of] separation did not exist, the agent could not possibly be capable of action.” We should object: If you assume that the agent causes the body to be separated without [creating] a distinct entitative cause, and then no separation occurs, and there is thus no way to presume that either combination exists, or [only] one of the two without the other, while [the agent] wants to cause [the body] to be separated, but he does not want the [accident of separation] to exist within it, and if that which he does not want to exist does not exist, then this is no evidence for [the agent’s] weakness and incapability. If, in turn, the [accident of] separation existed, it would not follow that a necessary cause (*‘illa*) would exist without its effect, because whenever an [accident of] separation exists, its effect must also occur (*wajaba thubūt hukmihi*)—namely that the body is separated—and the opposite cannot be true—namely, the [presence of] an [accident of] combination and the occurrence of its effect, that is, the body’s being combined. And we should object: Once a body exists, it is no longer related to the agent. The reason behind this is that [agents] cannot possibly cause it to exist when it [already] exists, because it is absurd to cause the existence of something that [already] exists. Hence, if he cannot cause it to exist once it exists, he cannot cause it to have an attribute without [creating] a distinct entitative cause either, because he can only cause it to be that way on condition that he is capable of creating it, and this is not the case, once [the body] exists.

The answer to the second question is that whenever a person deliberates³⁵ on an issue while observing an object with his sound eyes, he must see [the

35 Literally, the Arabic expression translates as “looking at something with one’s heart”, and means deliberating or reflecting upon something. See for example ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, vol. 12, p. 4 and the corresponding passage in Hamdan, and Schmidtke (eds.), *Nukat al-Kitāb al-Mughnī* (from which we translate as it offers an improved reading): “Know that when using the term *naẓar*, it can refer to the act of directing the sound iris toward an object in order to see it, [...] and to the act of looking with the heart. [...] Here, we want to refer to the act of looking with the heart, whose true meaning is reflection (*fikr*), because no one looks with their heart unless they are reflecting, and no one reflects unless they are looking with their heart. This is how the definitions of things are known”.

object] whenever there are no obstacles, because all conditions for seeing it are fulfilled. However, he is not conscious of the fact that he is seeing, just as the sleeper perceives flea bites and loud sounds while asleep. These perceptions cause him to wake up, even though he is unaware of his perceptions, of what he experienced, and of what caused him to wake up from his sleep.³⁶ The same applies to the problem we are discussing: what is achieved by someone absorbed in thinking is the knowledge of the object of perception and observation rather than [the knowledge] that he perceives and sees by his senses, and this is obvious.

The answer to the third question is that the visual ray is a thin and tight (*musiff*) body³⁷ that emanates from the beholder's eye, and it is attached to the ray of the sun or of the moon or the stars. By virtue of this connection it becomes the beholder's instrument by virtue of which he sees what he sees, be it even as far as the stars. This is only so because the visual ray is attached to these lights and comes to be like one single ray that strikes the object of perception or [the object's] locus of being.³⁸ Yet the visual ray itself is not sufficient for the possibility of visual perception. Rather it needs to be connected to light that reinforces and strengthens it. Therefore, we cannot see in complete darkness, even in the presence of our visual ray: the reason is its weakness and the lack of a reinforcing light. Bats see by night rather than by day, because their visual ray is powerful and sufficient by night without additional light. On the other hand, they do not see by day because the [solar] rays are connected to their visual ray such that they are exorbitantly multiplied and consequently

36 The question whether knowledge (*ilm*) and sense-perception (*idrāk*) are identical or something distinct is a topos in discussions of *kalām* and often open the relevant sections of texts dealing with this issue. Both Mu'tazilis and Ash'aris disagree on this question, and Bahshamis argued they are distinct. See Benevich, "Nonreductive Theories of Sense-Perception in the Philosophy of Kalām", pp. 97–103. Al-Raṣṣāṣ's example for illustrating that knowledge is distinct from sense-perception is also found in Mānkdim Sheshdīw, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamṣa*, p. 169: "Regarding the actuality of sense-perception in the absence of knowledge, it occurs when a sleeping person perceives the bites of bugs and fleas that annoy him, even though he cannot assert or know this. Similarly, he perceives a conversation without knowing it, or he sees something from a distance and thinks it is black when it is actually green."

37 For the visual ray's conception as a thin body, see 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, vol. 4, p. 58 ("We know that a ray is a thin, luminous (*munūr*) body that must strike objects and emanate from the eyes, as long as there are no obstacles.") and Ibn Mattawayh, *Tadhkira*, vol. 2, p. 722 ("Know that the ray, whose necessity has been affirmed, is a thin body similar to light. It can be colored, or colorless.")

38 For the junction of rays of vision with rays of light, see Ibn Mattawayh, *Tadhkira*, vol. 2, p. 724: "Immediately upon opening our eyes, we see the sky, because the rays dispersed in the atmosphere and our visual ray become like one single thing."

they cannot see because of an overabundance of rays. Many animals, like cats, see by day and by night because their visual rays have an intermediate quantity between few and many, such that they are sufficient by night and not outshined by the abundance of [solar] rays by day.³⁹ Now if this is correct, his argument in this issue is pointless. This is so because whenever a visual ray emanates from the beholder's eye, it does not separate from the eye to the extent that it is completely emptied of [visual rays]. Rather, it extends between the beholder's eye and the perceived object together with the rays that are dispersed in the atmosphere and to which it is connected. And whenever [the visual ray] strikes a reflective object it is reflected back because of the absence of a hole and because of the strength of the ray [reflected by] the reflective object on which it falls. That which falls on the reflective object is not the entire ray: one part of it is reflected back to its opposite, just as the sun ray is reflected to the roof or the wall of the house, whenever it strikes water. The sun ray thus becomes like a thread stretched between [the sun] and the water, and then from this point the sun ray extends like a stretched thread between the water and the house's roof or wall. The same applies to what we say about the visual ray: it emanates from [the eye] and extends, together with the rays in the atmosphere to which it is connected, between the beholder's eye and the reflective body like a stretched thread, and then from there the rays connected to the visual ray extend a ray like a stretched thread between the reflective object and its opposite. This invalidates [al-'Udharī's] objection that if the visual ray was part of [the beholder's] gaze and struck a mirror, it would follow that when it strikes the mirror and the human sees his face, his gaze would be feeble. This is so because they are big rays, one connected to the other, going straight (*mustaqīma*) and reflected back. This does not weaken the visual ray, just as the sun ray is not weakened when it is reflected by water to a roof or a wall. We do not claim, as he assumes, that [the beholder's] eye emanates all the rays and is emptied of them when they touch the perceived object, so that, supposedly,

39 The idea is discussed in more detail in Ibn Mattawayh, *Tadhkira*, vol. 2, p. 724: "Know that even though the ray that emanates from the eye is indispensable, it is not sufficient for vision to occur. Rather, a body is required—such as the sun, a lamp or something else—to support our visual ray. Yet, we do not consider it necessary that that which supports our visual ray must be a thin body (*jisman raqīqan mutakhalkhalan*), because it happens with glass, despite of its thickness, and similarly with water. We do consider it necessary that this matter is joined with our visual ray, because when we happened to be in a dark house, we cannot see what is in it. Similarly, we cannot see in the dark night, except we dispose of a lamp or something similar, because parts of our ray emanate and no longer serve as an instrument. If there are animals that can see in the dark night, this is so because of their abundant ray".

[the beholder] does not see the mirror whilst seeing his [own] face [in it], because the ray would subsist on the mirror. This is so because if a part of the ray or of the rays connected to it strikes the mirror and is then reflected by it to its opposite, it is still connected to the beholder's eye, and so what he imagines does not compel [us to make any concession] (*lā yalzamu*). The visual ray is not referred to as "gaze" (*naẓar*) according to the common sense of scholars. Rather, the gaze from one's eye denotes the directing of one's sound iris towards the perceived object in order to see it. Now directing the iris is a movement, and so an accident.⁴⁰ Therefore, it is not identical with the ray, which is a thin body, but it is rather a condition, namely the soundness of the sensory organ, that is, the eye, and once it is supplied with a ray (*ikhtaṣṣat bi-l-shu'ā'*) it is called "vision" (*baṣar*). Consequently, "vision" is the soundness of the eye. We do not claim that the ray [itself] perceives objects, such that every thin body is seeing, as he assumes, but rather it is the condition for a living body to see perceivable objects. Consequently, a seeing subject is a living [being], and the cause for his being seeing is his being alive, provided that there are objects to see and that obstacles and defects [that prevent him from seeing] are absent.⁴¹ [We do not consider] that these defects are absent until the eye is supplied by rays, since the lack of rays is indeed a defect. Furthermore, not every thin body is a ray, because dark air (*al-hawā al-muẓlim*) is a thin body and hence not a ray. Rays are indeed thin and tight (*musiff*) bodies. However, it is not necessary that something that does not live sees its reflection whenever a ray strikes a reflecting body: rather in the absence of a living being, the fulfilment of the conditions for visual perception does not necessitate that [perception] actually occurs. Accordingly, even if a ray strikes a mirror, [the mirror] does not see, since the cause for it to see is absent, namely its being alive. Furthermore, whenever the tip of a ray strikes a mirror, this does not entail that two bodies subsist in the same locus. Rather, whenever the tip of a ray strikes it, it is in its vicinity (*mujāwiran*) but actually not subsisting in the same locus. Since if it subsisted in the same locus, it would not strike it and touch it, because this can

40 Mānkdim Sheshdīw, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamṣa*, p. 44: "Naẓar is an expression with multiple meanings. It is used to refer to the act of directing one's sound iris toward an object in order to see it." See also the above quoted passage from *Nukat al-Mughnī* and its corresponding passage in the *Mughnī* (fn. 35).

41 The Bahshamis argued that human sense-perception is the effect of their being alive on condition that an object of perception exists, and no physical defect nor any other obstacle prevents us from perceiving. See Ibn Mattawayh, *Tadhkira*, vol. 2, pp. 699–670. For the theory's background see Peters, *God's Created Speech*, pp. 94–95, 175–176, 243–244; Frank, *Beings*, pp. 153–154.

only possibly [be true] for two [bodies] that subsist in two loci without spatial distance in between.

This is how it should be responded to the questions, according to what time and paper⁴² allows us. May God the Sublime provide His assistance and may His way lead us to righteous acts by virtue of His grace. Praised be God alone and blessed be His messenger, our master the Prophet Muḥammad, and his family.

3 Edition

الأجوبة القطعية عن المسائل العُدريّة

تأليف الشيخ الأجلّ العالم الأوحد الحسن بن محمد بن الحسن الرصاص سأله عنها
الشيخ الأجلّ الحسن بن ناصر بن يعقوب العُدري

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله ربّ العالمين وصلواته على سيّد المرسلين محمد وعلى أهل بيته الطيّبين
وسلامه عليه وعليهم أجمعين.

قال السيّد مانكديم في الدعوى الأولى في الشرح: «كلّ من قدر على أن يجعل ذاتاً على
صفة من دون إحداث معنى قدر على إيجاد تلك الذات»، هل هذه القضية الموجبة
تعكس كليّة أو جزئية؟ فإن قيل: إنها لا تنعكس إلا جزئية وأنّ ليس كلّ من قدر على
إيجاد ذات قدر أن يجعلها على صفة إلا ويوجد فيها معنى، قيل له: فإنا قد قدرنا على إيجاد
الكلام وقدرنا على إيجاده على صفة من دون إيجاد معنى، وإن قيل: إنها تنعكس كليّة
لزم من ذلك أن يكون الجسم مجتمعاً مفترقاً في حالة واحدة، أو لزم أن توجد العلة
ولا يوجد معلولها، ومثال ذلك أن نقدر أنّ البارئ سبحانه أوجد جسماً مجتمعاً بلا
اجتماع لأنّه قد قدر على إيجاد ذاته ثمّ نقدر أيضاً أنه أوجد جسماً وأوجد فيه اجتماعاً
ثمّ أراد تفريقه بغير اقتران يوجد منه، فلا يخلو إمّا أن يوجد معاً أو يوجد الاجتماع

42 Al-Raṣṣās responded on the same paper on which he received al-'Udhari's questions, hence the limitation of space.

أو يوجد الاقتراق، فإن وجدا معاً كان الجسم مجتمعاً مفترقاً في حالة واحدة وإن وجد الاجتماع⁴³ دون الاقتراق خرج عن كونه قادراً، [2 الف] وإن وجد الاقتراق كان قد وجدت العلة دون معلولها.

ثم قال في مسألة الرؤية: إن الإدراك ليس بمعنى لأنه لو كان معنى لوجب في الواحد متاً مع صحة الحاسة ووجود المدرك وارتفاع الموانع أن لا يرى ما بين يديه، والخصم يقول بذلك بأن الحاسة تكون سليمة والموانع مرتفعة والمدرك موجود بأن يكون الإنسان ناظراً في مسألة مثلاً فإن المؤثر في الإدراك غير هذه الشرائط.

ثم قال في هذه المسئلة: إن الشعاع ينفصل من نقطة الناظر ويتصل بالمرأة فيصير كالعين، ثم ينعكس فيرى الإنسان وجهه، ما الدليل على أنه ينفصل من العين شيء ويتصل بالمرأة؟ فإن قال: الإنسان يرى شيئاً يخرج من عينه كالخيوط، قيل له: جميع النظر أو بعضه؟ فإن كان بعض النظر فيلزم إذا اتصل بالمرأة ورأى الإنسان وجهه أن يضعف نظره لأنه قد عدم بعض نظره، وإن كان جميع نظره فيلزم أيضاً عندما يدرك وجهه أن لا يرى المرأة لأن نظره قد صار في المرأة. وعندهم أيضاً أن النظر جسم رقيق، فيقال: ما الذي خصصه بذلك وما العلة؟ فإن كان لكونه جسماً ووجب في كل جسم أن يدرك، وإن كان لكونه رقيقاً فيجب في الهواء أن يدرك لأنه رقيق، وإن [كانت] العلة في [2 ب] ذلك رفته واتصاله بكل صقيل ووجب في الهواء إذا اتصل بالمرأة أن يدرك لأن العلة قد حصلت وهي رفته وصقالة المرأة، وأيضاً فإن النظر جسم رقيق فيجب فيه أن يكون متحيراً والمرأة متحيرة فيصير جسمان في جهة واحدة، وذلك محال.

الجواب عن السؤال الأول، وبالله التوفيق: إن القضية التي ذكر السيد مانكديم، رضي الله عنه، قضية موجبة كلية وهي لا تنعكس إلا جزئية، لأننا متى قلنا: كل من صح عنه⁴⁴ جعل الذات على صفة سوى الحدوث من دون إيجاد معنى فيها فهو قادر على إيجاد تلك الذات، لم يلزم من ذلك أن كل من قدر على إيجاد ذات صح منه أن يجعلها على صفة سوى الحدوث من دون إيجاد معنى فيها، وذلك لأن الله سبحانه قادر على ذات الجسم قبل إيجاده وإن لم يصح منه جعله مجتمعاً من دون معنى هو الاجتماع،

43 وإن وجد الاجتماع: مكرر مشطوب.

44 عنه: عند.

لأنه لو صحّ منه أن يجعله مجتمعاً في حالة حدوثه من دون إيجاد معنى لما صحّ أن يفترق في حال بقاءه، لأن كلّ صفة بالفاعل يستحيل خروج الذات عنها في حالة البقاء بعد ثباتها حالة الحدوث على ما ذلك مبين في مواضعه من **المسائل العشرين** وغيرها. وقد ثبت أنه ما من مجتمع إلا ويجوز أن يفترق للاشتراك⁴⁵ في علة الجواز، وهي التحيز مع التماثل، وأما تنعكس القضية جزئية فقط، فيقال: بعض من قدر [3الف] على إيجاد ذلك أن يقدر على جعلها على صفة من دون إيجاد معنى فيها، كما نعلمه في الكلام، فإن من قدر على إيجاده صحّ منه أن يجعله أمراً وخبراً متى كان عالماً به وغير ساهٍ عنه، وصحّ منه ذلك من دون إيجاد معنى فيه، وليس يطرد ذلك في كلّ ذات سوى الكلام، بل لا يطرد في الكلام أيضاً، فإن الساهي والناائم قادران⁴⁶ على إيجاد الكلام في حال السهو والنوم وإن لم يصحّ منهما جعله أمراً ولا خبراً في حال السهو والنوم، فإن الكلام وإن صدر من جهتهما في حال السهو والنوم على صورة الأمر والخبر فليس له حكم الأمر والخبر، لأنّ حكم الأمر والخبر إنما ثبت⁴⁷ بكون الفاعل مريداً للأمر به والإخبار عن أمر أخبر عنه، والساهي والناائم يستحيل كونهما مريدين لما هما ساهيان وغافلان عنه لأنّ⁴⁸ صحّة الإرادة للشيء تتبع خطوره بالبال، وعلى أنه لو اطرّد ذلك في الكلام لم يوجب أن يكون عكس القضية كلياً فإنّ الكلام ليس هو كلّ الأفعال بل هو بعضها، فعلى⁴⁹ ما أورده أن يكون تصحيحاً لكون عكسها جزئياً فقط، وليس إذا قلنا: «ليس كلّ من قدر على ذات صحّ منه جعلها على صفة من دون إيجاد معنى فيها» يلزم منه أن لا يصحّ من القادر على إيجاد الكلام الذي هو بعض الأفعال جعله أمراً وخبراً من دون معنى [3ب] لأنّ القضية السالبة الجزئية لا تناقض الموجبة الجزئية سيما في مادة الإمكان. وقلنا: «قد يصحّ من القادر على إيجاد الذات جعلها على صفة من دون إيجاد معنى» كاللّكلام قضية موجبة جزئية فلا تكون مناقضة لقلنا:

45 للاشتراك: الاشتراك.

46 قادران: قادر.

47 ثبت: إضافة في الحاشية.

48 لأنّ: لأن محاله، ومحاله مشطوب.

49 فعلى: فعابه.

«ليس كل من قدر على إيجاد ذات يصحّ منه جعلها على صفة من دون معنى»، بل يصدقان جميعاً.

فأمّا ما ذكره من الكلام على إنعكاسها كلية فهو كلام فاسد متناقض إذ فرض فيه أولاً أنّ الله سبحانه أوجد جسماً وأوجد فيه اجتماعاً ثمّ أراد تفريقه بغير افتراق يوجد فيه، ثمّ قال: «فلا يخلو إما أن يوجد معاً، أو يوجد الاجتماع، أو يوجد الافتراق»، ففرض أولاً كون الفاعل مريداً يجعله مفترقاً من دون افتراق، ثمّ فرض ثانياً وجود الافتراق وأنّ الفاعل أراد وجوده بقوله: «إما أن يوجد معاً، أو أحدهما وإن لم يوجد الافتراق خرج الفاعل عن كونه قادراً». فلقائل أن يقول له: إذا فرضت أنّ الفاعل جعل الجسم مفترقاً من دون معنى فليس هناك افتراق حتى يقال بأنّه إما أن يوجد الاجتماع، أو يوجد أحدهما دون الآخر، بل أراد جعله مفترقاً ولم يرد وجود الافتراق فيه فإذا لم يوجد ما لم يرد من ذلك لم يدلّ [4 الف] على معجزه عنه وخروجه عن كونه قادراً، وإذا وجد الافتراق لم يلزم منه وجود العلة بدون معلولها فإنه متى وجد الافتراق وجب ثبوت حكمه وهو كون الجسم مفترقاً ولزم بطلان ضده وهو الاجتماع وزوال حكمه وهو كون الجسم مجتمعاً. ولقائل أن يقول: الجسم في حال بقاءه قد خرج عن التعلّق بالقادر فإنه لا يصحّ منه إيجاداً في حال بقاءه لأنّ إيجاد الموجود محال، وإذا لم يصحّ منه إيجاداً في حالة البقاء لم يصحّ منه أن يجعله على صفة من دون معنى في حالة البقاء لأنّ شرط جعله عليها كونه قادراً على إيجادها، وذلك مفقود في حالة البقاء.

والجواب عن السؤال الثاني أنّ الإنسان متى كان ناظراً في مسألة بقلبه وهو محقق نحو المرئي بحدقته السليمة فإنه يجب أن يراه متى زالت الموانع لاجتماع شرائط الرؤية فيه ولكنّه ذهل عن العلم بحاله في كونه رائيّاً، كما أنّ النائم يدرك قرص البراغيث ويدرك الأصوات العظيمة في حالة نومه ويكون إدراكه لذلك سبباً لانتباهه وإن لم يعلم بما أدركه ولا يدري بالذي دهاه ولا ما سبب انتباهه من نومه، كذلك ما نحن فيه فإنّ الذي زال في حقّ المستغرق قلبه بالفكر هو العلم بما أدركه ورآه لا كونه مدرّكاً ورائيّاً بحواسه، وذلك [4 ب] ظاهر.

والجواب عن السؤال الثالث أنّ الشعاع جسم رقيق مُسِفّ ينتشر من نقطة الناظر ويتصل بأشعة الشمس والقمر وسائر الكواكب فيصير باتصالها به آلة للرأي في رؤية

ما يراه وإن بعد عنه كما يرى أحدنا الكواكب في أول وهلة وليس ذلك إلا لأن شعاع بصره اتصل بالأنوار المتصلة بها فصارت كالشعاع الواحد المتصل بالمرئي أو بمحلّه، وليس مجرد شعاع بصره كافيًا في صحة أن يرى بل لا بدّ من إتصاله بالأنوار الممدّة له والمقوية له، ولهذا لا يرى أحدنا عند فرط الظلمة وإن كان شعاع بصره حاصلًا لضعفه وقد ما يمده من الأنوار. والخفافيش إنما ترى بالليل دون النهار لعظم شعاع بصرها فصار كافيًا في الليل دون سائر الأنوار ولا ترى بالنهار لأنّ الأشعة تتصل بشعاع بصرها فتكثر كثرة فاحشة فلا ترى لمكان زيادة الشعاع على المحتاج إليه، وكثير من الحيوانات يرى ليلاً ونهاراً كالهَرّ لأنّ شعاعه متوسط في المقدار بين القلة والكثرة فهو كافٍ في الليل ولا يحقه كثرة الأشعة بالنهار، ومتى صحّ ذلك لم يكن لما ذكره من السؤال وجه وذلك لأنّ شعاع البصر متى انتشر من نقطة الناظر فإثّه لا ينفصل عن النقطة حتّى يزايه بكليته بل هو ممتدّ بين نقطة الناظر وبين المرئي مع الأشعة التي تمده [5الف] ويتصل به في الجوّ، وإذا اتصل بالصقيل⁵⁰ انعكس عنه لعدم المنافذ وتقوية شعاع الصقيل الذي وقع عليه، وليس الذي اتصل بالصقيل هو كلّ الشعاع ثمّ ينعكس طرفه عن الصقيل إلى ما يقابله كما ينعكس شعاع الشمس الواقع على الماء إلى سقف البيت أو حائطه فيصير شعاع الشمس كالخط⁵¹ الممتدّ بينها وبين الماء ثمّ يمتدّ من الماء من شعاع الشمس كالخط الممدود بين الماء وبين سقف البيت أو حائطه، كذلك القول في شعاع البصر فإثّه يمتدّ منه ومن الأشعة المتصلة به في الجوّ بين نقطة الناظر وبين الجسم الصقيل كالخط الممتدّ ثمّ يمتدّ من ذلك الأشعة المتصلة بشعاع البصر شعاع كالخط الممدود بين الصقيل وبين ما يقابله، وبذلك يبطل قوله: «إنّ الشعاع المتصل بالمرآة إن كان بعض النظر فيلزم إذا اتصل بالمرآة ورأى الإنسان وجهه أن يضعف بصره»، وذلك لأنّها أشعة كبيرة تتصل بعضها ببعض مستقيمة ومنعكسة فلا يضعف شعاع بصره لذلك كما لا يضعف شعاع الشمس لانعكاس ما ينعكس عنه عن الماء إلى السقوف والحيطان، ولسنا نقول بما ظنّه من أنّ كلّ الشعاع ينفصل عن العين ويزايلها ويصير مماساً للمرئي حتّى يلزم ما ظنّه من أن لا

50 بالصقيل: بالصفة.

51 كالخط: كالمحيط.

يرى المرآة في حال رؤيته لوجهه لأنّ الشعاع قد صار في المرآة، وذلك لأنّ الشعاع وإن اتصل [5ب] جانب منه أو من الأشعة المتصلة به بالمرآة ثمّ انعكس عنها إلى ما يقابلها فهو أيضاً متّصل بنقطة الناظر فلا يلزم ما توهمه، وليس شعاع البصر يسمّى نظراً في عرف العلماء فإنّ النظر بالعين هو تقلاب الحدقة السليمة نحو المرئي التماساً لرؤيته، وتقلاب الحدقة هو تحريكها وهو عرض فلا يكون هو الشعاع الذي هو جسم رقيق وهو شرط سلامة⁵² الحاسة التي هي العين، فتميّزت بالشعاع سميت بصراً فالبصر هو العين السليمة، ولسنا نقول: إنّ الشعاع هو المدرك للهدركات حتى يلزم ما ظنّه من أن يكون كلّ جسم رقيق رائيّاً، وأتما هو شرط في كون الحيّ من الأجسام رائيّاً للرئيات، فالرائي هو الحيّ والعلة في كونه رائيّاً هي كونه حيّاً بشرط وجود المرئيات وزوال الموانع والآفات. وليست الآفات بزائلة عن ذي الحاسة حتى يختصّ عينه بالشعاع فإنّ فقدته للشعاع آفة في حقه. وليس كلّ جسم رقيق شعاعاً فإنّ الهواء المظلم جسم رقيق وليس بشعاع وإتما الشعاع جسم رقيق مُسِف، وليس يلزم في كلّ شعاع اتصال بالصقيل أن يرى به ذلك الصقيل ما لم يكن حيّاً إذ ليس يلزم من حصول شرط الرؤية حصولها متى فقدت [الحياة]، فإنّ⁵³ المرآة وإنّ اتصل بها الشعاع فليست [6الف] براءة لفقد علة الإدراك فيها فإنّها ليست بحية، وكذلك فليس يلزم إذا اتصل طرف الشعاع بالمرآة أن يكون الجسمان قد صارا في جهة واحدة وذلك لأنّ الشعاع متى اتصل طرفه بها كان مجاوراً لها ولم يكن كائناً في جهتها، ولو كان كائناً في جهتها لاستحال كونه متصلاً بها ومماساً بها لأنّ ذلك لا يصحّ إلاّ بين كائنين في جهتين بحيث لا بون بينهما ولا مسافة.

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52 سلامة: السلامة.

53 فإنّ: فادت.

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