

AL-GHAZĀLĪ'S THEORY OF CAUSALITY

I. The question of causality has been much dealt with in Islamic thought. There are two opposite views, one held by the Mutakallimūn and the other by the philosophers. (1) Most of the Mutakallimūn, both Ash'arites and Mu'tazilites, denied natural efficient causality. (2) Their point of departure was God's omnipotence and unity. If God is omnipotent and one, only He created the universe and only He continues to create whatever happens or comes into being in it. Hence they denied causation by secondary agents, animate as well as inanimate. (3) While the basis of their theory was Qur'ānic, the Mutakallimūn resorted to rational argument to substantiate it. They developed a theory of atomism, according to which the smallest part in the universe is an indivisible particle called an atom (*djuz' alladhī lā yaladjazza'u*). Each body is composed of several atoms and of the accidents (*a'rād*) inhering in them. When its atoms are dissolved, a body is destroyed. God creates and annihilates atoms at His spontaneous will not by necessity. Most of the Mutakallimūn held that an atom and an accident cannot endure for more than one instant of time. Consequently, the existence of bodies in the universe and the existence of the universe itself depend upon God's continuous creation of atoms

(1) W. J. Courtenay ("The Critique on Natural Causality in the Mutakallimūn and Nominalism", *The Harvard Theological Review*, 66 (1973), p. 77) presents *kalam* a counter-movement to Arabic philosophy in the subject of causality. This suggestion requires careful examination.

(2) See H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, Cambridge, Mass. 1976, pp. 518-578.

(3) See *ibid.*, pp. 518-519.

and accidents.⁽⁴⁾ Bodies generate their effects not through their essential natures but only through God's creation. The repeated occurrences in the universe are explained by God's custom ('*āda*) of creating things in the same way. But God can certainly do otherwise. To sum up, God acts directly in the universe without any intermediate causes.⁽⁵⁾

On the other hand, the Muslim philosophers, following mostly Aristotle as interpreted by the Neoplatonists, taught that creation derives from God through a series of natural, necessary⁽⁶⁾ emanations. God is the First Cause of the universe. Other beings in the universe are related to Him and to each other through a necessary natural causal nexus.⁽⁷⁾ The occurrence of an event and the coming into being of an object are elucidated as the result of the natures inhering in things, both in agents and in recipients.⁽⁸⁾ This philosophical theory of causality is based on the evidence of sense perception, which shows that things always happen in the same way. Things that happen in the same way happen by necessity.⁽⁹⁾

The two opposing theories, that of the Mutakallimūn and that of the philosophers are found, among other places, in *tahāful al-falāsifa* of al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), the great exponent of orthodox Islam, and its refutation entitled *tahāful al-tahāful*⁽¹⁰⁾ written by Ibn Rushd (d. 1198), the last of the great Muslim Aristoteli-

(4) For a detailed description of this theory and various *Kalām* views, see S. Pines, *Beiträge zur islamischen Atomenlehre*, Berlin 1936, pp. 1-26. Wolfson, *Kalam*, ch. VI. M. Fakhrī, *Islamic Occasionalism*, London 1958, pp. 22-43. The best description of this theory occurs in Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, ed. and tr. into French by S. Munk, Paris 1856, rep. Osnabrück 1964. Tr. into English by S. Pines, Chicago 1963, I, ch. 73. Cf. D. B. MacDonald, "Continuous Re-Creation and Atomic Time in Muslim Scholastic Theology", *Isis* 9 (1927), pp. 328-337.

(5) See Pines, *ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

(6) Cf. R. M. Frank, "Kalām and Philosophy, A Perspective from one Problem", in *Islamic Philosophical Theology*, ed. P. Morewedge, Albany 1979, pp. 76, 83-86.

(7) See al-Ghazālī, *maḳāṣid al-falāsifa*, ed. S. Dunya, Cairo n.d., pp. 288-296.

(8) Cf. M. E. Marmura, "Ghazali and Demonstrative Science", *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 3 (1965), p. 185.

(9) See Aristotle, *Phys.* II, 5, 196b, 10-12. Ibn Rushd, *tahāful al-tahāful*, ed. M. Bouyges, *Bibliotheca Arabica Scholasticorum*, Vol. III, Beyrouth 1930, pp. 519-521, tr. by S. van den Bergh, *The Incoherence of the Incoherence*, London 1954, Vol. I, p. 318. Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, Vol. I, ch. 73, the 10th prop.

(10) Al-Ghazālī treatise is quoted in *tahāful al-tahāful*. See the preceding note. The discussion on causality occurs in ch. 17.

ans. But whereas no one doubts that Ibn Rushd propounds the philosophical theory of causality, the scholars' views concerning al-Ghazālī differ. Some of them agree that al-Ghazālī rejects causality,⁽¹¹⁾ while others hold that al-Ghazālī abandons the Ash'arite theory of the denial of causality. In his translation of *tahāful al-tahāful*, S. van den Bergh notes that in one section "Ghazālī abandons the Ash'arite theory of the denial of causation, and reverts to the rationalistic supernaturalism of the Muslim philosophers."⁽¹²⁾ Van den Bergh's note refers to the following section: "The second answer... is to agree that in fire there is created a nature which burns two similar pieces of cotton which are brought into contact with it and does not differentiate between them, when they are alike in every respect."⁽¹³⁾ Courtenay, basing himself on this section and what follows, draws the conclusion that although al-Ghazālī denies the necessity of a causal nexus, he admits the existence of causality which is the result of God's ordination. Moreover, God gave every cause its nature and every cause may produce its effect. God can change the relation between cause and effect by giving a thing additional properties. Hence change too takes place through nature implanted in a thing not directly through God.⁽¹⁴⁾ Alon⁽¹⁵⁾ proves through a structural, contextual and semantic examination of chapter XVII of *tahāful al-falāsifa* (referring mainly to the above quoted section and what follows) that al-Ghazālī seeks to reconcile the two opposing views on causality, the philosophical view and that of the Kalam. According to Alon, al-Ghazālī's admission that God acts through physical means and his acceptance of impossibility not only in the logical domain but also in the ontological one affirm causality. Goodman proves that al-Ghazālī, using Aristotelian axioms expressed in Islamized terminology, holds

(11) Fakhrī, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-82. Al-Ghazālī, according to Fakhrī, disapproves of ontological causal necessity but admits logical causality. See *ibid.*, p. 60. Wolfson, *Kalam*, pp. 548-551. A. J. Wensinck, *La Pensée de Ghazālī*, Paris 1950, pp. 6-9. K. Gyekye, "Al-Ghazali on Causation", *Second Order* 2 (1973), pp. 31-39. Marmura, *op. cit.*, pp. 186ff.

(12) See vol. II, p. 182, n. 7, to p. 326.

(13) See *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 326 and pp. 327-330.

(14) See Courtenay, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-86.

(15) See I. Alon, "Al-Ghazālī on Causality", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 100 (1980), pp. 397-405.

causality but rejects the philosophers' doctrine that causes are necessary. (16)

As far as I know, there is no research on al-Ghazālī's views on causality in his non-philosophical writings. Wolfson refers to *ihyā'* vol. IV, where al-Ghazālī states that a cause is a condition (see below p. 90) but fails to examine all the sections on causality in this volume or in al-Ghazālī's other works. Similarly, Wensinck (see n. 11 above) briefly treats a very few sections in *ihyā'* Vol. IV, ignoring other of al-Ghazālī's books. Thus we have only a partial picture of al-Ghazālī's views on causality, namely that which is found in his *tahāfut*. What follows is an attempt to examine al-Ghazālī's views on causality in *ihyā'*, *k. al-arba'īn* and *al-maḥṣad al-asnā*.

II. The fifth root of *k. al-arba'īn fī uṣūl al-dīn*, (17) dealing with God's will (*irāda*), is relevant to our discussion. It begins with the assertion that God has willed every existing thing and that every thing in the perishable corporeal world (*mulk*) as well as in the everlasting spiritual world (*malakūt*) (18) happens in accordance with God's decree (*kaḍā'*) and by His determination (*ḥadar*), (19) judgement (*ḥukm*) and will (*mashī'a*). (20) This is the Ash'arites' unanimously accepted view concerning God's will. (21) Then, al-Ghazālī goes on to state that the fact that the issue of *ḥadar* is a slippery one has caused many people to make mistakes. In his view these people adhered to ambiguous verses in the *Qur'ān* (*mā lashābaha minhu*) (22) for purpose of bringing about dissension and in order to misinterpret them, whereas only God and those firmly rooted in

(16) See L. E. Goodman, "Did al-Ghazālī deny Causality", *Studia Islamica* 47 (1978), pp. 83-120. I was referred to this article by Prof. J. L. Kraemer.

(17) Cairo, n.d., pp. 5ff.

(18) For both terms see H. Lazarus-Yafeh, *Studies in al-Ghazālī*, Jerusalem 1975, pp. 503-505.

(19) The term *kaḍā'* usually denotes God's eternal decree, i.e., predestination, and the term *ḥadar* God's decree within time. *Al-kaḍā' wa'l-ḥadar* when occurring together in one expression have the general meaning of the decree of God. See L. Gardet, "Al-Ḥaḍā' Wa'l Ḥadar", *Et*, vol. IV, pp. 365-367; M. Schwarz, "The Letter of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī", *Oriens* 20 (1967), pp. 20-21.

(20) See *k. al-arba'īn*, p. 5f.

(21) See al-Baghdadi, *uṣūl al-dīn*, Istanbul 1928, p. 102.

(22) On the term *mutashābihāt*, and its opposite, *muḥkamāt*, (self-evident verses), which are both derived from *sūra* 3, v. 7, see my "The Ṭabaristānis' Question", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, n. 7 (forthcoming).

knowledge (*al-rāsikhūn fī'l-'ilm*) (23) know their true meaning. Al-Ghazālī follows this statement with the traditional prohibition against dealing with the issue of *ḥadar*, which he addresses to those who study it by means of discussion and contest (*bī'l-baḥth wa'l-djidāl*). (24) *Ḥadar*, according to al-Ghazālī, is a secret, and any attempt to understand it is forbidden. Whoever wants to know God's secrets must obey His precepts sincerely and do what pleases Him. But if he cannot be satisfied with only devotion, he must believe (*'alayhi an ya'ta-ḥida*) what Abū Ḥanīfa and his adherents say about this matter, namely, that it is God's action that creates power in man (*iḥdāth al-islīḥā fī'l allah*) while man's action consists of using the power that was created (*wa'islī'māl al-islīḥā al-muḥdatha fī'l al-'abd*) really and not just metaphorically using it. (25) These are the two basic components of the doctrine of acquisition (*kasb*), (26) which is repeated twice more in the book (27) as a middle doctrine held by *ahl al-sunna wa'l djamā'a* (28) between the doctrine of the Kadarites and of the Djabrites.

Up to here, al-Ghazālī has stated the following points: a. Most people are forbidden to deal with *ḥadar*. b. Man can know God's secrets through devotion. c. Whoever wants to hold a doctrine concerning *ḥadar* should hold the doctrine of *kasb*. In view of these points, it is quite perplexing to see al-Ghazālī elaborating, as he does, a detailed discussion of the

(23) See *sūra* 3, v. 7, *sūra* 4, v. 162.

(24) See *k. al-arba'īn*, pp. 6-8. Very probably by "those who study through discussion and contest" al-Ghazālī means the *Mutakallimūn*. See S. Pines, "A Note on an Early Meaning of the Term *mutakallimūn*", *Israel Oriental Studies* 1 (1971), pp. 239-240.

(25) See *k. al-arba'īn*, p. 9.

(26) On the doctrine of *kasb*, see M. Schwarz, "'Acquisition' (Kasb) in Early Kalām", in *Islamic Philosophy and the Classical Tradition*, ed. S. M. Stern, A. Hourani, V. Brown, Oxford 1972, pp. 355-387. The *kasb* doctrine according to Abū Ḥanīfa and his followers is different from the doctrine propounded by al-Djuwaynī in *k. al-irshād*. Whereas the latter granted to human created power no impact on action, the former affirmed such an impact. Al-Ghazālī might have learned the Ḥanafite version of *kasb* from his teacher al-Djuwaynī who expounded it in his *'akīda nizāmiyya* apparently following Ḥanafite-Māturīdite thinkers. See Schwarz, *ibid.*, p. 380, p. 387, n. 112. In *k. al-iktisād*, however, al-Ghazālī follows al-Djuwaynī's way in *irshād*. See *ibid.*, pp. 380-381.

(27) See *k. al-arba'īn*, pp. 9-12.

(28) For this term, which generally conveys the meaning of "orthodox Sunnism", see W. M. Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought*, Edinburgh 1973, pp. 267-280.

issue of *ḳadar* from the point of view of causality. For in doing so he explicitly opposes the doctrine of *kasb* he had just recommended, according to which God directly creates the power for every action in man (29) and he opposes too his denial of causality in *k. al-ikṭiṣād fī l-'iṭikād* (Cairo n. d. pp. 43-46, 100). (30)

As we have seen, according to al-Ghazālī, whatever happens in the world is due to God's will. How God's will operates in the world, he explains as follows: First, God, by his wise rule (*ḥukm*) (31) established that causes (*asbāb*) are to be directed to effects (*musabbabāt*). (32) God's wise rule denotes an absolute primary design (*al-tadbīr al-awwal al-kullī*) and eternal order (*amr azalī*) which emerged instantly. (33) This design determines which instruments (*ālāt*), causes and motions (*ḥarakāt*) are needed to bring about what should be brought about. (34) Al-Ghazālī speaks here, then, of God's establishing the essence of causality, namely of the fact that causes bring about effects (35) and of God's decision as to what devices He will use to fulfil His plan. At the second stage God establishes (*naṣaba*) absolute, basic, fixed and stable causes (*al-asbāb al-kullīyya al-aṣliyya al-thābita al-mustaḳirra*) which neither disappear nor change till the end of days. These are the earth, the seven heavens, the stars, the celestial spheres and their proportional perpetual motions, the creation of which is God's decree (*ḳaḍa'*), as is stated in sūra 41, v. 12. (36) Al-Ghazālī

(29) See al-Ghazālī, *iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, Cairo 1967-68, vol. I (*k. ḳawā'id al-aḳā'id*), pp. 150-51. Cf. al-Bāḳillānī, *k. al-tamhid*, ed. R. J. McCarthy, Beirut, 1957, pp. 286ff.

(30) In affirming God's direct continuous creation of everything in the world, including, naturally, man's actions, the Ash'arites deny causality. See above p. 76.

(31) The word *ḥukm* has two meanings: *a.* wisdom, *b.* rule. See E. W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, Book I, Part I-VIII, London 1863-1865, p. 617. Al-Ghazālī, *al-maḳṣad al-asnā sharḥ asmā' allah al-ḥusnā*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Abū al-'Alā', Cairo, n.d., p. 82. This term is employed by al-Ghazālī intentionally. We shall see later that, according to al-Ghazālī, God has will as well as wisdom; He acts at His will but not capriciously.

(32) See *k. al-arba'in*, p. 12, l. 6.

(33) See *ibid.*, ll. 11-12.

(34) See *ibid.*, p. 13, ll. 14-15.

(35) Cf. R. Taylor's definition of cause: "A cause has traditionally been thought of as that which produces something and in term of which that which is produced, its effect, can be explained..." *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. P. Edwards, New York, London 1967, p. 56.

(36) "Then He decreed them (*ḳadāhunna*) as seven heavens in two days and inspired into each heaven its order...".

calls this stage the absolute establishment of the absolute perpetual causes (*al-waḍ' al-kullī li'l-asbāb al-kullīyya al-dā'ima*). (37) The third stage, named *ḳadar* (determination), involves God's direction (*lawjih*) of the above-mentioned causes through their proportioned, measured motions (*bi-ḥarakātihā al-mutanāsiba al-maḥdūda*) to the effects, which are brought into being from these motions moment after moment (*al-ḥāditha minhā laḥza ba'da laḥza*) according to a known measure (*ḳadar ma'lūm*) which neither increase nor decrease. (38) It is worth noting that when al-Ghazālī uses the verb *ḥadatha* (meaning: it was brought into being) he seems to attribute the power of efficient cause to the absolute causes. (39) Finally, al-Ghazālī concludes, all this explains why nothing exists outside God's decree and determination. (40)

Now al-Ghazālī uses a parable to illustrate the scheme according to which everything happens in the world. The parable is about a water clock by means of which one knows the times of the prayers. (41) This instrument is composed of several parts. There is a cylinder (*uṣluwāna*) filled with a known quantity of water. On the surface of the water there is a hollow vessel. To this vessel is tied the end of a thread, while the other end of it is tied to the lower part of a little basin placed above the hollow vessel. In the little basin is a ball and beneath it a bowl. The bottom of the cylinder is perforated with a hole of a given size. When this is done the water begins to descend, the hollow vessel on the surface of the water descends as well, the thread connecting the hollow vessel with the little basin is pulled and moves the little basin with its ball, until the little basin turns over and the ball rolls into the bowl and rings. The ringing in turn, calls men's attention to and brings about their prayers and other actions. The frequency of the rings depends on the size of the hole perforated in the bottom of the cylinder. (Al-Ghazālī does not explain how the ball returns to the little basin so that it may again roll down

(37) See *k. al-arba'in*, p. 12, ll. 6-10. By "absolute" al-Ghazālī may mean "unchangeable"; God's decision to establish these causes is unchangeable, and so too these causes bring about changes, without themselves being changed.

(38) See *ibid.*, ll. 10-14.

(39) See below, p. 84.

(40) Cf. *iḥyā'*, vol. IV, p. 120.

(41) See *k. al-arba'in*, pp. 12-13.

into the bowl.) The first cause of all these various motions in the water clock is the perforation of a hole. Each motion after that can cause another motion, and so on. The verb al-Ghazālī employs here is *lawallada*,⁽⁴²⁾ which means to be generated, and denotes the coming into being of a new motion. Thus he seems to be asserting that each motion is the efficient cause of the motion which follows it.

The water clock operates when three conditions are fulfilled: a. the clock is planned, namely the tools, causes and motions needed to make it ring are determined (*ḥukm*); b. these tools are brought into existence (*ḥadāṭ*); c. a cause which necessitates a regular motion is established, namely a hole is perforated in the bottom of the cylinder, which makes the water descend and the other events occur consecutively.⁽⁴³⁾ All these motions, al-Ghazālī states, "are according to a known measure (*bi-ḥadāṭ ma'lūm*) and a measured amount (*miḥdār muḥaddar*) by reason of all of them being measured by the measure of the first motion (*bi-sabab taḥaddur djamī'ihā bi-ḥadāṭ al-ḥaraka al-ūlā*) and it is the water motion."⁽⁴⁴⁾

Following this al-Ghazālī elucidates the connection between the parable and the events in the universe. Just as the parts in the water clock move by necessity⁽⁴⁵⁾ and their motions are necessarily regulated, with the result that everything they generate is also regulated, so too the events in the universe (*ḥawādith*), none of which comes early or late when their term (*adjal*) arrives, i.e., when their cause is present (*ḥadāra sababuhā*), necessarily occur and in necessary amounts.⁽⁴⁶⁾ The heavens, the celestial spheres, the stars, the earth, the sea and the air in the world are like the parts of the water clock. The cause which moves the heavenly bodies in accordance with a known numerical plan (*bi-ḥisāb ma'lūm*) is like the hole which makes the ball descend in a known measure (*bi-ḥadāṭ ma'lūm*). The motions of the heavenly bodies bring about events on the earth, just as the motion of the water in the clock brings about other motions that lead in the end to the ringing of the ball. An example of the influence of the heavenly motions on the earth

(42) See *ibid.*, p. 13, ll. 9-12.

(43) See *ibid.*, ll. 13-24.

(44) See *ibid.*, ll. 24-25.

(45) See *ibid.*, p. 14, l. 1: *ḥādhihi al-ālāl uṣūl lā budda minhā li'l-ḥaraka*.

(46) See *ibid.*, ll. 2-3.

is the effect of different locations of the sun; these cause day and night and the various seasons which in turn bring about different kinds of human activities and behaviour.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Everything that happens in the world, be it good or bad, useful or harmful, is according to God's will, just as the clock moves according to the will of its maker.⁽⁴⁸⁾

At this point, we may draw the following conclusions: a. al-Ghazālī puts forth here a theory of dual causality, divine as well as natural, co-operating in the generation of the same effect.⁽⁴⁹⁾ God is the First Cause of everything that happens in the world. He created a chain of cause and effect and He keeps it in continuous operation. He does not intervene in the world directly.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Nothing is said about continuous creation.⁽⁵¹⁾ Al-Ghazālī combines two kinds of causes, which consist of two kinds of actions. God is the First Cause and His actions derive from His spontaneous will. The other causes act through God indirectly as well as through the necessity inhering in their essence,⁽⁵²⁾ an essence which God created and

(47) Aristotle had already shown that all generation is effected by the motions of the heavenly bodies. See *De caelo* B3. 286b 1-9. Cf. S. van den Bergh's tr. of *tahāful al-tahāful*, vol. II, pp. 20-21 (n. 1 to p. 24), p. 22 (n. 5 to p. 27), p. 160 (n. 5 to p. 291). Cf. Ibn Rushd, *manāhidj al-adilla fi 'aḥkām al-milla* (ed. Maḥmūd Ḳāsim, Cairo 1969), ch. V the first question, p. 195f.

(48) See *k. al-arba'in*, p. 14, ll. 4-22.

(49) This reminds one of St. Thomas Aquinas' solution of the problem of causality. See Fakhry, *op. cit.*, pp. 148ff.

(50) Some Christian thinkers held that God does not intervene in the world after having created it. See Courtenay, *op. cit.*, p. 93. Al-Ghazālī does not speak here of miracles, i.e., the changing of the normal course of events in the world. The parable, however, may imply that God can intervene in the world by changing the duration of the first action, so that an event may take place in a shorter period than usual, and this may make it a miracle. Cf. al-Ghazālī, *tahāful*, p. 534. tr. S. van den Bergh, vol. I, p. 327.

(51) The notion expressed by al-Ghazālī is very close to al-Nazzām's theory of causality. The world is governed by causality rules imposed by God at the time of creation. These rules are subject to God's control and will. Historically, this notion represents Philon's conception of causality and its relation to God. Wolfson, *Kalam*, pp. 559-578. Cf. Courtenay, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-86. Alon, *op. cit.*, p. 403. The Ḳaraites Ḳirkisānī and Yefet asserted that God implanted nature in the created things, which then act according to that nature. See H. Ben Shamay, *The Doctrines of Religious Thought of Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Ḳirkisānī and Yefet ibn 'Alī*, unpublished Ph. D. thesis [in Hebrew], Jerusalem 1978, pp. 133-137.

(52) Contrary to Ockham who says that the causes were decreed to operate in a fixed way (see Courtenay, *op. cit.*, p. 91), it is obvious from the context (see above

continuously maintains.⁽⁵³⁾ Thus al-Ghazālī puts forward a theory of theistic determinism which seems to aim at reaching an agreement between faith and philosophy. Using the term *ḥukm*, which denotes wisdom (and rule as well, see above, p. 80), on the one hand, and the terms *ḥadā'* and *ḥadar*, which connote power, on the other hand, he reconciles the philosophical view that God is wisdom with the religious view that God is power; b. Al-Ghazālī's use of the verb *ḥadatha* and *tawallada*⁽⁵⁴⁾ in connection with the causes may prove that he attributes the power of efficiency to them; c. as if feeling that he has exceeded the due bounds of orthodoxy, at the end of the passage al-Ghazālī admonishes man to leave the parable and to pay attention only to its purpose,⁽⁵⁵⁾ which is to prove that everything happens according to God's will. It is quite likely that al-Ghazālī realized that whoever reads the parable carefully would draw the conclusion we did. Given his acceptance, at least on the surface, of the orthodox theory of *kasb*, his prudence can be justified.⁽⁵⁶⁾

III. Al-Ghazālī first describes the plan of the universe and tells the parable of the water clock in *al-maḥṣad al-asnā sharḥ asmā' allah al-ḥusnā*.⁽⁵⁷⁾ But in this book, after drawing the parable and its implications, al-Ghazālī further elucidates man's position in this scheme of causality. Man must know that

p. 84) and from conclusion *b* that al-Ghazālī believes that secondary causes have immanent natures.

(53) Cf. Fakhry, *op. cit.*, p. 92f, p. 130, n. 44 quoting Ibn Rushd's *tahāful al-tahāful*, p. 524.

(54) Elsewhere (*k. al-iḥṣād fi'l-i'tikād*, Cairo, n.d. p. 45) al-Ghazālī opposes the use of the term "generation" (*tawallud*) on the ground of its literal meaning, which is the coming out of something contained from a container, as a child comes out from its mother's womb. Since an accident is not contained in another accident, it cannot be regarded as having been generated by another accident. Al-Ghazālī supports his argument with the fact that *tawallada* has two meanings: a. to be born, b. to be generated. See also *iḥyā'*, vol. IV, p. 8 and below p. 94. (The Mu'tazilites taught that whatever is generated from a man's acts is his action. When a person shoots an arrow, for example, he is responsible for whatever injury someone else may receive, for that injury derives from his shooting. See Fakhry, *op. cit.*, pp. 44ff. Pines, *Beiträge*, pp. 31-32.

(55) *fa-da' al-mūhāl fa-lanabbah li'l-gharad*. See *k. al-arba'in*, p. 14, ll. 22-23.

(56) On al-Ghazālī's self-contradictions see below, p. 90.

(57) Ed. by Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Abū al-'Alā', Cairo, n.d. pp. 82-86. (The section dealing with God as *ḥakam* lit. judge). Cf. L. Gardet, "Al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā", *EI*⁸, vol. 1, pp. 714-717.

everything exists necessarily by virtue of the irresistible eternal decree (*al-ḥadā' al-azālī*), and not by virtue of the thing itself (*li-dhālihi*). Whatever is determined (*maḥdūr*)⁽⁵⁸⁾ would be (*kā'in*)⁽⁵⁹⁾ and man's anxiety (*ḥamm*) about it is extraneous (*faḍl*).⁽⁶⁰⁾ Then al-Ghazālī raises two questions: a. How can anxiety be extraneous when it is determined? For the anxiety was caused and its cause makes the anxiety inevitable. b. If something is completed (*mafrūḡ minhu*), why should man act (*fa-fīma al-'amal*)? i.e., if the occurrence of an event is pre-determined by God, why should man strive to perform it, since it would undoubtedly be carried out by God anyway. Al-Ghazālī answers the first question by explaining that *faḍl* here means an ineffectual act (*laghw*) which is of no avail (*lā fā'idala fīhī*); for if a thing was in fact determined, anxiety which is the effect of complete ignorance, would not abolish it, and if on the other hand that thing was not determined, anxiety concerning it would be meaningless. Al-Ghazālī reiterates the idea that the existence of a cause necessitates the existence of its effect. The answer to the second question has its basis in the well known tradition: *i'malū fa-kull muyassar li-mā khulika lahu*, i.e., act, for every one's path in life is paved in accordance with what he was created for.⁽⁶¹⁾ A person for whom happiness (*sa'āda*) was determined would be led to it by causes which have the general name of obedience (*lā'a*). A person for whom misery (*shakāwa*) was determined would be led to it by inactivity caused by a motive (*khālīr*)⁽⁶²⁾ which tells him that if he is destined to be happy, there is no need to act, and if he is destined to be miserable, action is of no avail. To illustrate his answer al-Ghazālī offers the example of a person who wants to be a

(58) I do not know why al-Ghazālī prefers the word *maḥdūr* to *muḥaddar* which coincide with *taḥdīr*. But since *ḥadara* (the first stem) also means "he determined", al-Ghazālī's use of *maḥdūr* creates no difficulties. Cf. S. van den Bergh, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 38, ll. 1-3. In *iḥyā'*, vol. IV, p. 318, he employs *maḥdur* and *muḥaddar* interchangeably.

(59) The participle of *kāna* (*kā'in*) also indicates the future. Cf. J. van Ess, *Anfänge Muslimischer Theologie*, Beirut, 1977, pp. 143-144, n. 6.

(60) See *al-maḥṣad*, p. 86, ll. 18-21.

(61) See Watt, *The Formative Period*, p. 106, n. 99, p. 308.

(62) On motives and their role in al-Ghazālī's theory of causality see below p. 88. The exact wording here is: "The cause of his inactivity might be that [a thought] would be established in his mind saying if... (*wa-ḥad yakūnu sabab baḥālatihi an yastakirra fi khālīrihi...*).

jurisprudent (*fakīh*) and attain the position of imam. (63) That person is told to exert himself to that end and study, but says: "If God decreed (*ḥaḍā*) the imama for me from eternity (*fi'l-azal*), there is no need to make an effort, and if He decreed ignorance for me, exerting myself in attaining the imama is of no avail." He is then told: If God made this motive overcome you (*sallaḥa 'alayka hādha al-khāḥir*), this proves that He decreed ignorance for you, for if God decrees a person to be imam from eternity, He does so indirectly by decreeing causes which motivate that person to reject inactivity. Al-Ghazālī sums up saying that whoever does not make an effort will in no way attain the position of an imam. As for the person who does make an effort and for whom the causes are made, his hope of attaining the imama is real if he keeps on making efforts and lets no obstacle bar his way. (64) Al-Ghazālī's example, however, does not answer the question of why man should act if things are predetermined. It rather emphasizes the fact that even man's thoughts and motives are determined by God. As to the question of how man's actions are decreed, al-Ghazālī answers that by implication suggesting that God acts wisely, through a cause-effect chain, and not capriciously, and generates man's actions according to a fixed system. Another conclusion that may be drawn is that in his view of causality al-Ghazālī leaves no room for man's free choice. (65)

IV. The notion that man does not have free choice (*ikhliyār*) and the notion of causality are further elaborated in the fourth part of al-Ghazālī's *iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*. (66) In *k. al-lawakkul*, al-Ghazālī divides man's actions into three kinds: (67) a. natural action (*fi'l ḥabī'ī*) such as when a man stands on water, he breaks through it; b. instinctive action (lit. volitional action: *fi'l irādī*) (68) as when man breathes; c. chosen action (*fi'l ikhliyārī*)

(63) See *al-maḥṣad*, p. 87, l. -1f.

(64) Cf. *iḥyā'*, IV, pp. 111-112.

(65) Ibn Rushd holds that man's actions are determined by external as well as internal causes. See *manāhidj al-adilla*, pp. 227-228. The whole section (called *fi'l ḥaḍā' wa'l-ḥadar*) in ch. 5 of the *manāhidj* needs to be examined and compared with al-Ghazālī's theory of causality.

(66) This fact emphasizes the importance al-Ghazālī attaches to this problem.

(67) See *iḥyā'*, vo. IV, p. 315, l. 24-p. 316, l. 1.

(68) In the following (see *ibid.*, p. 316, l. 20), al-Ghazālī considers this action to be spontaneous (*'alā al-badīha*) and undeliberated.

such as writing. According to al-Ghazālī, these three types of action are the same in relation to the compulsion (*djabr*) and necessity (*iḍtirār*) behind them. The compulsion in natural action is evident, since whenever one stands on water or goes beyond the edge of a roof into the air he undoubtedly breaks through both water and air. This breaking through is a necessary effect of both the standing on water and the going beyond the edge of the roof. In this context, breathing is a natural action, since the motion of the throat relates to man's instinct to breathe in the same way that breaking through water relates to the weight of his body. Weight necessarily causes breaking through, (69) and one has control over neither weight nor over instinct. It is worth noting that weight, i.e., an inherent nature, serves as the cause and not God's order or creation. Moreover, al-Ghazālī uses the word *ḥabī'a*, making concession to the philosophers also in the terminological domain. Another example, more instructive, of instinctive action given by al-Ghazālī is man's shutting necessarily his eyelids when a needle is directed towards his eyes.

Concerning the third kind of action, al-Ghazālī says that if man wants to he acts, and if he wants to he does not act (*in shā'a fa'ala wa-in shā'a lam yaf'al*). Hence it may be assumed that one has dominion over his will. But this, al-Ghazālī says, is ignorance of the meaning of choice (*ikhliyār*). In what follows he analyzes the difference between the process leading to *fi'l irādī* and the process leading to *fi'l ikhliyārī*. Both actions derive from knowledge which tells man whether or not a particular thing is suitable for him (*muwāfiq*). This knowledge is the result of either immediate, unhesitating rational judgement, or rational judgement coming after hesitation. An instance of a decision to act without hesitation is when one is threatened by sword. He knows immediately that pushing aside the sword is good and suitable. (70) The process occurs as follows: Man's volition (*irādā*) is caused (*tanba'ilhu*) by his knowledge (*'ilm*) and his power (*ḥudra*) by his volition, and

(69) See *ibid.*, II, 3-4.

(70) See *ibid.*, II, 11-13. Al-Ghazālī gives the example of man's shutting his eyelids when a needle is directed towards his eyes as an immediate unhesitating act. Thus he seems to confuse what we call instinctive acts (e.g., breathing, shutting one's eyelids etc.), which a person cannot avoid, and immediate acts (e.g. pushing away the sword), which one can avoid.

consequently the action takes place. On the other hand, there are things which man does not know immediately whether or not they are suitable for him. In this case, he needs to deliberate and reflect (*yaḥlādju ilā rawiyya wa-fīkr*) until he knows whether acting or not is what is good for him (*al-khayr fī'l-fi'l aw al-tark*).⁽⁷¹⁾ When he does attain the knowledge of whether acting or not acting is good for him, that knowledge gives rise to his volition in the same way as *fi'l irādī* does, that is by necessity.⁽⁷²⁾ Al-Ghazālī calls this kind of volition *ikhṭiyār* on account of its being caused by an action which reason deems good (*khayr*).⁽⁷³⁾ As an example al-Ghazālī depicts man's deliberation when he is on a roof fleeing from someone who wants to kill him. It is possible that he will throw himself off the roof to escape the sword, even if doing so means death for him. But if he is threatened by an only light blow of the sword, his reason will judge that such a blow is less dangerous than throwing himself off the roof, and he will not throw himself off. That is to say, the motive for doing so will not arise (*lā tanba'ithu lahu dā'iya*).⁽⁷⁴⁾ That is because motive (equals volition) is subject to the judgment of reason and senses, and power is subject to motive, and motion (*ḥaraka*) is subject to power. This entire process is determined (*muḥaddar*) in man by necessity and without his knowledge (*min ḥaythu lā yadrī*),⁽⁷⁵⁾ and man is a substrate (*maḥall*) acted upon by all these things. Man's being compelled means that all the things that happen

(71) The verb *taraka* (lit. to omit) was already used by al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri in the sense of "not to do" or "abstain from doing". See H. Ritter, "Studien zur islamischen Frömmigkeit I, Ḥasan al-Baṣri", *Der Islam* 21 (1933), p. 77, ll. 5-6 tr. by M. Schwartz, "The Letter of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri", p. 29, at the bottom. Cf. J. van Ess, *Anfänge Muslimischer Theologie*, p. 56.

(72) Cf. al-Ghazālī, *maḥāṣid al-falāsifa*, p. 203, ll. 1-3. Describing the philosophical theory of man's action, al-Ghazālī there states that whenever man's volition is complete and unhindered, action takes place because of it by natural necessity, just as the power of fire to burn derives from natural necessity.

(73) See *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 316, ll. 15-20. On the basis of this derivation, the first kind of volition can also be called *ikhṭiyār* by reason of its also coming from *khayr*.

(74) For the rendering of *dā'in* or *dā'iya* see R. M. Frank, "The Autonomy of the Human Agent in the Teaching of 'Abd al-Ḡabbār", *Le Muséon* 96 (1983), p. 333. Al-Ghazālī here uses the term *dā'iya* as equivalent to *irāda*. See *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 317, ll. 4-5.

(75) I do not know exactly what al-Ghazālī means by "unknowingly". He might mean that man does not know that his reasoning is also compulsory.

inside him come from someone else and not from himself. The meaning of his choice is that he is a substrate for volition, which comes into being (*ḥadath*) in him through compulsion (*djabran*), after reason judges that an action is good and suitable for him. This judgement, too, arises through compulsion. Therefore man is compelled to choose (*madjbūr 'alā al-ikhṭiyār*).⁽⁷⁶⁾ Borrowing a Mu'tazilite term, al-Ghazālī says that man's action is in an intermediate position (*manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*);⁽⁷⁷⁾ that is, the fire's action in burning is pure compulsion, God's action is pure choice and man's action is in an intermediate position, since he is compelled to choose. The people of the truth (*ahl al-ḥaqq*), al-Ghazālī says, called it *kasb*. Al-Ghazālī adds that God's choice (*ikhṭiyār*) does not mean volition coming after confusion and hesitation both of which are impossible (*muḥāl*) for God.

Up to now, al-Ghazālī's theory about human action is in keeping with the parable of the water clock and its implications. Man is led to act by a cause-effect chain. Also his action of choice is compulsory, since it derives from necessary external and internal causes. Every sane man, according to al-Ghazālī, would perform the same action under the same circumstances. [In contrast to 'Abd al-Djabbār,⁽⁷⁸⁾ al-Ghazālī does relate motives to power or to action as cause to effect]⁽⁷⁹⁾ It is worth noting that here too al-Ghazālī does not mention God's directly bringing man's action into being.

All this might suggest that cause generates its effect without God's power. Al-Ghazālī is aware of the danger: "If you say... that knowledge generates (*wallada*) volition and volition generates power and power generates motion and that every later thing (*kull mūla'akḥkhir*) comes into being (*ḥadatha*) from a preceding one (*min al-mūlakaddim*), if you say this, you

(76) See *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 317, ll. 1-8.

(77) A term employed by the Mu'tazilites to denote the position of someone who commits a grave sin. Such a person is neither a believer nor an unbeliever; he is in an intermediate position. If he repents before his death, he will be considered a believer, and if not he will be punished in the world to come as an unbeliever. See W. Madelung, *Der Imam al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm und die Glaubenslehre der Zaiditen*, Berlin 1965, pp. 10-11.

(78) See R. M. Frank, *op. cit.*, pp. 352-354.

(79) See *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 454, ll. 15-16. Cf. H. A. Wolfson, "The Ḥāṭirānī in the Kalam and Ghazālī as Inner Motive Powers of Human Actions", *Studies in Mysticism and Religion*, presented to G. G. Scholem, Jerusalem, 1967, pp. 375-379.

decide that a thing does not come into being through God's power. [But] if you deny this (i.e. that a thing does not come into being through God's power), what is the meaning of the derivation of any of these things from other things (*tarallub al-ba'd min hādha 'alā al-ba'd*).⁽⁸⁰⁾ Al-Ghazālī answers saying that: "Concerning coming into being (*ḥudūth*) some of the determined things (*ba'd al-muḥaddarāt*) derive from others in the same way as a conditioned thing (*mashrūt*) derives from a condition (*shart*). Volition, then, comes out of the eternal power (*al-ḥudra al-azaliyya*) only after knowledge [comes out] and knowledge [comes out] only after life [comes out] and life [comes out] only after [the existence of] the substrate of life (i.e. the body). Just as it is inadmissible (*lā-yadjūzu*) to say that life derives from (*lahṣulu min*) a body, which is the condition for life, so it is inadmissible to say that about the rest of the stages of derivation (*darajāt al-tarīb*)." ⁽⁸¹⁾ Everything that happens in the world, al-Ghazālī asserts, is according to a necessary derivation (*tarīb wādjib*) and obligatory truth (*ḥaḳḳ lāzim*). It is impossible (*muḥāl*) that a conditioned thing should precede a condition.⁽⁸²⁾

Al-Ghazālī contradicts himself. Above he says that *some* determined things derive from others, whereas here he says that *all* that happens in the world comes about through a necessary derivation. This contradiction may be explained by a passage in *k. al-iḳlīsād*, in which al-Ghazālī distinguishes between necessary events (*lāzimāt*) which occur through a chain of conditions giving rise to conditioned responses (e.g. life-knowledge-volition), and necessary events such as cotton burning when it is near fire, which occur by virtue of the consecutiveness of custom (*bi-ḥukm ṭard al-'āda*). Events of the first kind must be connected to each other, and as for those of the second kind one can imagine their being disconnected with the violation of customs (*khark al-'ādāt*). Al-Ghazālī considers the first type

(80) See *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 317, ll. 15-17.

(81) See *ibid.*, ll. 20-23.

(82) See *ibid.*, p. 317, l. 27-p. 318, l. 2. According to al-Ghazālī (*k. al-iḳlīsād*, pp. 99-100), conditional correlation is one of three kinds of necessary relationships between two terms or entities. The other two are: 1. a reciprocal relationship, "according to which the negation of the one implies necessarily the negation of the other, e.g. right and left, above and below." and 2. "the relations of cause and effect, whereby the negation of the cause entails the negation of the effect only when the effect has one cause". See Fakhry, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

of events to be subject to the law of contradiction.⁽⁸³⁾ We may assume that al-Ghazālī's first assertion, that some determined things derive from others, represents his view as expressed in *k. al-iḳlīsād*, while his second assertion expresses his real view in *ihyā'*. Probably, al-Ghazālī changed his mind in *ihyā'* (which was written after *k. al-iḳlīsād*), but preferred to conceal his true opinion by contradicting himself. This system of contradicting oneself to conceal one's true doctrines was adopted by some thinkers in the Middle Ages.⁽⁸⁴⁾ The fact that in *ihyā'* the action of fire in burning is depicted as pure compulsion, as action which occurs necessarily, without any mention of the consecutiveness of custom, further proves that al-Ghazālī adheres to the second assertion, namely that everything that happens in the world happens through a series of necessary derivations on condition-conditioned chain, so this chain becomes imperative not only logically but also ontologically.

At this point al-Ghazālī relates a parable to prove that everything that is determined, depends when power exists, on the existence of a condition (*tawaḳḳuf al-maḳdūr ma'a wudjūd al-ḥudra 'alā wudjūd al-shart*).⁽⁸⁵⁾ The impurity of person sunk up to his neck in the water will not be removed from his organs even if the water surrounding him (*mulāḳin lahu*) removes impurity, until he washes his face. God's eternal power, al-Ghazālī explains in the parable, is present (*ḥāḍira*),⁽⁸⁶⁾ surrounds the determined things and is attached (*mulā'allika*) to them in the same way that the water surrounds man's body. But what is determined does not occur through the presence of this power alone, just as impurity is not removed by water until the right condition is fulfilled. Al-Ghazālī emphasizes that the fact that impurity is removed after washing one's face does not mean that the washing is the cause of its being removed. Similarly motion does not occur directly on account of power. When impurity is removed from a person's face it is removed

(83) See *k. al-iḳlīsād*, p. 46. Fakhry, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

(84) See L. Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, Glencoe, Illinois 1952, especially ch. 3, pp. 69-78. R. L. Nettler, "Ibn Khaldūn's Proof for God's Unity: A Problematic Passage in the Muḳaddimah", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* I (1979), pp. 151-183.

(85) See *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 318, l. 5.

(86) Probably he means "present in the determined things". The text has *fa-ḳadar al-ḥudra al-azaliyya ḥāḍira*. I could not find any meaning for the word *ḳadar* here.

from other organs by the water which environs them, and not through washing the face, which was only the condition. Once that condition is fulfilled the water, or power (the 'illa), becomes effective. 'Illa⁽⁸⁷⁾ means here God's eternal power. According to al-Ghazālī, this parable shows the derivation of determined things (*ṣudūr al-muḥaddarāl*) from the eternal power; the power is eternal (*al-ḡudra ḡadīma*) and the determined things come into being (*wa'l-maḡdūrāl ḡāditha*) from it.⁽⁸⁸⁾

To sum up, al-Ghazālī asserts that God's eternal power is always present in things,⁽⁸⁹⁾ but is actualized only through conditions. The real cause of the occurrence of events is God's power, which is revealed only in the presence of the right conditions. God has established an unchangeable scheme of derivation⁽⁹⁰⁾ according to which each thing is derived from another by God's power. There is no mention in the context of the parable of either the continuous creation of accidents or of the theory of habit ('āda)⁽⁹¹⁾ which are cornerstones of the Ash'arite theory of the universe.

Al-Ghazālī's repeated assertion (e.g. *ihyā'*, vol. IV, pp. 7-8, p. 318, l. 27-p. 319, l. 1), however that: "the meaning of man's acting is that he is the substrate in which God creates power after He creates in it volition after He creates in it knowledge" coincides with the Ash'arite theory of God's continuous creation of man's action. In short, al-Ghazālī, contradicts the implications of both the parable of washing and the parable of the water clock. Yet, al-Ghazālī seems to conceal from the ordinary reader his true opinion, which is found in these two parables, by repeating of the Ash'arite theory. This repetition of the orthodox doctrine and the insertion there of only a very

(87) For the term 'illa see L. Gardet, "Illa", EI², vol. III, pp. 1129-1132.

(88) See *ihyā'*, *ibid.*, II, 6-16. One may offer a modern example to illustrate al-Ghazālī's scheme. A car whose engine works does not move unless one gears it. The cause of the car's motion is the action of the engine but it will not move without gearing which is the condition for its motion. Gearing alone does not make the car move.

(89) Cf. Ibn Rushd's quotation of Aristotle in *tahāfut al-tahāfut*: "Everything that is in this world is only set together through the power which is in it from God; if this power did not exist in the things they could not last the twinkling of an eye". See S. van den Bergh's tr. Vol. I, p. 90, vol. II, p. 65 (n. 5 to page 90).

(90) See *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 8, II, 18-19.

(91) For Ibn Rushd's critique of the notion of "habit" ('āda) see *tahāfut al-tahāfut*, pp. 523-524. tr. S. van den Bergh, vol. I, p. 320, vol. II, p. 179 (n. 1 to p. 320).

few contradictory statements is reminiscent of Maimonides' way of writing as elucidated by L. Strauss: "We may therefore establish the rule that of two contradictory statements in the *Guide* or in any other work of Maimonides that statement which occurs least frequently, or even which occurs only once, was considered by him to be true."⁽⁹²⁾ One who reads our text carefully may draw the conclusion that even in his seeming acceptance of the theory of consecutive creation, al-Ghazālī does not diverge from the view he expresses in his two parables. In *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 120, l. 1, he says that God has a quality called "power" (*ḡudra*) from which creation (*al-khalk wa'l-ikhtirā'*) derives (*yaṣḡuru*). Elsewhere,⁽⁹³⁾ he explains how creation comes about: "Whenever the condition for a quality (*waṣf*) exists, [and] the substrate is ready to receive that quality (*ista'adda al-maḡall li-ḡabūl al-waṣf*) following (the fulfillment of) that condition,⁽⁹⁴⁾ then, that quality derives from God's generosity⁽⁹⁵⁾ and eternal power (*ḡaṣala min al-djūd al-ilāhi wa'l-ḡudra al-azaliyya 'inda ḡuṣūl al-isti'dād*).⁽⁹⁶⁾ Thus, according to al-Ghazālī, creation derives from God's eternal power when circumstances are suitable, i.e., when the necessary conditions are met. He says nothing about God who creates the qualities. On the contrary, al-Ghazālī uses intransitive verbs (*ṣadara*, *ḡaṣala min*) in order, we suggest, to express the notion that God does not intervene directly in nature but through a cause-effect chain derived from His eternal power.

Al-Ghazālī's use of the word *sunna*⁽⁹⁷⁾ instead of the commonly employed ('āda) in this context to denote the notion of derivation (*ḡarīb*)⁽⁹⁸⁾ is very significant. This word has inter

(92) See L. Strauss, *op. cit.*, p. 73. This article is not the place to discuss the question of whether al-Ghazālī holds esoteric doctrines. [Cf. H. Lazarus-Yafeh, *op. cit.*, ch. V: *The Esoteric Aspect of al-Ghazālī's Writings*]. My intention is only to try to prove that in this issue of causality al-Ghazālī conceals his true opinion. It is worth noting that in *tahāfut al-falāsifa*, too, he diverges only once from the Ash'arite doctrine.

(93) See *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 8, II, 16-17.

(94) I.e., life serves as a condition for knowledge.

(95) For God's generosity as the source of creation see Ibn Rushd, *tahāfut al-tahāfut*, p. 151. tr. S. van den Bergh, p. 90. Plato, *Tim.* 29, d, e. Plotinus, *Enn.*, v. 4, 1.

(96) *Isti'dād* as a philosophical term means the ability of an object to receive only one form and not two contradictory forms. See al-Ghazālī, *maḡāṣid*, p. 293.

(97) See *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 8.

(98) See *ihyā'*, vol. III, p. 35, II, 6-7: *ḡādha mā 'urifa min sunnat Allah ta'dūlā fī ḡarīb al-musabbabāt 'alā al-ashbāb*. "This is the known law of God, may He be

alia the meaning of: a. law, or rule; b. habit, custom.⁽⁹⁹⁾ Al-Ghazālī seems to have chosen it to persuade the ordinary reader that he does not deviate from Ash'arite doctrine when he speaks of *sunna* (custom), though he actually seems to consider *sunna* to be a law. Quoting *sūra* 33, v. 62 "One will not find in the law (*sunna*) of God any change", he seems to want to show that there is no change in the way things take place. The fact that al-Ghazālī uses here the word *sunna* to denote the chain of condition-conditioned things, further supports our conclusion (see p. 9) that he changed his mind in *ihyā'* when he stated that all events in the world come into being through necessity.

Consequently, when Wolfson (*Kalām*, pp. 550-51) translates the word *sunna* as "customary procedure" he fails to take its context into consideration. This statement of Wolfson (*ibid.*, p. 551) is also untenable: "It is similarly to be noted that, when in his *ihyā'* he describes the cleavage of water by a man's falling into it as a 'natural act' he uses the term 'natural' in the sense of 'customary'." Wolfson is wrong because al-Ghazālī considers cleaving water an action which occurs *necessarily* and *through compulsion* (see above, p. 87), features which cannot describe a "customary procedure". Elsewhere in *ihyā'* (vol. IV, p. 354, l. 1f) al-Ghazālī tells the following story: People complained to their prophet of the ugliness of their children. Then God told him: Order them to feed their pregnant women quince, since it beautifies the child. This is to be done in the third and fourth month, during which God shapes the child. So the people used to feed the pregnant women quince and the confined women fresh dates. From this story and others of its kind al-Ghazālī

exalted, in making effects derive from causes." Ibn Rushd uses the same phrase. See *manāhidj al-adilla*, ch. V, the 1st q., p. 200, ll. 15-20. *Tarīb al-musabbabāt* is a term used by the Muslim philosophers to denote a cause-effect relationship. It occurs also in al-Ghazālī's *makāsid al-falāsifa* (p. 288), in which he objectively and precisely explains the views of those philosophers, in the form of *tarīb* (or *tarallub*) *al-sabab wa'l-musabbabāt*. For other philosophical terms, occurring in al-Ghazālī see E. L. Ormsby, *An Islamic Version of Theodicy: The Dispute over al-Ghazālī's "Best of all Possible Worlds"*, unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University Micro Inter. Ann Arbor 1983, p. 240. Thus, H. Lazarus-Yafeh's statement (*op. cit.*, pp. 249ff) that common medieval philosophical terms "are entirely absent from these books by al-Ghazālī which scholars have accepted as authentic books written by him" and the conclusion she derives from this statement about some books ascribed to al-Ghazālī must be re-examined.

(99) See Lane, *op. cit.*, p. 1438.

draws the conclusion that "the causer of causes (*musabbib al-asbāb*)⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ made his law of the connection of effects to causes continue (*adjrā sunnatahu bi-rabḥ al-musabbabāt bi'l-asbāb*) in order to manifest [His] wisdom (*iḥḥāran li'l-ḥikma*)." Al-Ghazālī regards the remedies of quince and dates as causes subject to God's judgment (*musakhkhara bi-ḥukm allah*) just like the other causes are. Al-Ghazālī reasserts that the cause-effect chain is a law and that it expresses God's wisdom. This use of the words judgment (*ḥukm*) and wisdom (*ḥikma*) which connotes unchangeability indicates his intention which is that *sunna* is a law not a custom. In *tahāful* (p. 512, ll. 11-12) al-Ghazālī himself says that "whoever considers the habitual course of events in the world (*madjārī al-'ādāt*)⁽¹⁰¹⁾ an indispensable necessity (*lāzimatan luzūman ḍarūriyyan*) regards all this (i.e. the miracles) as impossible. He thus opposes the ascription of necessity to habit, because it excludes the possibility of miracles. Thus if we accept Wolfson's rendering of *sunna* as "customary procedure," how can we explain al-Ghazālī's self contradictory statements, namely the coincidence of custom with necessity in *ihyā'* on the one hand, and the opposition of such coincidence in *tahāful* on the other hand? We must admit that *sunna* in *ihyā'* is not equivalent to 'āda or *madjārī al-'ādāt* in *tahāful*. Moreover, nowhere in *tahāful* does al-Ghazālī employ the word nature (*ḥabī'a*). Ibn Rushd, however, states following Aristotle, that things that take place by nature take place invariably or in most cases.⁽¹⁰²⁾

Another issue on which al-Ghazālī deviates from the theory dominant in the *Kalām* is that of impossibility. For the *Kalām* whatever is imaginable is intellectually possible.⁽¹⁰³⁾

(100) For the term *musabbib al-asbāb* cf. H. A. Wolfson, *Religious Philosophy: A Group of Essays*, New York, 1965, p. 179, n. 5.

(101) S. van den Bergh's translation of *madjārī al-'ādāt* as "the ordinary course of nature" (vol. II, p. 313, l. 13) does not seem suitable to al-Ghazālī's theory in *tahāful* because he uses the word "nature" itself.

(102) See *tahāful*, p. 523, l. 10. tr. S. van den Bergh, vol. I, p. 320, vol. II, p. 180 (n. 4 to p. 320).

(103) Nevertheless, the Mutakallimun agree that there are impossibilities such as the Law of Contradiction, see al-Ghazālī, *tahāful*, p. 90. Tr. S. van den Bergh, vol. II, p. 40 (n. 1 to p. 53). Maimonides, *The Guide*, I, ch. 73, prop. 10. Cf. H. A. Wolfson, *Repercussions of the Kalām in Jewish Philosophy*, Cambridge, Mass. 1979, pp. 195-199. K. Gyekye, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32. For the Law of Contradiction see D. Ross, *Aristotle*, London 1966, pp. 159ff.

It is possible by reason that, for instance, fire may cool and water may heat, ⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ and that a stone may stand still in the air. ⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ This view is explained by al-Idjī as follows: "All possibilities (*mumkināt*) depend on God, Glory be to Him, directly (*iblidā'an*), and there is no connection between the [consecutive] things which come into being (*ḥawādith*) except by [God's] continuing the custom (*'āda*) of creating some things after others. Thus burning comes after fire touches and quenching of one's thirst follows drinking. But God may bring about touching without burning and burning without touching. The same applies to all other events." ⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ In *ihyā'* al-Ghazālī holds the opposite view. He explicitly states that it is impossible for a conditioned thing to precede a condition, e.g., volition must come after knowledge. "Possibility (*imkān*) means derivation (*tarīb*), and derivation does not admit change (*lā yaḵbalu al-taḡhyīr*)." ⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Likewise it is impossible that God would cause plants to sprout without man sowing or that a woman should give birth without sexual intercourse. Whoever expects God to perform such actions does not know God's law (*sunna*). ⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ These examples and others support our conclusion (p. 9), namely that the rule of derivation or the condition-conditioned chain is valid in the logical realm as well as in the ontological one. Thus al-Ghazālī expresses in *ihyā'* the same view he expresses in some sections in *lahāful*. ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

V. Now we are coming to our final conclusions. In *Ihyā'* al-Ghazālī reasserts the three principles illustrated by the parable of the water clock, namely: 1. God's wisdom and design (*ḥikma, tadbīr*). ⁽¹¹⁰⁾ 2. God's decree (*ḥadāṯ*). 3. God's de-

(104) See Maimonides, *loc. cit.*

(105) See al-Baghdādī, *uṣūl al-dīn*, Istanbul 1928, pp. 138-139.

(106) See al-Idjī, *mawāḳif*, vol. I, pp. 241-242. J. van Ess, *Die Erkenntnistheorie des 'Aḡudaddin al-Īrī*, Wiesbaden 1966, pp. 289-290. This notion is put forward by al-Ghazālī. See *tahāfut al-falāsifa*, pp. 517-518. Tr. S. van den Bergh, Vol. I, p. 316. *Idem*, *k. al-iḳtiṣād*, p. 46. Judah Halevi (d. 1140) gives a detailed description of the action of burning which is quite contrary to al-Ghazālī's theory. See *Kuzari*, v, 20. H. A. Wolfson, "Judah Halevi on Causality and Miracles", *Meyer Waxman Jubilee Volume*, Chicago 1966, pp. 138-139.

(107) See *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 8, l. 15.

(108) See *ibid.*, p. 330.

(109) See Alon, *op. cit.*, pp. 404-405.

(110) See *ihyā'*, vol. IV, p. 318, l. 4, and p. 80 above.

termination (*ḥadar*). ⁽¹¹¹⁾ (He does not make a clear distinction between the first and the second principles here, as he does in *al-maḥṣad* and *k. al-arba'īn*.) Indeed, one might assume that there is an essential difference between *ihyā'* on the one hand and *al-maḥṣad* and *k. al-arba'īn* on the other hand, because in the latter al-Ghazālī uses the verbs *ḥadatha* and *tawallada* in connection with causes, showing that he regards them as efficient causes, whereas in the former he considers causes to be conditions. Yet, the fact that al-Ghazālī uses the term nature (*ṭabī'a*) about man's actions and attributes heaviness to man's body proves that in his mind causes have efficacy on effects, although it is God who created these causes and maintains their influence. That God's eternal power does not operate directly but needs conditions to bring actions into being is what the parable of the water clock teaches us: The first cause makes all the instruments in the clock move, but the form (or quality) of each action of every instrument is determined not by its first cause but by the relation of each instrument to other instrument. These relations among the instruments constitute conditions. Thus, for instance, the falling ball will not ring if it does not touch iron. The ringing occurs by reason of three causes: a. the first cause, which makes the instruments move; b. the nature of the ball and iron (e.g. solids); c. the arrangement of the ball and iron (condition), i.e., the ball falls on iron.

Al-Ghazālī's theory is that God created things and their natures and that he established the plan by which things influence each other. The condition-conditioned chain that al-Ghazālī depicts in *ihyā'* is no other than the scheme he elaborates in *al-maḥṣad* and *k. al-arba'īn*. As we have stated, he combines divine causality with secondary causality, but the secondary causes also have inherent natures created and maintained by God. To sum up, al-Ghazālī's view of causality is the same in all three works. The only work in which he strictly adheres to the Ash'arite doctrine is *k. al-iḳtiṣād fī'l-i'tiḳād*.

What was al-Ghazālī's aim in putting forth his theory of causality? By establishing a cause-effect chain with God as its First Cause and Maintainer, al-Ghazālī affirms the following: a. God is Omnipotent and One, since He alone, at His will has created and continues to maintain the cause-effect chain.

(111) See *ibid.*, p. 8, ll. 18-20, p. 120 and p. 80 above.

b. God acts through His wisdom and not capriciously. c. Consequently it is possible to acquire knowledge about the world, since every event or thing has a cause, and things happen or change according to a fixed scheme.⁽¹¹²⁾ d. Man is obliged to choose his actions but his choice is really compulsory too. These four points constitute a compromise between orthodox Islam and philosophy. Points *a* and *d* represent the religious view, while points *b* and *c* represent the philosophical view.

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(112) Cf. *tahāfut*, pp. 529-530. Tr. S. van den Bergh, pp. 323-324. Fakhry, *op. cit.*, p. 126, n. 2. Courtenay, *op. cit.*, p. 87. Goodman, *op. cit.*, p. 111f. — I wish to thank Prof. S. Pines for his valuable remarks.