

Soul-searching at the Dawn of Jewish Philosophy: A Hitherto Lost Fragment of al-Muqammaṣ's *Twenty Chapters*

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Introduction

The fact that Jewish systematic philosophy emerged under Islam, and the crucial importance of the Islamic context for understanding the flourishing of the Judeo-Arabic philosophical output, have long been recognized. As already stated succinctly by Shlomo Pines, “in the sphere of philosophical literature... Jewish thinkers had recourse primarily to the books of their Muslim counterparts,” whereas “rare and of secondary significance is that relationship to the teaching of their Jewish predecessors.”¹ Regarding the earliest stage of Judeo-Arabic philosophy, it was commonly assumed that these Muslim counterparts belonged mainly to the first school of Islamic rationalist theology, the Mu‘tazila. The close association of Jewish thinkers with the Mu‘tazila and their intense involvement in this school have indeed become increasingly clear in the last generation. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, various libraries became available to scholars, disclosing invaluable manuscript collections. Foremost among these is the Firkovich collection, which contains hundreds of Mu‘tazilite manuscripts that were copied and studied by Jews. Many of these manuscripts are written in Judeo-Arabic, that is to say, Arabic in Hebrew characters; and in many cases these Judeo-Arabic texts are the sole surviving testimony for an otherwise lost Mu‘tazilite work.

The indebtedness, and even servile adherence, of early Jewish authors to the

1 Sh. Pines, “Scholasticism after Thomas Aquinas and the Teachings of Ḥasdai Crescas and his Predecessors,” *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Science and Humanities* 1.10 (1967), p. 1.

Mu‘tazila was forcefully stated in the twelfth century by Maimonides, in his brief sketch of the history of Jewish philosophy (*Guide*, I, 71).² With regard to the first generation of Jewish philosophers, however, Maimonides’ sweeping evaluations must be challenged on several counts. Early Jewish thinkers did not adopt Mu‘tazilite ideas blindly, as Maimonides claimed, but rather selectively, as evidenced by their occasional dissent from these ideas. Nor did they follow the Mu‘tazila exclusively, and other influences must be taken into account in the study of early Jewish philosophy.³

The author of the fragment published below, Dāwūd ibn Marwān al-Muqammaṣ, is a key figure in the emergence of Jewish speculative thought. Large parts of his work are, unfortunately, still not available, and may no longer be extant. His available writings, however (which have come to light mostly from the Firkovitch collection), have contributed significantly to our ability to correct Maimonides’ historical sketch and to reconstruct the emergence of medieval Jewish philosophy.

The present article focuses on a new fragment of al-Muqammaṣ’s *Twenty Chapters*, identified several years ago by Bruno Chiesa.⁴ In what follows I will recapitulate what is known regarding al-Muqammaṣ’s biography and his writings, then delve into the specific issues with regard to which the new fragment adds to our knowledge. The Judeo-Arabic text and an annotated English translation are presented at the end of the article.

2 *Dalālat al-Ḥā’irīn*, ed. I. Joel (Jerusalem 1931), pp. 122–123; *The Guide of the Perplexed*, translated by Shlomo Pines (Chicago and London 1963), pp. 176–177.

3 For a detailed discussion of Maimonides’ historical sketch, see S. Stroumsa, “Al-Fārābī and Maimonides on the Christian Philosophical Tradition: a Re-evaluation,” *Der Islam* 68 (1991), pp. 263–87; eadem, “The Muslim Context of Medieval Jewish Philosophy,” in S. Nadler and T. Rudavsky (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Jewish Philosophy: From Antiquity through the Seventeenth Century* (forthcoming).

4 I wish to express my gratitude to Bruno Chiesa for generously allowing me to publish this fragment, and to Sabine Schmidtke for her help in examining it. I also wish to thank Haggai Ben-Shammai and Robert Brody, who read a draft of this article and offered valuable suggestions. The final reading and analysis of the text, and whatever shortcomings they may have, are of course my own.

Al-Muqammaṣ and his Place in Judeo-Arabic Thought

The biographical data concerning Dāwūd ibn Marwān al-Muqammaṣ come mostly from the tenth-century Karaite author al-Qirqisānī, to whose information we can add some insights gleaned from al-Muqammaṣ's own work.⁵ Al-Muqammaṣ lived in the area of Syria and northern Iraq, where he converted to Christianity and studied in the Christian academy in Nisibis. His teacher Nānā has been identified with the Jacobite theologian Nonnus (d. ca. 860). This identification, and the tenor of al-Muqammaṣ's own work, suggest the first half of the ninth century as a plausible dating of al-Muqammaṣ's *floruit*. Having returned to Judaism at some later stage, al-Muqammaṣ composed the first Judeo-Arabic theological *summa* (whose structure was then followed closely by Sa'adya in his *Kitāb al-Amānāt*);⁶ the first systematic tractate of Judeo-Arabic Biblical exegesis, which he translated (*naqala*) from Christian Syriac commentaries (and in all probability adapted to Judaism);⁷ and probably the earliest Judeo-Arabic anti-Christian polemical works.⁸ About three quarters of al-Muqammaṣ's theological work, the *Twenty Chapters* ('*Ishrūn Maqāla*),

5 On al-Muqammaṣ's biography and his name, see the Introduction in S. Stroumsa, *Dāwūd ibn Marwān al-Muqammaṣ's 'Ishrūn Maqāla* (Leiden 1989) [henceforward referred to as *IM*; references to the text of the *Twenty Chapters* will indicate the chapter (in Roman numerals) as well as the numbered paragraph, as marked in the edition]; B. Chiesa, "Dāwūd al-Muqammaṣ e la sua opera," *Henoah* 18 (1996), pp. 121–155; S. Stroumsa, "From the Earliest Known Judaeo-Arabic Commentary on *Genesis*," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 27 (2002), pp. 375–395, especially pp. 375–379.

6 Cf. Stroumsa, Introduction to *IM*, pp. 23–33; eadem, *Saadia Gaon: A Jewish Thinker in a Mediterranean Society (Jewish Culture in Muslim Lands and Cairo Geniza Studies)*, Tel-Aviv University, ed. M. A. Friedmann; Tel-Aviv 2001) [Hebrew].

7 See Qirqisānī's *Introduction to Genesis*, published by H. Hirschfeld, *Qirqisānī Studies (Jews' College Publications* 6, London 1918), p. 40; G. Vajda, "Du prologue de Qirqisānī à son commentaire sur la Genèse," in M. Black and G. Fohrer (eds.), *In Memoriam Paul Kahle* (Berlin 1968), pp. 222–231, on p. 224; Stroumsa, "From the Earliest Known Judaeo-Arabic Commentary on *Genesis*" (n. 5 above), *passim*.

8 See D. J. Lasker and S. Stroumsa, *The Polemic of Nestor the Priest: Qiṣṣat Mujādalāt al-ʿUsqūf and Sefer Nestor ha-Komer* (Jerusalem 1996), vol.1, p. 8.

have been discovered so far, including most of the first fifteen chapters.⁹ The text of these chapters, however, is also incomplete, as there are several lacunae in the manuscript. Furthermore, most of the extant text was preserved in a unique, often faulty manuscript, and the reading remains conjectural at times. The discovery of new fragments of the *Twenty Chapters* can thus add significantly to our knowledge of al-Muqammaṣ's thought, and may lead to a modification of previous assessments.

In my edition of the *Twenty Chapters*, almost twenty years ago, I offered a rather reserved evaluation of al-Muqammaṣ's role in the development of Jewish philosophy, pointing to the fact that "Jewish theology was shaped by the second generation of Judaeo-Arabic theologians, such as Sa'adya and Qirqisānī".¹⁰ This evaluation, I now believe, does not do al-Muqammaṣ justice, and must be revised. It is of course true that al-Muqammaṣ never achieved the leadership position of Sa'adya, and that his writings did not attain the centrality of the latter's work. Compared to that of Sa'adya or of Qirqisānī, al-Muqammaṣ's work lacks the specifically Jewish flavor which could have allowed it to become a major resource for the Jewish community. Al-Muqammaṣ must, however, be evaluated against the backdrop of previous Jewish systematic philosophy, or rather against the glaring absence of such philosophy.

Eight centuries separate al-Muqammaṣ from his nearest known Jewish predecessor, Philo of Alexandria. Al-Muqammaṣ's groundbreaking achievements can be fully appreciated if we consider the ingenuity and daring needed to realize that literary genres and ways of thought, which were conspicuously absent from Jewish literature, must not necessarily be construed as inherently alien to it. Although it is of course possible, and even probable, that other Jewish intellectuals began to be exposed to systematic philosophical thinking around the same time, al-Muqammaṣ seems to have

9 Chapter Sixteen has survived in a Hebrew translation, incorporated in Judah Ben Barzillai's *Commentary on Sefer Yezira*. See the Introduction to *IM*, pp. 39–40.

10 Introduction to *IM*, p. 35.

been the one who, by taking the giant strides to Christianity and then back to Judaism, transported the acquired literary baggage with him and introduced it into the Jewish world. Al-Muqammaṣ's innovative role deserves to be fully appreciated, as indeed it was by many of his near contemporaries.¹¹

The correct appreciation of al-Muqammaṣ's pioneering role is of paramount importance not only in order to give this trailblazer his due, but also in order to take full advantage of the glimpse he allows us into a formative period of Arabic thought. Al-Muqammaṣ's theological work is not only the first Judeo-Arabic summa known to us, it is also the earliest surviving summa belonging to the school of *kalām*, as all extant Muslim works of this genre are significantly later. The first half of the ninth century was a period of gestation, in which the magma of shifting ideas had not completely set: school traditions (of both *kalām* and philosophy) were still in the making, and the movement which translated large portions of the classical philosophical and scientific heritage into Arabic was far from complete, and was in fact gathering momentum. Furthermore, our knowledge of the intellectual scene in this period is rather sketchy. It may of course happen that newly discovered fragments pertaining to the thought of this period reveal no exciting novelty except their early date. There is, however, a high likelihood that any newly discovered Arabic fragment will disclose an unexpected piece of information, especially if this

11 Daniel ibn al-Māshīṭa, writing in 1223, mentions al-Muqammaṣ specifically as the first Jewish philosopher; see the quotation in P.B. Fenton, "Daniel Ibn al-Māshīṭa's *Tuqwīm al-Adyān*: New light on the oriental phase of the Maimonidean controversy," in J. Blau and S.C. Reif (eds.), *Genizah research after ninety years: The case of Judaeo-Arabic* (Cambridge 1992), pp. 74–81, on p. 77 and note 21; S. Stroumsa, "Saadya and Jewish Kalam," in D. H. Frank and O. Leaman (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Jewish Philosophy* (Cambridge 2003), pp. 71–90, especially p. 77. Al-Muqammaṣ is cited by Bahyā ibn Paqūda (d. ca. 1080), Yehuda ben Barzillai (d. 1130), Moses Ibn Ezra (d. after 1138), Yeda'ya ha-Penini Bedershi (d. 1340) and Jacob ben Solomon Ṣarfati (at the end of the fourteenth century) among the Rabbanites; by Karaite authors including Qirqisānī, Yefet ben 'Eli, Judah Hadassi (d. 1148), and by the fifteenth century Ibn al-Hītī. To the list of Jewish medieval philosophers who refer to him by name, one must add his palpable influence on authors who do not mention him, for example Sa'adya (cf. Stroumsa, *Saadia Gaon* [n. 6 above]).

fragment comes from the first Judeo-Arabic theological *summa*. The fragment published here is not disappointing in this respect, as it touches upon several unresolved questions.

Al-Muqammaṣ's Discussion of the Soul, Between *Kalām* and Philosophy

Throughout the *Twenty Chapters* al-Muqammaṣ uses, as an organizing scheme, the paradigm of the four noetic questions: whether a thing exists, what is it, how it is, and why it is so. He applies this paradigm to knowledge, to the world, and to God. Chapter Ten of the *Twenty Chapters* examines the applicability of the third question, the question of “how” or quality, to God. In *IM*, X:24, al-Muqammaṣ argues that the application of certain attributes to God (e.g. “living”, “knowing”, “one”, etc.) does not necessarily imply the admission of other attributes (e.g. “quantitative”, “qualified”, or “relative” attributes).

In his discussion of the divine attributes, al-Muqammaṣ insists that the attribute “living” is applicable to God, and that this attribute does not imply corporeality. To support this claim, he adduces the soul as another living, non-corporeal being. The incorporeality of the soul is accepted by al-Muqammaṣ as a proven fact, and the presentation of the soul as an incorporeal living being appears repeatedly in the *Twenty Chapters*. The soul's qualities, such as the intellect, are also presented as “spiritual” (*rūḥānī*).¹² This implies that the relations between the soul and its attributes are different from those pertaining between a body and its qualities: whereas the body requires life in order to live, the rational soul is alive by its very essence, and does not require an additional entity of life.¹³

Al-Muqammaṣ is traditionally classified as a *mutakallim*: he was regarded as such by both Muslims and Jews in the Middle Ages, particularly because of his polemical and apologetic interests, and this is also the case in

12 Cf. *IM*, I: 25–26.

13 *IM*, IX:14.

modern scholarship. *Kalām* works are easily recognizable, even before one examines their content, by their form, style and structure, and in this sense, al-Muqammaṣ's *Twenty Chapters* is a typical *kalām* work.¹⁴ In other ways, however, al-Muqammaṣ is not a typical (or stereotypical) *mutakallim*. Already Julius Guttman observed, on the basis of those chapters preserved in a Hebrew translation, that al-Muqammaṣ “combines views of the Kalam with Greek philosophic doctrines, which seem to have influenced him more than they did Saadya”.¹⁵ Examination of the first chapters of the *Twenty Chapters*, which were not available to Guttman, corroborates his discerning observation. In these chapters, as part of al-Muqammaṣ's discussion of epistemology, he cites Aristotle's *Categories* as well as Porphyry's *Eisagoge*. The use of these books in particular reflects the education al-Muqammaṣ received in the Christian academies, where Aristotle's *Organon* was part of the curriculum (whether this involved study of the books themselves or merely of paraphrases and epitomes).¹⁶ The somewhat atypical balance of *kalām* and philosophical material in al-Muqammaṣ could thus be attributed to his Christian education. It is however noteworthy that a similar a-typicality (that is to say, usage of material which is not typical of the school with which a thinker is usually associated) is also to be found in the works of later medieval Jewish thinkers.¹⁷

The fragment presented here adds a new dimension to this picture. As part of his discussion of God's attributes, al-Muqammaṣ states that the soul is a living, incorporeal being. For the details and proofs of this claim, al-Muqammaṣ refers the reader to Aristotle's *De anima*. This is a rather early use of this book in the Islamic world. The so-called “translation movement” was only beginning to gain momentum at that time, and full and reliable translations of the whole Aristotelian corpus were not yet available. Arabic compendia on the

14 Cf. Stroumsa, Introduction to *IM*, pp. 23–33; cf. also eadem, *Saadia Gaon* (n. 6 above).

15 J. Guttman, *Philosophies of Judaism: A History of Jewish Philosophy from Biblical Times to Franz Rosenzweig*, translated by D. W. Silverman (New York 1973), p. 84.

16 Cf. Stroumsa, Introduction to *IM*, pp. 19–20; *IM*, I:8, 25.

17 Regarding Sa'adya, cf. Stroumsa, *Saadia Gaon* (n. 6 above); on the general problem of classifying Jewish thinkers, see eadem, “The Muslim Context” (n. 3 above).

soul and epitomes of the *De anima* in Arabic were already in circulation in the first half of the ninth century,¹⁸ but a full Arabic translation was probably produced only in the second half of the ninth century.¹⁹ It should be emphasized that al-Muqammaṣ, unlike his near contemporary “the philosopher of the Arabs” al-Kindī, did not immerse himself in this philosophy, and seems to have contented himself with incorporating bits of it within his *kalām* system.²⁰ Nevertheless, al-Muqammaṣ’s reference to the *De anima* indicates a deeper exposure to Aristotelian thought than the mere usage of logic as *ancilla theologiae*. Furthermore, this reference demonstrates that Maimonides’ claim that the *mutakallimūn* adopted theology (and in particular, the theology of the Mu‘tazila) only because they stumbled upon this material at an early date is flagrantly incorrect. Al-Muqammaṣ’s exposure to the theological concerns of Muslim *kalām* went hand in hand with simultaneous exposure to philosophical, Aristotelian material. Already at this early stage, the Aristotelian corpus seems to have been accessible in some form. Jewish *kalām* was thus not a pre-philosophical, primitive stage in the development of Jewish philosophy, but the result of a choice between several available intellectual options.

18 Such a compendium was made by the Christian translator Ibn al-Bitṛīq (*fl. ca.* 835); cf. F. E. Peters, *Aristoteles Arabus* (Leiden 1968), pp. 43–44, and see note 20 below.

19 On the earliest Arabic translations of the *De anima* see Peters, *Aristoteles Arabus*, pp. 40–45; Ishāq Ibn Ḥunain (d. 910) made a second translation of this text, thirty years after writing a preliminary translation which he considered incomplete and faulty. Al-Muqammaṣ, of course, could have had recourse to existing Syrian translations; see Peters, *ibid.*, p. 41.

20 Al-Kindī wrote a *Discourse on the Soul abridged from the Books of Aristotle, Plato and the rest of the Philosophers*, as well as a *Discourse on the Soul briefly epitomized*; cf. Peters, *Aristoteles Arabus*, p. 44; *Rasā’il al-Kindī al-falsafiyya*, ed. M. Abū Rida (Cairo 1950), I, pp. 278–282. On the compendium of the *De anima* produced in the circle of al-Kindī, see G. Endress, “The Circle of al-Kindī,” in G. Endress and R. Kruk (eds.), *The Ancient Tradition in Christian and Islamic Hellenism* (Leiden 1997), pp. 52–58; D. Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early ‘Abbāsīd Society (2nd–4th/8th–10th centuries)* (London and New York 1998), p. 145.

Al-Muqammaṣ's Books

As mentioned above, our most important source for al-Muqammaṣ and his *oeuvre* is Qirqisānī, but some additional information can be gathered from the surviving works of al-Muqammaṣ himself.

1. According to Qirqisānī, al-Muqammaṣ wrote two Bible commentaries, one on Ecclesiastes and the other on Genesis, both of them translated (and probably adapted) from Syriac works. Qirqisānī also reports that the Commentary on Genesis was called “The Book of Creation” (*Kitāb al-Khalīqa*).²¹ On the basis of this title and of Qirqisānī's reference to a Syriac model, Georges Vajda suggested that this book was not a commentary on the whole book of Genesis, but rather belonged to the genre of *Hexaemeron*, in which theological problems related to the creation story, and in particular to Genesis 1, were given separate and extensive treatment.²² Only a single fragment of this commentary has been discovered so far, and this fragment does not offer decisive evidence regarding Vajda's suggestion. The newly discovered fragment of the *Twenty Chapters*, however, decisively proves Vajda's suggestion, as al-Muqammaṣ explicitly refers in it to “our book on the six days of creation.”²³ Al-Muqammaṣ sends the reader to this book for proof of the fact that the soul is an incorporeal being. One may assume that this point was discussed in al-Muqammaṣ's commentary on the creation of Adam, perhaps specifically on the words “*nefesh ḥayya*” (a living soul) in Genesis 2:7.

2. In the same context of discussing the soul's incorporeal nature, al-Muqammaṣ also refers the reader to a polemical book which he had

21 Cf. note 7 above.

22 Vajda (n. 7 above), p. 224.

23 On the genre of *Hexaemeron* see *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*², ed. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone (Oxford 1974, reprinted 1985), p. 645; *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, ed. A. Di Bernardino (New York 1992), vol. 1, p. 380. It is noteworthy that the term is used already by Philo (*Legum Allegoria*, II, 12); cf. also M. Alexandre, *Le Commentaire du livre Genèse I–V: La version grecque de la Septante et sa réception* (Paris 1988), pp. 46–51, especially p. 47. See further Stroumsa, “From the Earliest Known Judaeo-Arabic Commentary on *Genesis*” (n. 5 above), p. 382 n. 29.

begun writing. This book was directed against a group which included both monotheists and unbelievers, but the name of the group is uncertain. In the fragment published here, this polemical book is mentioned twice. In the first instance (where the fragment fills a lacuna in the extant text) the name of the target group is written clearly as “*aṣḥāb al-kurūr*”. The second instance is less clear,²⁴ but for this second occurrence there is a parallel in another manuscript which reads, just as clearly: *aṣḥāb al-budūd*. Let us examine the two readings:

a. Although the name *aṣḥāb al-budūd* does not appear in exactly this form in Arabic heresiography, it is clearly reminiscent of the *aṣḥāb al-bidada*, a term used in Arabic literature to designate Buddhists, who are described as including both monotheists and others.²⁵ Encounters with representatives of Indian religions are mentioned in anecdotes related to the beginning of Islamic theology, and in particular to the beginning of the Mu‘tazila.²⁶ Furthermore,

24 It seems to read *aṣḥāb al-kudūr*. The similarity of the Hebrew letters *dalet* and *resh*, *bet* and *kaf* is at the core of the difficulty. Al-Muqammaṣ’s original work was written in Arabic characters, as can be clearly seen in the main manuscript of his work (MS F). The convention of writing Judeo-Arabic in Hebrew characters, however, soon prevailed, and all existing manuscripts and fragments of the *Twenty Chapters* are in Hebrew characters. This includes some very early fragments, written in the pre-Saadianic phonetic transliteration, a fact that highlights the even earlier date of al-Muqammaṣ’s original work. MS F was clearly copied already from a *Vorlage* in Hebrew characters (cf. the Introduction to *IM*, pp. 35–39), as was probably the fragment published here. The multiplicity of readings regarding the group’s name may indicate that the copyists were not familiar with this group.

25 Cf., for example, M. al-Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-Milal wa’l-niḥal — Book of Religious and Philosophical Sects*, ed. W. Cureton (London 1842), p. 446. The more common name for Buddhists was *Sumaniyya*; see the discussion in S. Stroumsa, *Freethinkers of Medieval Islam: Ibn al-Rāwandī, Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, and Their Impact on Islamic Thought* (Leiden 1999), p. 159.

26 Cf. Sh. Pines, “A Note on an Early Use of the Term Mutakallim,” in G. Baer (ed.), *The ‘Ulamā’ and the Problems of Religion in the Muslim World* (Jerusalem 1971), pp. 18–30 [Hebrew]; D. Gimaret, “Bouddha et les bouddhistes dans la tradition musulmane,” *Journal Asiatique* 257 (1969), pp. 273–316; Sh. Pines, “A Study of the Impact of Indian, Mainly Buddhist Thought on Some Aspects of Kalam Doctrine,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 17 (1994), pp. 182–203; K. van Bladel, “The Bactrian Background of the Barmakids,” in *Tibet and Islam* (London: The Warburg Institute, forthcoming). I am indebted to Kevin van Bladel for making this article available to me before its publication.

al-Muqammaṣ himself offers, in Chapter Thirteen of his *Twenty Chapters*, a detailed refutation of the *Barāhima*, representatives of Indian religions who reject the notion of prophecy, and whom he specifically categorizes as monotheists.²⁷ Refutations of the *Barāhima* abound in Arabic theological literature, but most of them appear in later texts. Even the earliest such refutations, attributed to al-Muqammaṣ's contemporary Ibn al-Rāwandī and his mentor Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq, are preserved mostly in later, tenth-century sources. Al-Muqammaṣ's is thus one of the earliest primary attestations of this theme.²⁸ Moreover, the refutation of the *Barāhima* in the *Twenty Chapters* includes an unusual component. Most of our sources attribute to the *Barāhima* a rejection of prophecy on the basis of its incompatibility with the supremacy of the intellect. As already pointed out by Paul Kraus, it is difficult to find any echo of this "intellectual" argument in Indian religions in general and in the Hindu tradition in particular. Al-Muqammaṣ's refutation of the *Barāhima* in the *Twenty Chapters*, on the other hand, offers another argument, concentrating on the altruistic aspect of the prophet's mission. Unlike the intellectual argument against prophecy, the argument which al-Muqammaṣ attributes to the *Barāhima* has close parallels in Buddhist discussions of the role of the *Boddhisatva*. Al-Muqammaṣ's presentation of the topic thus has a true ring to it, and could well reflect actual encounters with Indian religions. For these reasons, I have suggested understanding *Barāhima* as a generic term

27 *IM*, XIII:1, p. 255.

28 The topic of the *Barāhima* was first discussed in modern scholarship in P. Kraus, "Beiträge zur islamischen Ketzergeschichte: das *kitāb az-zumurrud* des Ibn ar-Rāwandī," *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* XIV (1933), pp. 93–129, XIV (1934), pp. 335–379 (reprinted in Kraus, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, pp. 109–190). For further discussion see Sh. Pines, "Shī'ite Terms and Conceptions in Judah Halevi's *Kuzari*," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 2 (1980), pp. 165–251 (reprinted in Sh. Pines, *Collected Works*, vol. 5, Jerusalem 1997, pp. 219–305), on pp. 220–223; S. Stroumsa, "The *Barāhima* in Early Kalām," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 6 (1985), pp. 229–241; B. Abrahamov, "The *Barāhima*'s Enigma: A Search for a New Solution," *Die Welt des Orients* 18 (1987), pp. 72–91; N. Calder, "The *Barāhima*: Literary Construct and Historical Reality," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 57 (1994), pp. 40–51; Stroumsa, *Freethinkers* (n. 25 above), pp. 145–162.

referring to Indian religions (rather than only to Brahmins), and seeing in al-Muqammaṣ's *Radd 'alā Aṣḥāb al-Budūd* a refutation of Indian religions.²⁹

The reading *aṣḥāb al-budūd* also seems to fit well with al-Muqammaṣ's otherwise attested penchant for heresiography. His heresiographical bent is clear from Qirqisānī's report: although, contrary to prior assumptions, al-Muqammaṣ probably did not write a full-fledged heresiography of Jewish sects, he did develop this topic in the framework of his refutation of Christianity. His interest in other religions is evident in his lengthy (and quite well-informed) refutation of Manichaeism, and there is no reason to assume that his intellectual curiosity in this domain would stop there.³⁰ The idea that al-Muqammaṣ wrote a refutation of Buddhism is appealing, particularly since there is no other book on the subject by Jewish authors, and the existence of such a book would indicate a broader cultural horizon for Jewish thought in its formative period than is usually assumed. At the same time, precisely the absence of such works speaks against this reading, as does the absence of the exact term *aṣḥāb al-budūd* from our sources.³¹

b. The second reading, *aṣḥāb al-kurūr*, is equally problematic. Its literal translation, "those who believe in repetition", could refer to believers in metempsychosis. The belief in transmigration of souls is attested in this period among Muslims and Jews alike. The most common designation of this belief is *tanāsukh*, although other terms can also be found (e.g. *naql*, *intiḳāl*, *maskh*,

29 For a detailed discussion see Stroumsa, *Freethinkers*, pp. 145–162.

30 Georges Vajda suggested that al-Muqammaṣ's book "*Arḍ al-maqālāt 'alā al-manṭiq*", mentioned in the *Twenty Chapters*, might have been a comprehensive heresiographical work ("La prophétologie de Dāwūd ibn Marwān al-raqqī al-Muqammaṣ, théologien juif arabophone du IXe siècle", *Journal asiatique* 265 [1977], pp. 227–235, on p. 232). Although this possibility cannot be ruled out, it is also possible that this lost work was dedicated to a discussion of the Aristotelian categories. On al-Muqammaṣ as polemicist and heresiographer, see the Introduction to *IM*, pp. 20–22.

31 Although, as a relatively rare foreign word, the name of the Buddha can be expected to be variously transcribed at this early period. I wish to thank Kevin van Bladel for discussing this point with me.

faskh, qalb), including derivatives of the root *krr*.³² The issue of metempsychosis seems relevant to the topic discussed in the fragment, as it involves the nature of the soul's relation to its corporeal abode. Furthermore, although this reading would oblige us to give up the idea that al-Muqammaṣ wrote a refutation of Buddhism, it too would fit well with al-Muqammaṣ's otherwise attested interest in Indian religions or *Barāhima*, as the idea of the transmigration of souls was sometimes associated with Indian religions.³³ What speaks against this reading is the fact that Qirqisānī, who was very familiar with al-Muqammaṣ's work, does not cite al-Muqammaṣ in his discussion of monotheists who believe in transmigration, nor does he use the exact term *kurūr*, but rather *karr*, *takrūr*, or, most frequently, *tanāsukh*.³⁴ Qirqisānī accuses 'Anan ben David of believing in the transmigration of souls, and attributes to him a book on the subject, but he makes no reference to any book written in refutation of transmigration.³⁵ Furthermore, in writing his own *Commentary on Genesis*, Qirqisānī relied, by his own admission, on al-Muqammaṣ's *Kitāb al-Khalīqa*. In commenting on Gen. 2:7 Qirqisānī endeavors to show that each soul is created with its body, a claim that resonates with the rejection of the notion of transmigration of

32 Cf. R. Freitag, *Seelenwanderung in der islamischen Hāresie* (Berlin 1985), index, s.v. *karra*; H. Ben-Shammai, "Transmigration of Souls in Tenth-Century Jewish Thought in the Orient," *Sefunot* 20 (n.s. 5; 1991), pp. 117–136 [Hebrew]; C. Pellat, "Maskh," *Et*², vol. VI, pp. 736–738; P. E. Walker, "The doctrine of metempsychosis in Islam," in W. B. Hallaq and D. P. Little (eds.), *Islamic Studies presented to Charles J. Adams* (Leiden 1991), pp. 219–238; M. Cook, "Ibn Qutayba and the Monkeys," *Studia Islamica* (1999), pp. 43–74, especially pp. 51–58 and p. 56 n. 51.

33 Walker (p. 220) points to the identification of transmigration of souls by Muslim writers as characteristic of Hindu religious thought. 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī, *Al-Farq bayna al-Firaq* (Beirut 1973), p. 253 identifies the pre-Islamic believers in metempsychosis as either philosophers or Buddhists (*Sumāniyya*); cf. Ben-Shammai, "Transmigration", p. 212.

34 Cf. Abū Ya'qūb al-Qirqisānī, *Kitāb al-Anwār wa'l-marāqib*, *Code of Karaite Law*, ed. L. Nemoy, vol. 1 (New York 1939), p. 54, line 20; vol. 2 (1940), pp. 307–318, especially p. 307, line 10, and p. 316, line 16; H. Ben-Shammai, *The Doctrines of Religious Thought of Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Qirqisānī and Yefet ben 'Elī* (Ph.D. dissertation, Jerusalem 1977), vol. 2, p. 57, line 8. *Karr* and *tanāsukh* are also the terms used by Sa'adya, *Kitāb (al-Mukhtār fī) al-amānāt wa'l-I'tiqādāt*, ed. Y. Qafih (Jerusalem 1966), Chapter 6:8, p. 214, line 13.

35 Cf. Qirqisānī, *Anwār*, vol. 1, p. 54, lines 18–20.

souls,³⁶ and yet the believers in this dogma are not mentioned by name at all. It stands to reason that, had the issue of transmigration been so important for al-Muqammaṣ that he dedicated a book to it, he would have discussed it already in his *Commentary on Genesis*, and the issue would have found an echo in Qirqisānī's allusion to that topic in his own *Commentary*.

The two readings — *aṣḥāb al-budūd* and *aṣḥāb al-kurūr* — are equally problematic, although each can be explained and defended. Weighing the readings against each other does not lead to a clear conclusion: either reading would introduce a peculiar terminology, unattested in its exact form in other texts, and in either case al-Muqammaṣ's book would be the sole instance in Jewish literature of a work wholly dedicated to the refutation of this particular doctrine. Because of the failure of Qirqisānī's testimony to support the reading *kurūr*, the linguistic closeness of *budūd* to *bidada*, and al-Muqammaṣ's otherwise attested interest in the *Barāhima*, I lean towards the reading *aṣḥāb al-budūd*. A final verdict, however, must await further discoveries, which at this point remains a likely possibility.

The new fragment allows us to partly reconstruct the chronology of al-Muqammaṣ's works. As he was writing his *summa*, he also began drafting the polemical work cited here, but his *Commentary on Genesis* was already written.³⁷ His relatively early exegetical interest is not surprising. It fits Qirqisānī's testimony that al-Muqammaṣ's commentaries were translated from Syriac Christian works, which would point to al-Muqammaṣ's greater reliance on his Christian schooling at this stage of his literary career. It also fits the methodological precedence of exegesis to systematic theology: the composition of a theological digest like the *Twenty Chapters*, which attempts to harmonize revealed religion and rational thought, presupposes prior experience in tackling the revealed, sacred texts in a rational way. This point is worth emphasizing,

36 For Qirqisānī's text, see Ben-Shammai, *Doctrines*, vol. 2, pp. 46–48; and cf. Ben-Shammai, "Transmigration" (n. 32 above), p. 132.

37 As was his *'Arḍ al-maqālāt 'alā al-manṭiq*, mentioned in IM, V:14, 24. On this book, see note 30 above.

particularly since, unlike the theological compositions of his Jewish successors, al-Muqammaṣ's *Twenty Chapters* is not laced with Hebrew proof-texts. Only rarely does al-Muqammaṣ use Biblical quotations at all, and when he does, he quotes only their Arabic translation. And yet this work could not have been written without its author having previously grappled with the rational interpretation of the Bible, just as it could not have been written without his previous exposure to logical reasoning.³⁸ Of course, methodological precedence need not correspond to actual chronological precedence; but the fact that in this case it did is not a mere coincidence.

The fact that al-Muqammaṣ's exegetical interest preceded his broader theological writing, and perhaps also his polemical activity, is emblematic of the centrality of the Bible for the nascent Judeo-Arabic literary corpus. This point has been emphatically argued by Rina Drory, who attempted to reconstruct the circumstances which allowed the emergence of the Judeo-Arabic literary system under Islam.³⁹ Contrary to Drory's reconstruction, however, the chronology of al-Muqammaṣ's writings shows that the centrality of the Bible was an essential feature of the Judeo-Arabic literary corpus from its incipience, before Sa'adya and before the Karaite-Rabbanite schism. And it further shows that in its earliest occurrence, this feature was not modeled primarily on the centrality of the Koran in the Muslim literary system, but rather on the centrality of the Bible in Syriac Christianity.

The Fragment

MS St. Petersburg, Yev. Arab. II, 1006 (No. 59485 in the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts; hereafter MS M) is described in the catalogue as a collection of various fragments on philosophy. Folio 29 of

38 This last observation would favor the assumption that his *'Arḍ al-maqālāt* dealt with logic; see note 30 above.

39 Cf. R. Drory, *Models and Contacts — Arabic Literature and its Impact on Medieval Jewish Culture* (Leiden 2000), pp. 126–146.

this collection was identified by Bruno Chiesa as belonging to al-Muqammaṣ's *Twenty Chapters*. Chiesa also noticed the fact that this fragment fills a *lacuna* in the published text, and generously put the fragment at my disposal.

A small folding (a few millimeters in width) at the left-hand margin hides several letters, and sometimes words, which are missing in the microfilmed copy in the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts in Jerusalem. Sabine Schmidtke kindly examined the manuscript on my behalf, and provided me with another, clearer scanned copy.

The main surviving manuscript of the *Twenty Chapters* also comes from St. Petersburg (Yev. Arab. II, 4817; hereafter MS F).⁴⁰ When the fragment overlaps with this manuscript, I have adopted the same division into paragraphs as in the published text. Variant readings of MS F are presented here in the notes to the text. In the translation, however, I have followed in each case the manuscript that seemed to present the most coherent reading.

The manuscript marks diacritical points unsystematically, and I have added them to standardize the reading. I have also adopted the standard practice of marking the Arabic letter *jīm* with a dot above the Hebrew letter *gimel*, although in the manuscript itself this marking is reserved for the letter *ghen*.

Sigla:

An overline marks faded letters, or letters the reading of which is uncertain.

[] indicates reconstructed text, where there is a tear in the manuscript.

< > indicates text supplied by the editor, where there is no room or no indication in the manuscript for the missing words.

{ } encloses paragraph numbers as marked in the published edition.

() encloses words added in the translation for clarity's sake.

40 For a description of this manuscript see Stroumsa, Introduction to *IM*, pp. 35–37.

29v⁴¹

1. ק[א]ל א[ן] אללה גסם גיר מרכב פקד [כ]אן יב[טל] גסם לא [בד]ני ...
2. [..]ללה חי לא לחמאני ולא דמוי ולם יבטל אן י[כון] חי פאן קאל [פ]מ[א] אלפרק
3. בין אלאמרין קלנא אלפרק בינהמא אנא לא נגד גסם אלא מרכב [ונגד]
4. חיא גיר גסם כאלנפס פלמא וגדנא חיא גיר גסם ולם נגד גסמ[א] גיר
5. מרכב אנפינא אן יכון גסם אד לם יכן מרכב ולא ננפי אן יכון [חיא אד]
6. אנפינא אן יכן לחמאני דמוי. פאן קאל מא דליכך עלי אן אלנפס [חיה]
7. ואנהא ליסת לחמאניה דמויה. קלנא אן ארדת [אלג]זאב פ[עליך]
8. בכתאב ארסטאטאליס פי אלנפס ועליך איצא במא וצענא פי [אלרד עלי]
9. אצחאב אלכרו⁴² ועליך בכתאבנא פי תפסיר אלסתה אלאים פ[כלאמנא]
10. הנאך פי כלקה אלאנסאן. פאן סאל סאיל פקאל אליס אללה [גיר גוהר]
11. קולנא נעם יקול אליס הו גיר ערץ פמון⁴³ קולנא נעם פאן קאל ו[הלא יגב]
12. עלי הדא אלקיאס איצא אן יכון גיר חי וגיר מית וגיר מ[ואת]...
13. קלנא אנמא אנכרנא אן יכון גיר גוהר לאן אלגוהר יק[בל] אלאעראץ כמא
14. שרחנא מרארא. ואנכרנא אן יכון גיר ערץ לאן אלע[רץ] הו אלקאים
15. פי אלגוהר ואנכרנא אן יכון מואת לאן אלמוואת אכס מא ענדנא[...]
16. ואסמינאה חיא לאנא לם נשאהד פאעלא אלא חיא. [פאן קאל לם]
17. סמוה חיא ולם יסמוה גוהרא קלנא לאנה יסתחיל אן יכלק אלג[והר]
18. אלא חי ולא יסתחיל אן יכון אלחי יכלק אלגוהר דון אן יכון אלגוהר [יכלק]
19. חי קלנא דלך לאנא קד נגד גוהר גיר חי ולא נגד חי גיר פ[אעל פאן]
20. כאן הדא הכדי וגב אן יכון פאעל אלגוהר חיא ולא יכון אלג[והר] חיא
21. ודלך אנה לא חי פימא שאהדנא אלא פעאל וכתיר מן אלגוואהר [פימא שהדנא]
22. גיר חי פאן קאל אדא גאז אן יכון מא ליס בגוהר קדים הו אל[לה] וחדית יקבל
23. [אל]אעראץ מא אנכרת אן יכון מא ליס ערץ עלי צרבין קדים הו [אללה] וחדית
24. הו אנת. קלנא וכדלך נקול אן מא ליס בערץ עלי צרבין קדי[ם] הו
25. אללה וחדית הו אלגוהר ומא ליס איצא בגוהר פהו עלי צרבין קדים הו
26. אללה וחדית יעני מחדת הו אלערץ.⁴⁴ פאן קאל פאדא אגז[ת] אן יכון מא ליס

41 The page marked as verso actually comes before the "recto".

42 For a discussion of this group, see above, pp. 145–150.

43 Read: פאן.

44 M: אלגוהר.

27. בגוהר קד[ים] וחדית לם לא אגזת אן יכון אלגוהר קדים וחדית ואן יכון]
 28. [אל]גוהר אלקדים הו אללה ואלגוהר אלחדית הו אלכליקה קול[נא אנא לא]
 29. [נ]קול מתל הדא ולא ילזם הדא אלמתל מא לזם מ[תל מא]
 30. [קל]נא אן מא ליס בערעץ⁴⁵ עלי צרבין ק[דים] וחדית וליפעד[...]

29r

1. [עלי צר]בין קדים ליס הו גוהר והו אללה וחדית הו גוהר והו אל[כלק]
 2. [קל]נא אן מא ליס בגוהר עלי צרבין והו גיר אללה. פאן קאל פאד[א]
 3. ק[ל]תם גוהר חדית וקדים כנתם קד שבהתם ולו קלתם ערעץ
 4. [קדים] וחדית כנתם קד שבהתם איצא וכדלך אדא קלתם מא ליס בגוהר
 5. [קדים ו]מא ליס בגוהר חדית תכונון קד שבהתם אללה באלערעץ וכדלך אדא
 6. [קלתם מ]א⁴⁶ {25} ליס בערעץ קדים ומא ליס בערעץ חדית כנתם קד שבהתם
 7. [אללה] באלגוהר. קלנא ולא ילזמנא הדא איצא פאן קאלו ולם לא ילזמכם
 8. [דלך קל]נא מן קבל אן אלאשתבאה⁴⁷ אנמא יגב⁴⁸ וילזם⁴⁹ באלמוגבאת לא
 9. באל[סאלבאת]⁵⁰ ודלך אנה לא יקאל אן הדא אלביאץ ישבה הדא⁵¹ אלפרס ופי⁵² אן הדא
 10. אל[ביא]ץ ליס הו אנסאן ולא הדא אלפרס אנסאן ולא יקאל אן הדה אלשמס תשבה
 11. הדא[אלקמר] באנהא ליסת קבל⁵³ ולא הו קבל⁵⁴. ואנמא יגב⁵⁵ אלאשתבאה⁵⁶
 12. באל[אנתסאב]⁵⁷ ואל[אתבאת] כקולך אנסאן טויל <ואכר טויל⁵⁸> ואנסאן זנגי ואכר זנגי
 ופרס עתיק

45. אלערעץ: M: (מא ליס בערעץ).

46. The text of Ms F resumes at this point.

47. F: אלאשתבאה.

48. F: תגב.

49. F: ותלזם.

50. F: באסאלבאת.

51. This word is missing in F.

52. Read "פי", although the *vav* appears in both manuscripts.

53. F: חבל.

54. F: חבל.

55. F: תגב.

56. F: אלאשתבאה; M: אלאשתבאת.

57. F: באלאכתסאב.

58. Missing in both manuscripts.

24. [סואלך] הדיא פאן קאל מן אין⁸⁰ אחלת. קלנא⁸¹ מן קבל אנך קלת לם לאן⁸² ולם
 25. [הו סו]אל ולאן הו אכבאר⁸³ באלעלה אלתי הי⁸⁴ לם פכאנך⁸⁵ אנמא קלת לם כאנת
 26. [אלעלה] עלה אלמעלול ולם כאן אלמעלול מעלולא לעלה⁸⁶ ולם כאן אלסבב
 27. [סבבא למס]בב [ו]הדיא סואל⁸⁷ פאסד ודלך אן אלאלאה⁸⁸ ואלמאלוה ואלעלה ואלמעלול
 28. [אשיא תצאף בעצה]א אלי בעץ⁸⁹ וירגע⁹⁰ בעצהא אלי בעץ. { 3 } פאן קאל קאיל וליס
 29. [קד אנכרת יא הדיא] פי אלמקאלה אלעא[ש]רה⁹¹ אן יכון אלאהא⁹² מצאפ[א]

Translation:

29v

<If>⁹³ he said that God is a non-composite body, he had (previously) [denied the existence of an incorporeal body] [...] of neither flesh nor blood, but did not deny the claim that He is living. And if he says: “W[hat is the difference] between the two cases?”, we say: “The difference between them is that every body we encounter is composite, [but we do encounter] a non-corporeal living thing, like the soul. Since we encounter a non-corporeal living thing, but we do not encounter [a non]-composite [body], we deny (the possibility) that He is

80 F: אן.

81 Missing in F.

82 F: לא.

83 F: אחק.

84 F: הו.

85 F: פכנך.

86 F: לא לעלה (perhaps reflecting: ללעלה).

87 F: אלסואל.

88 F: אלהא.

89 F: בעצהא בעץ ואלאשיא אלמצאפה תתעטף בעצהא אלי בעץ.

90 F: ותרגע.

91 F: אלי.

92 F: אלהא.

93 The fragment belongs in Chapter Ten of the *'Ishrūn Maqāla*, within the context of an anti-Christian polemic concerning the doctrine of incarnation. There seem to be some words missing between the end of the discussion in *IM*, 10:24 and the beginning of our fragment.

a body, since He is non-composite, but a denial of His being [living does not follow from] our denial that He is made of flesh and blood.”

If he says: “And how do you know⁹⁴ that the soul is [living] although⁹⁵ it is neither flesh nor blood?” We say: “If you seek an [answer (to this question)], you should consult Aristotle’s *De anima*.⁹⁶ You should also consult what we wrote in [The Refutation of] the Buddhists.⁹⁷ And you should also consult our book on the Hexaameron⁹⁸ and [what we said] there concerning the creation of man.”

If someone asks: “Is it not true that God [is not a substance?]”, we say: “Yes indeed.” Then he says: “Is it not true that He is not an accident?” If we say: “Yes indeed”, and if he then says: “So [why does it not follow], from this logic, that He is also neither living, nor dead, nor [inanimate]?”

We say: “We have denied that He is a non-substance only because the substance is subject to the reception of [accidents as] we have explained repeatedly. And we have denied that He is a non-accident, because [the accident is that which resides] in the substance. And we have denied that He is inanimate, because we consider the inanimate to be the vilest thing. And we call Him ‘living’ because we never encounter⁹⁹ an agent which is not living.”

[If he says: “Why] do they call him ‘living’ and do not call him ‘a substance’?”

We say: “Because it is impossible for anything to create a substance unless

94 Literally: “And what is your indication...?” In standard *kalām* vocabulary, the “indication” or “indicator” (*dalīl*) is the proof which is furnished through the observation of similar phenomena. Strictly speaking, it is different from the apodictic proof (*burhān* or *ḥujja*), but al-Muqammas uses the terms loosely and interchangeably. On the *dalīl* in *kalām* terminology, see J. R. T. M. Peters, *God’s Created Speech — A Study in the Speculative Theology of the Mu’tazilī Qāḍī al-Quḍāt Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Abd al-Jabbār bn. Aḥmad al-Hamadhānī* (Leiden 1976), pp. 65–68.

95 Literally: “and that”.

96 See note 19 above.

97 Reading, as below in F: *aṣḥāb al-budūd*. On the alternative readings and their meaning, see above, pp. 145–150.

98 Literally: “on the *Commentary of the Six Days (of Creation)*.” On this book, see *apud* note 23 above.

99 Literally: “We have never witnessed”.

(the creator) is living, but it is not impossible for a living thing to create a substance, without the substance creating a living thing.”

We say so, because we sometimes encounter a non-living substance, but we never encounter a living being [which is not an agent. Since] this is so, the agent who makes the substance must be living, but the substance does not have to [be living]. This is so because every living thing in our experience is active, but many of the substances [in our experience] are non-living.

If he says: “If you allow that a non-substance can be (either) pre-existent, which is God, [or created in time, which is subject to] accidents, why do you deny the possibility that that which is a non-accident should (also) be of two kinds: pre-existent, which is [God, and created-in-time], which is you?”¹⁰⁰ We say: “This, indeed, is what we say! (We say) that the non-accident is of two kinds: Pre-existent, [which is] God, and created-in-time, which is the substance. The non-substance is also of two kinds: Pre-existent, [which is God] and created-in-time, I mean: that which is newly created, which is the accident!”

If he says: “If you allow [that the non-]substance should be either pre-existent or created, why do you not allow that the substance should be either pre-existent or [created and that the] pre-existent substance is God, and the created substance is the created world?” We answer: “[We do not]¹⁰¹ say such a thing, and the comparison is not binding [as the one regarding our] saying that the <non->accident is of two kinds, pre-existent and created. [...]

100 The direct address here seems to reflect oral disputations. A similar direct address is attested in other parts of the *Twenty Chapters*; see below, in the last line of this fragment, and *IM*, XI:3, p. 227 (“Didn’t you just tell us, you fellow [yā hādha]...”). Religious and philosophical disputations were common practice among the *mutakallimūn*, cf. H. Laszarus-Yafeh et al. (eds.), *The Majlis: Interreligious Encounters in Medieval Islam* (Wiesbaden 1999). Al-Muqammaṣ himself records his participation in such interreligious disputations; cf. *IM*, XII, pp. 28–32, 249–250.

101 The missing words could well be an exclamation, such as “[God forbid that] we should say such a thing!”

29r

[of two kinds], a pre-existent (being), which is not a substance and this is God; and a created one, which is a substance and which is [the creation], (therefore¹⁰²) we said that that which is not a substance is of two kinds, and it is not God.”

If he says: “And if you say: “When you say ‘a pre-existent substance and a created one’, you thus draw a comparison. And should you say ‘a [pre-existent] accident and a created one’, then again, you draw a comparison. Similarly, if you say: ‘a [pre-existent non-substance and a created non-substance’, you would be comparing God to an accident. Similarly, if [you say: ‘a pre-existent¹⁰³ {25} non-accident, and a created non-accident’, you are comparing [God] to a substance.”

We answer: “This also is not an implication which we are obliged to admit.” If they say: “And why is it not something which you are obliged to admit?”, we answer: “Because comparisons are cogent and compelling only with regard to affirmations, but not with regard to negations. For one cannot say that a certain white color is comparable to a horse in that the color white, like the horse, is not a human being. Nor can one say that the sun is comparable to the moon in that, like the moon, it is not a rope. Rather, comparisons are cogent only with regard to whatever is said by way of association and affirmation. So you may say: “A certain tall man” <and “another one, who is also tall”>; or “a black person” and “another black person”; “(This is) a thoroughbred horse, and this horse has a blaze on its forehead, whereas that horse is white-footed”; but other (kinds of comparisons) are not acceptable.”

{26} What we have just said concerning affirmation and negation should be taken as a general criterion that includes all issues. Were it not for our intention to be as brief as possible in this book, we would have explained what a

102 Reconstruction *ad sensum*, but the faded letters in the manuscript do not allow for the required words. The logic of the argument here remains obscure, and the text of the sentence may be corrupt.

103 The text of MS F continues here (cf. *IM*, X: 25, p. 223).

(proper) comparison is. We shall, however, leave [that] to the book that we have begun writing in refutation of the Buddhists.¹⁰⁴ We shall offer¹⁰⁵ a concise presentation¹⁰⁶ of this issue there, God willing. **End of Chapter Ten.**

Chapter Eleven

{1} In Chapter Ten of this book we dealt with quality, and whether or not it is applicable to God, the Blessed and Exalted. At the same time we mentioned various kinds (of quality) that are relevant in this context. Now we come to discuss the last issue in the inquiry, which is the wherefore of a thing.¹⁰⁷

{2} We say that the wherefore is no more than a person's saying: "Why is this?" (It is) a question about the reason for the existence of that which is and about the cause of the caused thing.

So if anyone asks: "Why is God a god?", we answer: "Because of the existence of a subordinate-to-God, and because He brought into being a subordinate-to-God." If he asks: "And why is He a god because He brought into being a subordinate-to-God?", (we answer): "This (last) question of yours is absurd." If he says: "Why is it absurd?", we answer: "Because you said: 'Why...because....?', and 'Why' is a question, while 'because' is an announcement of the cause,¹⁰⁸ which is (the answer) to 'why'. It is as if you were to say: 'Why is the (final) cause the cause of the caused?' and 'Why is the

104 Or: "... in refutation of those who believe in the transmigration of soul." On these two alternative readings, see above, pp. 145–150. Ms F adds here: "both the unbelievers and the monotheists among them." This addition, however, does not help us in deciding on the reading, since Islamic heresiography recognizes the existence of monotheists among both Buddhists and believers in metempsychosis.

105 MS F has: "have resolved to offer".

106 The reading in both manuscripts is *nūjizu*, presumably with the meaning of a summary that is both concise and comprehensive.

107 On the fourfold noetic paradigm, see above, p. 142; and see the Introduction to *IM*, pp. 23–24.

108 Thus in M, which juxtaposes two manners of speech: the question (*su'āl*) and the informative pronouncement (*ikhbār*); F reads: "and 'because' is more appropriate for the cause".

caused caused by the cause?’ and ‘Why is the cause a cause of whatever is caused (by it)?’ This question is wrong, because God and the subordinate-to-God, the cause and the caused, are things that are mutually related, and related things are inter-connected and affect each other.”

{3} If he says: “Did you not deny, fellow, in Chapter Ten, that God could be relative? [...]”