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Philosophy and Medicine
in the Formative Period of Islam

Edited by Peter Adamson and Peter E. Pormann

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Early Kalām and the Medical Tradition

Gregor Schwarb

Enquiries into the relation between early kalām and the medical tradition – first and foremost the Galenic tradition – are but one aspect of a broader investigation into the relation between early kalām and the various intellectual strands of the late antique Byzantine and Sasanian Empires. The physical and theological doctrines of the early mutakallimūn, which at times are ‘fundamentally opposed to one another in some of their most basic presuppositions’¹, are characterized by their coexistence and engagement with divergent religious, philosophical and scientific trends, whereby the identification of specific textual and non-textual sources and of exact channels of transmission remains notoriously difficult and more often than not elusive.²

On the face of it, the stance of the early mutakallimūn on Galenic medicine and the medical profession is largely marked by antagonism, tension, and polemics. The close alliance of medical formation with Greek philosophical education, of Galenism with an Aristotelianized Platonism,³ and of the medical profession with a Christian or Sabian


(‘pagan’) affiliation, as well as the frequent association of physicians with materialist or mechanistic worldviews of ‘Sceptical materialism’ (al-Dahrī, Aḥī al-dahr) and proponents of (four) elemental qualities (Ašḥāb al-tābāb) played a part in portraying their culture of knowledge as incompatible with and even inimical to the theological and cosmological doctrines which the early Muslim mutakallimīn were about to develop. All these antagonisms convey an impression of mutual intellectual estrangement between adherents of the ‘Seal of the Prophets’ (ḫātam al-anbiyāʾ/al-nabīyīn) and proponents of the ‘Seal of the Physicians’ (ḫātam al-ʿarībū). The disparity of educational canons and the lack of a common discursive framework is reflected in the relative scarcity of social mobility between the two camps, regardless of scattered reports about personal acquaintances between mutakallimīn and physicians. Early mutakallimīn who are said to have been physicians themselves or had a keen interest in medical subjects were usually acquainted with non-Galenic medicine and practitioners of indigenous medical traditions. Particularly noteworthy are recurrent reports about contacts with physicians of Indian origin. Those, however,


5. Qurʾān 33:40. For the concept of ‘Prophetic Medicine’ (al-tibb al-nabawi) see P. E. Pormann and E. Savage-Smith, Medieval Islamic Medicine, Washington, 2007, pp. 71–6 with further references.


7. For a survey account of the social milieu of the early mutakallimīn see van Ess, TG (n. 1 above) vol. IV, pp. 731–7; for the social milieu of the physicians see J. C. Bürgel and T. Käser, Arzteschaft und Denken im arabischen Mittelalter, Leiden, 2016. Examples of personal acquaintances between mutakallimīn and physicians include the friendship between Zurqān (Abū Yaʿlā Muḥammad ibn Šaddād al-Mis’īn) and Ibn Māsawī, the not so smooth relationship between al-Ǧāḥīz and his patron Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbd al-Malik Ibn al-Zayyāt (d. 847–8); see J. E. Montgomery, Al-Ǧāḥīz: In Praise of Books, Edinburgh, 2013, pp. 230–4, 582 (index); the relationship between Abī l-Gāmī al-Balḥī (d. 911) and Abū Zayd al-Balḥī (d. 934) or the friendship between the Buṭḥānī brothers (i.e. the Zaydī Imāms al-Muʿayyad bi-Lāh Abū l-Ḥusayn Aḥmad [d. 1020] and al-Nāʾiq bi-l-Ḥaqq Abū Ṭālib Yahyā Ibn al-Husayn Ibn Ḥārūn [d. 1031]) and Abī l-Faraq Ibn Ḥindū (d. ca. 1031), himself a Ṣarīf (see S. Khalīfat, Ibn Ḥindū: sirātuhu, ārāʾūhā al-falsafaya, muṣlaṭaṭarthūhā: Dirāsā wa-nuṣṣā [Ibn Ḥindū: Biography, Philosophy and His Works: A Critical Edition with Studies], 2 vols, Amman, 1995, vol. 1, pp. 7, 50–53, 191).

who – as for instance al-Naẓẓām (d. ca. 836), al-Ǧāḥīz (d. 869), or Abū l-Ǧāsim al-Balḥī (d. 931) – had frequent opportunities to swap ideas with physicians and by all accounts also gained a fair amount of doxographical and even first-hand knowledge of Galenic medicine, rhetorically disowned it and challenged some of its fundamental principles. Conversely, a mutakallīm like Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Ǧaṣrī (d. 1044), who in the late tenth and early eleventh century studied some technical and practical Galenic medicine as well as Aristotelian logic and physics with exponents of the Christian Peripatetics in Baghdad, was disparaged by his fellow Muṭṭaṣilīs as maverick dissenter who had fouled the nest of his kalām teachers. Physicians and falāsifā on their part were quick to make patronizing and sneering remarks about the mutakallīmān’s deficient methods and their lack of sophistication and perspicacity.

physicians); vol. VI, p. 161. Al-Ǧāḥīz, Kitāb al-Hayawān, ed. A. M. Hārūn, Cairo, 1938–45, vol. 2, p. 140, refers to a group of mutakallīmān such as Mu’amar (Mu’ammarr) Abū l-ʾAfāt (van Ess, TG [n. 1 above], vol. II, pp. 37–43), Abū Ǧa’far Muḥammad ibn al-Ǧahim al-Barnakī (ibid., vol. III, pp. 204–8) and Ḥabīḥīm ibn al-Sīnī (ibid., pp. 65 f.) who are dubbed ‘the physicians who are the philosophers among the mutakallīmān’ (al-ʾāṭṭābī, wa-hum falāsifāt al-mutakallīmīn). All three entertained contacts to physicians of Indian origin (ibid., vol. II, p. 21, 37) and clearly represent non-Galenic medical traditions. Unusual are mutakallīm-physicians of the sort of Abū Ḥalim al-Ḥusayn al-Ǧāḥīz (Ibn Karnīb), mentioned in Ibn al-Nadīm, al-Fihrist (n. 4 above), vol. II/1, p. 198.


11. This feeling is given articulate expression in Rukn al-Ǧān ibn Hindū’s Epistle of Sincere Advice (al-Riṣāla al-naṣīḥa) in the closing pages of his Gift to the Theologians in Refutation of the Philosophers (Thuhfāt al-mutakallīmān wa-l-radd ‘ul-l-ṭalāsfa), ed. H. Ansari and W. Madelung, Berlin, Tehran, 2008, pp. 213, l. 18–219, l. 18. Al-IALIZHMI characterizes Ibn Hindū’s Epistle as a powerfully written piece of good advice for the haughty philosopher and a rare example of an unpretentious philosopher-physician who shows his respect for Muslim scholars and the religious sciences (wa-khun Abū l-Ǧaṣrī Ḥaḍā mīn al-mutakaddimīn fīʾīn al-falāṣīfā ... fa-innahu lā yazādī bi-ʾulāmīl al-muslimīn wa-lā yaḥtaqiru ʿulām al-islām). Ibn Hindū also wrote a (lost) kalām-style treatise (Kitāb al-Buṣā) and was on good terms with several Muṭṭaṣilī mutakallīmān in Rayy (see above n. 7) where he belonged to the scholarly circle around al-Ǧaṣrī ibn Abī Bīdāb between 979 and 985.
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All this being said, it would be altogether wrong to infer a lack of attention and interest from this distance and dissociation. Quite the contrary, it appears that central components of early kalām cosmology and anthropology evolved from a critical engagement with philosophical worldviews and physical theories championed by proponents of medical science. As S. Pines aptly observed, the complexity and heterogeneity of early kalām cosmological doctrines ‗presuppose an intense theoretical interest in philosophy and science ... over a long period of time‘.12 Even if the engagement with doctrines from the medical milieu was seldom, if ever, based on a close reading of Galenic texts and more often than not motivated by refutation and a purposeful endeavour to present alternative explanations for the phenomena of the world, components of the contested doctrines were repeatedly appropriated and preserved, above and beyond the recurrent use of medical themes, metaphors, imagery and analogies in theological arguments.13 Moreover, the rich and variegated doxographical and heresiographical material circulating in the medical milieu was for the early mutakallimīn an invaluable source for their own heresiographical narrative, as may be gleaned from works such as Abū ‘Isā l–Warrāq’s (d. after 864) On the Doctrines of People and their Differences (Kitāb Maqālāt al-nās wa-hīdāfihim),14 Zurqānī’s (d. 891–2) Book of Doctrines (Kitāb al-Ma QA lāt),15 Abū l–Abbās ʿAbdallāh ibn Muhammad al-Anbārī’s (‘al-nāsī al-akbar’, d. 906) Book of Religious Practices (Kitāb al–Diyā nāt),16 Abū Muḥammad al–Ḥasan ibn Mūsā al–Nawbahṭī’s (d. after 922), Book of Opinions and Religious Practices (Kitāb al–Arā’ wa-l–diyā nāt)17 and similar compositions


16. Id., Der Eine und das Andere (n. 14 above), pp. 197–204; id., TG (n. 1 above), vol. 14–6, Kitāb al–Diyā nāt contained a chapter dedicated to the anārists (al-qadāmāt).


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by authors who entertained close ties with the Mu'tazila. 18

In previous scholarship several cross-pollinations and phenomenological similarities between early kalām doctrines and Galenic concepts or non-Galenic ideas transmitted via the medical literature have been mooted. In-depth investigations of the relevant topics, however, are still pending. Suffice it here to point to the most salient themes:

(1) Semeiology/semiotics: One of the most striking commonalities between physicians and *mutakallimūn* is their shared preoccupation with signs (σημεῖα/σημεῖον; *tekmīrion*/*tekmīría* dālīl/dālīla; *alāmāʾ/alāmāt; *amārā*/*amārāt*), signification (dālāla) and sign-interpretation (istīdalī). In kalām, signs and indicators play a central role in *usūl* al-dīn (notably prophethood), legal methodology (*usūl* al-fiqh), jurisprudence and Qur'ānic exegesis. In Galen’s works the most important places for a discussion of signs are the introduction to *On the Sects* (*Fi *fīraż al-tibb*), which discusses the position of sign-based knowledge (*ʿilm al-*alāmāt wa-l-dālāl / al-ʿilm bi-l-adilla*) within the medical science, the second part of *Ars medicā* (*al-sīnāʾa al-ṣaḥāra*/*al-tibbīyā*; esp. chapters 6–22) 19 which in Latin translations bears the section title *De Signīs*, and the *Commentary on Hippocrates’ Prognōstic*. 20 A sub-branch of semeiology is symptomatology (τέχνη σημειωτική; *ʿilm al-ʿilāl wa-l-ʿarād*), symptoms (*things happening*, *characteristics*, *attributes*) being a special category of signs. 21 The evaluation of possible points of contacts between medical semeiology and the interpretation of signs in kalām cosmology, theology, legal and scriptural hermeneutics will require a comprehensive study. 22

(2) Theories about the relation between signs, the signified and sign interpretation are intrinsically linked to epistemology. Questions about various degrees of certainty, probable knowledge and probabilism are another key topic common to kalām treatises and Galen’s works. 23 A close comparison of similar terms and concepts such as *preponderance* (*taqīf*),


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‘preponderant presumption’ (gâlib al-żann), ‘equivalence of (conflicting) evidence’ (takâfu’ al-adilla), etc. will also demand a separate in-depth study. This also applies to the ḍuḥul-qyâsî, the ‘inference of something hidden from something visible’ (al-istidlâl bi-l-ṣâhid ‘alî l-ġâlib) of the mutakallimûn and Galen’s ‘inference of something hidden from something apparent’ (al-istidlâl bi-mâ ḏâhara ‘alâl mâ ḏâffîyâ / al-qyâs bi-l-ẓâhir ‘alâl-ḥâffî).\(^2\)

(3) Structural resemblances between Mu’tazilî and Stoic theories of language usage (utterance-analysis) and meaning have at times also been explained as being mediated through medical literature.\(^2\) An investigation of these supposed affinities will once again require a separate study.\(^2\)

(4) Similarities between Mu’tazilî theories of the ‘optimum’ (al-aṣlāh), namely that God knows and does ‘what is best’ for his creatures and that He does nothing in vain (‘aṣbâṭan), and Galen’s ‘best of all possible worlds’ which combines the providential demiurgy of the Timaeus with Aristotelian teleology, has repeatedly been invoked.\(^2\) It goes without saying that many terminological overlaps may conceal substantial conceptual differences between medical and kalâm texts.\(^2\)

Some further facets of the mutakallimûn’s possible indebtedness to Galenism have recently been explored by Y. Tzvi Langermann who suggests that central tenets of


25. See e.g. R. Walzer, Galen on Medical Experience, London, 1944, pp. 22 f., 58–66 and passim, where this type of inference is depicted as characteristic of the medical rationalists (aṣlāh al-qyâsî). For the Aristotelian background see Prior Analytics, II. 27, 70a7–8.


kalām atomism, which over the course of the ninth century emerged as the predominant among several competing kalām theories of the physical world, are ‘best understood in the context of a response to Galen’s rejection of atomism.’30 His argumentation is specifically based on the following observations:

(1) The Galenic tradition – in particular Galen’s On the Elements and its satellite literature – contains the richest bank of discussions and refutations of atomism available in Arabic.31

(2) For some mutakallimūn, Galen and his school – rather than the Peripatetic tradition – ‘represented the authoritative voice of those who ... view the natural world as self-contained system functioning under its own laws’,32 that is ‘the type of world-view that they had to reject’.33 These mutakallimūn may have adopted atomism as a ‘plausible alternative’ to the Galenic world-view, because Galen was so careful to reject it.

(3) The core of Galen’s refutation of atomism in On the Elements revolves around ‘the argument from pain’.34 It relies on the assumption ‘that what is to suffer pain must be capable of alteration and of sensation’35 and therefore ‘presupposes a kind of multiplicity or alterity’.36 Since atomism posits homogeneous and qualityless particles which are incapable of alteration and affection, it fails – in Galen’s view – to provide an adequate explanation for the phenomenon of pain. Against this backdrop, Mu’tazili ‘attempts at articulating a biophysical theory of pain are a direct response to Galen’s


31. For a synoptic view of Greek text and Arabic translation see http://www.graeco-arabic-studies.org/texts.html (accessed 31/10/2015). As Galen himself mentions in De ordine librorum suorum (nepi τὰξιον τῶν βιβλίων Ἰουλίου, Kithāf fī marātib qirāʾat kutābih, ed. Bouzon-Milot, Paris, 2007, p. 93, ll. 9–15) the fullest discussion of his theory of elements, including a refutation of atomism, was to be found in Books 5 and 6 of On the Opinions of Asclepiades (lost) and in Book 13 of On Demonstration. A critical account of Epicurean atomism (alajā’ Afīqūrus allatī lā tataḏaẓzaʾu) and the associated view that everything happens by chance and randomly (bi-l-buṭ wa-l-ittifāq) is also found in Book 11 of On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body (see MS Paris, BNF, ar. 2833, fol. 196e, ll. 3 f.) and the summarizing commentary by Yahyā al-Nalīwi al-Iskandarānī (see G. Strohmaier, ‘Der Kommentar des Johannes Grammatikos zu Galen, De usu partium (Buch 11) in einer unikalen Gothaer Handschrift’, in id., Hellen in Islam (n. 6 above), pp. 109–12). Langermann erroneously holds that On the Elements was ‘the first of the sixteen Galenic works that formed the “core curriculum” for medical students in late Antiquity’ (‘Islamic Atomism’ [n. 9 above], p. 278). As correctly stated in Ibn Rāzī’s commentary on the book, it actually is ‘the first book to be studied by the person who wishes perfection in the art of medicine’ (ibid., p. 282) after having completed the study of the four (or five or six) isagogic writings (see Ḥunayn ibn Ṣaḥaṣ’s Risāla, ed. G. Bergstrasser, in id., Ḥunayn ibn Ḥishāq über die syrischen und arabischen Galen-Übersetzungen, Leipzig, 1925, pp. 9–10 (ed.), pp. 7–8 (transl.); A. Z. Iskandar, ‘An Attempted Reconstruction of the Late Alexandrian Medical Curriculum’, Medical History, 203, 1976, pp. 235–58 (esp. pp. 238, 250, 258).


33. Ibid., p. 291.


36. Ibid., p. 216.
reputation of atomism

In the following first part of this article I will take up the thread of Langermann’s hypotheses and use it as a convenient starting point to elaborate on a few additional factors which have a bearing on the relation between kalam and the medical tradition.

(1) Galen’s staunch ant-atomism should be viewed in conjunction with his more sceptical and agnostic statements about the foundations of the created world, the createdness or uncreatedness of the world, the nature of the Demiurge-Creator, the substance (ouσία) of the soul, etc. While he considered his general physical theory of elemental qualities and the ensuing criticism of atomism as ‘necessary or useful’ (ἀναγκαῖον ἢ χρήσμον) to explaining the structural and functional principles of bodies and hence as requisite know-how for physicians, he at the same time conceded that these foundations, like all fundamental assumptions of physics and speculative philosophy (ἡ θεωρητικὴ φιλοσοφία), are indemonstrable and conjectural and therefore ‘continue to baffle even the best of philosophers up to the present day’. Galen’s agnosticism finds its most elaborate expression in On My Own Opinions, a ‘spiritual testament’ of sorts, in which he distinguishes between ‘things that he knows to be certain, things that he regards as plausible but as yet unproven, and things on which he cannot (yet) make up his mind’. The last group, which comprises the nature of the soul and its relation to the body and the ultimate constituents of matter, ‘he dismisses as irrelevant and inessential both to medical practice and to ethics’. 

Admitting to such indifference, however, effectively entailed that contrary explanations, such as Epicurean and Democritean atomism, which Galen had rejected in On the Elements, On Demonstration and elsewhere, could not conclusively be refuted. The criticism engendered by Galen’s agnostic statements in al-Rāzī’s Doubts or al-Fārābī’s

38. Ibid., p. 286.
41. Nutton, Introduction (n. 40 above), p. 48, referring to On My Own Opinions 14.5, p. 114 (οὗτος τὴν μὲν γνῶναν σοὶ ἀναγκαίαν ἔχει πρὸς ἑγεῖν σώματος ὥσπερ τῆς ψυχῆς ἡμῶν ἄρατον); see also On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato IX, 9–12, ed. P. De Lacy, Berlin, 1984, vol. 2, pp. 588 f., 494–6) where Galen also states that these questions are inconsequential to practical sciences (8.3.2.6–7 ἄχρηστον ἰατρῷ ὁρμῆμα, ‘useless to the physician’; 8.3.3–8.3.4.1 ἵνα τὰς τῶν νόσων ἱάσεις οὐδὲν συντελεῖ, ‘contributes nothing to the healing of diseases’).
42. See On My Own Opinions (n. 40 above), p. 112 with commentary on pp. 206–8.
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Rebuttal of Galen further enhanced the renown of On My Own Opinions, which in the ninth century circulated in two Syriac translations by Job of Edessa and Ḫunayn ibn Ishaq and three Arabic renderings by Tābit ibn Qurra, Ḫūā Ḫunayn ibn Ishaq. It is unlikely that the gist of Galen’s agnosticism remained hidden from the mutakallimūn.44

(2) The mutakallimūn of the early ‘Abbāsid period were aware of non-Galenic medical theories that proved compatible with various forms of atomism, be they of Indian, Dualist (e.g. Bardaisanite) or other origin.45

(3) The refutation of Greek atomism was a recurrent topic in patristic literature, first and foremost in Hexaemeron compositions and commentaries on the Book of Genesis.46 Greek atomism was equated with a philosophical system which does not recognize a creator-God and views creation as a product of chance rather than divine providence.47 By way of example, I may refer here to one of the oldest and most detailed arguments against Epicurean atomism from a Christian point of view which is found in an extract from On Nature, in Answer to the Epicureans (Περὶ φύσεως πρὸς τοὺς ἑπικούρες).


47. See, for instance, the references given in U. Possekel, Evidence of Greek Philosophical Concepts in the Writings of Epiphron the Syrian, Louvain, 1999, pp. 120–6; B. Pullman, The Atom in the History of Human Thought, Oxford, 2001, pp. 91 f. A similar line of argumentation against the anti-teleological, haphazard strain (kātū rūḥūz – bi-l-ḥāṣ wa-l-ittifaq) of Epicurean atomism comes to the fore in Book XI of Galen’s On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body (see above n. 31).
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κατ’ Ἐνίκους (Eníkous) by Origen’s student Dionysius of Alexandria (d. after 265) and which has been preserved in Eusebius of Caesarea’s Preparation for the Gospel.48 Ephrem the Syrian (d. 373), who counts among the most widely read Church Fathers in both the West-Syrian and the East-Syrian churches,49 dedicated several paragraphs of his Discourse against Mani to a refutation of Bardaisan’s atomistic cosmogony.50

(4) A search for points of contact between kalām and the Galenic tradition should attach greater weight to indirect channels of transmission of Galenic ideas and place special emphasis on the fact that Galen and Galenism were assimilated to both Christian and ‘pagan’ systems of religious thought well before the rise of Islam. While Langermann rightly emphasizes the multiple lines of transmission of Galenic works and ideas into Arabic, his reflections mostly relate to Arabic translations of Galen’s works and the milieu of professional physicians.51 This focus on the medical curriculum, the ‘Alexandrian Canon’ of Sixteen Books, or the Alexandrian Summaries tends to overrate their importance for the reception of Galenic ideas in Arabic literature in general and among the mutakallimūn in particular.52 There is, in fact, little to no evidence suggesting that the acquaintance of early mutakallimūn with Galenic ideas was in any way shaped by the medical curriculum.

To correctly gauge the reception of Galenic ideas in kalām circles it is far more pertinent to explore their role and place in contemporaneous speculative thought (physical theory, theology, psychology, anthropology) of Christian and ‘pagan’ (Ṣābians, Dahriya, Jābirians, etc.) scholars outside of the strictly medical domain. Such an investigation will demonstrate that the Galenic ideas which carried greatest weight in these milieus mostly derived – directly or indirectly – from Galen’s medico-philosophical works of which many were not part of the mainstream medical curriculum, notably On Demonstration, On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body, On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato, On My Own Opinions, and That the Faculties of the Soul Follow the


50. According to Hunayn’s Risāla (n. 31 above), written between 855 and 863, 129 Galenic writings had been translated by his time into either Syriac or Arabic or both.


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Mixtures of the Body. 53 From among the ‘canon’ of Sixteen Books they mainly comprised the first three books of the advanced cursus, namely On the Elements According to Hippocrates, On Mixtures, and On the Natural Faculties.

A certain predilection for Galen’s medico-philosophical writings is already apparent in some extant fragments of his works on papyrus. 54 It becomes even more tangible, if we consider their role in what we may call ‘Christian Galenism’, the by no means uncritical appropriation, adaptation and integration of medical knowledge in general and Galenism in particular into the body of Christian thought from the third century onwards. 55 This process of appropriation gained currency over the course of the fourth through seventh centuries, when several Church Fathers demonstrate remarkably detailed medical knowledge and acquaintance with at least some of Galen’s works, 56 and continued over the first centuries of the Islamic era when we find many


54. Boudon-Millot, Galien (n. 52 above), pp. cxi f.


Christian physicians who received an advanced theological training as well as several clerics well-versed in theoretical medicine.\textsuperscript{57} By the end of the first millenium the assimilation of Galenism to Christian thought was pervasive enough for Abū l-Ḥasan al-Masʿūdī (d. 956) to portray Galen as a pious Christian.\textsuperscript{58}

At a time when Christianity was gradually consolidating its position as a major cultural and political force, it often characterized its relation to and assimilation of the rich ‘pagan’ body of scientific, philosophical and religious knowledge in medical imagery as a ‘therapy’ (ἰατρική διαδραματική) which should help to remedy the ‘inverted beliefs’ of adherents of Hellenic religions.\textsuperscript{59} The Christian God was depicted as Deus (or Christus) medicus (Χριστός Ἰατρός) and His prophets as (assistant) physicians.\textsuperscript{60} Galen was at once object and instrument of this therapeutic process. For the early Christian recipients of his medico-philosophical writings their attraction rested on the one hand on a similar Platonic frame story describing the creation of the universe and its artistic Craftsman-Creator based on the model of the demiurgic creation theology of the Timaeus and its commentators\textsuperscript{61} and sustaining a sharp distinction between the ontological realms of immaterial principles and sensible, created entities, and on the other hand on a pervasive Aristotelian teleology which depicted in great detail the purposive


60. Schulze, Medizin und Christentum (n. 56 above), pp. 155–62. Ἰησοῦς, the Greek form of Joshua, has often been related to Ἰατρός, Ἰατρική (to cure). The comparison of prophets with physicians and of σάρκα/σαρῆ with medicine is common in kalām literature; see, for instance, Sadiq al-Din Mahmūd ibn ‘All al-Himmaṣī al-Kāzī (d. after 1204), al-Manāṣir min al-taḥffūd, Qum, 1412/14/1991–3, vol. 1, p. 1421: ‘The status of the magnificent acts of divine service which the prophets put forth in their revealed Laws is equivalent to the status of the bitter and distasteful drugs which the physicians prescribe to the patients. ... The prophets, peace upon them, are physicians of the religious communities in the same way as the physicians are physicians of the bodies. ...’

and perfect design of the created world and the human being based on up-to-date anatomical and physiological knowledge.

The work which represented this Platonic-Aristotelian hybrid more than any other was On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body (UPB). As Galen writes in On My Own Books, his detailed exposition of the all-embracing purposiveness apparent in God’s creation of the human body made UPB soon very popular with contemporary Peripatetics, ‘because Aristotle had himself written the same type of work’. The Platonic theological scheme of the treatise in turn greatly facilitated its dissemination among Christian readers to the extent that it soon became a master repository of evidence satisfying the monotheist quest for signs asserting the perfect design of divine conception and providing an arsenal of potent arguments in anti-Dualist polemics.

Galen calls UPB a ‘sacred discourse’ (ιερὸν λόγον; qawī ṣāhir muqaddas) which he composed ‘under the order of some divinity/[angel]’ (… тις ἐκέλευσε δαίμων…; amaranī malak min al-malāʾīka). ‘as a true hymn of praise to our Creator’ (τοῦ δημιουργοῦντος ἡμᾶς ὤμον ἀληθῶς; tasabīh wa-taqās ḥālīs li-ḥālidīnā) and considers the ‘Treatise [arab. Science] of the Usefulness of Bodily Parts’ (η περὶ χρείας μορίων πράγματεία; ‘ilm manāfī al-aʿḍāʾ) to be ‘the source of perfect theology, which is a thing far greater and far nobler than all of medicine’, (θεολογίας ἀκριβοῦς ἀληθῶς ἀρχὴ μορίων πράγματεία; ἡ μαρτάνου ἡμὰς ἔκανεν ἡμᾶς ἀληθῶς ἀκριβῶς ἀρχή…, πολὺ μείζονος τις καὶ πολὺ τιμωτέρου πράγματος ἀληθῆς τῆς ἱεροῦ λόγου; ἡ καὶ ἡμὰς ἐκέλευσε δαίμων…). See also G. Strohmaier, ‘Galen als Vertreter der Gebildetenreligion seiner Zeit’, in Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte der Altertum Welt, Bd. 2, ed. B. C. Welskopf, Berlin 1965, pp. 375–9 (377), repr. in G. Strohmaier, Von Demokrit bis Dante. Die Bewahrung antiken Erbes in der arabischen Kultur, Hildesheim, 1996, pp. 94–8 (96).

I consider that I am really showing Him reverence … when I myself first learn to know His wisdom (νοησία/hiṣma), power (δύναμις/qudra) and goodness (χρηστότης/qdīla), and then make them known to others. I regard it as proof of perfect goodness that one should will to order everything in the best possible way, not grudging benefits to any creature, and therefore we must praise Him as good. But to have discovered how everything should best be ordered is the height of wisdom, and to have accomplished His will in all things is proof of His invincible power.


65. UPB (n. 62 above) Book III, iii 237.12; MS BNF arab. 2853, fol. 55v; transl. May (n. 62 above), p. 189; Ormsley, Theodicy (n. 28 above), pp. 45 f., 211.
66. UPB Book X, iii 814.11; MS BNF arab. 2853, fol. 182v; transl. May, p. 491.
69. UPB Book III, iii 237.12–238.6; MS BNF arab. 2853, fols 55v–56r; transl. May, p. 189.

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Nature appears in UPB as divine subject assuming the creative role of Plato’s Demiurge who is to be praised and worshipped as God. She is industrious, skillful, wise and just, does nothing superfluous, nothing in vain and nothing without a reason; she is the quintessential attestation of the Creator’s providential wisdom and benevolence.

In fact, she is equally careful to make nothing insufficient and nothing in excess. For a deficiency in construction renders the work to be accomplished defective, and a superfluity, by imposing an extra burden, hinders parts that are strong enough in themselves to function and thus causes injury.

By Book XII of UPB Galen holds the evidence accumulated thus far to be sufficiently overwhelming to solemnly declare that ‘if by this time there is any reader who does not believe that Nature does nothing in vain, what I have written up to this point has been written in vain’.

With respect to the Christian reception of UPB it is worth reminding here that the first attempts at rapprochement between Galen’s providential teleology of creation and analogous Jewish and Christian conceptions has its beginning in the Galenic work itself. The passage which represents this accommodation process more than any other is a famous section in Book XI of UPB where Galen juxtaposes two opposing

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concepts of the relation between Creator and creation, one being by 'Plato and the other Greeks who follow the right method in natural science' and hold 'that certain things are impossible by nature and that God does not even attempt such things at all but that he chooses the best out of the possibilities of becoming', the other being 'by Moses for whom it seems enough to say that God simply willed the arrangement of matter and it was presently arranged in due order; for he believes everything to be possible with God.' It is but one of the passages in UPB which attracted a fair amount of attention and debate among Jewish, Christian and Muslim intellectuals in the Islamicate world.

The reception history of *On the Usefulness of Bodily Parts* and other Galenic texts in Christian thought from the third century onwards is paradigmatic for the progressive accommodation of 'pagan' theological categories in Galen's work to a monotheistic discourse. The Syriac and Arabic translations of *UPB* are an integral part of this process of appropriation as is evident from the examples just quoted. The fact that Ḥunayn's 

75. Galen refers here to what he calls 'the matter-intrinsinc principle' (ibid., Book X, i, 905.9–10 [cf. *Ad Thrasylulum* v 859.2]; MS BNF arab. 2853, fol. 203r) or εκ τῆς ὅλης ἁρμῆν al-madda 'allāfī min al-madda, which is distinguished from 'the Creator-intrinsic principle' (ibid., Book X, i, 905.8–9) or εκ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ ... ἁρμῆν γενέσως εν ἄπαυ τοῖς γεννητοῖς ... ʿAllāh, ḫalā ḫiswā ḫnawādir ḫalā kulli ḫalāfīqī; see Flemming, "Demiurge and Emperor" (n. 70 above).

76. Ibid., i, 905.18–906.5; transl. May, p. 533: καὶ τοῦτ' ἑστι, καθ' ὑμῖν ἦν ὁ θεὸς ὁ δημιουργός τοῦ κόσμου τοῦ ποιημένου τοῦ ἄλλου τῶν παρὰ τὸν θεόν ἐκ τῆς ὅλης, ἡ δ' εὐθὺς κεκόσμημα πάντα γὰρ εἶναι νομίζει τῷ θεῷ διαφέρει. τῷ ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὸ βοσκοῦν τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν κόσμον 

77. For a discussion of this passage see R. Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians* (n. 55 above), pp. 11–3 (text), 23–37 (discussion); G. Strohmaier, 'Galen in den Schulen der Juden und Christen' (n. 55 above), pp. 140–56 (142–5).

Arabic translation of UPB is replete with terms and phrases borrowed from the theological discourse of early ninth century Muslim and Christian mutakallimûn further facilitated the reception of Galenic ideas in the kalâm milieu.79

The weighty contribution of UPB and other Galenic texts to expositions of God’s purposive and providential design of His creation in Christian and Muslim compositions of the early ‘Abbâsîd period has recently been surveyed in J. E. Montgomery’s two-volume introduction to the writings and textual world of Abû ’Uṯmân al-Ḡāhîz.80 Montgomery takes the ‘obsessive interest’ of ninth century intellectuals in what he calls the ‘Design Complex’ to be ‘one of the primary reasons behind [their] interest ... in the works of Galen, Hippocrates and Aristotle.’81 He depicts their shared preoccupation with nature and physical theory as ‘a contact zone and a site of polemical contestation where thinkers ... from different traditions and creeds converged, shared, borrowed, stole, argued with, rejected, contested and appropriated each other’s position ...,while actually claiming it as their own’.82 In line with this view, he characterizes al-Ḡâhîz’s Book of Living (Kitâb al-Hayawân), whose ‘nearest analogue’ he considers to be Galen’s Compendium of Plato’s Timaeus, as ‘a salvific ... and... proselytizing work’ which was designed to appeal ‘to all theists, dualists, monotheists and henotheists’ with the intention of ‘reclaim[ing] the scientific study of nature for Islam’ and ‘reduc[ing] non-Muslims to silence by depriving them of any pretensions to the reading of nature’.83

The most remarkable example for an early Muslim appropriation of what I termed ‘Christian Galenism’ is a succinct hymnodic homily by an anonymous Christian author who sings praise to the perfection and purposiveness of God’s design apparent in His creation.84 Among Muslim readers this text circulated in at least two versions and under varying titles and was most frequently ascribed to al-Ḡâhîz.85 In the preface to

79. The impact of late eighth and early ninth century kalâm treatises on translations from Greek or Syriac into Arabic remains a neglected topic in the field of Graeco-Arabic studies. A bi- or, to the extent deemed possible, trilingual (Greek-Syriac-Arabic) edition of UPB with an analysis of theologically motivated modifications of the original text would clearly be a worthwhile undertaking.


82. Ibid., pp. 311, 315.
83. Ibid., pp. 315 f.

85. Montgomery, Al-Ḡâhîz: In Praise of Books (n. 7 above), p. 297 erroneously states that M. R. al-Ṭabbâh’s edition of The Book of Signs and Paradigms (Kitâb al-Dalâ’il wa-l-rîdâr, Aleppo, 1928, with numerous reprints) is the ‘only printed version to date’ and seems to be unaware of Ǧâbir Idrîs’s edition (Kitâb al-Ibar wa-l-rîdâr, Cairo, 1994) which is based on MS London, British Library, Or. 3886 (see Idrîs’s introduction, ibid., pp. 19 f.). For an annotated Italian translation based on the British Library manuscript and MS Milano, Biblioteca
one of these Pseudo-Gähizian versions (kitāb al-‘ilbar wa-l-‘itibār) the anonymous author explicitly creates a Christian textual genealogy for his cosmogonic hymn by referring to four Christian thinkers who previously composed works belonging to the same genre (wa-qad allafa mišū kitābinā hāḍīrā ḥanāfa mišī al-ḥukamā’ al-muttaṣaddimīn; Ǧibrīl ibn Nūḥ al-‘Arbārī, Diodorus of Tarsus, Theodoret of Cyrus, and Išoʿyahb) (MS Išoʿyahb) of Fars.68Yet, for all these Christian paragons, it is the unnamed Galen who comes to the fore as one of the foremost sources of inspiration, especially in the section on human anatomy which draws heavily on UPB.69

The ‘appropriation’ of ‘Christian Galenism’ in early Muslim kalām is but the beginning of a gradually increasing reception of Galen’s ‘sacred hymn of praise to the Creator’ in subsequent Islamic theologies. The history of this reception still remains to be written.69


On the Nature of Man likely dates from the last decade of the fourth century. [N]o other Christian author earlier than the fifth century can be shown to follow Galen so closely, often verbatim, and to possess such detailed knowledge – whether directly or indirectly – of a considerable number of Galen’s works.90 The importance of On the
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Nature of Man for an indirect transmission of Galenic ideas into the Islamicate world not only rests on its numerous quotations from and references to Galen’s works and other medical literature, but also on its massive and still grossly underappreciated reception history in various languages (Greek, Syriac, Armenian, Arabic, Georgian) and denominations as well as in its status as one of the most authoritative and influential expositions of Christian psychology and anthropology, characterized by its eclectic blending of Platonic, Aristotelian, Stoic, Galenic, and Patristic sources.

The fact that several Greek manuscripts as well as most Syriac, Armenian, Arabic and Latin translations attributed the treatise to Gregory of Nyssa enhanced its prestige and furthered its wide distribution among all Christian denominations. The earliest extant manuscript fragment of the Greek original derives from the Syro-Palestinian monastic milieu of the late seventh or early eighth century. The fragmentarily

Natural Faculties, On Semen, On the Movement of the Muscles and On the Usefulness of Respiration’ (ibid., pp. 12 ff.). See also the detailed indices in ibid., pp. 242–6.


94. It is found in the famous palimpsest codex Vat. Sir. 623 whose second half (fol. 105–227) consists of reused folios extracted from several codices of varying dates and linguistic settings (Greek, Aramaic, Syriac, Armenian, Arabic); see F. D’Auito, ‘Graeca in codici orientali della Biblioteca Vaticana (con i resti di un manoscritto tardoantico delle commedie di Menandro)’, in Tra Oriente e Occidente: scritture e libri greci fra le regioni orientali di Bisanzio e l’Italia, ed. L. Perria, Roma, 2003, pp. 227–96 (esp. 269–72, 277). D’Auito currently prepares a detailed study and edition of these fragments to be published in the ‘Studi e testi della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana’ series (see ibid., p. 271, n. 114). The upper layer of this palimpsest, a collection of Syriac texts, was copied in AD 886. Two fragments of Περὶ φύσεως ἀνθρώπου (sections from chs 25 and 43) are preserved on two bifolios (fol. 211–18, 212–17) as the intermediate text of a double palimpsest (bis rescriptus; see D’Auito, ibid., plate no. 13 for a UV image of fol. 211v). The mucuscle script of this copy dates to the late 7th or early 8th century. For other texts contained in this palimpsest, including a fragment of Menander’s Dyskoles and probably Titte and at least one folio (fol. 227) of an early Syrian translation (most likely by Sergius of Rēshʿaynā) of Galen’s De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis et facultatibus; see also D. Vania Proverbio, ‘Theonis Alexandrini fragmentum pervertus arabice. Sul piu antico manoscritto del Commentarium parsum di Teone Alessandrino. Notizia preliminare’, in Rendiconti (Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche), serie ix, vol. 13.3, 2002, pp. 373–86 (374, 379 f.); G. Cavallo, ‘Qualche
preserved Syriac translation of On the Nature of Man likely dates from the sixth century,95 the Armenian from the early eighth,96 while the earliest Arabic translation is datable to the last two decades of the eighth century.97 In a letter dated 781 to his former teacher Rabban Mar Pethion, Timothy I, the Catholicos of the East-Syrian church (780–823), mentions On the Nature of Man among seven books which he had prioritized for translation into Arabic and asks his confidant to search for copies of the Greek original or a Syriac translation of the missing ‘second part’ of On the Nature of Man.98 A paraphrastic translation of On the Nature of Man, chapters 1–30, dating from the late eighth or very early ninth century, in which all reminiscences to its Christian authorship have diligently been removed, is preserved in the pseudo-Apollonian Book of the Secret of Creation and the Art of Nature (Kitāb Sīr al-ḥalāqa wa-ṣanʿat al-tabāʾa, also known as Kitāb al-ʿilāl, Kitāb al-Gāmî l-l-ayāţ) which represents an idiosyncratic amalgam of late antique physical speculations with theological concerns that are indicative of an early ‘Abbāsid stage of intellectual fermentation’.99 This paraphrastic and condensed translation riflessione sulla “collezione filosofica”, in The Library of the Neoplatonists, ed. C. D’Ancona, Leiden, 2007, pp. 155–65 (165, n. 35).


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which in both vocabulary and style differs markedly from the later translation by Iṣḥāq ibn Ḥunayn\textsuperscript{100} – is a testimony of paramount importance for the early reception of On the Nature of Man in the milieu of Muslim mutakallimūn.\textsuperscript{101}

The pervasive influence of On the Nature of Man on late antique Christian thought in Greek and Syriac and its demonstrably early reception in a non-Christian Arabized milieu is part of the evidence corroborating my aforestated contention that the treatise should serve as a benchmark to correctly capture the vantage point from which ‘Hellenising falsafa’ can be said to represent the type of world view which the mutakallimūn were keen to reject.\textsuperscript{102}

From a medico-philosophical (Platonic-Peripatetic-Galenic) and, indeed, Christian patristic viewpoint, one of the most conspicuous and contentious features of ninth and tenth century kalām cosmology and anthropology consisted in its gradual disposing of the concepts of ‘Nature’ and ‘Soul’ in a purposeful and persistent attempt to offer an alternative and exhaustive cosmology and ontology of the created world under the premise of rejecting the existence of any non-physical, self-subsisting creative agency other than God.\textsuperscript{103} While several eminent mutakallimūn of the ninth and early tenth centuries (e.g. Muʿammar, al-Ḡāḥiẓ, al-Ḥasyāṯ, Abū ʿĪ-Qāsim al-Balḥi, al-Māturīdī) clung to a restrained notion of natural elements and elemental qualities (ṭabāʾiʿ),\textsuperscript{104} the vast

im antiken Gewand: Das theologische Konzept des Kitāb Sīr r-Ḥalīqa, in Proceedings of the 14th Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants, Part One, ed. A. Fodor, Budapest, 1995, pp. 123–36 (126); S. N. Haq, Names, Natures and Things: The Alchemist Jībir ibn Hayyān and His Kitāb al-ahlār (Book of Stones), Dordrecht, 1994, pp. 29 f.; van Ess, Tg (n. 1 above), vol. II, p. 714. As shown by R. Hansberger, ‘Ticklish Questions: Pseudo-Proclus and Job of Edessa on the Workings of the Elemental Qualities’, Oriens, 42, 2014, pp. 140–219, some sections of Sīr r-al-Ḥalīqa represent ‘a specific strand of the Problemata physica tradition’ (146) which is closely related to parallel sections in Job of Edessa’s Book of Treasures and the pseudo-Proclean Masāʾil fl ḳ-lāyāʿ al-ṭabīʿya. For Job of Edessa the speculations about the foundations of the natural world have a decidedly theological purpose, for ‘it is only by knowing the created world that we can in any way know its Maker, and it is only by knowing him in this way that we can draw close to him’. (Job of Edessa, Book of Treasures, as quoted ibid., pp. 145 f.).

100. See Ullmann, Wörterbuch (n. 97 above); Haji-Athanasiou, ‘Le Traité de Néméius d’Émèse’ (n. 89 above).

101. Rudolph, ‘Kalām im antiken Gewand’ (n. 99 above), argues for a close connection between the theological doctrines advocated in Sīr r-al-Ḥalīqa and early ninth century anti-Muʿţazili (Jahmīte?) strands of kalām. A 10th century example for an anonymous reception of On the Nature of Man in medico-philosophical circles is found in M5 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Oriental Collection, Marsh 593A which contains several unmarked and partly modified quotations from Fi Ṭabīṭat al-ışnā. See E. Waelwigm, A Philosophy Reader (n. 43 above), pp. 33 f., 515 (index). The reconstruction of an indirect and anonymised reception of On the Nature of Man in non-Christian Arabic literature definitely deserves a separate study.


The philosophers and the physicians were of the opinion that the capacity to act (al-qudra) is (tantamount to) the balance of the bodily mixture (iʿtidāl al-ṭabāʾiʿ) and the equilibrium of the elemental qualities (ṭabāʾiʿ al-ṣifāt) of man were conceived in purely physicalist terms, the physical and psychical powers of a body could not be regarded as an independent determinant that fully conditions its physical and mental faculties. Even though all vital and cognitive functions above), p. 283–91; 568 (index 7-v–1); H. A. Wolfson, The Philosophy of the Kalam, Cambridge, MA, 1976, pp. 559–78; R. El Omari, Ṭabīʿa (n. 9 above), pp. 85 f., 166–81.

105. Among the many kālim compositions dedicated to the refutation of (proponents of) elemental qualities see Gaʿfar ibn Ḥarb, al-Radd ʿalā aṣḥāb al-ṭabāʾiʿ; Ẓūrī ibn ʿAmr, al-Radd ʿalā aṣḥāb al-ṭabāʾiʿ; Ḥishām ibn Ḥakam, al-Radd ʿalā aṣḥāb al-ṭabāʾiʿ; Abū Ḥākim al-Ǧubbāʾī, Naqḍ ʿalā aṣḥāb al-ṭabāʾiʿ, Abū Rašīd al-Ǧišumī, Taʿlīq, etc.

106. Abū l-Qāsim [al-Ǧišumī], Šarḥ ʿUyūn al-masāʾil, MS Riyadh, Ǧāmiʿat al-Ǧubbāʾī, 7783, fol. 61r.

107. 'Unintelligible' means according to Šarḥ Ṭabāʾiʿ al-ṣifāt, ibid., fol. 60v, 'that it cannot be known by either necessary/immediate or inferential knowledge' (wa-min al-daʿīʿ ʿalā annahā lā yuʾqūl annahā lā yuʿraḍu darāratan wa-lā istāḍān).

108. Abū l-Qāsim al-Ǧišumī, Kālim al-Ṭabīʿa, MS Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, ar. 866, fol. 111v–7–16 (see also fols 19r–1v and the corresponding section in Šarḥ Ṭabāʾiʿ al-ṣifāt [n. 106 above], fols 60r–62v; Mānṣūrīn, Taʿlīq, etc.

109. The position ascribed to Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī in al-Malāḥimī’s Ṭabīʿa (n. 11 above), p. 158, ll. 8–10 comes very close to the position which Abū l-Qāsim ascribes in Kālim al-Ṭabīʿa to the physicians, philosophers and the Baġdādī Muʿtazila: ‘nd iʿṭīād ʿiḥṣāḥi wa-šīḥbatī yuḥṣib an yadrūka wa-ṣīḥbatī wa-ṣīḥbatī ʿiḥṣāḥi wa-dīlikā wa-dīlikā ʿalā tarājī waḥida’.

110. maʿnā refers to accidents qua irreducible ontological grounds of attributes (ṣifāt) and properties (ṭabāʾiʿ). In order to give a coherent and comprehensive account of the totality of phenomena events,
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than these ... For them, ‘the balance of the bodily mixture’ is an expression denoting the four elemental qualities, but these are contraries (mutaḏāda) and contrary things cannot necessitate one single attribute.\textsuperscript{111}

In the minimalist ontography of the Basrian Muʿtazila the two constituent entities of homogeneous, space-occupying atoms (jāwāhir, which are the only material substrate) and immaterial accidents (aʿrāḍ) ‘bear the explanatory burden for all the phenomena of the world, whether they be physical or psychological, as well as for the relationships between them’.\textsuperscript{112} The mechanisms of the material world and the activities of animate beings which in the medico-philosophical tradition were construed as faculties of nature and soul were understood by the mutakallimūn as distinct types and configurations of immaterial accidents inhering in atomic substrates and bodily structures (binya/qumla).\textsuperscript{113}

The conversion of natural and psychic faculties into ontologically discrete immaterial accidents inhering in atoms is an integral part of the meaningful suggestion to view kalām cosmology as an ‘alternative philosophy’, that is as a deliberate attempt to advance a counter-discourse to ‘Hellenizing falsafa’ in general and to (Christian) Galenism in particular. Yet, as I have noted at the outset of this article, it would be a misapprehension to reduce the advancement of an ‘alternative world view’ to a gesture of negation and rejection. It should more adequately be understood as the result of a complex and dialectic process in which substantial components of the opposing world view have been appropriated and preserved.\textsuperscript{114} To the extent that the

experiences, sensations, activities, etc.) in the world, it is necessary to posit the existence of these discrete accidental entities. Without them, the associated phenomena would lack an ontological ground (‘lā budda li-amr mīn’).\textsuperscript{115}


113. The distinction between faculties/activities of the soul and faculties/activities of nature are recurrent in Galen (see the references in Sharples and van der Eijk, Nemesiūs (n. 53 above), p. 160, n. 814, and On the Nature of Man, ch. 27; ṣiwāqa/ṣiwāq bi-dināma - al-qawāl/al-qawāl al-tabīʿa, al-qawāl/al-qawāl l-nafsānīya; ḥātiṣ baʿdūn tān ʿaṣṣāfi qiwāmān kai qiwāmān ʿaṣṣāfi dūṣāfā dūṣāfā al-tafrīq baṣīna l-ʿafrāl al-nafsānīya wa-l-ʿafrāl al-tafrīqā (ed. Haji-Athanasiou [n. 89 above], p. 167, ll. 6–16); Sirr al-Jalāla, ed. Weisser (n. 99 above), pp. 622 L. qawāt/umal al-tafrīq - qawāt/umal al-nafs. This distinction is faintly reminiscent of, but clearly not identical with the kalām distinction between ʿafrāl al-jawāhir and ʿafrāl al-qulūb.

114. The numerous seeming and factual similarities between the conception of individual accidents in kalām cosmology and anthropology on the one hand and homonymous physical or psychical faculties and elemental qualities in the medico-philosophical tradition and in Christian Galenism on the other hand, require a number of separate in depth studies (e.g. al-ḥardā ʿa tharīm ʿa ḥurūmat al-burāda ʿa ḥurūmat al-faṣl al-ʿafrā; al-sarība ʿa ṣarbī ṣarbī al-faṣl al-ʿafrā xīrīhā xīrīhā al-ḥaṣnīya - xīrīhā ʿa ḥiṣnī ḥiṣnī al-ḥaṣnīya - ḥiṣnī ḥiṣnī - ḥiṣnī al-ḥaṣnīya - ḥiṣnī al-ḥaṣnīya; al-ṣabīl ʿa ḥiṣnī al-ṣabīl ʿa ḥiṣnī al-ṣabīl ʿa ḥiṣnī al-ṣabīl; al-salām ʿa ḥiṣnī al-ṣalām ʿa ḥiṣnī al-ṣalām ʿa ḥiṣnī al-ṣalām; al-zahmī ʿa ḥiṣnī al-zahmī ʿa ḥiṣnī al-zahmī ʿa ḥiṣnī al-zahmī). It goes without saying that such comparisons should never come at the expense of exploring other pertinent points of intellectual contact (Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism, Indian atomisms, etc.). Previous studies on kalām atomism by Pines, Frank, Daiber, van Ess, Ben-Shannmai and Dhanani centre upon the concept of the atom and do not offer a systematic and comprehensive analysis of all types of accidents. The second part of this article is a modest contribution towards the implementation of such a desideratum with regard to the accidents of desire-aversion and pleasure-pain.
alternative kalām philosophy engages with the medico-philosophical tradition and late antique Christian thought which are characterized by a customized Timaean-demiurgic cosmology and an eclectic Platonic-Peripatetic-Galenic anthropology and psychology. Nemesius’s On the Nature of Man represents a reference text of paramount importance which – better than the Galenic texts themselves – helps to cast light on the nuances of the dialectic process of rejection and appropriation.

A case in point is the fifth chapter (‘On the Elements’; Περὶ στοιχείων; Fī l-'ustūṣuṣsāṭ) of On the Nature of Man which contains a concise version of the ‘argument from pain’ against atomism in Galen’s On the Elements, the argument that in Langermann’s view prompted the mutakallimūn’s preoccupation with the physiology of pain. The following table juxtaposes Ishāq ibn Ḥunayn’s translation of the ‘argument from pain’ with its paraphrase as it is found in the Secret of Creation:

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<td>Πρὸς δὲ τοὺς ἐν μόνον λέγοντας εἶναι στοιχεῖον, ἢ τὸ πόρ ἢ τὸν άέρα ἢ τὸ ὅδωρ, ἀρκεῖσαι τὰ πάρα ἑποκράτους εἰρημένα</td>
<td>ἐὰν τῶν διὸν διάλεγοντο ἔναστεφος ευδοκειται, και ἐναί θρόνον ἐναί τοίῳ ἐναί τῆς πρόσωπος ἐπρώτους εἰρημένα</td>
<td>ἐὰν τὸν καθολικὸν θεοῦ τελεῖται ἐναί φύσιν ἐναί ἔτει αὐτοῦ τῆς προσωποῦ ἐυδοκειται, και ἐναί τοῖς πάροις ἐναί τῇ προσωποῦ φύσιν ἐπρώτους εἰρημένα</td>
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<td>οἶ γὰρ οὸν άνθρωπος υἱός ποτὲ ἔγευεν οὐδέ ποτε ἔγευεν οὐδέ γὰρ ἄν ἔγευεν οὐδὲ δὲ καὶ ἔγευεν ἐν ἄν ἦν τό ἱμύρενον.</td>
<td>ἐὰν καὶ ἐγνώσατο ἔκάσι ἐκεῖ οὐκ ἔχων ἀλήθειαν ἡμῶν, οὐκ ἔχων ἀλήθειαν ἡμῶν.</td>
<td>ἦν οἴ ἐκεῖς οἱ θεοὶ θεοὶ οὐκ ἔχον ἀλήθειαν ἡμῶν.</td>
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It is instructive to compare these two versions of Galen’s ‘argument from pain’ with an early kalām refutation of that argument in al-Ḥasan ibn Mūsā al-Nawbaṭṭī’s (d. after 922) Book of Opinions and Religious Practices as it is quoted in the chapter against the ‘Sempiternalists’ (Bāb al-kalām ‘alā l-Dahrī) of Rukn al-Dīn al-Malāḥīmī’s (d. 1141) Kitāb al-Muṭṭamād fī ʿusūl al-dīn  

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<th>Galen’s ‘argument from pain’</th>
<th>Early Kalām refutation of Galen’s argument</th>
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<td>It is instructive to compare these two versions of Galen’s ‘argument from pain’ with an early kalām refutation of that argument in al-Ḥasan ibn Mūsā al-Nawbaṭṭī’s (d. after 922) Book of Opinions and Religious Practices as it is quoted in the chapter against the ‘Sempiternalists’ (Bāb al-kalām ‘alā l-Dahrī) of Rukn al-Dīn al-Malāḥīmī’s (d. 1141) Kitāb al-Muṭṭamād fī ʿusūl al-dīn</td>
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Galen claimed that Hippocrates was the first to have said that there are four elemental qualities (tabā‘ītī) arguing that the evidence for this consists in the fact that if the human being were made up of one elemental quality (taḥā‘a wāḥa) he could not get sick (mā ʿtalā); and if he were to get sick, there would be only one thing to cure him.

On this al-Nawbaṭṭī made the following comment: He should be told: Why would you deny that he is made up of one elemental quality which then undergoes changes and that this accounts for the fact that diseases occur and that what cures them varies in accordance with the changes it undergoes?

[al-Nawbaṭṭī also] said: They would also be told: Do not human beings fall sick with more than four diseases and are there not more than four drugs to cure them? Admit then that there are more than four elemental qualities! – Hence, what brought them to


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argue that the world is composed of four elemental qualities is nothing but allegations, and on these grounds we have abandoned [this position].

ABŪ BAKR MUḤammad ibn ZAKARĪYĀ AL-RĀZĪ (d. 925) IN TENTH AND ELEVENTH CENTURY MUṬAZILĪ THOUGHT

Al-Rāzī’s thorough engagement with the doctrines of the mutakallimūn is evident from the content of his extant writings as well as several titles of his lost works and has received due attention in scholarly literature. It has even been suggested that ‘much of al-Rāzī’s philosophical output can be understood as a reaction to Muṭazilism’. The most salient expression of his preoccupation with tenets of Muṭazilī thought is a prolonged written exchange (‘munāzara tawila’) with Abū l-Qāsim al-Balḥī ‘al-Kaḥī’ (d. 931), the figurehead of the Baḡdādī Muṭazilā, which touched on a variety of subjects, including the concept and definition of time, the world’s pre-eternity/createdness, void, prophetology and prophetic miracles, psychology, metempsychosis, and bodily resurrection. Substantial extracts of this debate have been preserved in a number of later works, first and foremost in Faḫr al-Dīn al-Rāzī’s The Paramount Issues of the Divine Science (Theology, Metaphysics) (al-Maṭālib al-ʿāliya min al-ʾilm al-ilāhi).


120. The treatises belonging to this debate are listed in Ibn al-Nadīm, al-Fihrist (n. 4 above), vol. I/2, p. 615, vol. 2/1, pp. 308–13 and in the secondary literature given in n. 117. The repeated back and forth of the debate is well reflected in the title of al-Rāzī’s Kitāb l-ʾīdāl Abī l-Qāsim al-Balḥī ḥādhī l-ʾālāʾ wa-l-ʿawābdīḥ li-ʾalāʾ ʿawābdīḥ (Pīne, Studies in Islamic Atomism [n. 12 above], p. 104, no. 15). For the development of the controversy between the two see P. Kraus, Raʾīl falsafīya li-Abī Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakarīyā al-Rāzī, Cairo, 1939, pp. 166–8.

121. Rashed, ‘Abū Bakr al-Rāzī et le kalām’ (n. 117 above), p. 41 characterizes the passages in the Maṭālib as being ‘la source [la] plus étendue, la plus riche et très vraisemblablement la plus objective en vue d’une reconstitution de la doctrine métaphysique d’al-Rāzī. The most important passages are found in Maṭālib, ed. A. Ḥāfiẓ al-Ṣaqqāq, 9 vols, Beirut, 1987, vol. 3, pp. 318–20; vol. 4, pp. 402–420, 427; vol. 7, p. 201; vol. 8, pp. 29–33, 51 ff; see
Less known is the fact that the debate between Abū ’l-Qāsim al-Balḥī and Abū Bakr al-Rāẓī aroused a great deal of interest among several generations of Muʿtazilī scholars over the tenth and eleventh centuries. Two counter-refutations of Abū Bakr al-Rāẓī’s rebuttal of al-Balḥī’s positions are ascribed to Abū ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAlṣībī, a third one (Naqṣ al-ʿīlm al-ʿilāhī al-kabīr) to Abū Ishāq Ḳabīr ibn Ṭālib ibn Ἀlfī al-Naṣīḥī (fl. 980) who in turn was a student of Abū ʿAbdallāh. A passage in al-Ḥākim al-Ǧišumī’s K. al-ʿUyūn suggests that Abū ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAlṣībī made use of the Ṭabāṭaba in his teaching sessions.


122. See Rashīd, ‘Abū Bakr al-Rāẓī et le kalām’ (n. 117 above), p. 49: ‘Même si les adversaires les plus directs de Rāẓī ont sans doute été les Muʿtazītes de Bagdad, il est cependant probable que leurs collègues de Bassorah ne sont pas restés totalement indifférents à la polémique’. Among numerous other references to these debates see ʿAbd al-Ǧabbār (MS Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, arab. B 66, fol. 164r [my translation]. The quotation is from the concluding masūla of Bāḥ masāʾil mutaḥāra which closes the second section on divine justice (Kātib al-ʿAdl). For the corresponding passage in al-Ḥākim al-Ǧišumī’s Šarḥ ʿUyūn al-masāʾil, see MS Riyadh, Ǧāmiʿat al-Malik, fol. 200; al-Ǧišumī, Ṭabāṭaba al-mutakallimin (n. 11 above), p. 179; Rukan al-Dīn al-Malāḥīmī, Ṭabāṭaba al-mutakallimin (n. 11 above), pp. 159, 175 (Bāḥ al-ṣaqīf fī l-rāʿīd).
of the celestial sphere. Indeed, they themselves measure acts in terms of ‘time’, ‘eternity’ and ‘duration’ much in the same way as we measure the movements of the celestial sphere. What indicates that duration is non-eternal (hādīya) is the fact that time measurement pertains to it, while it does not pertain to things which are lasting and eternal.

In spite of the evidence that at least some Muʿtazilis faced up to Rāzī’s thought and criticism, only few scholars have ventured the opinion that it had a bearing on tenth century Muʿtazili thought. The attitudes towards Rāzī and his thought in tenth and eleventh century kalām circles were indeed rather double-edged: on the one hand we find a good number of purely polemical anecdotes and ad hominem arguments; they continue a long tradition of compositions in refutation of medicine (Naqḍ/ibṭāl al-tibb) and aim at undermining the soundness and reliability of medicine and the professional integrity of individual physicians. On the other hand there are several texts reflecting a continuing debate about issues of substance, some of which had been the subject of Rāzī’s controversies with Abū l-Qāsim al-Balḥī. To give the reader a vivid sense of the argumentative strategies and rhetorical devices employed, both facets of the Muʿtazili reception of Rāzī will be exemplified with translations of longer passages from relevant source texts.

An outstanding example for a medicine-bashing kalām text is found in Confirming the Evidence of Prophecy (Taḥbit dalāʾil al-nubūwa), a major Muʿtazili treatise on prophethood. Recently, doubts have been raised about the authorship of this work, which has traditionally been ascribed to Abū al-Gabbār al-Hamadānī. Some doctrinal and historical considerations suggest that the actual author could have been Abū Ahmad ʿAbdallāh ibn Muhammad ibn Abī ʿAllān, himself a student of Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Ṣāliḥ, who later became chief Qāḍī of Ahwāz. Even in the primary literature the two chief judges have at times been confused. The section of the Taḥbit which concerns us here is found close to the end of the book. It consists of a series of anecdotes, stories and pseudo-scientific considerations delegitimizing and stultifying the medical science and individual physicians and perfectly fits the style of compositions against medicine lambasted by Ibn Ḥindū in the second chapter of his Key to Medicine and Curriculum for the Students (Maǧmaʿ al-tibb wa-minḥāg al-ṭullāb). The section opens with a number of

128. Pines, ibid., p. 91: ‘It is possible that some mutakallimūn accepted the existence of the void in the course of a debate that was begun by al-Rāzī, but we can offer little more than a guess on this matter.’
129. Taḥbit dalāʾil al-nubūwa (n. 122 above).
prophetic hadīt relating to healing and medication and culminates in the slogan that God is the only agent having the power to heal (wa-l-ṣifā lā yafʿaluhū illā Llāh ... wa-lā yaḍiru ‘alayhi siwāhu).  

Quite a few passages in this section of the Taḥbīt relate to Rāzī. The first belongs to a compilation of hearsay gossip slandering the professional competence of Christian and pagan physicians who suffered from all kinds of ill health:

You are well-informed about the condition of their predecessors who lived before your time, the likes of Qusṭā ibn Lūqā, Ḥunayn ibn Išāq, and his son Išāq, and their unbridled devotion to heresy. You are also well acquainted with the revelations about Ibl Zakariyā al-Rāzī, for he was a Christian, son of a Christian, who used Christianity as a fig-leaf (yatasattaru bi-l-Naṣrānī ya) to indulge in the doctrines of the infidels. Later on he embraced Islam for the sake of appearance and took on the name Muḥammad, while his [real baptismal] name was Yūḥannā (John). He only did this as an act of deception in order to vilify Islam.

He held the view that it would be absurd for God to have the power to create a human being other than through sexual reproduction and to bring his rational and physical potential to perfection instantaneously, for had He the power to do so, He would have done it, but, as we can see time and again, He has never done it.

But, do not people endowed with reason observe that a chick leaves its egg plummed and self-reliant, getting along without the support of its father, its mother or another member of its species, or that a baby goose starts swimming as soon as it leaves [its egg] without needing a swimming instructor as humans do? What the bees build, what the spider and the silkworm weave, all this happens instantaneously. He forgot that God created the heavens, the earth, and the mountains as well as the white of cotton, birds, and horses and other things whose colour He created instantaneously. The same applies to their tastes and smells.

He [scil. Rāzī], however, denied [that God has] the power to create grapes and the like instantaneously and claimed that they are necessarily unripe [sour] and green at first, while sweetness and blackness emerge in them only later on. And about the white hair he said that it is caused by the mouldiness of moisture in the hair roots.

In return it should be said to him: There are horses, birds, and other creatures which are white from the very beginning without the presence of moisture.

21–33]. On this chapter and parallel texts see F. Rosenthal, ‘The Defense of Medicine’ (n. 4 above), pp. 519–32. Given the proximity in time between the composition of the Taḥbīt (995) and Ibn Hindū’s Mīfāḥ, we might suggest an even closer relationship between the two texts. Ibn Hindū spent a few years in Ahwāz from 1003 onwards (see Khalīfax, Ibn Hindū, pp. 38 f.). In the Mīfāḥ he also refers to a group of medicine-bashers in Persia who were at feud with his teacher, the Yahyā ibn ‘Adī-student Ibn al-Ḫammār (d. after 1017; Ibn Abī Uṣaybi‘a, ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ, ed. Riḍā [n. 4 above], p. 429).

135. Ibid., pp. 623 f. (my translation).
136. See G. Reynolds, A Muslim Theologian in the Sectarian Milieu: ‘Abd al-Jabīr and the Critique of Christian Origins, Leiden, 2004, pp. 187 f. To the best of my knowledge this allegation is unknown from other sources and has been passed over in silence in most studies on Abū Baḵr al-Rāzī. The possibility that al-Rāzī was indeed born to a Christian family cannot be rejected out of hand. Al-Gāhīj jibes in his Radd ‘alā l-Naṣārā (in Rasāʾil al-Gāhīj [n. 9 above], vol. 3, pp. 315 f.) at Christians who adopted Muslim names to protect their status. Yūḥannā was the iwn of several Christian physicians, notably Abū Zakariyā Yūḥannā ibn Māsawayh.

137. This argument is closely linked to Galen’s discussion of ‘the matter-intrinsic principle’ in Book XI of On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body and elsewhere (see above n. 75) as well as to a passage in al-Rāzī’s Doubts quoted below at n. 158.
al-Rāzī also said: ‘God takes no gratification (niʿma) in creating them and in creating bodily soundness (ṣiḥba), [the senses of] hearing and sight, speech, skin, and in the pleasures (laḏḏāt) [His creatures] may experience.’ He also said that ‘people who hold such convictions are fools, indistinguishable from donkeys. It is rather so that the pleasure (laḏḏa) they experience is relief from a pain (rāḥa min alam) in them or from an achiness which afflicts them, analogous to the case of someone who finds relief from a strong urgency to defecate and urinate when he finally clears out the bowels, or someone who scratches a rash or puts ointment on his wound or his lesion.’

Yet, any person endowed with reason does make a distinction between things he takes pleasure in and the medicine he takes to treat an injury. He hopes that his desirousness, youthfulness and fortitude will last and wishes to protect them and he is driven to despair when it wanes and cries and weeps about it as he would cry about the loss of his dearest ones or the loss of his hearing and eyesight, hoping that it would be returned to him. He thus consults the physicians to prescribe for him what strengthens the desire and restores it, but does neither yearn for a rash in order to scratch himself, nor for a wound and an injury in order to get medical treatment, nor for a strong urgency to defecate and urinate in order to sit down and relieve himself. This is obvious nonsense which is known by sense-perception. One may then marvel at the fact that the medical treatises of Ibn Zakariyā contain various sections dedicated to the preservation of desirousness, physical soundness, youthful vigour, fortitude and strength, where he prescribes the most accomplished medications for these purposes.

They thus discard objects of perception, reject compelling facts and are exasperated about people who hold these things to be a blessing of God who promised analogous things for the hereafter. Meanwhile, they fool themselves and those who follow their presumption to believe that they heal them and perpetuate their bodily soundness and fortitude.

The association of physicians with hybris, pretentiousness and corruption has been a leitmotiv of anti-medical literature since antiquity. In the Taṯbīt, the allegations against Rāzī’s professional integrity is substantiated with an anecdote involving Abū l-Qāsim al-Balḥī:

One day, the governor of Balḥī came down with some disease. Ibn Zakariyā al-Rāzī prescribed him the requisite [medicine] and even went to visit him. On that occasion he asked the governor to submit a query to Abū l-Qāsim al-Balḥī, may God have mercy upon him, so that he may answer it. The governor acceded to his request and obliged Abū l-Qāsim [to answer]. He thus replied and wrote to Ibn Zakariyā as follows: first of all, [let me tell you] that I have never seen a person more foolish than you. Ibn Zakariyā then replied: This does not blend in well with your moral standards, for you are characterized as a man of gentleness and good manners. Abū l-Qāsim then wrote in return: Let me explain this to you: You deny what Muslims and people who adhere to revealed Laws.
affirm concerning the deity and prophetic missions and consider [what they believe] to be ignorance; they, in turn, consider what you advocate to be blasphemy and think that the blood of those who promote and endorse [such views] should be spilled. Meanwhile, you mingle with them and they are with you and around you over long distances. You openly express your opinion and engage in debates about it without assuming recompense and reward for this neither in this world nor in the hereafter, because you do not believe in the world to come and in reward and punishment. This is point number one. Secondly, you assert the validity of alchemy and your [ability to] turn stone and clay into gold and silver; you have written books about this in which you affront people who reject this and contest [the validity of alchemy]. In spite of all that, your wife had to sue you to make you pay alimonies for her and your [joint] child; you left her no other choice but to bring you before the judges so that they would impose [the payment of alimonies] on you, something that usually only happens with the poorest and the most destitute people. Thus far the second point. Thirdly, it is quite obvious what saves you from debilitation and relieves you of an incurable disease. You, however, arrogate to yourself the science of elemental qualities (ʿilm al-ṭabāʾiʿ) as well as proficiency and a vanguard role in medicine; you deride the physicians who preceded you, such as Ibn Māsawayh and others, as well as your contemporaries.

This anecdote is followed by yet another which is meant to illustrate that the medical knowledge of ordinary people outstrips the competence of professional physicians. According to this story, al-Rāzī had lost his eyesight and was unable to find a physician who knew how to cure it. But then, a woman happened to visit his wife and told her about the correct treatment:

Likewise, Galen often tells about medications for which he benefited from [the experience of] midwives, peasants and sailors. How many diseases the great physicians have already encountered which have never been seen and how many patients have died of some undiagnosed disease?

To buttress his allegation that physicians are incompetent and incapable of treating many diseases, the author of the Taḥbīt also adduces supporting evidence from the medical literature:142

The drugs of different nations (adwiyat al-umam) differ from each other and are not identical. Thus, the medicine of the Indians (ṭibb al-Hind) differs from the medicine of the Arabs, the medicine of the Byzantines differs from the medicine of the Persians, the medicine of the urban population differs from the medicine of the rural population, and the medicine of the rural population differs again from the medicine of the Bedouins, the mountain population and the nomads. Ḥunayn ibn Iṣḥaq wrote a book in which he lists many drugs which were unknown to Hippocrates and Galen and remained undocumented, among them [drugs against] smallpox and measles.143 It was claimed that [Galen] did not know [these drugs] until Ibn Zakariyya al-Rāzī said: It seems that he already knew them. ... The book of Galen which is known as Kitāb al-Mayāmir,144 which is his trademark and

143. Possibly a reference to Ḥunayn’s commentary on Ps.-Galen’s Kitāb al-Adwiyā al-maktūma (GAS [n. 8 above], vol. III, p. 129, no. 102 and p. 256).
144. Kitāb al-Mayāmir or Kitāb fi Tarkīb al-adwiyā bi-ḥaṣab al-mawāḍiʿ; Ullmann, Die Medizin (n. 3 above), p. 48, no. 50a; GAS (n. 8 above), vol. III, pp. 70 f., 118–20, no. 64; Fichtner, Corpus Galenicum (n. 3 above), pp. 54 f., nos 80 f.
Aside from these polemical texts we also find a number of more substantial engagements with specific aspects of Rāzī’s thought in several kalām treatises. A paramount example in this respect are Mu’tazīlī discussions about pleasure (laḏḍa) and pain (alām), inasmuch as they illustrate quite vividly how over the course of the tenth century some of al-Rāzī’s philosophical views effectively prompted certain Mu’tazīlī scholars to get to the bottom of the concepts championed by their school-authorities. On a number of occasions the revision of these concepts gave rise to inner-school controversies. Al-Rāzī’s conception of pleasure may be characterized as a constrained version of Plato’s theory of pleasure. It largely depends on the Timaeus (64 A 2–65 B 3) where...

145. I.e. Tāḥīt ibn Qurra (GaS [n. 8 above], vol. III, pp. 260–3).
146. In usūl al-dīn and usūl al-ḥiṣb treatises the concept of abrogation, i.e. the time-limited benefit and validity of certain revealed legal regulations, as well as the epistemological status of jurisdiction based on ījāḥād are frequently compared with the temporal and context-dependent effectiveness of drugs or nutritional regimens. See, among numerous other examples, Abū Tāḥīt Yahyā ibn al-Husayn al-Harrūnī, Ziyādāt Šarḥ Ṣūl al-Dīn, Leiden, 2011, p. 163; idem, Kitāb al-Uṣūl wa-l-Laṣṭīn, ed. A. Ġadbān, Šarī‘ah, 2013, vol. 4, pp. 159–215. E. G. Price, ‘The Medicine of the Prophets: Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥarith al-Maṣḥūr’, Studia Islamica, 69, 1989, pp. 5–38 (1st part) and Studia...
pleasure and pain are confined to mere physical or physiological processes and discards Plato’s considerably more nuanced treatment in "Republic" 9 especially in "Philebus" which he only knew by title. Râzî thus disregards the Platonic notion of ‘pure’ and ‘intellectual’ pleasures and construes all pleasures as bodily pleasures. Central to both Plato’s and Râzî’s understanding of bodily pleasures is the idea of replenishment as leading towards the restoration of the natural or normal state (τὸ κατὰ ὑπόστασιν θάλασσαν; al-ḥāl al-ṭaḥāfiyya).14 The process of replenishment, however, can only be called ‘pleasure’, if it is perceived and experienced as such, and it is only perceptible, if the replenishment is ‘overwhelming and sudden’ rather than ‘gentle and gradual’. For Râzî the idea of replenishment implies that 1) there is no genuine pleasure without preceding harm and that 2) the extent of pleasure one perceives will always be commensurate to the extent of preceding harm.15 Since pleasure only exists as restoration and replenishment, it is at best a return to the original or natural state of the body which is the best possible physical state, i.e. bodily health (which includes psychic well-being) and the optimal balance of the bodily mixture. This natural state is defined as ‘the state in which there is neither pleasure nor pain’.154 It is at once starting point and normative goal. From the vantage point of the natural state, any pursuit of pleasure is futile, because the desire for pleasure only arises in a state of lack, deficiency, or unhealthiness.

An additional aspect of Râzî’s understanding of pleasure comes to the fore in a short passage of his "Doubts against Galen" where his definition of pleasure is linked to the state in which there is neither pleasure nor pain.155 For divergent opinions about the level of al-Râzî’s acquaintance with the "Timaeus" see Adamson, ‘Platonic Pleasures’ (n. 117 above), p. 83, n. 33. At the very least he had access to Arabic versions of Galen’s "Compendium of the Timaeus" (see Plato Arabus, i: Galeni compendiurn Timaei Platonis, ed. R. Walzler, London, 1951, pp. 18 f., par. xiv) and Galen’s Commentary on the "Timaeus". See Pines, Studies in Islamic Atomism (n. 12 above), p. 86, n. 116; id., ‘Nouvelles études sur Awdh al-Zamân Abîl-Baraikât al-Baghdâdî’, Paris, 1955, pp. 60 f., repr. in The Collected Works of Shlomo Pines, vol. i: Studies in Abûl-Baraikât al-Baghdâdî, Physics and Metaphysics, Jerusalem, 1979, pp. 147 f.; A. R. Das, ‘Galen and the Arabic Traditions of Plato’s “Timaeus”’, PhD diss., University of Warwick, 2013, pp. 96–146. See ibid., p. 100, for the suggestion that al-Râzî’s alleged super-commentary on Plutarch’s Commentary on the Timaeus may be the result of a conflation of two separate compositions, namely a commentary on a book of Plutarch [Kitâb Tafsîr kitâb Fīlāṯarṣ, i.e. the De placitis] and some treatment of a commentary on the Timaeus [Fī tafsîr kitâb Tīmāwus].


154. Kīthāb al-Lāḏāḏa, ed. P. Kraus, in Rasā’il falsafīya (n. 120 above), pp. 148, l. 6 – 149, l. 2 and p. 153, l. 2, as quoted in Adamson, ‘Platonic Pleasures’ (n. 117 above), p. 84; Wolfsdorf, Pleasure (n. 152 above), pp. 41 f.
with Galen’s matter-intrinsic principle which we have briefly encountered in connection with a famous passage from Book XI of On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body. In the Doubts, the topic is broached in reference to a contentious statement in Book III of On the Usefulness which immediately follows the passage wherein Galen characterizes the treatise as ‘a sacred discourse which I write as a true hymn of praise to our Creator’.

As Rāzī remarks, this statement could be deemed theologically problematic inasmuch as it undermines God’s omnipotence, wisdom and equity, as well as the purposive connection with a famous passage from Book XI of On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body. In the Doubts, the topic is broached in reference to a contentious statement in Book III of On the Usefulness which immediately follows the passage wherein Galen characterizes the treatise as ‘a sacred discourse which I write as a true hymn of praise to our Creator’.

According to the Arabic translation of On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body the last bit of Rāzī’s citation should be translated as:

“You should, however, consider the material substance of each entity [separately] and should not fool yourself into expecting the inadmissible, namely that it would be possible that out of menstrual blood and semen emerges a living being which does not pass away or does not experience pain, or is moving eternally, or shining brightly like the sun.”
design of His creation. If the properties of bodies and their parts are co-determined and co-regulated by the composition of their material substrate, the creative power of the wise Creator (Ḥームوپυγός, ḥāliq) is substantially confined and curtailed. 158

I say: With this statement Galen has made it explicit that matter is not part of the creation of the Giver of forms (al-muṣawwir) and that the Giver of forms can only bring into being in each matter what it is disposed for in and of itself. But if this is the case, why would this Giver of forms be wise and considerate, if it is not possible for Him to generate from any matter a living being which does neither suffer pain nor pass away? Would not wisdom and deliberation suggest to Him that He should refrain for ever from bringing it into being in order to spare it from pain, death, distress and misfortune? 159

If someone wondered whether according to Galen’s view the amount of pleasure a human being experiences over the course of his lifetime exceeds the amount of pain that afflicts him or is equal to it, he should know that Plato and all the natural philosophers were in agreement that pleasure is [tantamount to] returning to the natural state (ruḏūʿ ilā l-state’) by being relieved from a source of pain (bi-l-rāḥa min muʿlīm) and that it would not be in accordance with wisdom and deliberation that the Creator would create a natural disposition which is inextricably linked to pain. But hasn’t He relieved it from pain, if it was free from it initially? 160

However, this statement contradicts what he and all philosophers say with respect to the improvement of character traits (ṣdāḥ al-aḥlāq), namely that the Good, which is sought for its own sake, consists of pure pleasure. It is obvious that such an assertion would clash with the contents of Galen’s book On Character Traits 161 and particularly with the contents of Plato’s books 162 as well as with all the other venerable philosophers.

The discrepancy which Rāzī detects here between Galen’s concept of matter and the ontological underpinnings of Galen’s moral philosophy is closely linked to his narrow concept of pleasure. For if all pleasure is bodily pleasure and all bodily pleasure is restorative and inextricably linked with some kind of deficiency, pleasure cannot serve as a reliable benchmark, let alone constitute the ultimate goal in pursuit of the most complete life. Being a kind of cure, restorative pleasure is contingently good, but never


159. This recalls Tim., 30 A 1–3: ‘wise men will tell you ... that this ... was the pre-eminent reason for the world’s coming to be: the divine wanted everything to be good and nothing to be bad so far as that was possible’ (βουληθεὶς γὰ ρ ὁ θεὸς ἀγαθὰ μὲν πάντα, φλαῦρον δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι κατὰ δόμων) (italics mine).

160. The definition of pleasure as ‘returning to the natural state’ and of pain as ‘departing from the natural state’ is also ascribed to the natural philosophers in al-Ṭīlīb al-rāḥānī, (n. 153 above), p. 37, ll. 3–4 (ḥaḍḍ al-lāḏaḏa ‘indahum huwa annahā ruḏūʿ ilā l-tabii‘); see Adamson, ‘Platonic Pleasures’ (n. 117 above), p. 84.


162. Initially: Fī ḥālatihī l-ṭabīʿa, i.e. in its initial, pristine condition.

163. One may refer, for instance, to Galen’s statement in On Character Traits 34.4–11 (transl. D. Davies, in Galen: Psychological Writings, ed. P. N. Singer, Cambridge, 2013, p. 149): ‘Whoever chooses pleasure rather than the beautiful as his goal chooses to be like a pig rather than to be like an angel ... Someone who in his nature and his act makes [the attainment of] this pleasure his goal is like a pig, whereas someone whose nature and act loves the beautiful follows the example of the angels. The [last], therefore, deserve to be called “godlike”, and those who pursue pleasures deserve to be called “beasts”. On the Platonic concept of “pure pleasure”, i.e. pleasure that is unmixed with (i.e. not preceded by) pain, and the distinction of grades of pure pleasure see Adamson, ‘Platonic Pleasures’ (n. 117 above), p. 77; Wolfsdorf, Pleasure (n. 152 above), pp. 102, 124; van Riel, Pleasure and the Good Life (n. 152 above), pp. 8, 15f., 17–36.

164. Rāzī obviously has the Timaeus in mind.
a good in itself. At the very most it is indicative of a body’s approaching its natural condition or a state of bodily soundness.

The mutakallimūn agree with Rāzī on that pleasure is confined to physical or physiological processes and inextricably linked with desire and need. In Ibn Mattawayh’s Kitiḥ al-Taḏkira, the section On Pains and Pleasures opens with the following definition:

Pain is an ontologically discrete entity (ma’nā) which is generated in the living being of our species (fī l-ḥayy minnā) when incision takes place (‘ind al-taqṭīf) and aversion (al-nifāf) is linked to it. It [viz. pain] belongs to the perceptibles (al-mudrakāt); it is impossible to deny the reality of an ontologically discrete entity that is perceived.

... The case of pleasure runs parallel to that of pain: [it is an ontologically discrete entity which is generated when incision takes place and desire (al-šahwa) is linked to it].

Strictly speaking, this definition of pleasure and pain not only precludes the existence of ‘pure’ or intellectual pleasures, it actually confines the experience of pleasure and pain qua ontologically discrete entity (ma’nā) to tactile perception. All pleasurable and painful experiences that trigger the occurrence of an ontologically discrete entity relate to incision (taqṭīf) and separation (tafrīq) and hence to an


167. My rendering of ma’nā as ‘ontologically discrete entity’ is explained in n. 110 above.

168. Lit. ‘It is impossible to refrain from positing’, ‘it is impossible not to posit as a given’.

169. For sense perception as a primary and unwavering source of knowledge in Bahšamī kalām see, for instance, Muqān (n. 17 above), vol. XIII, p. 239; fa-īdī ḥāṣa ʾal-ṣayyārūkān, fa-kāwājī ḍī ḍibāṭīhī an yakunā ʾalūk wa-an yastahnīya ‘an ʾalīf.

170. The explicative addition in square brackets is found in Šarḥ al-Taḏkira, ms. Tehran, Mahdavi Codex 514, fol. 48r, in An Anonymous Commentary on Kitiḥ al-Taḏkira by Ibn Mattawayh. Facsimile Edition of Mahdavi Codex 514 (8th/12th Century), Tehran, 2006, p. 93; my edition and translation of this passage is appended to this article. The exclusive association of pleasure with the desiring soul (al-nafs al-šahwanī) is also found in the Arabic translation of Galen’s paraphrase of the Timaeus (see Adamson, ‘Platonic Pleasures’ [n. 117 above], p. 84). As mentioned above n. 152, some early Arabic translations of Greek texts render ḥdovai as šahwa rather than laḏḏa. Thus, ch. 18 (nepi ḥdovāv) of Nemesius of Emesa’s On the Nature of Man is rendered ‘ji l-šahwād’ in the earliest paraphrastic translation (Širr al-ḥalāqa, ed. Weisser [n. 99 above], p. 605, ll. 6 f.), whereas emiḥa (cē emiḥayyakōv), which is usually translated as šahwa (al-šahwām), is rendered as īṭātū (ibid., p. 603, ll. 12 f.). Desire and pleasure are thus united under the same root *š-h-w.

171. See Taḏkira (n. 131 above), p. 168 (wa-inna ḍīhī ḍīfā ḍīmā yuṣṭuṣa hūdīṭan ‘ind al-taqṭīf ʾal-ṣayyā). This qualified position is ascribed to Abū Ḫālīm al-ʿUbbālī. In his view the experience of pleasure and pain based on non-tactile sense perception does not involve the occurrence of a ma’nā (lā yastanīya ilā ma’nā); see Sharḥ al-Taḏkira (n. 170 above), p. 98, l. 22. According to his father, Abū ‘All, the occurrence of this ma’nā can be related to any of the five senses (fī kulli mā yuḍrakū bi-l-huwaṣā ṣāḥīma). For tactile pleasures as a distinct category of pleasures in Aristotle see Pearson, Aristotle on Desire (n. 152 above), pp. 96–100. In Nicomachean Ethics 10.1 (1173b14–30) Aristotle argues that the replenishment view of pleasure is – strictly speaking – restricted to tactile pleasures that are tied to the animal’s survival (food, drink, sex) and presuppose a painful disruptive state of the body.
infraction of the specific arrangement of homogenous atoms which make up the structure (binya) of a living being.\textsuperscript{172}

The close association of pleasure with physical processes, desire and need also explains why the topic is broached in treatises on religious fundamentals (uṣūl al-dīn) in the context of discussions about divine self-sufficiency (jannāt).

A self-sufficient God is by definition free of need. If all pleasure arises from desire and all desire strives for the replenishment of a lack and, by implication, quantitative change of some sort, desire and pleasure cannot be ascribed to Him. Like Rāzī, the mutakallimūn were therefore adamant not to associate God with pleasure and desire:\textsuperscript{174}

Evidence corroborating [the aforementioned] prove for God’s self-sufficiency, to wit that God is devoid of need, that need only applies to beings which are subject to desire (ṣānwa) and aversion (niḥār), that desire and aversion only apply to things which are subject to growth/increase (ziyāda) and diminution/deficiency (muqānāt), and that growth and diminution only apply to corporeal entities] is the following consideration by Abū Hāšim:

Whenever we perceive what we desire, our body grows and diminishes in accordance with it. This proves that growth and diminution are characteristic properties of desire and aversion.

The criticism which the mutakallimūn levelled against Rāzī’s conception of pleasure did not concern the fact that it was confined to bodily pleasures, but rather his understanding of pleasure and pain as related to deviations from the body’s natural and normal condition. Rāzī’s notion of a ‘natural state’ is echoed in the medical definition of health as

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{172} Šarḥ al-Taḏkira (n. 170 above), p. 98, l. 21. Inasmuch as pain relates to incision and separation, even inanimate and sentient beings could be said to be in a nonperceptible kind of pain, according to Abū Hāšim (see Taḏkira (n. 131 above), p. 172).
  \item \textsuperscript{173} See ‘Abd al-Gabbār, al-Kībār al-Muṣrī (n. 17 above), vol. 11, p. 80 (with cross-references on pp. 108, 117).
  \item \textsuperscript{174} Like Rāzī, the mutakallimūn abhor the idea that God is devoid of need, that need only applies to beings which are subject to desire (ṣānwa) and aversion (niḥār), that desire and aversion only apply to things which are subject to growth/increase (ziyāda) and diminution/deficiency (muqānāt), and that growth and diminution only apply to corporeal entities. [The aforementioned] prove for God’s self-sufficiency, to wit that God is devoid of need, that need only applies to beings which are subject to desire (ṣānwa) and aversion (niḥār), that desire and aversion only apply to things which are subject to growth/increase (ziyāda) and diminution/deficiency (muqānāt), and that growth and diminution only apply to corporeal entities.
\end{itemize}
The venerable Abū Ishāq ibn ʿAyyāš denied that pain is an ontologically discrete entity (maʿnā) in accordance with the definition which we are going to validate. Instead, he held the opinion that it is nothing other than ‘the body’s departing from its state of balance’ (ḥurūj al-ḥāyāt) and conceived of pleasure as ‘the attainment of balance in the body’ (ḥusul al-ḥurūj fī l-ḥāyāt) and getting rid of those of its parts that were tantamount to carrying a heavy burden. This position also led him to deny that aversion (niḥš) is an [ontologically discrete entity]; by implication he was then also forced to deny that desire (shahwat) represents an [ontologically discrete entity], since we regard it as pleasure in some respect. Ibn Zakarīyā in turn conceived of pleasure as ‘relief from a source of pain’ (rūḥa min muʿlīm) or ‘departing from a source of pain’ (ḥurūj min muʿlīm).

It is remarkable that most of the arguments which the mutakallimīn levelled against Rāzī’s and Ibn ʿAyyāš’s conceptions of pleasure and pain relate to types of non-tactual pleasures which according to the Bahšāmiya do not involve the occurrence of

176. It is the definition of health or physical soundness (ṣīḥa) which according to the Bahšāmiya do not involve the occurrence of serious injuries, such as wounds. According to Ibn ʿAyyāš, the first Muʿtazilī teacher of ʿAbd al-Ḡabbār, Muṣnī (n. 17 above), vol. 4, p. 29.8; and the medical definition of ʿṣīḥa is ascribed to Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāʿī, who held that physical soundness and balance (ṣīḥatūhā wa-ṭīdāl mizāǧīt) are a condition sine qua non (al-muqaṭaf) of a person’s perceiving, knowing, and having the capacity to act. For Ibn ʿAyyāš’s definition of pain see ‘Abd al-Ḡabbār, Muṣnī (n. 17 above), vol. 9, p. 59, ll. 8 f., and the corresponding translations in Heemskerk, Suffering (above), pp. 79 f. and J. K. Hecker, ‘Reason and Responsibility: An Explanatory Translation of Kitāb al-tawālīd from al-Muḥnī with introduction and notes’, PhD diss., University of California, 1975, p. 154: ‘A living being feels pain when physical health ceases and life ebbs away from his body in that place [where a wound exists]. He feels pain upon the occurrence of this just as he feels pain when he perceives bitterness’; similarly, Muṣnī (n. 17 above), vol. 4, p. 298–9; vol. 13, pp. 261, ll.4–5; Ibn al-Malāḥīmī, Fāʾiq (n. 122 above), p. 257 (tafraq biyat al-ḥayāt); al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī, Niḥṣat al-mardîm (n. 172 above), vol. 2, pp. 285 f.


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an ontologically discrete entity (ma'na).\textsuperscript{180} While some of these arguments may have been the product of inner-school debates, most of them were borrowed from the philosophical and medical literature.\textsuperscript{181}

The discussion of pleasure and pain is inextricably linked to that of desire (šahwa) and aversion (nifār/nafra). Pleasure and pain are said to be properties of someone who perceives one and the same ontologically discrete entity which occurs in the living being as a result of incision (taqīt?) with either desire or aversion.\textsuperscript{182} The detailed exposition of the concepts of desire (šahwa) and aversion (nifār/nafra) in kālām treatises once again exhibits multiple connections with the medical and philosophical literature. One such connection is again associated with a divergent position advocated by Ibn 'Ayyāš al-.Busrī who challenged the view of his Bahšami fellows that desire and aversion represent an ontologically discrete entity and rejected Abū Hāšim’s contention that ‘desire is inextricably linked with things that are beneficial to the body of the one who desires’.

Abū Išāq ibn ‘Ayyāš objected to this line of reasoning and advanced the following counter-argument: We may at times have a very strong desire for [a mixture of] mud and cheese (šahwat al-tīn wa-l-ğubn), even though it is extremely harmful for us and our body becomes deficient as a result of it. The same holds true for intercourse which is linked with a strong desire, even though it is not conducive to our [health]. On these grounds, the physicians said about it what they said.\textsuperscript{183} Conversely, we may derive a very strong and evident benefit from ingesting some distasteful and abhorrently bitter medication, despite our natural abhorrence and abhorrence for it. Abū Hāšim may talk his way out of this objection by saying that the desire for mud and cheese is not a correct desire (šahwa ṣādiqa), but rather a false desire (šahwa kāḏīqa).\textsuperscript{184} [He may also argue that] medications neither yield an advantageous effect nor do they cause the body’s recovery, but that they actually harm us and bring about feebleness and loss of weight whereby the body recovers owing

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180. See n. 171 above and the opening chapter of the section on pleasures and pains in Šarḥ al-Taḏkira (n. 170 above). My edition and translation of this chapter is appended to this article.
181. Some of these arguments are brought up in Rāzī’s writings, others go back to the Aristotelian critique of the replenishment model of pleasure, first and foremost in books 7 and 10 of the Nicomachean Ethics (NE 7.14, 1154a8–1155b10; 10.3, 1173b20–30). Once again, the earliest Arabic translation of Nemesius’s On the Nature of Man (see nn. 99, 152 and 165 above) should be mentioned as an important witness for the early Arabic reception of this material, a fact which is unaccounted for in recent survey articles on the Arabic reception of the Nicomachean Ethics: A. Akasoy, ‘The Arabic and Islamic reception of the Nicomachean Ethics’, in The Reception of Aristotle’s Ethics, ed. J. Miller, Cambridge, 2012, pp. 85–106; J. Hayes, ‘The Arabic reception of the Nicomachean Ethics’, in Aristotle and the Arabic tradition, ed. A. Alwishah, J. Hayes, Cambridge, 2015, pp. 200–213.
184. The Baṣrī Muṭṭalīzah considers desire (šahwa) to be good irrespective of the moral value of what is desired (‘Abd al-Ǧabbār, Muṣāfī (n. 17 above), X1, p.150: inna šahwata hasana wa-in taṣlaqlat bi-l-qaḥīb, while the Baghdādī Muṭṭalīzah considers the moral value of desire to be equivalent with the moral value of what is desired (Abū Rašīd al-Nisābūrī, al-Masāʾil fī l-takīf baṣira l-Baṣrīyīn wa-l-Baḍādīyīn, ed. M. Ziyāda and R. al-Sayyid, Ṭarābulus, 1979, pp. 368 f. : al-ṣāḥib min maṣḥūb al-Baḍādīyīn anna ʿānā l-qaḥīb takīmū ṣaḥīḥatīn).
to the wholesome and salubrious food we ingest thereafter. However, this line of reasoning cannot be sustained, for the body only grows and diminishes as a result of nourishment and medication, because God lets things take their customary course.\(^\text{185}\)

The distinction made in this passage between a correct/true desire (šahwa ṣādiqra) and a false/deceptive desire (šahwa kāḍībra) is well-known from the medical\(^\text{186}\) and philosophical literature. It recalls Plato’s distinction between true and various types of false and untrue pleasures or pains (ἀληθεῖς/ψευδεῖς ἡδοναὶ ἢ λύπαι)\(^\text{143}\) as well as Aristotle’s conception of the object of desire as the ‘apparent good’ (τὸ φαινόμενον ἄγαθον)\(^\text{188}\) and other attempts to capture the relation between physical and mental soundness, desire and the correct or incorrect perception of values.\(^\text{189}\)

In Ibn Mattawayh’s Ṭaḏkira, Abū Hāšim’s contention that “desire is inextricably linked with things that are beneficial to the body of the one who desires” is defended against Ibn ‘Ayyāš’s objections by claiming that its validity is restricted to the healthy body alone. The association of correct desire with physical and mental health and of false desire with a defective physical and mental constitution is reminiscent of Aristotle’s view that “things that are in truth wholesome are wholesome for bodies which are in good condition, while for those that are diseased other things are wholesome.”\(^\text{190}\) While every desire is for something that appears good,
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pleasant or advantageous to the one who desires it, the value judgement is only accurate (i.e. identical with what is truly good or pleasant), if the one who desires is in good health. Only healthy animals will get what is actually good for them by going for what they desire.

The afore-discussed passages well exemplify the nature of the mutakallimūn’s engagement with terms, arguments and concepts derived from the medico-philosophical tradition. They clearly do not suggest that kalām scholars were thoroughly acquainted with the medical and philosophical literature. Yet, even if their engagement with this literature was limited to isolated ideas which had been extracted from their medico-philosophical context and condensed into memorable phrases and accessible watchwords, it left its distinctive marks and scars in school-internal debates and had a significant impact on systematic expositions of kalām doctrines.

A new phase in the relationship between kalām and the medico-philosophical tradition is generally associated with what has been labelled ‘the Avicennian pandemic’, namely the rapid spread and contagious appeal of Avicennian thought during the sixth/twelfth and seventh/thirteenth centuries. Among proponents of the various kalām schools the emergence of this new intellectual trend elicited a wide spectrum of reactions ranging from outright hostility over well-measured criticism to fervent embracement of Avicenna’s works and philosophical system. With the reform of the madrasa curricula over the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries under the Seljuqs and their Zanǧid and Ayyūbid heirs, selected components of the Avicennian system found their way into the educational programme at institutions of legal and theological learning. From it emerged a new class of philosophically and scientifically learned jurists and mutakallimūn who spawned the development of a novel philosophic-theological discourse and introduced a new type of compositional templates.

that are pleasant to those whose constitution is defective [...] and things which in the eyes of a sick person are wholesome, sweet or bitter, actually are so; Eudemian Ethics 7.2, 1235b30–1236a6: ‘What is advantageous to a body in health is absolutely good [or pleasant] for a body, but not what is good for a sick body, such as drugs and the knife. Similarly, things absolutely pleasant to a body are those pleasant to a healthy and unaffected body’. For a thorough discussion of these passages see Moss, Aristotle on the Apparent Good (n. 188 above), pp. 106–10; 158–61 and Pearson, Aristotle on Desire (n. 152 above), pp. 77, 81 f.


194. The most influential expression of this new development were the works of Fāhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210) and his students.
Medicine and the medical oeuvre of Avicenna were an integral part of the Avicennian pandemic. The sources refer to a good number of philosopher-theologians who over the course of the twelfth century studied introductory texts to medicine, first and foremost Avicenna’s *Canon of Medicine* (al-Qānūn fī l-ṭibb) and its theoretical part, the *Generalities* (al-Kullīyāt), together with a growing body of appendant glosses, epitomes, handbooks, and commentaries. In northern Iran it was Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Īlāqī (d. 1141), a third-generation student of Avicenna, who played a pivotal role in promoting the proliferation of the Avicennian legacy among philosopher-theologians. 195 His epitome of the *Generalities* (later known as al-Fuṣūl al-Īlāqīya) became very popular with students of Islamic law and theology and was instrumental to the transmission of the *Qānūn* into Zanjīd and Ayyūbid Syria and Egypt. 196 Other philosopher-theologians studied the *Qānūn* and its growing satellite literature in Baghdad under the instruction of Amīn al-Dawla Abū l-Ḥasan Ṣāʿid ibn Hibatillāh ibn al-Tilmīḏ (d. 1165), the ‘Nestorian’ chief physician of the ‘ʿAdudī hospital in Baghdad. 197

It will be the task of future research to determine the contribution of Avicenna’s medical works (particularly the *Generalities* of the *Canon*) to the transformation of *kalām* theology in the post-classical period. 198 Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that the changing relationship between *kalām* and the medical tradition represents a significant feature of this transformational development.

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198. The interesting case of Ibn Gaylān al-Balḥī’s critical gloss on the *Book of Simple Drugs* of the *Qānūn* exemplifies how a post-Gazālian theologian made use of his familiarity with the *Qānūn* to demonstrate the unreliability of Avicenna’s works by pointing to a long list of alleged inconsistencies, discrepancies, and contradictions; see Shihadeh, ‘A Post-Ghazālian Critic of Avicenna’ (n. 192 above).
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APPENDIX

The following pages contain an edition and translation of two chapters from Abū Ġaʿfar Muhammad ibn ʿAlī Mazdak’s commentary (Šarḥ) on Ibn Mattawayh’s K. al-Taḍkira fī aḥkām al-ğawāhir wa-l-aʿrād. The first is the opening chapter of the section on pleasures and pains (al-qawl fī l-ālām wa-l-laḍḍān), the second is taken from the section on desire and aversion (al-qawl fī l-sahwa wa-l-nifār). A full presentation of these chapters will provide the context for some of the issues broached in the article and clarify lines of reasoning and patterns of arguments. It will also serve to underscore the necessity of studying the Taḍkira in conjunction with its earliest commentary.

199. Šarḥ al-Taḍkira (n. 170 above), pp. 95–8 (fols 48r–49v), which comments on Taḍkira (n. 131 above), pp. 163–7.
200. Šarḥ al-Taḍkira (n. 170 above), pp. 228 f. (fols 114v–115r), which comments on Taḍkira (n. 131 above), pp. 421 f.
القول في الألم واللذة: 

ثم قال، رحمه الله: «الألم هو معنى يحدث في الحيّ منا عند التقطيع، ويتعلق به النفائر»، إلى آخره. 

قال أبٍ إسحٰق بن عيّاش، رحمه الله: «الألم هو المعنى الذي يحدث عند التقطيع على وجه يتعلق به النفار، ولا شبهة في ثبوت معنى مدرك. وإنما يقع الكلام في إثباته مفصلاً. والحال في اللذة تجري هذا المجرى، فإنها المعنى الذي يحدث عند اللذة على وجه يتعلق بها الشهوة. فإن النوع واحد لا اختلاف فيها، وإنما تفرق الحال: الحب، أن كان معنى معروف، ولم يقع فيه النفار. وقد أثبتنا أنهان: ألم على هذا الحدّ نفاه شيخنا أبٍ إسحٰق بن عيّاش، رحمه الله، فلم يجعل الألم غير خروج الحيّ عن الاعتلال؟ وكذلك فلم يجعل اللذة أكثر من حصول الاعتلال؟ زوال أجزاء كانت بمثلة تقبل بحمله. فاداً هذا القول إلى نفي الفثار، ويلزم منه الشهوة، إذا جعلنا لذّةً على بعض الوجوه. والألم أنه راحة من مُلِذّة وخروج منه، كما قاله في الألم.» 

وأما ابن زكريا فقد جعل اللذة راحة من مؤلم، ويجبر على هذه القاعدة أن يقول في اللذة: راحة من مُلِذّة وخروج منه، كما قاله في الألم.
الأكوان التي هي التفرقة. فهذه الأمور يجوز أن تكون الحال فيه. فإذا بطل أن يكون الذي يدركه
شيئًا من هذه الأمور، لم يبق بعد ذلك إلا أن يكون الذي يدركه المضروب معنى على جهة يعبر عنه
بالألّم.

فإن قيل: لم لا يجوز أن يكون الألم الذي يدركه إنما هو الخشبة التي بها حصل الضرب؟
قيل له: لأننا علم أن الخشبة تزايده وتفاقه وحاله في التالى وقد زايده الخشبة كحاله في التالى
ولا زايده. ولو كان المراجع بما يدركه إلى تلك الخشبة، لوجب أن يزول تألهه بمزايلة الخشبة عنه، وقد
عرفنا خلافه. فلذا ذلك على المراجع بما يدركه إلى أمر زائد على تلك الخشبة.

فإن قيل: لم لا يجوز أن يكون المدرَك الذي يدركه المرجع به إلى التأليف الذي هو الصيحة؟
قيل له: لأن التأليف غير مدرَك على ما نبيته في باب التأليف. وإذا كان ذلك، وكان الألم مدرَكًا، فما
يذكر يجب أن يكون غير الذي لا يدرك. وبعد: فإن ذلك التأليف الذي قوله يبطل بالمرافقة وحاله
في الألزم كما كانت، ولو كان تأله لمكن ذلك التأليف، لكن يجب أن يزول ما يدركه لزوال
التأليف، وقد عرفنا خلافه.

فإن قيل: لم لا يجوز أن يكون المرجع به إلى ما فيه من التفرق؟
قيل له: لأن حالة في التلقى قيل الضرب كحاله بعد، ولو كان المرجع بما يدركه إلى التلقى الذي فيه،
لكن يجب أن يقف إدراكه وتائهه على الضرب، لأن الذي له وأته بحلّ حاصل في الحالين
جميعًا.

فإن قيل: لم لا يجوز أن يكون المرجع بذلك إلى الأكوان التي هي التفرق؟
قيل له: لأنها غير مدرَكة ومعموم أنه يدرك شيئًا، فلا يجوز أن يكون المرجع بما يدركه إلى ما
يستحلل إدراكه، وينبج أن يرجع ذلك إلى أمر آخر وراء الكون. وبعد، لو كان الألم هو الكون،
لوجب في الواحد منه، إذا انطلق من جهة إلى جهة، أن يزول بما يحدث فيه من الأكوان، وقد عرفنا
خلافه. فإذا بطل أن يكون الألم راجعا إلى شيءًا من هذه الوجه، لم يبق بعد ذلك إلا أنه معنى على
جهة.

[تنز: ١٤٧] العمرة في إثبات اللذة يجري على هذه الطرقية، لأن الحال لجرينِّية. بعد لذا
وبدكرها. فإذا لم يجز أن يكون المرجع بها إلى الاستنتاج الذي يفعله ولا إلى ما يفعله من الأكوان
 التي هي التفرقة، وينبج أن يكون راجعا إلى معنى مدرَك، وهو الذي يعبر عنه بالألزم. فصخ بهذه
الجملة إثبات الألم على التفصيل.

[تنز: ١٤٨] ثم وحما من جنس واحد لا اختلاف بينهما. وإنما قلنا ذلك، لأنهما مدرَكان بحلّ
الحياة، وذلك ينبع عن الاشتركهما في أحسن أوصافهما، فيجب تعاملهما لاشتركهما في الصفة
الخاصة. وإنما تختلف العبارة بحسب ما يقرن بها من المعاني، فإذا أقرنت به الفن، فنمي (ألّم)،

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وإذا اقتربت به الشهوة، سمي بالذّة، وعلى هذه الطريقة [٨٤٨] لو وجد هذا المعنى ولم تتقرر به11 شهوة ولا نفرة، لم يكن يسمى بالذّة، ولا بالأُمّاء. فصح بهذه الجملة أنه ليس بالذّة ولا لذّة لنا، وإنما هو ألم وذلة لما يكون به ونضّم إليه من الشهوة والنفرة. وهذا هو قول شيخنا أبي الفسم12، رحمه الله، حيث قال «إن اللذة ليست بمعنى»، فإنه لا يتعلم ليس بميمان السَّاْيَا، وإنما أراد به أنه ليس بمعنى غير ما ذكره فيه فيكون ألمًا وغير ما نذكره فيه فيكون لذّة بحسب ما يقتضيه بما يتفرّع به وينضاف إليه من الشهوة والنفرة، وهذه الجملة التي قد تقررها تقديم أن هذا المعنى لا يجوز أن يسمى بالذّة، ولا ألمًا، وهو معلوم، ولا أن يوصف بذلك، لأن وصفه بذلك يقتضي الوجود من طريق المعنى، فتستبدل بسمته بالذّة، والأُمّاء، لأن مقارنة الشيء لغيره تتفرّع على الوجود وترتّب على الحصول، وهذا لا يتصور في حال العدم، فلا يجوز إجراء هذه الوصفيان عليه وهو معروف، وإنما يجوز إجراهما من الأساسي على المعادنات ما لا يقتضي فيها الوجود ولا يقيد فيها الحصول، لا لفظًا ولا معنى.

فثبت بهذه الجملة فساد ما ذهب إليه شيخنا أبو سحق من تفتي هذا المعنى.

11 [١٠٥ - ١١٣.٨] وهذا ما يدل على فساد ما ذكره محمد بن زكريا الرزاز حيث جعل اللذة راحة من مول وخروجًا عنه وأنه بمجلة طرح تقل، فهو أن الواحد منا قد يلتذ بالذّة صوت أو صورة ولم يكن من قبل متأسماً. 12 كيف يقال إن لذة راحة من مول وخروج عنه أن لا يخطر به ذلك بالبال فضلاً عن أن يكون متأسماً؟ فبذلك قول من يعلم اللذة راحة من مول ووجب أن تكون الظلم أُمّاء زائدًا عليها.

12 ووجه آخر، وهو أن الواحد منا قد يلتذ بالذّة بعض الأشخاص ومشاهدته، ولا يلحقه بفقده ألم، فلا يمكن أن يقال والحال هذه إن اللذة خروج من مول، إذ لو كان كذلك، كان يجب إذا فذقه أن يطول، وقد عرفنا خلاله.

13 ووجه آخر: وهو أن اللذة، لو كانت راحة من مول، لم يكن الواحد منا يختار طعامًا على طعام ولا مشروباً على مشروب ولا متكوشة على متكوشة؛ إذ ليس الغرض إلا إزالة الجوع والشيق، وكان يجب أن يحل بالذّة صلة على صلة، فلم يعرفه أن يكون ن Thị كنان ونبيًا منكوشة كانت، فقد بين:% من المجلة المقرئ في أنه، لما كان الغرض إزالة الجوع، لم يتحطر صلة على صلة، فلم يعرفه أن يكون ناويًا دون ماكول، دلًا ذلك على أن اللذة أمر آخر وراء الخروج من مول بنلتذ له وليكنه

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بوقوع الأظهر، وفي علمنا بأن العقلاً كافأ يُ습ّسون بعقولهم التداوي بالأدوية الكريهة لينتذوا من بعد بينت أن الحال يدخلن من بحى نفس، ثم يتألموا. وفي علمنا أن عقولهم كافية يُспешون بعقولهم التداوي بالأدوية الكريهة التي تنفر عنها الطبعاء، ودلالة على أن هاها مبني هذة مطلوبة غير الخروج من مولم. ولا يمكن أن يقال: مسحل من هذل الاصبع كم يحسن منهم تحمل المشاق وتكدّف الشداد بالسفر طلباً للأرياح والمنافع؟، وذلك لا يتوقف: إنه إلّا يحسن منهم ذلك، لأنهم يرجون بذلك منافع تصل إليهم وعودان تعود عليهم ولذات تحصل لديهم، ولو لم يكن في ذلك إلا الخروج من المولم كما تقول، لكنّا نقضي ببعض ذلك أيضاً كما نقضي بحكم الأول، لو كان الأمر فيه على ما نزعمه، لأنه والحال على ما وصفت لا يكون في معالجة من ضعفت شهوده إلا التوصل إلى الخروج من مولم. فكان يجب أن يقيق جرح النفس لأسواها وكسر اليدين والرجلين لجرهما، وقد عرفنا خلاف ذلك. فوجب أن يرجم في الحال منا إلى اللذة المجيدة، غير ما قاله.


[5] وجه آخر: وهو أن الإدراك يفصل بين الإدخال القريئة وبين الطعوم الشهية وبين القاء الأفعال الكتابية عن الأشهر، ولأنا كانت اللذة راحة من مولم، لاستحالة وقوع هذا الفصل، وثبوت هذا التمييز. وفي علمنا بوقوع

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الفضل بين الموضعين: ما بَلَد على أن اللَّذة لا تكون خروجًا من مؤول وراحة عنه.
فَهَذَى الوجه كلها تدل على بطانة قول ابن زكريا.
[15 - 165:14] فَأَنَّا شَهِيَةُ الشَّيْخِ أَبِي إِسْحَاقٍ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَاللَّذةَ، وَهَيْهَا ذِي مَهْمَى بِنُؤُورَةٍ مِنْ فِئَةِ الأَمَامِ وَاللَّذةَ،
هَيْهَا ذِي مَهْمَى بِنُؤُورَةٍ مِنْ فِئَةِ الأَمَامِ وَاللَّذةَ.
علَمْنا بتساوي حاله في إدراك الألم دلالة على أن لا معنى ها هنا يبرَع عنه ٢٨ بالألم زائد على زوال

المصاطب والبطلان الاعتدال.

١٦ - تذذ٢٩ - وهذا شيء أنشته ٢٩ من كلام شيخنا أبي هاشم، رحمه الله، فإنَّه حيث دلَّ على

أن الألم معنى واثبة وجعه متولدًا عن الكون، قال نفسه فقال: "لو كان الألم متولدًا عن الكون، لما

جاء أن تتساوي حال الوقد في إدراك الألم، إذا غزى في بنده قادرون أحدما أشبَّه قوة من الآخر،

بل كان يجب أن يكون تألهه بغز الأقوى وأقوى أشد من تأله بغير الأضعاف الأهون، لأن ما

يفعله الأقوى من الأكوان أكثر مما يفعله الأضعف.

١٧ - ثم أجاب عن ذلك بأن قال: "إنا ما تتساوَى ٣٠ حاله في التأمل عن الغرزين، لأن الكون يولد الألم

بطرق، وهو أندفع الصحة. فإذا كان الغزو واحدًا في الموضعين، اندفع الصحة أيضًا عن

الموضوعين لا بد من أن يكون على حد واحده. وإذا كان كذلك، فتساوى اندفع الصحة عن بذمه

تتساوي حاله في إدراك الألم والتائلم، وذلك لأن ما يكون من فعل الأقوى من الأكوان لا يجمع كلها

على التولد، بل تولد بعضًا دون بعض على قدر اندفع الصحة، وهذا لا يعمد عليه، إذ ليس بعض

تلك الأكوان بالتولد أولى من البعض.

١٨ - تذذ٢٠ - ولما رأى أبو اسحق بن عياش ضعف هذا الجواب وعلم أنه لا يمكن أن يقال

إِن بعض ما يفعله الأقوى من الأكوان يولد الألم دون البعض، إذ لا اختصاص له، ٣١ جعل ذلك شبهًا

في نفي الألم.

١٩ - تذذ٢٠ - والذي يمكن أن يجاب به عما قاله هو أن الدلالة قد دلت على ثبوت الألم

معني، وما أوردته أمر محتال جوز أن يكون الأمر فيه على ما قره ووجز أن يكون يأتيه.

يجوز أن يترك ما لا يصح دخول الاحتمال فيه لما صد في دخول الاحتمال، بل يجب أن يترك ما

يدخله الاحتمال ويسع في التأويل لمكان ما لا يسوع فيه الاحتمال من الدلالة العلمية. فإن أمكنا أن

نبين plaque تحصل بها الموافقة بينه وبين ما هو المحتال في ذلك، وإذا لا يطوف أن نتفوق فيه ولم نفعل

علما يدخله الاحتمال إلى ما هو بعرض الاحتمال وصدد. وأصبر ذلك رمز وامتدت فيه الشبه

التي تورد عليه في نفي الأمور وما وردًا، لأنك نقول هناك أنها معرضة للاحتمال، ولدالة ابتداء

الجزء ونفي الطفر بعده الاحتمال، فلا يجوز العدول عنها، وهو ما هو بعرض الاحتمال وصدد.

ويعرض التأويل، بل إن عرفنا الاحتمال عنها، فإن لم نعرف، نقولنا ما امتدت به أو وضعة

البرهان ودل على البيان. هذه الطريقة هي التي يمكن الاعتدال عليها في الجواب عن هذا السؤال.

٢٠ - تذذ١٦٦ - وقد قيل في الجواب عن ذلك أن تساوي ألم إنما هو تساوي ما يفعله من

الأكوان، وذلك لأن أخذهما، وإن كان أقوى من الآخر، فإن أحدهما يفعل الكون في أقل قليل

٢٨ عنها خ

٢٩ استفاغ خ

٣٠ تساوي خ

٣١ اختصاص خ
الأوقات، والآخر يفعله في أزيد من تلك الأوقات. وهذا لا ينطوي لأن بالضرورة يقول: ليس يجب أن تتساوي حال ما يفعله أيها، حتى لا يقع التقابل بين فعلهما أبدا أصالة. فإنهم، وإن كان ذلك في الغالب، كان لا يمتع في بعض الأوقات أن ينطوي ما يفعله الأقوى على ما يفعله الأضعف، فتتراوي حاله في التأمل عن أحد الغزور دون الآخر.

وقد قيل أيضاً إنّ لا يُمكن من القطب على أن一组 الغرز واحد، كيف يدعي ذلك؟ وهذا لا يصح أيضاً لأنه، رحمه الله، لم يلزم ذلك في الغرز وإنما الزم ذلك في الأركان وما يرجع إلى كثرة من العلم بقدر الغرز وك ويمته لا يثور في كلمه ولا يعسوض من الزمان.

[٢١ - تذ ١٢٦:١٠١] وقد قيل أيضاً في الجواب عنه: إنه إذا تساويُّ حاله مع ما يفعله الشيء في وقته مع ما يفعله القوي في باب التأمل، لأن الله تعالى يفعل فيه عداد الضرع الشعوبي فيه أبداً تتساوي الألام التي يفعلها. القادر الأقوى، فيه تألَّمه بغزور كل واحد منها علّى سواء لهذه الأكون.

وهذا أيضاً فيه نظر، وألا قبل كان الأمر في ذلك على ما قاله، لأن حصول تلك الألام على عقلواً ما يفعله الأقوى في بعض الأركان، فلسنا بحاجة في بعض الأوقات من غزر الأضعف لأنه دون ما يجد منها غرز الأقوى. لأن هذا هو الواجب فيما يكون وقعة على سبيل العادة في علمنا بباستمرار حاله في تأمله بغيره في ذلك ما تزال في عقله، وإن ما كان يحسن من ذلك ذكرناها.

[٢٢] شبهة أخرى في نفي هذا المعنى في وصوله، وهو أنه، لو كان الأركان معنىً زاداً على زوال الاعتدال يحصل عند التطبيع، لصح تعلق النفار به ولسنا تعلق الشهوة أيضًا به بدلاً من النفار. ولو كان ذلك، لكنا في الواحد ما أن يشتهي فئ الأحوال، وهذا محال، وإنما إنه كونه فناً، وهو الفرد بكون الأركان معنىً واحداً عند التطبيع.

[٢٣ - تذ ١٢٦:١٠٥] والجواب أن هذا ليس، وذلك لأن القطب لا تتعلق به الشهوة أصلاً. وإنما علق الشهوة به هو المعنى الحاصل عند التطبيع، وهذا المعنى يحصل النفار والفار به على سواء لا يختلف، ولكن الانتقاد به لا يحصل واخفاءة في ذلك الله المعطية باتخاذ تلك البصيرة الرموزية في يصر ذلك كالانتقاد بالخصم المجموع، فلمه أنه لا يحصل هناك الانتقاد بالخصم لامرأجناه من المآكل الذي يففيه ضرره على نفع الخصو، كذلك لا يحصل الانتقاد هاهنا ينطبق الأحوال، لأن الضرر الذي يخلقه يففيه على ذكر تلك المعنى. وعلى هذه الطريقة فلداً لا يكده يففي وقعت الانتقاد بالخصم للكر، لأن الله الذي تحصل عنة تصير

32 بيساري خ
33 يفيف خ
34 يففي
35 يففي
معلومة فيما يتعلق بمصرر.

[۲۷] وعند هذه الجملة يبطل قول من نصر مذهبه وينصر طريقته من أنّه، لو كان الألم معنىًّاً زادًا على ما ذكرنا، نصب الواحد من أن يتصول إلى تحصيل جرب لتحصيل للنذة بحجة، لأنّ الألم المعنى للحكاية يوفي على أنه بذلك المعنى، قصير بمنزلة من يهدى على الشوك ليتنزه بالحفرة التي وراءها، كما أن هذا لا يحسن، فكذلك ما قوله.

[۲۷ - ۲۷] شبهة أخرى: وهو أنّه، لو كان هاهنا معنىً يولده الكون على ما تقولونه، لو جرب في الجرح، إذا انتمل، أن يوجد الواحد من الألم بعد الاندماج كما كان بعد قب الاندماج، لأن ذلك الكون الذي يولده حاصل والمحل محتمل ولا تموت، فلمّا عرفنا خلاف ذلك، كان العلم به دالّة على أنّه لا معنى هاهنا يولده الكون يعير عن بالألم.

[۲۸ - ۲۸] والجواب عن ذلك أن هذا لا يصح، وذلك لأن الكون، وإن كان يولده الألم، فإنما يولد بشرط انتقاء الصخة، فإذا انتمل الجرح، لا يوجد شرط توليده، هو وانتقاء الصخة، فلا يجب أن يولد أنهما لا محالة والحال هذه وإن كان هو حافزاً في الوقت، فمن أن الشرط، لو كان حافزاً، لكن لا يحصل هذا المعنى متولىًة عن؟ فبطل ما اعتمدته على هذا الجواب.

[۲۹] وجواب آخر وهو أن نقول: إنّ الجرح، إذا انتمل، كان تبرعًا فيه، فحرية الدم فيه، انفجاره يولد الألم، وإذا انتمل الجرح، فلا انفجار للدم فيه حتى تولّد جريته الألم فيه، فلهذا لم يحصل الألم عند الاندماج، وإن كان يحصل قبله. وإذا كان كذلك، لم يجب فيما ذكره أن يكون دالّةً على نفسي الألم.

[۲۹ - ۲۹] شبهة أخرى وتجربتها، وهو أن الأنم، لو كان معنىً، حاصلًا، لما جاز أن تنفعح حاله يغتصب المحال على ما ثبت في الحالة، ألا ترى أنها، إذا أظهرت في موضع محل، أظهرت في كله محل وموضع ولم تنفعح حاله بالاختلاف محاله، ولو كان الأنم معنىً، كما أن الحالة معيّن، لكن يجب أن تكون الحال فيه كالحال فيها حتى لا تنفعح الحال بالاختلاف محالها، فكان يجب أن يتلّغ به في كلّ موضع في موضع فيه أن يجعل في محل فكره كله مرة ويوجب في محل آخر فيكون لذلاًًاً، فلما كان الحال عندك بخلاف هذا، فيلزم أن تفوه هذا المعنى.

[۳۰ - ۳۰] والجواب أن هذا لا يصح، لأن اختلاف الحال في اللمم والإعتداناً بهذا المعنى

[۳۰ - ۳۰] ما هو تقارب الشهوة والفقرة به، فإذًا ابنه في موطن ونحو النفور، لتحصيل النفور، لا يمنع اختلاف الشهوة والنفور بحصبة اختلاف المواضع المبركة، فإذًا فلما تعلم أن سواد الحدقة يستحمك وينصرع، والتقليه، لو حصل في الوجه، لم يستحسن مع أن الجنس واحد، لفهذا لا يمنع في اللذة، والذن أن يكون من جنس واحد ومع ذلك يختلف في

[۳۰ - ۳۰] إدراكه بحصبة الابناء الشهوة والنفور به.

[۳۱] وبعد، فاليباس الخالص في الأسنان يستنب إلى البطابع وتميل إليه النفس، ومثله، لو كان في

[۳۱] الوجه والبدن، لتحصيل النفس، ويترف عن الطبع اببج من الجنس واحد، إذا لم يمنع مثله في مسألتنا

أن يميل إليه الطبع تارأً وينفر عنه أخري بحسب ما يقرر به ويتضافيف إليه.

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فإن وارد في كل ما يذكر فلا لم يعرف حكم الأخذ عند الإدراك، فإن ذلك على أن لا معنى
هناك تتعلق الشهوة والفترة به سواء ما ذكرنها.

[٣٤ - تذ ١٨١٨:٨]: الجواب عن ذلك: إن مجاب إلى ما سألف وسليم ما ذكرت، وذلك لأن الوارد
منا عندما يدركه يعرف على ما هو عليه في ذاته على الجملة، كما أنه، إذ أدرك اللون في المكان،
عرف ما هو عليه في ذاته على الجملة، ومنى آراد تفصيل العلم بما هو عليه في ذاته، كان من حقه
أن يرجع إلى طريقه، يقول: إن هذا المعنى أدركه في محل الحياة بمحjsx الحياة، فيجب أن يكون
مختصًا بصفة لكونه عليها يثبت هذا الحكم فيه وصحة التألم لهافتر الننقار به، وصحة التندم
لافتران الشهوة به.

فصل

قال أبو إسحق، رحمه الله: اختر هذا الفصل، وشرح به بين من ذهب أبا هاشم في الشهوة.
وجملة الفصل في ذلك أن الشيخ أبا هاشم كان يقول: إن شهوة إنما تتعلق بما يصح عليه بدن
المشتكي، ويزداد بناتاه، وينتصب فيه. وجعل هذا طريقًا إلى المنع من جوز الشهوة على الله
عالي وقال: لو جازت الشهوة عليه، تعالى، لصح عليه الزيادة والنقصان، لأن ذلك من حكم
الشهوة، فإنها تتعلق بما يصح عليه بدن المشتكي، فزداد بناتاه، وينتصب فيه.

قال أبو إسحق، رحمه الله، اعتراض هذه الفقرة، وقال: إن الزيادة والنقصان في بدن
لحي عند الغذاء ليس بموجب عن تناظل ما يتناوله، لأن لا يقول بإيجاب للطبوع أو غيره لهذه
الأمور، وإنما هي من فعل الله تعالى بمجرى العادة، ولهذا7٣ يثبت صلاح البند بعد تفاصلي
الشهوة، وإذا كان كذلك، لم يصح الإعتماد على ما ذكره أبا هاشم من الدلالة على استحالة الشهوة
على الله تعالى، وأن يكون المعتمد من الدليل على ذلك ما تعلنه، إن شاء الله، في موضعه.

قال الشيخ أبو محمد: الذي يمكن أن نذكر في بيان مذهب الشيخ أبا هاشم هو
أن معنى هذه الفقرة لا تتعلق إلا بما7٣ إذا أدركنا مخلصًا عن غيره صلح7٣ الآداب به على
طريقة واحدة، ومنى بلان7٣ وهو غير مغمور بما سواء، اغتنينا به والتذكنا بإذراك، ومنى مصار
مغموراً بيدها تعلنت الشهوة بغير ما صار مغمورًا به، ولم تخرج من أن تكون متعلقة به، فإن

36 - فيينا (ظ)
37 - (يتقن من ج)
38 - صح (ظ)
39 - قان١٤:٦٠
الشهوة، إذا أطلق السكر به، فإن الشهوة متعلقة بالأجزاء التي فيها حصارًا؟ لكنها معمورة بغيرها، ولو أدركها مختالًا عنة، لم يخرج من صحة الإعتيادة إذا ذاالن.» حصل من ذلك أنه، إذا أدرك المشتهى على الحارة الذي اشتهاه، صح الإعتيادة وصلح عليه بنده المشتهي.

[38 - تذ ٤٧٢٤] والذي يدل على ذلك أن الشهوة لا بد من أن يكون لها حكم من الأحكام فيما برح إلى ذاتها، وتتميّز به عن غيرها، لأن هذا واجب في كل ذات تنبه!، إلا إذا لم تمكن الإشارية إلى حكم سوى ما ذكرناه من تعلقها بما يصلح عليه بنده المشتهي، وجب أن نجعل ذلك من حكمها الأخص الذي يتميّز به عن غيرها!، بين ما ذكرناه أن أحدنا على الحقية لا يشتهي إلا ما هذا سبيله من الأغذية الشهية الطبية، لأنه يغتنثي بها ويصلح جسمه عليها، ولا يشتهي المنظر والتراب وما شاكليهما، لأن ذلك لا حظ له فيما ذكرناه من الغذاء ولا يقع بها صلاح الدين.


[40] الجواب: لا يجب أن يشتهي شرب الأدوية الكريبة، لأنه لم يصلح عليها بنده بمجزدها، وعلى هذا فإذه، لم أدم شربها، ألقفه، ولم أدم منها!،! تناولها! (الأدوية الطبية)، لانتها بها وصل عليها جسمه، ثم وتأثير الدواء إنما هي في زوال رضويات عن الدن، وغيرها، فإذا زالت تلك الرضويات تكمل الانتفاخ بالاذية الطيقة الشهية، فبعد الأمر إلى أن صلاح بنده المشتهي إنما هو لتواصيه ما يشتهيه، ولكن هذا لا يتم إلا بزوال تلك الرضويات والمواد وغيرها عن بنده الحي، فلا يخرج ما ذكرناه من أن يكون أخص الأحكام.

[41 - تذ ٤٧٢٥] وعلى هذه الطريقة التي ذكرناها جعل الأطباء علامة الصحة وخروج المعلوم عن الغلة عبد الشهوة لطعام، وعلى ذلك لا يعلوم عن الأغذية الطيفة الموافقة إلى الأدوية المزعة الكريبة إلا عند الضرورة وشدّة الحاجة إليها.

[42] فأخى بهذه الجملة صحّة ما ذهب إليه الشيخ أبو هامد من أن الذي هو من حكم هذه الشهوة تعلقها بما يصلح عليه بنده المشتهي، فتسرّ الدلالة التي أذنها في المنع من قراء الشهوة على الناس!، فإذا تثبت أن ذلك من أخص الأحكام الشهوة، وجب أن يتناوله الذي هو ضم لها!، أن تعلي ما يفسد عليه جسم الحي ويتميّز اعتبارًا لذلك، بسرار ما يبرع طبع عنه من حظيه، فإنه إذا تتناولها!، قس عليه جسمه وانتفص على طريقة واحدة حتى يجب أن يكون تعلق النفار بما يفسد عليه بنده من أخص الأحكام النفار، كما أن تعلق الشهوة بما يصلح عليه بنده من أخص الأحكام.
الشهوة.

[۴۳ - تذ [۴۲۲:۱۵۵] قال: واعلم أن هذه الجملة التي ذكرناها لنصرة مذهب أبي هاشم يُعترض عليها بوجوه كثيرة، فقال: كيف يصح ما ذكرتم والشهوة قد تتعلق بما لا يصلح عليه بن المشتثى، ولذلك نحو شهوة المناظر وغيرها من الأدوات، فإن الشهوة التي تسمى عشقًا، تتعلق بما لا يصلح عليه بن المشتثى، وقد يكون من الأدوات الطبية المطرية ما إذا أدركه مع الشهوة، لم يصلح عليه بن المشتثى، وفقاً للنصوص الطبية المطرية ما إذا أدركه مع الشهوة.

قال: وإن شاء الله، فإن شهوة المريض تتعلق بما لا يصلح عليه جسمه، بل تتعلق بما إذا ناله، أضرّ به وفسد عليه جسمه، وكذلك فقد تقوى الشهوة للطين، ومن أدركه، لم يصلح عليه جسمه، بل انخفض بتناوله، وكذلك متشثى الجبن وما أشبه ذلك. فيجب أن تتعلق بما يُصرّب بالمتشثى وانخفض بتناوله.


وأما المريض، إذا اشتهى ما يضره، فشهوته كانت غير صادقة، وهو إنما يظن أن مشتهى وهو في الحقيقة غير مشتهى، ولذا، متى قدم إليه ما طال شهوته له، لم ينتظروه بل تكرهه حتى لو كانت شهوته صادقة، لصلح جسمه على ما يتناوله مما تعلقت الشهوة به، وعلى ذلك فلا يمكن الطبيب المريض من تناول ما تصدق [۴۶ - تذ [۴۲۳:۲۷] شهوته إليه، ولذا أن نقول في ذلك مثل ما قال في تناول الجبن والطين: إن فيما اشتهى أجزاء لم تتعلق شهوته بها، وإنما تعلقت شهوته بجزاء هي محمومة بما لم يشتته، حتى أنه لو أدركها مأخوذًا عن ما لم يشتهيه، لصلح عليها جسمه كما في تناول الجبن والطين.


Ibn Zakariyyā held the view that pleasure is ‘relief from a source of pain’ or ‘departing from a source of pain’. ... The claim that pleasure is ‘departing from a source of pain’ and that it is tantamount to throwing off a heavy burden from oneself is unsound in many respects:

1) We may take pleasure in perceiving a sound or an image straight away, without experiencing pain prior to this. How then is it possible to say that our pleasure is relief from a source of pain and departing from it, when such a thought would not even cross our mind, let alone that we would experience pain by it? The claim of those who say that pleasure is relief from a source of pain is therefore false. It is rather the case that pleasure has to be something in addition (amr zāʾīd) to what he mentioned.

2) We may also take pleasure in seeing a person and looking at someone without that his/her absence is connected with the experience of pain. This being the case, it is not possible to say that pleasure is ‘departing from a source of pain’, for if it were so, we would have to experience pain when that person is absent, but we know [from our own experience] that this is not the case.

3) If pleasure were relief from a source of pain, it would not be possible for us to choose one meal over another or one drink over another or one woman over another, considering that the goal [of the respective action] is confined to assuaging hunger or a sexual desire which is satisfied by any food or any woman. This is analogous to someone who, when feeling cold, does not choose one bonfire over another, when his [only] goal is to get rid of the coldness. However, the fact that we know that he has a predilection for one woman over another and chooses one food rather than another shows us that pleasure is something else, over and above the (amr un āḫar , warāʾ) ‘departing from a source of pain’, because of which and as a result of its perception one experiences pleasure.

4) If pleasure were relief from a source of pain, people endowed with reason would not accept to be treated with distasteful drugs in order to experience thereafter pleasure in ingesting meals. If it were so, they would be equivalent to someone who...
injures himself in order to then nurse himself. Our knowing, however, that any person endowed with reason rationally sanctions to be treated with distasteful drugs which [his] natural disposition finds repulsive, indicates that there exists an ontologically discrete entity (maʿnā), i.e. that there is a pleasure which is required (laḏḏa maṭlūba) over and above the ‘departing from a source of pain’. One cannot object [to this argument] by saying: ‘Does not this conduct [of ingesting distasteful drugs] behoove them in the same way as it is appropriate for them to put up with difficulties and to endure hardship when they travel in quest of profits and benefits?’, for we would then reply: ‘This [conduct] is only appropriate for them, because they anticipate that thereby they will yield benefits, obtain a return and experience pleasures which will be granted to them. If all this was confined to the ‘departing from a source of pain’, as you claim, we would condemn all this as inappropriate, and we would do likewise in the first case, if things were as you claimed them to be. For if things were as you have described them, the treatment of someone whose desire has become weak would merely be conducive to the ‘departing from a source of pain’. This would inevitably imply that it is [not] inappropriate to injure oneself in order to then nurse [one’s injury] and to break one’s hands and feet to then set the fracture. We know, however, that this is not the case and must therefore conclude that pleasure is an ontologically discrete entity and not what [al-Rāzī] claimed it to be.

5) We perceive pleasure in the same way as we perceive pain. If pleasure was the ‘departing from a source of pain’, then pain would have to be the ‘departing from a source of pleasure’. We know, however, that this is not the case. His view is therefore mistaken.

6) We perceive pleasure [in a way] that is distinct from the ‘departing from a source of pain’. Perception only relates to things which are stable and actual and hence cannot relate to their vanishing and termination.

7) If the attainment of something desired was identified with the elimination of pain and the departing from it, then desire would have to be pain. It is, however, well-known that this is not the case, since we never experience pain in desire. The view that pleasure is the ‘departing from a source of pain’ or ‘relief from it’ is therefore unsound.

8) Under the premises of [his definition of pleasure], it would not be possible that the pleasure we take in something grows, because the experience of pleasure in his view depends on privation (nafy). Given, however, that there can be no growth in privation, the experience of pleasure which is related to that privation cannot grow either. [His definition] would also imply that there is no growth in the experience of pain, because – if his conception of pain was analogous to his conception of pleasure – it [viz. pain] would [likewise] depend on privation inasmuch as it would be ‘the departing from a source of pleasure’. It would therefore not be possible for a pain we experience to grow. From our own experience we know, however, that our feeling of pleasure and pain may grow, which shows that both [pleasure and pain] relate to two ontologically discrete entities (maʿnayayn) rather than to what he propounded.

53. The negation is missing in Šarḥ al-Taḏkira (n. 170 in main article), p. 96, l. 18.
54. MS .asc (ibid., p. 96, l. 18) should be read as either li-aṣwihā or li-aṣāhā (‘in order to treat it’).
9) We make a distinction between the perception of pleasant tastes and the unloading of heavy burdens from our backs. If pleasure were relief from a source of pain, there would be no such difference and it would not be possible to maintain this distinction. Our knowing, however, that there is a difference between the two cases indicates that pleasure is not the departing and relief from a source of pain.

All these counter-arguments prove that Ibn Zakariyyā [al-Rāzī’s] understanding [of pain and pleasure] is unsound.

10) If he objected to [our line of argumentation] by saying that ‘it is well-known that when our thirst gets stronger because of our ever increasing desire for cold water, we experience the utmost pleasure when we finally drink it. The only reason for the fact that we take pleasure in drinking it lies in the pain caused by the intensity of the thirst. We thus experience pleasure, because we are delivered from that pain as soon as we drink the water.’

11) [Our] response would be [to say]: ‘What we desire in this situation is the cold water and the perception of it, not the deliverance from thirst or pain. His argument only supports his case, if what they claimed to be the source of pleasure is the only [source] possible. It is, however, not impossible to attribute the experience of pleasure to something other than what they maintained. Why then would it be necessary that we [only] desire in order to depart from a source of pain?’

12) Another objection of his was to say: ‘When we feel a sexual desire, we are in pain because of it. Then, as soon as we have intercourse and ejaculate in accordance with our desire, we take great pleasure in it. We thus have to infer that pleasure must be the departing and relief from a source of pain.’

13) [Our] response [to this objection] would be twofold: First, the experience of [sexual] pleasure is not a result of what he claimed it to be, but rather a result of the fact that we perceive with our own organ the organ of someone else. If the experience of [sexual] pleasure can be attributed to this, [al-Rāzī] cannot attribute it to what he claimed [to be the source of pleasure]. Secondly, we only experience pleasure, because we perceive with desire an entity (maʿnā, viz. an ontologically discrete entity) generated by the flow of the fluid and prompted (mutawallid) by the separation [of adjacent atoms] which happens as a result of the outpouring liquid. The pleasure we thereby experience is like the pleasure we experience when we scratch an itch. The experience of pleasure is thus the result of what we have just mentioned, not the result of a ‘departing from a source of pain’. The correctness of our view is confirmed by the fact that we feel during intercourse something like a tickle which only occurs as a result of compression and the collision of the fluids when they pour out in desire. This indicates [once more] that the pleasure we experience during intercourse is due to the perception of an ontologically discrete entity (maʿnā) which is prompted by the separation (tafrīq) [of adjacent atoms], not due to the departing from a source of pain.

14) With these summary explanations Ibn Zakariyyā [al-Rāzī]’s conception (maḏhab) [of pain and pleasure] has been proven invalid. We have thus achieved our goal of

55. See Plato, Philebus, 46 A 8–10 and 46 D 7–E 1.
ascertaining that pleasure is an ontologically discrete entity in its own right (al-laḍḍa ma‘inan ‘alā hidatin). The line of reasoning which shows that pain cannot be conceptualized as the departing from a source of pleasure runs analogously; indeed, the case of pain may even be clearer and more obvious, just as the cogency of [potential] counter-arguments would be even more questionable.

15) The objection raised by the venerable Abū Isḥāq [ibn ‘Ayyāš], may God have mercy upon him, to support his denial of pain and pleasure [qua ontologically discrete entities] runs as follows:56 If there were an ontologically discrete entity called ‘pain’ prompted by the accident of location (al-kawn)57 over and above the termination of [bodily] soundness and balance (gayr zawāl al-ṣiḥṭa wa-l-īṭidāl), it would entail that when two agents of unequal strength58 prick a needle in the body of a living being, the pain which [the latter] feels as a result of each of the two pinpricks will be of unequal [intensity]. It would entail that the pain he experiences owing to the prick of the stronger [person] would be more intense and greater than the pain he experiences owing to the prick of the weaker [person], /49/ because the stronger [person] would produce more pain-prompting accidents of location than the weaker [person]. Our knowing, however, that [the pricked body] perceives [in both cases] an equal amount of pain indicates that there exists no ontologically discrete entity called ‘pain’ which comes in addition to the termination of [bodily] soundness and balance.59

16) [Ibn ‘Ayyāš] derived this from [scil. read this into] a statement of our venerable Abū Hāšim,60 may God have mercy upon him, when [the latter] pointed out and ascertained that pain is an ontologically discrete entity and determined that it is prompted by the accident of location. He then marvelled and asked himself: if pain was prompted by the accident of location, it would not be possible for someone whose body is pricked by two agents of whom one is stronger than the other to perceive an equal intensity of pain. He would rather experience a more intense and greater pain upon the pinprick of the stronger and taller [person] than what he would experience

56. The parallel account in ʿAbd al-Ḡabbār’s Muʿajjī (n. 17 in main article), vol. 13, pp. 262–9 is summarized in Heemskerk, Suffering (n. 176 in main article), pp. 79–81.

57. This refers to the aforementioned definition of pain as ‘an ontologically discrete entity that is prompted by the separation of adjacent atoms’ (ma‘ānā mutawallid `an al-tafrīq). Kawn (‘accident of location’) is an umbrella term comprising the ‘coming-into-being’ (kawn faqat), ‘motion’ (ḥaraka), ‘rest’ (sukūn), ‘adjacency/tangency’ (muǧāwara), and ‘separation’ (mufāraqa/mubāʿada) of atoms (see Taḍkira [n. 131 in main article], p. 237). On the difficulty of translating kawn, pl. akwān (accident of location, accident of spatial relationship, accident of referential position, location vector) see Sabra, ‘Kalām Atomism’ (n. 13 in main article), pp. 209–15 who makes the akwān doctrine the cornerstone of what he calls ‘the Kalām ontology of events’; see, moreover, Heemskerk, Suffering (n. 176 in main article), pp. 74 f.

58. Lit. : ‘of whom one is stronger than the other’.

59. On ‘the problem of the two needle-pricks’ see Heemskerk, Suffering (n. 176 in main article), pp. 98–102; Langemann, ‘Islamic Atomism’ (n. 9 in main article), pp. 290 f. Langemann argues for a direct link between the Muʿtazili preoccupation with pinpricks in inquiries about the physiology of pain and Galen’s use of the Hippocratic ‘argument from pain’ (see in main article n. 34) – which also refers to the pricking of fine needles – in his refutation of Democritean and Epicurean atomism, even though the scope of the question is rather dissimilar in both cases.

60. I.e. Ibn ‘Ayyāš presented and justified his position as being based on an explicit statement by Abū Hāšim al-Ḡubbā‘i, the ultimate school authority of the Bahšamiya.

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upon the pinprick of the weaker and smaller [person] inasmuch as the stronger would generate more accidents of location than the weaker.

17) Abū Hāšim anticipated this potential objection [and] answered it as follows: The pain which [the body] experiences as a result of the two pinpricks is only equal, because the accident of location only prompts pain if it occurs in conjunction with the privation of [bodily] soundness. If the needle is in both cases the same and [bodily] soundness is in both cases absent, [the intensity of the pain] must inevitably be equal. Whenever this is the case, the equality with regard to the privation of [bodily] soundness corresponds to an equal perception and experience of pain. This is so, because not all accidents of location generated by the act of the stronger partake in the prompting [of pain]; some of them do prompt pain, while others do not, depending on the extent of the privation of [bodily] soundness and the kinetic impetus, since none of those accidents of location is more suitable to prompt [pain] than others.

18) When Abū Isḥāq ibn Ayyāš recognized the weakness of [Abū Hāšim’s] reply and realised that it is not possible to say that some accidents of location generated by the stronger [person] prompt pain, while others do not, inasmuch as they lack [a corresponding] specification, he turned this into an argument against the existence of pain [qua ontologically discrete entity].

19) A possible reply to his objection would be to say that evidence has already ascertained that pain is an ontologically discrete entity, whereas his statement is merely hypothetical (amr muḥtamaš), which means that the facts may either conform to what he hypothesized or not. It is, however, not admissible to abandon [certain, evidence-based knowledge] which is not subject to hypothesis in favour of [knowledge] which is purely hypothetical (fa-là yaṣṣṣu l-qatara mà là yasīhhu duḥūl al-iḥtimaš fīhi li-mā yasīhhu fīhi duḥūl al-iḥtimaš). Rather, one should abandon [knowledge] which is hypothetical and open to interpretation (mā yadhuluحū l-iḥtimaš wa-yasāṣṣu fīhi l-ta’wil) in favour of rational evidence (al-dalāla al-aqliya) which is not hypothetical. If we can find a reason (illa) owing to which hypothetical knowledge can be shown to be compatible with [certain, evidence-based knowledge], so be it. Otherwise, we ought to suspend judgement, but not abandon [certain knowledge] which is not subject to hypothesis in favour of [probable knowledge] which belongs to the realm of hypothesis. This is analogous to what we say with regard to the objections that have been raised against us with regard to the denial of the existence of atoms and the affirmation of the existence of leaps (nafy al-ǧuz’ wa-tubūt al-tafr[a]), because we also argued in that context that these objections are based on probable knowledge, whereas the evidence provided for the existence of atoms and the non-existence of leaps (dalāla at-tubūt al-ǧuz’ wa-nafy al-tafr[a]) is untainted by probable knowledge [viz. it is certain]. It is therefore not admissible to abandon [such certain knowledge] in favour of something which pertains to the realm of hypothetical

61. I.e. It is not admissible to abandon a doctrine which is based on certain knowledge in favour of another doctrine which is only based on probable knowledge; cf. van Ess, Erkenntnislehre (n. 23 in main article), pp. 237 f.
knowledge and is open to interpretation. If we know the answer to [one of these objections], we go by it, if not, we refrain from making a judgement and stick to what has been elucidated by proof and shown by evidence. In answering [the present question] we can rely on this procedure.

20) It has also been said in reply to this [objection] that the equal [intensity] of pain is a consequence of the equal number of accidents of location generated [by each of the two agents], save that one of them generates them in fewer instances of time, the other in more. This answer is not sound, for someone may object and argue: nothing implies that what the two agents generate will ever be equal, and it may even be incomparable in principle. Even if this were so in the majority of cases, it could not be excluded that the stronger [person] will at times generate more [accidents of location] than the weaker, so that the pain experienced through one of the two pinpricks will be greater than through the other.

21) It has also been argued that we cannot determine that the intensity of the pinprick is identical in both cases. But why should one make such a claim? It also misses the point, because [Abū Isḥāq ibn ʿAyyāš], may God have mercy upon him, does not make this claim with respect to the pinprick, but with respect to the accidents of location [generated by the pinprick] and their large or small number. Hence, the impossibility of knowing the intensity and magnitude of the pinprick does not pertain to what he says and does not disprove his argument.

22) It has, moreover, been argued in reply to [Ibn ʿAyyāš’s objection] that the intensity of pain which [the pricked body] experiences due to [the accidents of location] generated by both the weaker and the stronger [agent] is equal in both cases, because God produces [additional] units of pain [in the body], when it is pricked by the weaker person in order to make it equal to the pain generated by the stronger person and that [the body] therefore experiences the same intensity of pain resulting from the pinprick of either of the two agents, as we have mentioned.

23) This [argument] also warrants further examination, for even if things were as delineated, the occurrence of those [additional] units of pain in accordance with the accidents of location generated by the stronger person would still be within the bounds of God’s customary course of action (bi-maqrā l-ʿāda min fī ʿllī Llāh). This being the case [the occurrence of these additional units of pain] may also fall short [of the required number], so that the units of pain produced by the pinprick of the weaker [person] may at times fall short of the units of pain produced by the stronger [person], for this is a necessary implication of things which happen according to custom (li-anna hādā l-wādīb fī-mā yakānu waqaʿuḥū ʿalā sabīl al-ʿāda). Our knowing, however, that [the body’s] experience of pain resulting from the two pinpricks is invariably the same, indicates that the pinprick of the weaker agent is not bound up with the occurrence of [additional] units of pain produced by God. Otherwise, it would be inappropriate for
people endowed with reason to blame the weaker agent for the totality of those pains. We know, however, that the opposite is true.

24) Another objection [raised by Ibn ʿAyyāš] against the existence of [pain qua ontologically discrete entity] runs literally as follows: ‘If pain were an ontologically discrete entity above and beyond the termination of the balance [of the bodily mixture] (zawāl al-iʿtidāl) which occurs as a result of incision (taqṭīʿ), it would be no less conceivable for us to desire it than to have an aversion to it. If this were correct, it would be conceivable for us to link desire to the amputation of our limbs under certain circumstances. This is absurd, [and] whatever implicates an [absurd] position such as this, is untenable. This also applies to the claim that pain is an ontologically discrete entity which occurs as a result of incision.’

25) The reply [to this objection would be to say]: This is inconceivable, because desire is never linked to the amputation [of our limbs]. It is rather linked to an ontologically discrete entity which occurs as a result of incision. Both desire and aversion can be linked to this ontologically discrete entity in equal measure and indiscriminately. However, no benefit derives from [the amputation of our limbs], because the damage resulting from it would completely cancel out the expected pleasure (al-ladḍa al-matlūba) and [the pleasure] would be outweighed by [the damage inflicted upon the body]. This would be tantamount to taking pleasure in eating a poisoned sweet, for just as no benefit derives from the sweet because of the poison it contains and whose harm cancels out the benefit of the sweet, no benefit derives in the case at hand from the amputation of limbs, because the inflicted damage cancels out the pleasure one may take from that ontologically discrete entity. In accordance with this line of thought we said that it is hardly ever the case that one takes pleasure from scratching an itch, because the pleasure [which the scratching] affords will be outweighed by the damage it causes.

26) With this summary account the position of those who champion [Ibn ʿAyyāš’s] conception [of pleasure and pain] and follow his line of reasoning has been invalidated. I am referring to their claim that ‘if pain were an ontologically discrete entity above and beyond what we have mentioned, it would be conceivable for us to intentionally scar ourselves in order to then take pleasure in scratching [the scar]’. [This is not true], because the pain which follows upon the scratching cancels out the pleasure prompted by the ontologically discrete entity. It would be like someone who climbs over thorns in order to take a walk in the meadow which lies on the other side. [Ibn ʿAyyāš’s] conception [of pleasure and pain] is just as inadequate as this.

27) Another objection [by Ibn ʿAyyāš runs as follows]: ‘If there were an ontologically discrete entity prompted by the accident of location as you claim, we would have to feel the same [intensity of] pain from a wound before and after its cicatrization, because the accident of location which prompts [the alleged ontologically discrete entity of pain] is actual and [its] substrate in place and there is no impediment [that could prevent its occurrence]. We know, however, [from our own experience] that the opposite is the case. This knowledge indicates that there is no such thing as an ontologically discrete entity called ‘pain’ which is prompted by the accident of location.’
28) The reply to this [objection would be to say]: this is not correct, because the accident of location which prompts the pain does only do so on condition of the [concomitant] privation of health (intifāʾ al-ṣiḥḥa). As soon as the wound is cicatrizied, this condition, i.e. the privation of health, is not met any more. Hence, [the accident of location] does not prompt [the ontologically discrete entity of pain] anymore, despite the fact that it is actual in both moments. But why should it not be conceivable that the ontologically discrete entity [of pain] is prompted by [the accident of location] whenever the condition [of concomitant privation of health] is met? With this reply the basis of his [objection] has been invalidated.

28) An alternative reply [to the same objection] would be to say: as long as the wound is open, blood gushes out of it. It is the flow and the gushing out of the blood which prompt the pain. As soon as the wound is cicatrizied, the blood does not gush out any more so that its flow could prompt in it the [ontologically discrete entity of] pain. That is why there is no actual pain when [the wound] is cicatrizied, whereas it is actual before its cicatrization. This being the case, his argument does not provide compelling evidence against the existence of pain [qua ontologically discrete entity].

30) Another objection runs literally as follows: 'If pain were an ontologically discrete entity which comes about, its condition (ḥāluhū) could not change as a result of changing substrates in keeping with what has been established with regard to sweetness. Do you not recognize that if [sweetness] is desirable in one location and in one substrate, it will [likewise] be desirable in all substrates and all locations? Its condition does not change as a result of changing substrates. If pain were an ontologically discrete entity just like sweetness, its condition ought not to change as a result of changing substrates as is the case with the condition [of sweetness]. It would therefore be necessary that one experiences pain as a result of its presence in every location, and it would not be conceivable that it exists in one substrate as pain on one occasion, and then exists in another substrate as pleasure on another occasion. Given that according to your position the opposite is the case, [this argument] forces you to deny the existence of this ontologically discrete entity.'

31) The reply to this [objection would be to say]: This is incorrect, because the difference between the condition (ḥāl) of pain and the condition of pleasure in relation to [one and the same] ontologically discrete entity only exists by virtue of the desire and the aversion which are alternately linked to it. Thus, when someone perceives it in one location with desire, he takes pleasure in it, while when he perceives it in another location with aversion, he experiences pain because of it. That is why one can never rule out the possibility that desire will alternate with aversion as a result of changing locations of perception. You know, for instance, that the blackness of the pupil is considered appealing and beautiful. Yet, when the same [blackness] is found on a face, it is not considered beautiful, even though the type (ǧīn) [of blackness] is one and the same. Analogously, nothing precludes that pleasure and pain relate to the same type [of ontologically discrete entity] and that they alternate depending on whether the perception [of the ontologically discrete entity] is linked with desire or aversion.
32) Another [example would be] the pure whiteness of teeth which has a reassuring effect on [our] natural disposition (al-ṭibāʿ) and appeals to [us]. Yet, when the same [whiteness] is found on a face or on a body, the aesthetic instincts dislike it and the natural dispositions are repulsed by it, even though the type [of whiteness] is one and the same. Similarly, nothing precludes that our natural disposition (al-ṭabʿ) has affection towards someone of our species on one occasion, while having an aversion to him on another occasion depending on whether [desire or aversion] is linked with his preception and related to it.

33) If someone argued: 'If pain were an ontologically discrete entity, one would have to discern its most distinctive property (aḫaṣṣ aḥkāmihi) as soon as it is perceived, for this is a necessary feature of anything perceived (li-anna ḥāḍā waʿṣib fī kull mā yudraḳ). If the most distinctive property of something is not discerned upon its perception, it indicates that there is no ontologically discrete entity to which desire and aversion could be linked over and beyond what we have mentioned [scil. the termination of health and bodily balance].

34) The reply to this [objection would be to say]: You shall be granted an answer. Let us concede that what you have just said is correct. Whenever we perceive a thing, we discern its distinctiveness (mā huwa ʿalayhi fī ḏātihī) in a general way (ʿalā l-ǧumla). For instance, when we perceive a colour in a substrate, we discern its distinctiveness in a general way. If we then want to understand this distinctiveness in more detail, we should follow a method (ṭarīqa). Thus, we determine that this ontologically discrete entity [scil. pleasure and pain] is perceived in reference to a substrate of living and in the substrate of living (fī maḥall al-ḥayāt bi-maḥall al-ḥayāt); hence, there must be a distinctive attribute owing to which a thing is said to possess this property and owing to which it has the capacity to experience pain in it when aversion is linked to it or experience pleasure when desire is linked to it.

Chapter 35)

35) [Abū Ǧaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī Mazdak], may God grant him strength, said: [Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Ahmad ibn Mattawayh], may God have mercy upon [Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Ahmad ibn Mattawayh], may God have mercy upon

63. In kalām ontology and epistemology ḏāt refers to a concrete entity, not to an ‘essence’ or ‘quiddity’ of a thing in the philosophical (esp. Aristotelian) sense of the word. Accordingly, mā huwa ʿalayhi fī ḏātihī does not refer to the quiddity of a thing, but rather to its distinctiveness, i.e. a singular property which makes it distinguishable from any other entity; see Dhanani, *The Physical Theory of Kalām* (n. 12 in main article), pp. 25–33; Shihadeh, ‘Classical Ashʿarī Anthropology’ (n. 103 in main article), p. 438.

64. The method in question consists of a classification tree which results from an ordered sequence of evaluative and classificatory questions which help to determine the properties and attributes of a thing (see Taḏkira [n. 131 in main article], pp. 2–8). It proceeds on the assumption that the order and structure of knowledge often inverts the order and structure of the known object (ibid., p. 523: inna l-ʿulām lā tanbaġī muṭābaqatiḥa li-l-maʿlūm fī kulli mawḍiʿ).

65. This expression denotes the property (ḥukm) or the type-specific, generic attribute (ṣifat al-ʿūn) of pleasure and pain; see Taḏkira (n. 131 in main article), p. 167.

66. Šarḥ al-Taḏkira (n. 170 in main article), pp. 228 f. (fols 114v, l. 14 – 115r, l. 7) which comments on Taḏkira (n. 131 in main article), p. 421 f. The editor renders the chapter heading as follows: ‘Chapter on the question of whether it would be correct to say that desire is [inextricably] linked with what is beneficial to the body of the one who desires’ (inna l-ṣalwa mutaʿalla bi-mā yuṣlaḥu ʿalayhi badan al-muṣlaḥ).
him, included this chapter with a view to clarifying an alternative conception of desire by Abū Ḥāšim [al-ʿUbaid; Abī Ḥāšim fī l-ṣahwa]. The gist of this position is Abū Ḥāšim’s contention that desire is inextricably linked with things that are beneficial to the body of the one who desires: when he ingests them, [his body] grows (yazādāʾ), when he lacks them, it becomes deficient (yantaqiṣ). Abū Ḥāšim employed this argument to show that it is inadmissible [to ascribe] desire to God. He argued that if it was admissible [to ascribe] desire to Him, it would be conceivable for Him to be subject to growth/increase (ziyādā) and diminution/deficiency (nuqṣān), for this is a property of desire (min ḥukm al-ṣahwa). [Desire] is [inextricably] linked with things that are beneficial to the body of the one who desires: when he ingests them, [his body] grows, when he lacks them, it becomes deficient.

36) Abū ʿIsḥāq [ibn ʿAyyāš] objected to this line of reasoning and argued that growth and diminution of the living body in association with nourishment are not a necessary consequence of the food one assimilates, because we do not advocate the position that nature or something else necessitates these processes. They are rather the effect of God’s sustaining the customary course [of events]. For this reason the well-being/benefit (ṣalāḥ) of the body is only established once the desire has vanished. This being the case, one cannot build on Abū Ḥāšim’s line of reasoning to prove that it is inconceivable to ascribe desire to God. God willing, we are going to expound a more solid argument for this at its proper place.

37) Abū Muḥammad [ibn Mattawayh] said: what we can adduce to elucidate Abū Ḥāšim’s position is our knowledge that desire only relates to things on which we can subsist consistently (ʿalā ṭarīqa wāḥida) to our benefit, when we perceive them unmixed with other things (iḏā adaknāhu muḥallāsan ʿan ġayrihī), and [to things] on which we can subsist consistently, when we ingest them unmixed with other things (iḏā nilnāhu wa-ha wa-majmūr bi-sīwāhī) and in which we take pleasure when we perceive them. However, when they are mixed with other things, desire does not relate to what they have been mixed with, but still relates to it separately, as if it were unmixed. When, for example, [bitter] aloe is splashed with sugar, desire relates to those parts in which there is actual sweetness (ḥalāwa ṭābita), despite the fact that it has been adulterated by something else. If we perceived it unmixed with other things, we would still be able to subsist on it, when we ingest it. The gist of all this is [the understanding] that if the object of desire (al-muṣṭahā) is perceived just as it has been desired, it is possible to subsist on it and the body of the one who desires derives benefit from it.

38) Evidence for that is [found in the fact] that desire must have a property (ḥukm min al-aḫkām) which is specific [i.e. belongs exclusively] to it and on account of which desire is [inextricably] linked with things that are beneficial to the body of the one who desires.

67. Or: an alternative approach to desire by Abū Ḥāšim.
68. As noted by the editor (D. Gimaret) of the Taḏkira (n. 131 in main article), p. 421, n. 69, this alternative argument is not found in the rest of the book, but in Ibn Mattawayh’s Kitāb al-Maǧmūʿ fī l-Muḥīṣ bi-l-taklīf, ed. U. S. ʿAzmī, Cairo, 1965, pp. 214 ff.
69. The text version of the Šarḥ is corrupt here and should be corrected in accordance with Taḏkira (n. 131 in main article), p. 422, l. 1: ... illā bi-mā ilā ... .
70. Taḏkira (n. 131 in main article); Saḥīḥ; Šarḥ al-Taḏkira (n. 170 in main article); Saḥīḥu.
71. Taḏkira: iḏā nilnāhu; Šarḥ al-Taḏkira: matā quālīnāhu (!).
it is distinguishable from any other entity (fī-mā yarqī'u lāl dātih[a] wa-tatamayyuzu bi-hī ‘alā ġayrihā), for this is [a] necessary [condition] for all entities whose existence we posit (li-annā hāḍa wājibun fi kulli dātin nuṭbituhā[l]).22 Now, if we cannot point to a property other than the aforementioned fact that it [scil. desire] relates to things which are beneficial to the body of the one who desires, we cannot but identify this as its most specific property (ḥukmuhā al-aḫṣ) in virtue of which it is distinguishable from [any] other entity.

What we just said is clarified by the fact that we only desire in the true sense of the word (alā l-ḥaqīqa) wholesome and salubrious nourishments that are compatible with this [property], because we subsist on it and because our body derives benefit from it. We do not desire bitter apples, mud and such things, because this does not belong to the type of nourishment mentioned above and because our body does not derive benefit from it.

39) If someone objected: How can you possibly claim that the most specific property of [desire] is the fact that it is [inextricably] linked with things that are beneficial to the body of the one who desires, when it is well-known that a living being may at times benefit from things which its nature abhors, such as distasteful and abhorrently bitter medications (al-adwiya al-murra al-kariha)? If it were as you claim, we would have to desire [these] distasteful and abhorrently bitter medications, since the benefit [or: healthy condition] of the body (ṣalāḥ al-badan) depends on it.

40) [We would] reply: We do not need to desire the drinking of distasteful medicine, because the body does not derive benefit from them alone (li-annāhū lam yāṣluḥ ʿalayhā al-badan bi-mugarradihā). For if we ingested [this medicine] continuously, it would harm [our body], while we take pleasure in the continuous ingestion of wholesome food and our body derives benefit from it. Moreover, the effect of the medicine is limited to the discharge of moisture (zawāl al-ruṭūbāt) and other things from the body. As soon as this moisture has been discharged, the advantageous effect (intifāʿ) of the medication is complemented and accomplished by the [ingestion of] wholesome and salubrious food. The process [as a whole] is therefore reducible to the fact that the benefit of the body of the one who desires does only relate to the ingestion of what he desires, but this only comes about by the discharge of those moistures, substances and other things from the body of the living being. All this does therefore not preclude that the most specific property of [desire] is what we said.

41) In conformance with the aforementioned procedure, the physicians determined the recovery of appetite (ʿawd al-šahwa lil-ṭaʿām) to be indicative of health (ʿalāmat al-ṣiḥḥa) and of the end of a patient’s state of sickness. For this very reason, they only suspend [the ingestion of] wholesome and customary nourishment for the sake of bitter and distasteful medication, when it is necessary and absolutely inevitable.

42) Based on this summary account, Abū Hāšim’s conception [of desire], namely [the view] that the specific property of desire consists in the fact that it relates to
things which benefit the body of the one who desires, has been proven to be correct. Therefore, his proof is also a legitimate way of arguing against the admissibility of [ascribing] desire to God. Having established that this is the most specific property of desire, aversion (nifār) – which is its counterpart – must accordingly relate to things which cause the body of the living being to become deficient and corrupted. This consideration applies to everything which its natural disposition (ṭabʿuhu) abhors, such as bitter apples and the like. Whenever [the living being] ingests these things, its body is corrupted and becomes deficient consistently and invariably (ʿalā ṭarīqa ṭarīqa wāḥida). Thus, the most specific property of aversion consists in the fact that it relates to things by which the body of the living being is corrupted, just as the most specific property of desire consists in the fact that it relates to things which are beneficial to its body.

43) [Abū Ǧaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī Mazdak] said: Note that many objections have been raised against this summary account which we have brought up in defense of Abū Hāšim’s position. Thus, it has been asked: How can your account be correct, when desire may at times also relate to things which are not beneficial to the body of the one who desires, as for example the desire for magnificent views (šahwat al-manāẓir) and other objects of perception? Neither does the desire called ʿišq [passion/passionate love] relate to things which are beneficial to the body of the one who desires. There are also nice and pleasant sounds which are not beneficial to the body, even when they are perceived with desire. Likewise, the desire of the sick (šahwat al-marīḍ) relates to things which are not beneficial to his body and may even relate to things which harm him, if he ingests them, and have a detrimental effect on his body. Similarly, some people may have a strong desire for mud (šahwat al-ṭīn), but when they ingest it, it is not beneficial to their body and will even harm it. The same applies to people who desire cheese and the like. It has thus been established that [desire] relates to things which harm the one who desires them and have no beneficial effect on his body. So, how can you claim that its most specific property consists in the fact that it relates to things which are beneficial to the body of the one who desires?

74. This objection seems to allude to the existence of pure, unmixed, non-bodily pleasures (as in Plato’s Rep. 9 and Phil. 518–528), i.e. pleasures which are not coupled with bodily deficiency, pain, need and replenishment (see n. 152 in main article). The Philebus distinguishes three kinds of pure pleasure: 1) olfactory, 2) visual and auditory, 3) intellectual. See the pertinent discussion in Adamson, ‘Platonic Pleasures’ (n. 117 in main article), pp. 76 f. and Wolfsdorf, Pleasure (n. 152 in main article), pp. 73–6, 97–9.

75. Šahwat al-ṭīn is still used in contemporary medicine to refer to the pica disorder, the persistent and compulsive cravings to eat non-food items.

76. Reading tanāwalahū instead of adrakahū which is obviously incorrect here (and see the parallel passage in Šarḥ al-Taḏkira [n. 170 in main article], fol. 115r, l. 4).

77. In similar contexts cheese (ǧubn) is usually used in conjunction with ṭīn. The mixture of the two is described as inedible (see Taḏkira, [n. 131 in main article], p. 422; Šešdīv, [Taʿlīq] Šarḥ al-Uṣūl al-ḫamsa [n. 108 in main article], p. 214). Oddly enough, the author of Šarḥ al-Taḏkira turns ǧubn into an independent example of an inedible substance. The MS renders the word with a sadda (ġabban[?]) the meaning of which remains obscure. For the nutrimental properties of cheese according to Galen see De alimentorum facultatibus (Περὶ τῶν ἐν ταῖς τροφαῖς δυνάμεων; Kitāb Quwā l-aġḏiya = Kitāb fi l-ʿaṭisma), ed. J. Wilkins, Paris, 2013, pp. 211–14; Galen: On the Properties of Foodstuffs, ed. and transl. O. Powell, Cambridge, 2003, pp. 123–31.

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44) Response: In [the mixture of] cheese and mud there are part(icle)s to which desire does not relate. Hence, in keeping with what we just said, they are not beneficial to the body. If out of the two he only perceived what his desire relates to unadulterated by other things, his body would derive benefit from it and he would not harm himself by ingesting it.  

45) As for the sick, when he desires what harms him, his desire is false, not correct (fa-šahwatuhū kāḏība, ġayru ṣādiqa). He only believes to be desiring, while in actual fact he is not (wa-huwa innamā yazunnū annahū muṣṭahin wa-huwa fi l-haqīqa ġayru muṣṭahin). Thus, when something is offered to him of which he believed that he would desire it, he does not take pleasure in it, but rather abhors it. If his desire were correct, his body would benefit from ingesting those [part(icle)s of the mixture] to which his desire relates. For this very reason the physician does not prevent the patient from ingesting what he correctly desires (wa-ʾalā dālīka l-yamnaʾu l-tābilu l-marīda min tanāwuli mā taṣduqu šahwatuhu ilayhi). We say about this exactly the same as what we have said about the ingestion of cheese and mud, namely that in the thing which he desires there are part(icle)s to which his desire does not relate; his desire only relates to part(icle)s which are mixed with things which he does not desire; if he perceived them in unadulterated form, unmixed with things which he does not desire, his body would derive benefit from it, analogous to the ingestion of cheese and mud.  

46) As for the claim that the body of someone who listens to nice and pleasant sounds does not derive benefit from it, even though he perceives them with desire, this is not correct. It is rather so that his body does benefit from listening to them and perceiving them, even if it is not clearly recognizable for us.  

47) He then said: As for the desire which is called ‘išq [passionate love] and the fact that it relates to things which are not beneficial to the body of the one who desires them, and by which it may even be corrupted and become deficient, [Ibn Mattawayh] left it open and abstained from discussing it for the benefit of [further] examination.