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but also metaphysical, not purely corporeal, but spiritual as well.

It is the qualitative life that "the Living, the Self-subsistent" imparts to His creatures, life with a new dimension. It is a life that cannot be described, estimated or evaluated in conventional mathematical terms. The life that Jesus had in mind was one whose source could be traced to love, even to the love of God Himself. Such a life was all-powerful to cast out hatred and bring in love among strife-born mankind. It was capable of taking away suspicion and anxiety from the minds of men and substituting for these attitudes confidence and mutual trust. With such a life, hope would displace fear, peace would reign where struggle and turmoil held suffering humanity in its grasp, harmony would supplant discord. Above all, by this God-given life people heretofore estranged from God would become reconciled to Him. And, by the same token, people heretofore estranged from their fellowmen or in conflict with each other become reconciled. By the love-inspired life of Christ, peace, harmony, justice, goodness, kindness, well-being become realities among all men. And over and above all this there is the added assurance: "Because I live, ye shall live also" (S. John xiv.19).

E. H. D.

THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN AL GHAZALI AND THE PHILOSOPHERS ON THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD

PART I

Few writings in the history of philosophy reflect such an impression of exciting intellectual conflict as the celebrated debate of the two Tahafat on whether the world is eternal or originated. It is also one of the central texts of Islamic philosophy. But the argument follows a somewhat devious course. It seems worth while to present within a short compass its main lines with some general comments.

The debate in its final form is contained in Ibn Rushd's Tahafat al-Tahafat, in the first and longest of the twenty discussions of the book. But in reality the discussion includes three distinct layers of thought, contributed by the best philosophical minds of Islam over a period of two centuries and a half.

(a) The two earlier Islamic philosophers, Al-Farabi (d. A.D. 950) and Ibn Sina (d. 1037), had upheld the Aristotelian position that the world as a whole was eternal in the past. Their conception was that matter has always existed, though continually taking different forms. They did not deny that God was an eternal Creator (Makul). But by this they meant that He constantly combines matter with new forms, not that He made the world out of nothing at a definite time in the past. In the same way God "creates" time, but there is no beginning. The arguments of the two philosophers incorporated many elements drawn from Aristotle and the later Greeks, and are themselves incorporated in Al-Ghazali's statement of them in Tahafat al-Tahafat. Although Al-Ghazali was concerned to refute Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, he took care first to understand their positions and present them in a plausible manner.

(b) The next layer is Al-Ghazali's answers to the Islamic philosophers, contained in his Tahafat al-Tahafat 4, completed in 1055. Al-Ghazali's view is that both the world and time were created by God out of absolutely nothing, at a moment in the past which is at a finite interval from the present. Thus for him khalq means the same as al-thana:

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1 This article is a modified version of a lecture given at the School of Oriental Studies, American University at Cairo. The second article deals with the third and fourth parts. Both were written while the author was the holder of a Ford Foundation Fellowship. The Foundation is not responsible for the views expressed.


3 Ed. M. Bouyges (Beirut, 1927), pp. 27-5. Referenced to as FT.

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i.e. the Cration of the world was an act of origination, of matter as well as of forms and time. This is in accordance with the apparent meaning of the Qur'an, at least as it was understood by the Mashahidi-
sus. But Al-Ghazali does not attempt to prove his own view. His object is only negative, to show that the philosophers have not proved theirs. Speaking sometimes on behalf of the Mashahidi-sus and some-
times for himself, he brings out inconsistencies or shows the lack of force in the philosophers' arguments.

(c) Ibn Rushd's Fatàrât al-Thabât was written at some time after 1186. In it he repeats the first two layers almost in their entirety, and gives his own criticisms paragraph by paragraph. He represents a third viewpoint, for his primary object is to show that Aristotle, if not the Islamic philosophers, had proved the eternity of the world (and of time). Thus he has several ways of answering Al-Ghazali. Sometimes he vindicates the arguments of Al-Farabi and Ibn Sînâ, supporting them with fresh statements of his own. Again he argues that Al-Ghazali has misunderstood them, and criticizes the philosop-
phers themselves, saying that they have misunderstood Aristotle (in which case his attacks are irrelevant because they do not touch the real proofs for the philosophic position).

The following summary of this complex debate covers the four proofs of the philosophers in the order of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd. Within each proof the precise order of the text is changed when ever a clearer view can be obtained by simplification or re-arrangement. Ibn Rushd is not distinguished from the earlier philosophers except where they hold different views. Questions of method are discussed at the end. The first proof of the philosophers for the eternity of the world depends on the Aristotelian concepts of cause and will. Every change that takes place must have a cause to determine its occurrence, and this cause must be the action of some external force, other than the object changed. A ball is moved by a racket, the racket by someone's arm pressing it, and so on. The rule applies not only to physical changes but also to acts of will and changes of mind, and not only of man but of God as well. Then if God with a change to occur, this can only be because some agent has determined Him to will it.

Now suppose that the world as a whole had come into existence in time and not existed from all eternity. Such a change from non-
existence to existence would be quite inexplicable on the above prin-
ciples. It could not have occurred owing to physical causes, for ex
hypothesi, time did not exist, and the world could not have arisen from an act of will by God, for this too would have had to be determined by some external factor leading Him to change His mind, and no such factors outside His mind yet existed. But even if, for the sake of argument, we suppose that there was such a determinist of the world

* The discussion of the first objection covers TT, pp. 25-46 and TT, pp. 7-56.  
* K 37 in the Cairo edition.
the Ash'ārites: the philosophers assert it is impossible to connect an eternal Will with temporal production; but how do they know this is impossible, especially for the Will of God? There is nothing self-contradictory in supposing such a cause with a delayed effect (even without supposing any obstacle). If they claim to know it by intuition, why do their opponents not share this intuition?\(^4\)

The philosophers' next line of attack was against the Ash'ārites' "time bomb" theory of creation. Al-Ghazālī expresses it for the philosophers thus: One time would be as good as another for the creation of the world, so it is impossible to find a differentiating principle (masā'ahāra) for God's choice of a finite time for the creation. A differentiating principle is necessary because it is impossible to imagine a choice between two completely similar things, without any differentiating reason for the preference. The same is true of the Divine Will as of human will.

The answer of Al-Ghazālī to this, is that will is essentially that which differentiates one object of choice from another. We need not ask a reason for its choice. Free will is just that which can choose between two similar alternatives. The argument is conducted on two levels: human and Divine will. On human will, Al-Ghazālī gives the classic kind of example: "Suppose two similar dates in front of a man who has a strong desire for them, but who is unable to take them both. Surely he will take one of them through a quality in him the nature of which is to differentiate between two similar things." It is absurd to say that "the man will remain forever hungry and perplexed, looking at the dates without taking one of them, and without a power to choose or to will, distant from his desire." Ibn Rushd's reply to this is that the real choice in such a case is not merely between one date and the other, but between taking either one and leaving both, and there is a clear reason for taking, namely hunger.

At this crucial moment in the argument some comments will be in order. Vai den Bergh says that Ibn Rushd has missed the point completely. Certainly the will is going to choose one or the other of the dates rather than go hungry, "but the question is what determines its taking the one rather than the other." But Ibn Rushd has at any rate indicated a very relevant factor in the situation, namely the preponderance of a desire to eat. From this it can be inferred that the man will take the largest possible date as soon as possible, and if they are of equal size he will take the one that presents itself at the moment when that fact is discovered.

The argument on Divine Will follows a parallel course. Al-Ghazālī gives some examples of features of the cosmos which might have been different without being either better or worse: e.g. the sphere of the

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\(^4\) This mention of method will be discussed more fully in the second article.

\(^6\) TT, p. 41; 7T, p. 37.

\(^7\) 32.1 (i.e. note 1 to p. 33 of his translation).

\(^8\) This reference is at the end of the second article.

\(^9\) 7T, pp. 46-50; TT, pp. 56-65.
the earth is only necessary if the earth is a body with weight, and so on. It is not necessary in itself. So what causes bodies with weight; to be attracted to each other? Perhaps we can find some more general laws of the universe. But these in turn will not give us the element of unconditional necessity, which was supposed by Ibn Sina and others to be needed for a complete explanation. The whole chain of causes is, therefore, conditional, unless we assume the existence of an ultimate First Cause which is "necessary in itself." Leaving aside the falsity of this argument, we are only concerned with its conclusion as held by the philosophers: namely, that there must be a necessary eternal Being as the ultimate cause of temporal events. This cause is not merely at the beginning of time, it must be acting continually to create or cause every event in time; for the chain of causes mentioned in the above argument is not the temporal series, but the logical series from more particular to more general, all in operation simultaneously. Al-Ghazalli then argues: if the philosophers admit such a cause for each event in time, why cannot they admit it for the world as a whole in time; i.e., why cannot God cause the whole world to arise at any moment He wills?

Ibn Rushd protests that Al-Ghazalli has misinterpreted the way in which the eternal Being causes any temporal event. Each event has its accidental cause in an infinite series of preceding temporal beings; (such a series is apparently possible). Only the whole eternal series is causal essentially by an eternal Being acting upon the whole. Thus the eternal Being is not a cause of temporal beings qua temporal, and so the philosophers have not admitted that God can act directly in time.

Further on, however, Al-Ghazalli makes a more careful statement of the philosophers' theory of creation, which does try to avoid impeding them a direct intervention of God in temporal events. But then he proceeds to show that their theory is unsatisfactory and fails to explain change. The philosophers link the eternal Being with the temporal through an intermediary being, the outermost heavens, which is in endless circular movement: this movement is eternal essentially, in its universal aspect, being circular and endless, but it is reversible and correlative in its particular respect of its particular movement which are transient, always changing. This theory was produced by the Greek philosophers to get them out of a serious difficulty: how could a changeless Being, as God was supposed to be, be a cause of movement? Movement can only be caused by another movement by its mover; but a changeless God could not stir such a movement in himself. The intermediary being is supposed to follow more easily from an eternal changeless Cause, because it is itself eternal and changeless in a certain respect. But at least it moves, so that it can in turn start up all the particular movements of the world.

All this, however, is a subterfuge. The difficulty as Al-Ghazalli points out remains. For there is obscurity in the line on at least one side of the intermediary. He puts a dilemma: Is the circular movement the principle of temporal things because of its permanence (changelessness)? But how can a temporal event proceed from something because of its permanence? Or is it the principle of temporal things because of its arising anew (changing)? But what arises anew will need a cause for its arising anew, and we have an infinite regress.

Ibn Rushd says this is sophistical. The temporal proceeds from the circular movement qua temporal; but this process does not need a fresh cause, for it is "not a new fact, but an eternal act." This is the last word in the discussion—Ibn Rushd always has that advantage. But it is still not clear how an essentially same movement (the cycle) could cause the changes in the world.

This whole argument is difficult. What is its result? It would seem that Al-Ghazalli has shown the unsatisfactoriness of the philosophic theory of change in time, arising from an eternal changeless Being, without any act of His in time. One may conclude with him that if the temporal events of the world are caused by a Creator, they must be caused by Him in a more individual fashion, and He must be able to act in time directly. And in this case there is no reason why He should not also have created the world as a whole by a direct act in time, not from eternity.

The sages more of the philosophers (leaving aside Ibn Rushd) resolves around time: is it eternal or finite? We may ask: how is the existence of time relevant to the existence of the world? It is so because of an Aristotelian assumption, that the existence of time depends on the existence of movement, and thus of a moving being. Aristotle says that time is the measure of movement. So if it can be proved that time is eternal, it would follow that a moving being is eternal, i.e., the world.

Modern thought in general does not accept Aristotle's assumption. We think of time as some kind of framework in which movement occurs, and which is measured by movement—e.g. the day of 24 hours is measured by the movement of the sun between noon and noon. What kind of reality time has, in what sense is it objective or subjective, is a matter for discussion. But whatever it is, its existence does not depend on the actual existence of our measuring-stick of it, viz. movement in space. Perhaps the concept of time can only be grasped from some examples of actual movement, but when once grasped it can be understood as having an existence beyond any known actual movement. It can be thought of as a framework for possible movements. Since no limit can be set to such a framework, time cannot be conceived as finite but only as eternal. But this proves absolutely nothing about the

11 TT, p. 64.
12 TT, pp. 51-66, quoted in TT, p. 64-67.
length of time for which the world has existed. The argument about time is thus irrelevant.

This point, however, is not taken up by Al-Ghazalli. He apparently accepts the Aristotelian assumption which ties time to actual movement. Therefore, there are only two alternatives:

Either time and a moving world are both eternal. Or time and a moving world are both finite. He tries to prove that there is no reason why time should not be finite. This is not too difficult on the Aristotelian conception of time, for the existence of time is taken to be only co-extensive with the existence of a moving world, and there is no evidence that our moving world is not finite. Any extension of time beyond this world thus has no more basis than imagination, as Al-Ghazalli repeatedly says.

In fact the philosophers are in a difficulty, which starts in a contradiction in Aristotle’s own thought. If time is nothing but an attribute of movement, then the only valid way to find out the extent of time is from the evidence of the extent of movement. But Aristotle in the Physics shifts his ground and argues from a more natural concept of time: Whenever the world began, he can always observe a time before it, and this time must be eternal. Then he goes on to deduce from this eternal time an eternal movement, because time cannot exist without movement! In either words he has reversed his own correct order of reasoning, and instead of inferring the extent of time from the extent of movement, he has inferred the extent of movement from the extent of time—an illegitimate process both on his own assumptions and on modern assumptions. The Islamic philosophers followed him in this process. Al-Ghazalli, therefore, accepting Aristotelian time as derived from actual movement, has only to show that any extension of time beyond actual movement is purely imaginary.

Ibn Rushd, however, stands aside from this part of the argument, saying that the previous Islamic philosophers’ proof is merely dialectical because it makes an assumption about God being in time. It is not obvious how his objection is relevant. For here it has been readily possible to state the main outlines of the discussion without referring to God.

The argument is carried by Al-Ghazalli to a new point, the analogy between time and space. He says: the philosophers admit that space is finite, because it is an attribute of body which is finite. So why do they not admit likewise that time is finite, because it is an attribute of finite movement? This is an argumentum ad hominem: But it is a good way of showing the weakness of the philosophers’ position, namely that they are unable to prove the infinity of movement, though this ac-

13 Book viii, Ch. 1.
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PART II

The philosophers' third and fourth proofs of the eternity of the world are both based on the concept of possibility.

In the third proof 1 the argument turns around the possibility of the world as a whole. It can be stated very briefly, as follows:

Everyone must admit that at least the possibility of the world's existence is eternal; for it could never have been impossible and then become possible. But what can possibly exist eternally must actually do so, because, as Ibn Rushd puts it, "what can receive eternity cannot become corruptible" 2, i.e. have a beginning or ending.

It is not clear how this conclusion follows, until we see that the argument rests on a hidden assumption, pointed out by Van den Bergh 3 that the world as a whole is ungenerated. Now everything ungenerated is eternal, because by definition it could never have come into existence or been corrupted. In this case it can be argued: the world is certainly possible. It has also existed actually at some time. But if it existed at any time, it must have done so at every time, since it is not subject to generation or decay (al-fann al-lasiíd).

The assumption made, that the world is ungenerated, begs the whole question at issue, as Van den Bergh has shown. If we substitute "Socrates" for "the world" we can start it with the premise: "the possibility of Socrates' existence is eternal." But it is obvious that we cannot prove from this that Socrates is actually eternal.

Al-Ghazālī makes this objection, saying quite correctly that eternal possibility does not imply eternal actuality, "for reality does not conform to possibility but differs from it." 4 He does not see the hidden assumption, that the world as a whole is something ungenerated. Even if he had seen it, he would not have accepted it as a proved fact.

The fourth proof 5 concerns the relation of possibility to matter, inside the world. The philosophers' argument can be stated as follows. While the world as a whole is ungenerated and uncorrupted, the world in detail is continually changing. Change means the combination of fresh forms in matter, making new things actual. Now every new combination was eternally possible. But possibility requires a substratum, matter, in which the changes of form take place. Therefore this substratum, matter, must also be eternal.

This is the essence of the philosophers' argument. Here a criticism may be offered, which does not occur in Al-Ghazālī. It seems to me that the philosophers, including Ibn Rushd, confuse logical possibility with possibility. Then they compose an argument by selecting the most favorable feature of each of the two concepts, as follows: every possibility is eternal; matter is implied by every possibility; therefore matter is eternal.

In the yelaginion, stated thus, it is obvious that the supposed middle term is ambiguous, that is to say there is no real middle term. If we take each of the two concepts and apply it exclusively in the yelaginion, we can see that it does not lead to the desired conclusion.

First, let us take possibility in its correct logical sense. We say that any state of affairs is possible if its existence is not logically impossible owing to self-contradiction or some other logical absurdity. In this sense, the major premise is correct, for the existence of each changing thing in the world was always a possibility. But no substratum of actual matter is implied by this logical possibility. Therefore, the eternity of matter does not follow.

Now consider the other alternative, potentiality. Here the minor premise is correct, that matter is implied by every possibility; for in the Aristotelian system potentialities belong to actually existing matter. This boy has the potentiality of becoming a man, but not that of becoming a stone. In the same way everything has its fixed and limited potentialities, according to the nature of its species. What the potentialities of each thing are can only be discovered by empirical observation of the development of real things. So potentialities are a kind of attribute, which can only be spoken of in connection with real things. Their existence implies the existence of some matter, in the sense that they only exist where matter exists. But if we turn to the major premise and say "Every potentiality is eternal," we can now see that there is no justification for such an assertion. Indeed potentialities are peculiarly temporal, for they belong to instances of species only at a particular stage of development. Therefore once more there is no proof of the eternity of matter.

Al-Ghazālī does not see this ambiguity in the philosophers' argument, nor does Ibn Rushd. Their discussion revolves around logical possibility only, and deals with the ontological status of possibility. Is it subjective or objective? This is a very difficult question. The discussion of it in Tahāfat has great intrinsic interest, but no relevance to the question about the world. For even if we accept the philosophers' view, that possibility has some kind of objective existence as an object of knowledge, still this would prove nothing about the actual existence of the world, which is the point at issue.

Our conclusion from the two arguments from possibility must be that nothing can be proved about the actual from the possible. This is inevitable because the nature of the actual can only be known from evidence, and the possible provides no evidence. The logically possible always offers at least two alternatives, for if "A is B" is possible, "A
is not B" must also be possible; but logic provides no way of choosing between them and deciding which is true. Such a decision can only come from actuality, by observation and inference. In the issue before us, both an eternal world and a finite world are possible; therefore no amount of reflection about possibility will tell us which is actual.

From this survey the four proofs of the first discussion of the Tahiṣfat, our conclusion is that in none of them have the philosophers made out their case for the eternity of the world. This partly, no doubt, due to the superior skill and clarity of Al-Ghazali, and the some- what disappointing performance of Ibn Rushd in this debate. But there is a more essential reason, connected with the methods of the two par- ties (the philosophers and Al-Ghazali). We now examine their theories of knowledge and their methods of aiming at the truth about such questions as the origin of the world. We shall confine ourselves first to discussing their rational methods, and then mention their views on revelation at the end.

For the philosophers, the truth about the world can be deduced by demonstrative arguments (syllogisms) which make use of sound pre- missers. And the premises can be known in two ways: by observation of the world, which gives us empirical knowledge, and by intellectual ap- preciation of primary axioms, which gives us intuitional knowledge. Examples of such axioms, in the Aristotelian tradition, are: every event must have a cause; causes produce their effects necessarily; the cause cannot be identical with that part of the object which is moved or af- fected.

These axioms are not analytic statements, known to be true by mere analysis of language. But they are thought of as no less ultimate truths, which cannot be proved or disproved by further argument. The test of their certainty is that all men of sufficient understanding and education admit them, just as anyone with these qualities admits mathematical truths. Consequently, if we accept the axioms of the Aristotelian sys- tem, together with its empirical knowledge or beliefs, we should be able to work out for ourselves the very same conclusions about the world — provided there are no fallacies in the reasoning on either side.

The philosophers do not admit imagination as a source of truth. A good imagination is a great help to a man, in enabling his intellect to grasp quickly the relevant connections between facts and "see the middle term." But the imagination of objects or of relations between them is in itself no guarantee of the reality of the objects or the rela-

tions.

When we come to Al-Ghazali, we have to get rid of a false impres- sion which has become traditional concerning his attitude to reason. This is the idea that Al-Ghazali mistrusted reason. Such an idea can only lead to confusion about him, for one may ask: "What was Al- Ghazali doing in his Tahiṣfat?" To say that he was carrying on an activity which he rejected later, when he became a Sādhīf, will only lead us to worse confusion when we read his later books, for many of them are just as much works or reason as Tahiṣfat al-Tahiṣfat. His whole view of reason can only be learned from a careful study of his biography and doctrines. Much could be said on this subject, but here comment will be confined to his Tahiṣfat.

The fact is that Al-Ghazali accepts in principle all the rational sour- ces of knowledge accepted by the philosophers: observation, axioms and reasoning. He also rejects imagination, emphatically. The difference between him and the philosophers, in the sphere of rational knowledge, is that he rejects much of their particular reasoning as fallacious or contradictory, and some of their most important axioms as not known by any intuition. Their faulty reasoning might no doubt be regarded as remediable. But the weakness of their axioms is more serious; it leads him to conclude that the philosophers' positions on the origin of the world, and other questions, cannot be proved by direct rational methods. Reason is valid as far as it goes, but it does not cover as much ground as the philosophers think.

The disagreement of method, therefore, between the philosophers and Al-Ghazali resolves itself in the main in this: that the philo-
sophers place more reliance on intuition and so accept a greater number of axioms of reason. What happens when they assert that something is known by intuition and Al-Ghazali denies it? An example occurs in Tahiṣfat al-Tahiṣfat pp. 20-21. The philosophers have asserted that it is impossible to see in an eternal Will (of God) a cause producing the world in time, after a delay and not from eternity. Al-Ghazali answers, on behalf of the Ash'arites, that such an assertion of impossi-
bility must either be proved by argument or known by intuition, by a direct necessity of thought. If it is proved, the philosophers should bring forth their argument. If it is known by intuition, why do their opponents the Ash'arites not share this intuition? Ibn Rushd believes that the assertion in question is derived from the axiom "Effec-
t follows cause immediately," and he answers Al-Ghazali's methodological objection by saying: "It is not a condition of objective truth that it should be known to all." But this as it stands is an unsatisfactory answer. For, as Van den Bergh points out, "To Aristotelians the test of the objective truth of first principles is their universal acknowledge-
ment. Perhaps Ibn Rushd is thinking of the well-known qualifications of the principle of universal acknowledgement: that the judge of philo-
sophical truth must have natural intelligence and an intellectual edu-
cation. Elsewhere he says that when someone denies a truth that is cer-
tain and evident, it must be because he is unintelligent or uneducated. If the answer is still unsatisfactory: for a man like Al-Ghazali him-
self, for instance, had all the required qualities and could understand
the philosophers’ assertion perfectly well; but he could still reject it.

The fact is that when such a conflict arises about a supposed intu

ition, it is no use saying dogmatically, “My intuition is sound and yours

is unsound;” or “I am qualified to understand and you are not.”

We should be able to obtain agreement from every reasonable judge. If

we cannot, then it is well to look at the supposed intuition again more

clearly and ask whether it really is one.

In modern times we have learnt to do this more and more, under the

influence of Hume and Kant in particular. Hume showed that every

sensible statement can only be justified as true in one of two ways:

either we know it analytically, by simply understanding the meaning

of our language, as in definitions; or it must be justified ultimately

by some empirical observation. Thus we can learn nothing about the

real world by supposed axioms of reason. For instance, if someone

asserts: “Every effect follows its cause by a logical necessity,” we

must ask: “How do you know that?” If he answers: “I know it be-

cause it is implied in the notions of cause and effect as I understand

them,” we must tell him: “You may understand concepts as you like,

but you cannot show that this kind of cause and effect exists in the

real world, for you cannot point out one necessary connection between ob-

served events.” Necessary connections exist primarily between state-

ments or propositions, when one logically implies another. We can say

boastfully that an event implies another, but it can do so only in com-

bination with a natural law, and all laws are known only empirically,

not as logically necessary. Kant did not accept Hume’s sweeping theory

entirely, but he was aware of the difficulty posed by synthetic state-

ments about the world which appear to be known only à priori, not by

any empirical evidence. In the case of axioms about the origin of the

world, he showed in the “Antinomies of pure reason” that opposite

assertions can appear equally convincing if we follow the old dogmatic

method of starting from supposed axioms of reason; and he gave the

arguments on both sides, “proving” both the eternity of the world and

its beginning in finite time.*

The conclusion we have to draw about the world is then as follows.

Let us take the statement “The world is eternal.” The writer does not

question that this statement has a meaning, as some people would (the

logical positivists). It is taken here as meaningful, also as synthetic;

i.e., “eternal” is an attribute not contained in the concept of “world.”

I then say myself: the opposite statement, “The world had a begin-

ning in time, at a finite interval from the present,” is equally meaning-

ful (and synthetic). I can conceive either statement as being true. How

then am I to decide which is really true? I have absolutely no empirical

evidence, since prehistory, geology and astronomy do not take us back to

a known beginning of all things. The arguments which employ

Glimpses of Turkish Opinion

Below are a few representative translations from Turkish periodicals read over the last six months, followed by a few tentative deductions and questions arising from their subject matter.

The first contain material representing Islam as a religion. For the last six months, the Istanbul Daily, Yeni Sabah, has been running in daily installments a highly imaginative and idealised life of Muhammad. All through Ramadhan the same paper devoted a quarter page every day to religious instruction, headed: Corner for Ramadhan. This consisted of a column of "Inspiration from the Qur'an," i.e. orthodox teaching on a chosen Quranic text or a dissertation on a duty such as fasting, a short biography of a prominent Muslim personality, and a list of the prayers at the leading mosques for the current day.

The following four translations are from Corner for Ramadhan.

"Once upon a time, no rain fell upon a village for many months. The crops did not ripen, the valleys dripped dry, famine threatened. One day, the inhabitants began to pray. Thousands lifted open hands towards Heaven, directed their hearts towards God. But it was all of no avail, not a tiny cloud appeared in the sky. The people, weary and disheartened, returned to their homes. One from amongst them, however, feeling very sad, threw himself down in the shade of a tree. Then he saw a man of sick appearance, thin as a shadow, raising his arms to Heaven; a few minutes later the sun-drenched ground was darkened and merciful drops of rain began to fall. The mother was very much surprised and moved and followed the mysterious stranger. Upon discovering that he was a servant in a household he bought him from his master. The servant attached himself loyally to his new master, doing what he was told and evading what his master did not wish. This servant was rich, however, that although he belonged to one man he was the servant of all and loved everyone. The master was pleased with him but often thought about the day the rain had fallen. Why had Al-Hakk refused the prayers of a great multitude and accepted this man's prayer? At last he could keep silent no longer but asked the servant for an explanation. The servant said:"

"I said to Al-Hakk: Lord! In the name of Thy love for me and my love for Thee, let Thy mercy fall upon this village." Then he entered into his room and threw himself upon the carpet, saying:

'O God! They want to learn Thy secrets from me. Silence me!' Then he gave up his spirit to his Beloved, and left this world.

"One Ramadhan, in summer, a Bektashi was fasting. But at mid-day, he felt so stupefied under the burning noonday sun that he was forced..."