THE FIRST AND SECOND PROOFS FOR THE WORLD’S PRE-ETERNITY IN AL-GHAZALI’S TAHAFUT AL-FALASAFAH

by

ZAKARIAH DAWOOD MALL

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SUPERVISOR: PROF. YUSUF DADOO

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DECLARATION

I declare that *The First And Second Proofs For The World’s Pre-Eternity In Al-Ghazali’s Tahafut al-Falasafah* is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Mr. Z. D. Mall                               Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of my parents, who made enormous sacrifices to the cause of the Arabic Language ("the language of Heaven") in South Africa.

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INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

This is an attempt at translating the refutations of the First and Second Proofs for the world’s pre-eternity of al-Ghazali’s Tahafut al-Falasafah (The Incoherence of the Philosophers), page 13 till page 39, Article 6 to article 107 as presented in the edition of the same by Marmura.

The selection of this specific work for a Master’s dissertation was motivated by the following criteria:

- Al-Ghazali is arguably the greatest Islamic thinker after the period of the Prophet (saw).
- The Tahafut has been composed in clear, classical Arabic prose.
- The enormous impact the Tahafut has had on the subsequent development of Islamic thought.
- The fascinating infusion of logical argument into a domain widely regarded as being proper only to religion, and hence affirming the contention of the Prophet (saw) that logic was the foundation of his religion.
- The indispensable role al-Ghazali has played in defending the fundamental doctrines of Islam via the logical weapons of the philosophers themselves, thereby being moved to charge none other than ibn Rusd and ibn Sina with Kufr for their heretical views.

Al-Ghazali’s style is to present the arguments of the Philosophers first and then counter them with his own. He then anticipates a possible objection to his arguments, presents it and then proceeds to refute it with another rebuttal of his own. In this way al-Ghazali proceeds methodically and step by step to prove his fundamental assertions.

Some of the arguments presented are complex and subtle, and often the context and premises are left unstated. Where necessary therefore, proofs and refutations have been prefixed by explanatory notes given within curly brackets, so as to provide an orientation for the ensuing line of argument. Within the translations into Arabic my own interpolations are enclosed in

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square brackets so as to facilitate continuity and to make explicit hidden relations and references among terms. Rarely, some minor passages not central to the current theme have been omitted from this translation, lest the reader be diverted from the main thread of the proof at hand. While recourse has been made to extant translations for guidance, an attempt has been made here to keep closer to the original text, and to improve upon the errors and omissions of others. Much as I admire and respect al-Ghazali, I was quite proud to have detected and pointed out an error in his text. Meticulous care has been taken to keep to the numbering system of the Arabic text adopted by Marmura². The portion of the *Tahafut* selected for translation has been reproduced at the end of this thesis, with the pages numbered in Roman numerals for easy reference. My own attempt at translation stands closer to that of Marmura rather than to the older translation by Sheik [12].

Fundamentally, al-Ghazali’s reply is that *Allah* decreed in the eternal past that the world should be born at a specific, fixed time in the future. There is nothing absurd about a cause having a delayed effect, and if the Philosophers opt to disclaim such a possibility simply because it appears irrational to them, this is insufficient, for to other minds this explanation seems quite rational.

The Philosophers argue that since all instances of time are identical, how could it have been possible for *Allah* to single out a single point in time for the birth of the world? Al- Ghazali’s reply is that it is the function of the free will, even that of *Allah’s*, to choose and differentiate between two identical alternatives.

The Philosophers admit to the absurdity of presupposing an unending chain of causes for a given phenomena in the world. This is because no single link in the chain can provide the quality of unconditional necessity for that phenomena. By this is meant that every link in the chain provides only a partial justification for the appearance of the phenomena, and any link is itself justified by what precedes it in the chain. Hence the chain as a whole must lead to an ultimate First Cause, which is necessary “in itself” and requires no further justification as a cause. So if the Philosophers are prepared to concede such an ultimate cause as the cause for individual phenomena in the world, what prevents them from conceding that *Allah* could generate the entire world at a specific, appointed instance in time?

The Philosophers believe that any movement, even that of *Allah*, can only be caused by the movement of another mover, and *Allah*, who is ever constant, cannot logically produce such a movement or change in Himself.

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² Ibid
They contend that localized, momentary changes in the world are caused by the eternal, ceaseless revolutions of the outermost celestial sphere. Its revolutions are constant and elliptical, but subject to minor, local variations which explain the occurrence of individual phenomena and changes in the world. Accidents in the world are thereby attributed to the perpetual orbital motions of the spheres and their aberrations, and not to the direct intervention of Allah.

Al-Ghazali refutes the Philosophers by asking how a temporal movement can proceed from an eternal movement. Either both would be eternal, or both temporal. And if the temporal movement is due to aberrations in the eternal celestial revolutions, what is the cause of such variations in such orbital motion?

In their Second Proof the Philosophers argue that time is the measure of motion. So if they can prove that time is eternal, it would follow that that which moves, i.e. the world, is likewise eternal. Al-Ghazali accepts the premise that time is the measure of motion. Nonetheless he contends that there is no compelling reason to believe that the material world is not finite. Hence, time must also be finite. It is only the perverse influence of the imagination that leads one to believe that time exists beyond the realm of the physical world. Continuing in this vein, al-Ghazali argues that space is finite, because it is simply an attribute of mass or body, which is something finite.

The relative merits of the translations by Kamali and Marmura have been discussed above, yet it ought also be mentioned that the latter includes a critical introduction, placing *The Tahafut* in its historical and intellectual context. Craig [4] in his book *The Kalam Cosmological Argument* affords a technical discourse on the logical problems of the infinite. Providing logical and cosmological arguments, his conclusions stand approximate to those of *The Tahafut.*

Goodman [6] in his article “Ghazali’s Argument from Creation” critically analyses al–Ghazali’s so called “contingency argument” which occurs time and again in the latter’s writings. The foundation of this argument is that *Allah* is the only self-subsistent being, and that all other beings are dependent on Him for existence i.e. the world is contingent. Hourani [7] discusses the debate between al- Ghazali and ibn Rushd. He provides a critical commentary on two of the major proofs of the Philosopher’s that had been contested by al – Ghazali. In the first proof the debate on the world’s pre-eternity and the nature of the Divine Will feature, while in the second proof, the question about time being eternal or finite is handled.
Marmura [9] in the extract “the Logical Role of the Argument from Time in the Tahafut’s Second Proof for the World’s Pre-Eternity” points out in much depth that the structure of the argument of the Philosophers is that of a hypothesized, truly disjunctive syllogism, and that the argument is a sound one. The Philosophers successfully prove the impossibility of Allah’s temporal priority to time. Marmura [10] in his article on “al – Ghazali’s attitude to the Secular Sciences” explicitly states al- Ghazali’s postulates underlying his refutations of the Philosophers, and the important role the Theologian assigned to Logic and Mathematics within Theology. Sheik [12] handles the Tahafut in Chapter 9 of his book. He affords a clear, simplified exposition of the underlying tenets of the arguments of the Philosophers. Finally, Watt [13] in his book deals with Theological rather than Philosophical issues which had concerned al – Ghazali’, but does provide useful biographical material.
SUMMARY

The Philosophers such as ibn-Sina had maintained that time and space were co-eternal with Allah, emanating by necessity from His Attributes, and not being the results of a deliberate act of creation. This must be the case, for otherwise nothing would have been present to induce Him to create the world after a period of non-existence.

Al-Ghazali’s refutation of this is that Allah had decreed in pre-eternity that the world would materialize at a future, predetermined date, selecting an instance for its birth from a myriad like-instances by exercising His Free Will and manifesting therewith a cause with a delayed effect. The Philosophers’ explanation of local phenomena as resulting from the perpetual motion of the spheres is flawed, since perpetual celestial motions would result in perpetual, not transient phenomena.

Time, the measure of motion, does not extend beyond the physical realm. Time, and hence motion, is finite.
KEY TERMS APPEARING IN THIS THESIS

- *Allah*
- Philosophers
- Argument
- Birth of the world
- Eternal
- Attribute
- Matter
- Space
- Time
- Logical
{The Philosophers deny the possibility of the world having been created in time by an Eternal Being. For the world to have been created at some instant in time and not have co-existed with Allah, a giver of preponderance or creator of conditions) would have to have given it birth. But where was the giver of preponderance before that, and why did it act precisely when it did, and not earlier? Allah’s states of being are eternal and therefore unchanging; having initially decided not to create the world, He could not suddenly have changed His mind and willed its creation}.

[The Philosophers] maintain that it is impossible for a temporal event to issue from an Eternal Being. [The reason being that] if we assume the [presence of] The Eternal with the world not yet having issued from Him, then it would indeed not [ever] have issued from Him, for the world would not have had that which would have given it preponderance. Instead the existence of the world would have been possible, but [simply] as pure possibility. [But] if [on the other hand] it transpired [i.e. the issuance of the world from Allah] then [by implication] either a giver of preponderance would have emerged or it would not have emerged. If no giver of preponderance had arisen, then the world would have remained as pure possibility [only] as was the prior situation. But if a giver of preponderance did arise, then who was the giver of preponderance, and why did [that giver] occur [precisely] then and not earlier? So the question about the occurrence of the giver of preponderance remains [unanswered]. In short, if the states of the Eternal are similar, [i.e. unchanging] then either nothing whatsoever exists with
Him at all, or else it exists with him eternally. But as for the state of refrainment [i.e. non-action] differentiating itself [in \textit{Allah}] from the state of action [in \textit{Allah}], this is [simply] absurd.\textsuperscript{3}

\textit{Article 8 [p1]}

The precise statement of the question of the Philosopher’s [lies in it] being asked why the world did not occur before its actual occurrence. It is [of course] not possible that Allah be removed from a state of impotency at originating [the world], nor is it possible for the world [ever to have been] impossible to create. For that would lead [to the conclusion that] The Eternal switched from impotency to ability and the world from [the state of] impossibility to possibility, whereas [it is well known] that both options are unthinkable. Nor is there a possibility for it to be said that before the creation of the world there was no purpose [for its creation, however] thereafter a purpose was originated. Nor [can there be] a possibility of a state [being attained] by a loss of an instrument [for creating but] thereafter [being replaced by the state of] the instrument being found. Rather, the closest imaginable thing to say is that He did not want the existence [of the world] before that [i.e. the time of its actual creation]. From this it must of necessity be said that its existence transpired because He became aspirant for its existence after [the period when] He was not aspirant [for it]. In this case an aspiration for creation would have [found] occurrence. But the occurrence [of an aspiration] in Himself is absurd, since he is not a locus of events and the appearance of an aspiration outside himself would not [ipso facto] make him an Aspirer.

\textit{Article 9 [p2]}

Let us abandon inquiry into the location of the occurrence of the aspiration [to create the world]. The forms of the [present] argument is based upon the source of [the aspiration] for creation, from where the aspiration originated, and why it

\textsuperscript{3} The premise here is that Allah’s states are not receptive to variation
occurred now and not earlier. Did it come into existence from
now from a source other than *Allah*? If an event is permitted
[to have occurred] without pre-supposing a cause, then let [us
suppose rather] the world [as a whole] to be an event without a
maker. And if this is not admitted [as a solution], then [one
may well ask] what the difference is between the one event and
the other. For if the world came into being through an action of
*Allah*, then why was it born now and not earlier. Was the [prior
non-existence of the world] due to the lack of an [appropriate]
instrument, or capability, or purpose or [adequate] nature [of
the creator]. But when that [absence of the world] was
exchanged for existence, the world came into being. [But here]
the format of the argument above recurs.⁴ Or is [the world’s
prior non-existence] due to the absence of a will [to create it]?
[Now if we assume that a will suddenly occurred of itself],
then that will would have required another will [to create it],
and in this manner the first will would be conjoined to another
ad infinitum.

**Article 10 [p2]**

Therefore, without reservations, [lit. with the unrestricted
word], it has been verified that the emergence of an event from
The Eternal, [assuming] no change in the [internal] states of
The Eternal as regards capacity, tools or [sufficient] time or
purpose or [inherent] nature, is [something] unthinkable. The
assumption of a change [in the internal states of The Eternal] is
untenable, because the argument for such change in The First
Mover is no different from arguments for other [changes in the
internal states of] The First Mover, and all of [these proposed
changes] are impermissible. So long as the world was present
and its occurrence [as an event in time] impossible, its infinite
pre-existence remains not inconceivable.

**Article 11[p2]**

{This article has been omitted from translation as its contents
are peripheral to the central theme of the argument}

⁴ This question being, of course: “What gave rise to the formerly absent instrument, capability, purpose or
nature?”
Article 12 [p2]

{Al-Ghazali now begins his rebuttal of the arguments of the Philosophers}

The counter-argument [to that of the Philosophers] derives from two aspects.

**THE FIRST OBJECTION**

Article 13 [p3]

One of these aspects is in it being asked of [the Philosophers] with what proof they would deny [the argument] of one who says that the world actualized through an eternal will that made its existence necessary at [precisely] the time that it [in fact] materialized. [Further], that the [preceding] absence [of the world] lasted until that limit towards which it had proceeded, and that existence began precisely when [it had been willed] to begin and that existence before that had not been willed. [Hence] for [simply] that reason [the world] did not arise [previously]. [Rather] at the [specific] time at which it did arise, it had been [so] desired by The Eternal Will, and therefore materialized. Now, what is the obstruction to this conviction, and who is the assignor of the impedance [to such a] belief?

Articles 14 & 15 [p3]

{Here al-Ghazali anticipates a possible counter-argument from the Philosophers, which he states and later refutes}.

Suppose it is said [by the Philosophers] that this is absurd, and its absurdity has been manifested by the [principle that] an event is [something] necessitated and caused. And just as it is impossible for an event [to occur] without a cause and that which makes [its occurrence] unavoidable, it is likewise not possible to find an impelling cause, replete with all the conditions for optimizing [the effect], and [replete as well] with
the [knowledge of] the principles [governing] the effect and replete with the [knowledge of] its causes to the extent that absolutely nothing remains awaited, [but] yet the effect [to be] necessitated is delayed. More likely, the presence of the necessitated effect at the realization of the impelling cause replete with the conditions [for producing] the effect is a necessary [consequence]. [Indeed], a delay in the appearance of the effect is unthinkable on the grounds of the impossibility of the simultaneous presence of a necessitated effect with the absence of the [corresponding] impelling cause.5

Article 16 [p3]

For before the existence of the world, the Aspirer existed as well as the aspiration, as its nexus. Neither was the object of the aspiration, nor the Aspirer renewed. Not even a new nexus [between the two], which was not already there, was created. This [had to be the case], because all of that [would have signified] change [in the Aspirer]. This then [being the case], how was the object of aspiration [nevertheless] created, and what [was it that] prevented it from having been created before that [actual time of creation]. [Indeed], the condition of creation did not [even] distinguish itself from the previous condition in any thing from [all possible] things, nor in any affair from [all possible] affairs, nor in any state from [all possible] states, nor [for that matter] in any relation from [all possible] relations. More likely, the situation was exactly as it [ever] previously was, following which there would not have [possibly] been existent the object of aspiration, [the state of affairs, therefore] remaining identical to what it was [previously]. But [then suddenly] the object of aspiration is present! What is this then other than the utmost impossible limit [of absurdity].

Article 17 [p3]

{The Philosophers try to lend plausibility to their standpoint via an illustration from everyday life}.

5 There is clearly confusion here in the argument. Correctly the argument should be stated as: “the simultaneous presence of an impelling cause with the absence of a corresponding necessitated effect is impossible”
But this type of absurdity is not [only] restricted [to matters] as regards the compelling and the compelled, the necessary and the essential. Indeed [it is also illustrated] by the customary and the conventional.

[For example, we see that] if a man were to pronounce divorce to his wife, yet [in so doing] does not achieve immediate separation, it is hardly imaginable he would achieve it after that. This [stems from] his making the pronouncement a pretext for [legal] intervention, in accordance with convention and agreed practice. Delay of the effect would therefore not be a reasonable [outcome], unless the divorce-pronouncement were to be annexed to [the condition of taking effect only] the following day, or with [the condition of] the entry [the husband] into the house. [Obviously only] in such a case [the divorce] does not take effect immediately, but instead with the arrival of the morrow and with entry [of the husband] into the house. This arises from his [the man’s] having made it [the pronouncement] a cause connected to an awaited thing. But since [the awaited event] is not present at this time, being [as stated] the morrow and [the man’s] entry, the attainment of the necessitated [effect] has tarried upon arrival of what is not now present. And [to be sure], the necessitated effect would not have been achieved except [on the condition that] something [else] be already realized, that being the entry [of the man] into the house and the arrival of the morrow. And even if he [the man] had wanted to delay the necessitated effect [normally] arising from a pronouncement not made contingent upon the attainment of that which is not yet realizable, it [the delay] would have been unthinkable, despite his being the stipulator [of the terms of the pronouncement], and the arbitrator [lit. selector] of the details of the arrangement. Hence if it is not possible for us to stipulate this [type of delay simply] by our own desires nor conceive of it [occurring], how can we [at all] comprehend [it occurring in the realm of] assertions [that are] essential, rational and necessary.

*Article 18 [p4]*

{Omitted from translation as the argument is vague and only peripheral to the central theme}
Article 19 [p4]

{Once again an argument by the philosophers is produced, eschewing the possibility of any time-lapse between willing and that which is willed}.

Now The Eternal Will is subjected to the same rules as our [own] resolve. Hence a delay [in the attainment] of the objective is unthinkable, except if there is a [stipulated] impediment. Nor [for that matter] can the [temporal] priority of the objective [to willing] be imagined.⁶ Hence it is inconceivable that an objective [to be arrived at] today should materialize [only] tomorrow, unless [as we have seen], this had been [prearranged] by virtue of intent. And if The Eternal Will were to be subjected to the same laws as our [own] resolve, that [i.e. a simple pre-arrangement] would not be sufficient for the realization of the [objective of] the resolution [after the pre-arranged delay]. Rather, there would [in such a case] have to be a resurrection of the [original] intention at the [instance of] generation [of the intended act]. But this is [nothing other than] an assertion of a change in The Eternal. Hereafter there [still] remains the identical form [of the previous argument] concerning that goal, or aspiration or whatever you wish to be its name. [This is]: “Why did it occur now and not previously?” So [the end effect is] that either there remains with us an event without a cause, or the causes conjoin [regressively] ad infinitum.

Article 20 [p5]

{This article has been omitted from translation as it is essentially a repetition of the argument given in article 16}

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⁶ For the Philosophers, Allah’s intention and that which He intends necessarily arise simultaneously.
The reply [to the above contention] lies in it being said: [With respect to the statement]: “The impossibility of The Eternal Will being related to the occurrence of something whatever it might be [is confirmed]”- do you know this impossibility through the necessary inherent laws of the intellect or through [one of] its theories? And [while] according to you, language is the domain of logic do you [then] know the connection between these two terms by virtue of a middle term or by the absence of a middle term? Now if you assert [the presence of] a middle term in accordance with the theoretical method, then there is no escape from producing it. But if, [on the other hand], you claim to know that [connection between the two terms] through the impelling [laws of] the intellect i.e., then how is it that your detractors do not share with you in this knowledge, [especially] as the party convinced of the birth of the world [in time] by [the agency of] an Eternal Will may not be contained in a [single] land [alone], nor can any number enumerate it. Nor is there any doubt that they [i.e. the detractors of the Philosophers] do not stubbornly contradict the intellect when they [happen to] posses the knowledge of something. It is therefore imperative to construct a proof satisfying the rules of logic that demonstrates the impossibility of that. [This] all the more so, for in everything you have mentioned [thus far] there is nothing [more] but the disqualification of contrary arguments and the comparison of The Eternal Will with [our own] resolve and aspiration. But this comparison is false, for The Eternal Will does not correspond with temporally confined intentions. As for the simple disqualification [of opposing arguments], this is inadequate [as a rebuttal] without a [supporting] proof.

{These two articles have been omitted from translation as they deal with Allah’s knowledge of universals, which is a digression from our present theme of causality.}
Articles 25 & 26 [p6]

{Here al-Ghazali refutes the Philosophers’ notion that the world has been existing contemporaneously with Allah for an infinite time. He proceeds by invoking the logical paradoxes that consistently plague the concept of infinity.}

In fact, we would not be overstepping the unavoidable consequences of this inquiry when we ask with what means would you [Philosophers] refute your opponents if they said: “The eternity of the past is [in itself] an absurdity because it induces one to assert an infinite number of revolutions of the heavens with no restraint to their units. Nevertheless, [paradoxically] they [i.e. the number of revolutions] have fractions of a sixth, a fourth and a half. In fact, the orbit of the sun revolves [once] in a year, and the orbit of Saturn revolves [once] in thirty years so that the [annual] revolution of Saturn is a third of a tenth of the [annual] revolution of the sun [in arc length]. Further, the [annual] revolution of Jupiter is a half of a sixth of the [annual] revolution of the sun [in arc length], for it revolves [only once] in twelve years. Again [following from the tenets of the Philosophers], just as the number of revolutions of Saturn are unlimited, the number of revolutions of the sun are [also] without limit. Yet, [paradoxically], the number of revolutions [of the Sun] are a third of a tenth of those of [Saturn]. Indeed, there is no end to the number of revolutions of the orbits of the stars, which revolve once in 76,000 years. Likewise, there is no limit to the eastward motion of the sun, [occurring] once in a [period of] a day and night. And so if someone were to say to the Philosophers: “This is from among the things whose absurdity is known by necessity”, then with what means would you [Philosophers] dissociate yourselves from his words? Moreover, if the speaker were to say: “Is the number of revolutions even or odd; or even and odd at the same time, or neither even nor odd” and [in reply] you were to say [it is] both even and odd simultaneously, or [it is] neither even nor odd, then [in this case] the answer’s invalidity would be known by [logical] necessity. [But] if [on the other hand] you replied “even”, then the even number would become
odd by [simply the addition of] a single [extra] revolution. So how can something with no limit to it lack one [unit]. But if you were to say [instead] “odd”, then [of course] we know that the odd [number] becomes even with the [mere addition of] a [single] unit. Again, how can that [infinite number] lack one unit by virtue of which it would become even [were it to be added on]. Again [equally paradoxical, we ask] how can that [infinite number] lack one unit by virtue of which it will become even. Thus you [Philosophers] are compelled to say that the number of revolutions [of the heavenly orbits] is neither even nor odd, [an untenable conclusion].

Articles 27& 28 [p7]

{Here al-Ghazali anticipates and refutes a possible attempt by the Philosophers to evade the issue by their declaring any question of odd and even numbers as inadmissible}

[Now] if is said by them that indeed it is only finitude [of number] that is described as being [either] even or odd, whereas that [number] which never ends may not be thus described. [In reply], we would say that the invalidity of an aggregate made up of units, and possessing the fractions of a sixth and a tenth as has been [already] mentioned, yet [at the same time] cannot be described as even or odd is known by the necessity of [logical truth], without [needing] contemplation. So by what means would you find a way out from [this dilemma]. But if it is now said [by the Philosophers], that the location of error lies in your saying that it [i.e. the aggregate of orbital revolutions] is a quantity composed of units. Yet [we all know] that these revolutions have vanished. As concerns the past, it is extinct, and as concerns the future, it is not yet present. [But] the word ‘aggregate’ signifies entities [actually] present, [whereas] here there is nothing present. [To this], we [Theologians] say:

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7 In modern parlance we would affirm al-Ghazali’s point by the statement: infinity + 1 = infinity. It is definitely not true that infinity + 1 = an even number.
**Article 29 [p7]**

[Any finite] number may be classified as either even or odd, and it cannot possibly escape this [classification]. [This] is equally true if what is being counted presently remains or has [since] passed away. Hence, if we assume a [certain] number of horses, we are compelled to believe that the number does not become devoid of being either even or odd, regardless of whether we consider the [horses] existing or non-existing. Hence, even if they were to vanish after having been present, this situation does not differ [as regards their number].

**Article 30 [p7]**

{The premise here of the Philosophers, is that the souls of departed beings are infinite in number, the world being eternal in time. This affords al-Ghazali an example of an infinite number whose discrete units are invisible, yet existent. The question of whether this number is even or odd remains absurd}

According to your own sources, it is not unthinkable for [there to be] entities present, [discrete] units varying in description yet infinite [in number]. These are [none other than] the souls of human beings that have departed from their bodies. Now these are real existent entities [whose number] cannot be described as even or odd. So how would you refute one who says that the invalidity [of this categorization] is known by [logical] necessity, just as you have claimed that the invalidity of the relatedness of The Eternal Will to [the willing of] temporal events [follows] by [logical] necessity. The opinion on souls [used here as a premise] is the one selected by [none other than] ibn Sina, and [stems originally] perhaps from the school of Aristotle.

**Articles 31&32 [p7&p8]**

{These have been omitted from translation as they probe deeper into the Aristotelian theory of souls, and digress from the principal line of thought.}
**Article 33 [p8]**

The point of all this is to make manifest that they have not rendered their opponents incapable of their belief in the bond between The Eternal Will and temporal events except by the claim of necessity. Nor are they able to successfully distance themselves from those who [in their turn] claim the [logical] necessity [of their conclusions] against them [i.e. the Philosophers] in these matters that contradict their conclusions. And from this [result] there is no way out.

**Article 34 [p8]**

{Time, according to the Philosophers, is uncreated and co-existent with Allah. Here al-Ghazali denies this notion by arguing that time, like matter, is created by Allah and that it is meaningless to talk of time before the world’s creation.}

And if it is said [by the Philosophers] that this argument rebounds against you [Theologians in that] before He created the world Allah remained in a state of being able to create for a year or two, thereby there being no limit to his capacity. It is as if He were patient, did not create, then created. Nor was the period of disengagement [in creating] unlimited. Now if you [Philosophers] assert that the period of [non-creativity] was limited, it follows [logically] that the existence of The Creator is bounded as to His beginning.\(^8\) But if you said that the period [of non-creativity] by Allah was unbounded, then it follows [that] a period had elapsed [until actual creation] wherein the possibilities [of changes in Allah’s states] would have been uncountable.

**Article 35& 36 [p8]**

{Here al-Ghazali explicitly states the fundamental axiom upon which his refutations are based.}

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\(^8\) This conclusion follows only if we adopt the Philosophers’ tenet that Allah and the world exist as entities within an infinite, all-embracing time.
As far as we are concerned, periods [of time] and time [itself] are created entities and we will manifest the truth of our reply to this [issue] by distancing ourselves from their second proof [of the world’s pre-eternity].

*Articles 37& 38 [p9]*

Al-Ghazali makes a distinction between the concepts of the possible, the impossible, and the necessary:

Before the generation of the world, its creation hinged upon one of three modalities, viz. the possible, the impossible and the necessary. Now it could not have been impossible, for the world does indeed exist. Not could it have been necessary, for nonexistence of that which is necessary is impossible to be conceived of, and cannot apply to the birth of the world. Hence the only remaining plausible alternative is that the world’s creation must always have been possible, otherwise it would not have been born when it did. But this last modality presupposes a substrate which is in the process of becoming actual in form. Possibility cannot subsist in nothingness, but presupposes matter as a substratum which is susceptible to possibility. Nor for that matter can possibility be posited in *Allah*, for *Allah* exists by necessity. Hence matter could not have originated in time, for then the possibility for its existence would have preceded its existence, which ex hypothesi has to be excluded.

In Kantian fashion, al-Ghazali maintains that possibility, like impossibility, is merely conceptual, to which nothing need correspond in actuality. If possibility demands a substratum wherein it persists, then so would its logical counterpart, termed impossibility. But it is clear that impossibility cannot demand a substratum wherein it may persist. Finally, there is a huge gulf between the possibility of something’s existence, and its actual existence. An illustration would be the ontological fallacy committed when one concludes from the statement: “Mermaids swim” that mermaids do exist.

Now suppose the Philosophers were to ask with what means would you refute one who relinquished the claim of necessity [for their statements], but point to their truth via another aspect. This is that the [various points in time] stand at the same level as regards receptivity of attachment of The Eternal Will to
them.⁹ So what was it that distinguished a specific point in time from [another point in time] before it and after it, while it was not inconceivable for the earlier or later times to have been chosen for this purpose.

In fact, as regards whiteness, blackness, motion and rest, they [the Theologians] say that whiteness [of an object] results from The Eternal Will. The very same spot that is receptive of blackness is [equally] receptive of whiteness. So the question as to why the Eternal Will bonded with whiteness without bonding to blackness remains. And what was it that distinguished one of the two possibilities from the other [with respect to] the bonding of The Eternal Will with it? [At the same time]

we know by [logical] necessity that a thing may not distinguish itself from what resembles it except through being designated [as such].

And if that [principle] is admissible [here], then the occurrence of the world is certainly acceptable, for it [the world] is capable of existence and equally [capable] of non-existence. It may be possibly deemed for the aspect of existence, just as it may be possibly deemed for the aspect of non-existence, without [prior] designation. And if you [Theologians] said that it is The Eternal Will that [eventually] designated it [for existence], then [the question arises] about the designation of things by The Eternal Will and why it designated [in the manner it did]. But if you [Philosophers] now said that ‘why’ is not asked of The Eternal, then certainly the world must be assumed as being eternal. Thus no one ought to demand a constructor or reason [for the world], for [in matters of] the Eternal ‘why’ is not asked.¹⁰

Article 39 [p9]

{This article has been omitted, for the analogy herein is vague, and better ones are offered later in the text}

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⁹ A misspelling in the Arabic word for ‘will’ occurs here.
¹⁰ The Philosophers argue here that since the viewpoint of the Theologians leads to an inadmissible ‘why’, their position in this matter must be false.
[In reply], we would say that, on the contrary, the world was created when it was, with the peculiarities with which it was created, and in the location where it was created by virtue of the will. Now one of the pertinent properties of the will is the distinguishing of something from that which is [very] similar to it. And if that property were not relevant to the will, then sufficiency [for the conditions of creation] would lie [in simply] having the power [to do so]. But for the [very] reason that the relation of this power to the two opposing [positions] is the same, there is no avoiding [the positioning of] a designator who sets aside something from that which is [very] similar to it. Moreover, it is said [by the Theologians] that The Eternal has besides this capacity [another] property which among others is concerned with earmarking one thing from that which is similar to it. Hence the question [previously asked] as to why The Eternal Will earmarked one from two similar things is similar to the question of the speaker who asks: “Why does knowledge [of something] necessarily demand that that thing be encompassed [by the knower] regarding those [properties] pertaining to it. [The answer to this lies] in saying: “Because the word ‘knowledge’ is an expression for a quality [of the knower], and this is its [definitive] function.” Nay, the essence of this quality [i.e. the will] is the distinguishing of something from its likeness.

Articles 42 & 43 [p10]

And suppose [the Philosophers] were to say that [the attempt at the] demonstration of [the presence] of a quality whose function is the distinguishing of a thing from its likeness is irrational, in fact it is a contradiction. For if the constitution of a thing is [very close] similarity [to another thing], this means that they cannot be distinguished [from each other], while if its constitution is distinction [from anything else], this means that it is not similar [to anything at all]. For example it is not necessary to think that two black things in two different places are identical in every respect. This is because this one is in a [particular] place, and that one is in
another place. And this [difference] makes distinction obligatory. [In the same way] it is not the case that the two [similar] black [objects] in the same spot at two different times are absolutely identical. This follows from [the fact that] this one distinguished itself from that one [with respect to] time. Therefore, how can this [black object] be similar to that [one] in every respect? When we say that two black [objects] are similar, we mean by this expression that they are [similar only] in blackness [and thus] connected in a special, not absolute way. And if this were not the case, [it would imply] that the location and the time [of each object] had become one, there not remaining [any] distinguishing features, making [discussion of] two black objects, [nay, even] of duality, fundamentally irrational.

This [result] is further realized by the expression ‘The [Eternal] Will’ is borrowed from [the concept of] [our own, common] will. And nor is it imagined by us to distinguish a thing from its likeness by employing [our common] will. Indeed, were there before a thirsty man two glasses of water identical in every respect to each other, even as regards [the man’s] intention, it would not be possible for him to take [any] one of the two [at first]. Yet, in fact, he would [at last] choose that which he sees as better, or lighter, or nearer to his right hand, assuming it is his custom to move his right hand. Or [failing this], any cause from this [category of] causes, be it unknown or obvious, [could motivate his choice]. And if this is not the case, [then] distinguishing something from its likeness in any situation is [simply] unthinkable.

*Articles 44 & 45 [p11]*

The objection [to the thesis of the Philosophers] derives from two aspects:

The first aspect concerns your statement that this [distinguishing of a thing from its likeness] is unthinkable. Do you [Philosophers] know this thesis through the necessity [of logic], or through theoretical speculation [lit. construction]? In fact, claiming any one of these [positions] is impossible. Your analogy of The Eternal Will [compared] with our [common] will is a false comparison, resembling the comparison between
[The Eternal Knowledge and our common] knowledge. The knowledge possessed by *Allah* is distinct from our [common] knowledge, in matters we have earlier reported on [in the text]. So why should the difference between [that which is] eternal and [that which is] common [in matters of] the will be improbable. Indeed, maintaining this improbability is analogous to one who says: “An essence present neither without nor within the world, [and] neither attached nor detached [from the world] is unthinkable, because we do not conceive it [existing] in our reality. Further it is said by the Philosophers: “This position of yours is the work of your imagination [only]. As concerns the truth of the intellect [for our thesis], well, the intellectuals have [already] uttered the confirmation of that [thesis].”

{Now al-Ghazali proceeds to refute the Philosophers}

Then with what means would you [Philosophers] refute one who says [instead] that the intellect has put forth the confirmation of an attribute of *Allah*, The Exalted, one of whose functions is the distinguishing of a thing from its likeness. And if the name ‘will’ does not suit [this attribute], then it should be named with another name, for there ought to be no niggardliness about names. Nevertheless, we have applied this name in accordance with the law. [Had this] not been the case [we would have refrained from applying it for we know that] the word ‘will’ is laid down in the language to specify that which has a temporary object of desire. Clearly, there is no temporary object of desire with respect to *Allah*. However, what is intended [here] is the meaning [of words], not their articulation.

*Article 46 [p11]*

[And further], against [the thesis of the Philosophers], we do not accept that that attribute [discussed above] is unthinkable, [even] as regards ourselves. Hence, let us assume that there exist two dates identical to each other [lying] before someone looking [longingly] at them, but incapable of having both of them at once.
It is [certainly] not inconceivable that he would [still] take one of them by virtue of an attribute whose concern is the setting aside of something from that which resembles it. And [with] all that you [Philosophers] have mentioned about [lit. from] the distinguishing features of goodness or nearness or facility of taking we assume [simultaneously] the premise of their being absent. Yet, [despite this] there remains the possibility of [his] taking [a date].

[In short], you [stand] between two matters: Either you may say that equivalence with respect to the purpose of the man [having to choose one of the two dates] is completely unthinkable, this judgement [being mere] stupidity, since the premise [of equivalence between the two dates] is [certainly] possible, or [on the other hand] you might say that if equivalence [of the two dates] has been decreed [permissible], the yearning man would forever remain in a state of selecting. [He would be in a state of] observing the dates, but never taking either of them by virtue of [the instrument of] his will or his preference, [this being the consequence of] their having been cut of from [any proposed] purpose. But this [option] is also absurd, its invalidity being known by [logical] necessity. There is no avoiding by any investigator, present or absent, of the establishing of the voluntary act, of the confirmation of the existence of a quality [associated with such an act], whose concern is the distinguishing of something from its likeness.

Articles 47 & 48 [p12]

The second aspect11 of the refutation of the thesis of the Philosophers consists in us saying [to the Philosophers] that within your own adopted procedure, you have not avoided distinguishing something from its [close] likeness. For [according to you], the world arose as a result of a cause, making its [i.e. the world’s] existence necessary and according to special geometrical forms [closely] resembling their counterparts [in form]. So [one may well ask] does [the world] possess some of these configurations only, when the impossibility [here] of distinguishing something from its

11 The first aspect had been introduced in Article 12.
likeness in the matter of voluntary or necessitated action does not differ by nature [of the matter involved], nor by [logical] necessity?

*Article 49 & 50 [p12]*

Suppose [to this you Philosophers] said that it is not possible for the overall order of the world to be [based] upon a design other than that upon which it was founded. [And further], had the world been smaller or bigger than it is now, the [present] order would not have been complete. A similar assessment applies to the number of orbits and to the number of stars. You assert that something big differs from something small, and that things that are many differ from things that are few in number with respect to what is required to be fulfilled by them). These [categories] are not alike, but differ [from each other], except that human capacity is frail as regards attainment [of understanding] of the design of the wisdom [of the existence] of [different] quantities [of things], and of their [functional] details. But still it [i.e. human capacity] perceives the wisdom in some of its [i.e. the world’s] designs, as the wisdom in the inclination of the orbit of the zodiac from the average [orbit of the sun] for a day. [It perceives] wisdom as well in [the position] of the apogee and in the orbit that deviates from the centre.12

The majority does not understand the secret [of the wisdom in] quantities and details, but it does know differences [among quantities and details]. And it is unavoidable that something should distinguish itself from what is dissimilar to it by virtue of its specific relation to the system of decree.13 But concerning [different points in] time, they are utterly alike as regards possibility [of creation], and the system [of decree]. Therefore it is not possible to maintain that had [the world] been born after [the points] in [time] at which it was actually created, or before the points [in time] of its creation, by a single moment, the [present] system [of decrees] would have been unthinkable.

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12 By this is meant elliptical orbits
13 That is, natural laws and regulations
Surely, the [prevailing] equivalence of the states [of creation] is known by [logical] necessity.

**Articles 51 & 52 [p12 & p13]**

We [Theologians] say in reply that we could supposedly be capable [of challenging] your contention with a matching [argument] in the matter of states, as, [for example] in the case of speakers saying: “Allah created [the world] at a time which was the most suitable for creation”. [Nevertheless], we will not limit ourselves to this rebuttal, but rather insist upon [applying] your [own] premises, especially to two cases in which it is impossible to assess any disparity. One of these two cases is the difference in the direction of the motion [of the world], while the other is the specification of the poles\(^{14}\) [of the orbit] in the [earth’s] motion around the [celestial] sphere.

**Article 53 [p13]**

As concerns [the position of] the pole its explanation lies in saying that the [orbit of] heaven is spherical, and moves around two poles, as if the poles were fixed [points]. The sphere of the heaven consists of identical sectors, for it [i.e. the heaven] is uncomplicated in structure. [This is true] especially for the highest celestial plane, which is the ninth, for it has basically no stars. The two celestial spheres [the northern and southern hemispheres] rotate around the northern and southern poles. Hence we are led to say: There is among the locations [of the heavens] no [single] pair of opposite points, these [pairs] being infinite in number, except that they could be imagined [as comprising] the poles. [In the face of this], why have [what is termed] the northern and southern points been singled-out for polarity and fixation, and why does the [radial] line of the orbit not move [together] with the two [polar] points\(^{15}\), such that the poles revert [alternatingly] to the two opposing points upon the sphere?\(^{16}\) Thus if we suppose [that there is] wisdom in the scale

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\(^{14}\) In modern mathematical terminology these are referred to as ‘foci’.

\(^{15}\) Dual rendering preferred here, because reference is being made to what we nowadays term the two foci of an ellipse

\(^{16}\) With our present knowledge, we know that the heavenly orbits are elliptical
of the expanse and shape of the heavens, what was it that determined the location of the poles from any other [possible location], to the extent that they were specified to become [in reality] the poles to the exclusion of the rest of the sectors and points [of the celestial sphere]? Yet [we know that] all the points of the sphere are similar to each other, and all the sectors of the sphere are equivalent to each other. [Hence] there is no escape [for the Philosophers] from this [problem].

*Articles 54 & 55 [p13]*

[But now] suppose the Philosophers were to say that perchance the location at which lie the points of the poles distinguishes itself from other [possible] points by a quality that makes its essence appropriate as a position for the pole as a stationary [co-ordinate]. [Its essence] is as if it would not abandon its place, and realm and location or whatever from the [possible] names determined [so as to] be applied to its position. [Meanwhile], the remainder of the locations of the celestial plane exchange their position with respect to the earth and the other celestial planes during revolution, whereas the pole itself is fixed as to its location. So perhaps [we might say] that the position [of the pole] was superior [in suitability] to being fixed in position [as compared] to other positions.

*Articles 56 & 57 [p14]*

[In opposition to this] we [Theologians] say that in this argument [of the Philosophers] there is [an implicit] statement of the disparity in nature of sectors of the primary sphere, and that equivalence of sectors [of the sphere] does not apply [here]. Now this is in contradiction to your [own] premise, as one of the tenets upon which you have proceeded [in argument] for the necessity of [the cosmos] being spherical in shape, is that the [cosmos] is simple in nature and that its equivalent sectors are not in disharmony. And [it is known that] the sphere is the simplest of shapes. Indeed, the square and the hexagon and other shapes besides these two, demand the appearance of angles and their inequality [in measure]. Now that cannot come about except by an additional requirement upon simple nature.
But even if this [present] argument contradicts your own basic principles, it does not [by itself] repel that which it is obliged to do, for the [earlier] question about that quality still [stands unanswered]. This is, precisely [stated]: were the rest of the sectors [of the sphere] receptive of this quality [of being the repositories of the poles at the time of creation] or not? Should one say ‘yes’, then [the question is] why this quality devoted itself exclusively to only some among equivalent [locations, and not others]? And should they [in reply] say that that quality [to which you have referred] does not belong [anywhere else] except in that location, while the rest of the sectors cannot receive it, then we [Theologians] would say [the following in reply]: “The rest of the sectors by virtue of their constituting a body receptive of the [possible] shapes of things, are equivalent [in this respect] by necessity. And that [present] position [of the poles] does not have a claim to that special quality [of being the repository of the poles] merely by being a body or merely by being a celestial plane. This [is a consequence of] this connotation [of ‘location’] being shared by all the sectors of the celestial sphere. Hence the inescapable conclusion is that the location’s distinction [in that it possesses the poles] is a result of [arbitrary] decree, or [even better, a result of the action] of a quality whose concern is [none other than] the distinguishing of something from its likeness. And if [this argument does not suffice], then just as it is correct for them to say that the [different] states of the world are equivalent as regards [disposition for] instantiation of the world in them, it is [equally] correct for their antagonists [to say] that the [various] sectors of the cosmos are equivalent as regards reception of the intention by virtue of which fixity of the location [of the poles] became more seeming [to them] than [continual] alternation of location. And there is no evading this conclusion.
Article 58 [p14]

The second necessary conclusion pertains to [the question of] some of the orbital motions being from the east to the west, but some [others] being in the opposite [direction] whereas [we know] that the directions [in relation to the complete configuration of the heaven] are equivalent.\(^{17}\) So what is the cause of this [difference in rotational direction] when equivalence of direction like equivalence of times are without [noticeable] discrepancies?

Articles 59 & 60 [p14 & p15]

And [what if] they [the Philosophers now] should say [in defense] that if all [the celestial spheres] were to revolve in one direction [only], then their [respective] positions would not have been evident, and the correlation of the stars with respect to triangularity and hexagonality and [such] relations, and other [geometrical aspects] would not occur. Rather, the whole system would [always] be in one [single] state that would not ever diverge. On the other hand, these [geometrical] relationships are the foundations of the phenomena of the world.

Articles 61 & 62 [p15]

We [Theologians] say [in reply to the above] that we are not obliged [to accept] the absence of divergence in the direction of motion [as you maintain]. On the contrary, we say that the highest celestial sphere [vertically speaking] , revolves from East to West, and the one [immediately] below it in the opposite direction. [But], at the same time, every [objective] that could possibly be attained by [this configuration], could possibly be attained by a contrary [configuration], namely, by the highest orbit revolving from West to East. That which is immediately under it, would [now] move in the opposite [direction] to it, thereby attaining [the required] differentiation

\(^{17}\) In other words, what significance is there in, for example, one planet revolving around the sun anti-clockwise, and another revolving clockwise?
[in geometrical relations]. Now, conceding the motion as being circular and [mutually] opposite in direction, the directions of motion are equivalent [to each other with respect to the overall spatial arrangement.] Hence the question [remains], why was the one direction favoured in relation to its equivalent [opposite] direction?

Articles 63 & 64 [p.15]

[But] suppose that they [now] said that the two directions mentioned by [the Philosophers] are mutually opposite and contradictory, so how could they be [at the same time] equivalent? [Our reply would be that they ask this question], yet claiming to know equivalence in time with respect to the possibility of the birth of the world and with respect to every relevant event whose necessity must be imagined for the birth [and burgeoning of the world]. In similar fashion, equivalence with respect to receptivity of motion, of ranges of [motion], of situations, of locations, of directions and every other relevant matter connected [with the like] are known [and accepted by the Philosophers despite the occurrence of oppositeness in directions]. So if the claim of [inadmissible] differences [in configuration] is permitted to them despite all these [resemblances] disparity [in analogous] situations and configurations ought to be permitted to their antagonists.

THE SECOND OBJECTION

(The First Objection had been initiated in article 23)

The second [fundamental method] of counterargument against the foundation of their [i.e. the Philosophers] proof lies in it being said that you [Philosophers] regard as far-fetched the emergence of [a temporal] event from an eternal [cause], whereas, [in fact], you are obliged to recognize its possibility. Indeed, in the world there are events for which there are causes. For if [worldly] events are based upon [previous worldly] events without [ever] reaching a limit, this would be [something] unthinkable, for this is not the doctrine of an
intelligent man. For were that a possibility, you would certainly have dispensed with recognizing the The Maker, and dispensed [with] the conviction of a necessary, existent Being who is the cause of [all] possibilities. Assuming [now] that [the chain of] all occurrences [in the world] has a limit, then the chain [of events] would end with that limit. That limit is [none other than] The Maker. Therefore, based upon their own tenets, there is no way out from sanctioning the emergence of an event from an eternal [cause].

**Articles 67 & 68 [p16]**

What if [the Philosophers should] then say that they do not hold unlikely that an event [in time] can issue forth from an eternal cause, whatever that event may be? Rather [they continue, our precise objection is that] we consider remote the issuing forth of the [very] first event from The Eternal. This [position] is true because as regards the preponderance tending toward existence [of the world], the actual state of the [very] first event did not differ from [the state] that preceded it. [This statement] applies equally with respect to the arrival of [an appointed] time, [the availability of] an instrument, [the fulfillment of] a requirement, [the presence of] a natural order, of a purpose or cause among [possible] causes. Now in the case where indeed we are [not dealing with] the [very] first event, it is permitted [logically speaking] for [any] event to issue forth [simultaneously] with some condition [or other] from The Eternal. [These could possibly be] from among [conditions such as] preparedness of the place of reception [for the event], the arrival of the appropriate time, or whatever [else might be required] to set in motion this [specific] chain [of events].

**Articles 69 & 70 [p16]**

To this [argument] we [Theologians] would say, that the question about the attainment of preparedness, the arrival of the [right] time, and everything [else] that was revitalized [for the purpose at hand] still remains: Either [the events] form a series
without a limit, or they terminate at an eternal cause from which issued the [very] first event.

**Articles 71 & 72 [p16]**

Suppose that the [Philosophers] said [now] that matter that is receptive of forms, accidents and states are not things from which events proceed. [Rather], the conditions for an event [occurring] are orbital motions [of celestial bodies.] [By this] is meant the circular motion and what is generated by it [in terms of qualities] from among all [possible] additional qualities [of things]. [These may be, for example, from the qualities of] triangularity, hexagonality and rectangularity. These are [simply] interrelations among some sectors of the heavens and stars. Some of these are relations [established] with the earth. Some of these relations are attained with the ascent [of the sun] at sunrise, [others] with sunset, others are established by the decline [of the sun] from the utmost limit in altitude and distance from the earth when the stars are at their apogee. [Another] relation is obtained by the sun being at its perigee, and its inclination being away from some countries [lying] in the northern or southern [hemispheres].

And this supplementation [in geometrical relations] is necessarily [a compulsory one], for it is coerced by the circular motion itself. As concerns the events that are contained in the curve of the orbit of the moon, [the word ‘events’ here referring to what] are the [essential] ingredients of that which occurs within it concerning [matters such as] birth and decay, union and separation, and transition from one quality to another [of the celestial bodies]: all of these are events linked to each other in complex [lit. lengthy] detail and at the end [of it all], the root of their causes ends with the circular celestial movement, the relative [positions] of the stars to each other, and their relative [positions] with respect to the earth.

**Article 73 [p17]**

From all that was [just mentioned], it results [in the conclusion that] the eternal, perpetual, circular motion is the cause of all the events [in the world]. And the spirits of the heavens, are the
dynamo of the circular motion of the heavens. [Certainly] these spirits live, descending, [to the spheres even] as our [once heavenly] spirits descend in relation to our bodies to the rank of our [present] souls. The spirits of the heavens are eternal. Surely [therefore], the circular eternal motions which are a necessary [effect] of the [heavenly] spirits are likewise eternal. And because the states of the souls are equivalent [to each other], owing to their being eternal, the states of the [circular motions] are equivalent; in other words, they [i.e. the motions] were always circular.

**Article 74 [p17]**

It is therefore unthinkable that an event would issue forth from an eternal cause, except via an eternal, circular motion that in one aspect is similar to The Eternal, as He [Himself] is eternal and perpetual, but in [another] aspect resembles any [other] event, because every [constituent] facet presumed of it is itself a [realized] event after [the period when] it had not [yet] been manifested. Hence, from the aspect that the [circular movement] is an event as regards its constituent parts, [including any] qualities complementary [to it], it is a fundament to [all ensuing] events, and from [the other] eternal aspect [which is comprised of] equivalent, [unchanging] states, [it is deemed to] issue forth from an eternal spirit. Hence if there are events [occurring] in the world, there must [necessarily] also be circular motion [in the sense referred to earlier]. But [as we know] there are events [occurring] in the world. Therefore, the [existence] of the eternal, circular motion is confirmed.  

**Articles 75 & 76 [p17]**

In reply we [Theologians] say that this long-windedness does not become you [at all]. [For we may well ask] whether the circular movement [of the spheres] which [as you claim] is the fundament of [all worldly events] is itself an event or

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18 The falsity of this argument of the Philosophers is apparent: If A implies B, it does not necessarily follow that B implies A.
something) eternal. Hence, assuming it is eternal, how did it become a stating point for the [very] first worldly event? But if, [on the other hand], it were itself [merely] a worldly event, it would have needed another event [as a cause for its appearance, thus] forming a chain [without end].

[We turn now to your] assertion that it [the eternal circular motion] is in one aspect similar to The Eternal, while in another aspect it is like any [other] temporal event. This follows [according to you] from it being something constantly renewed, i.e. it is unchanging in its renewal, a created thing of constancy. [To this] we [Theologians] ask if [the circular motion] is a starting point for temporal events by virtue of it being constant, or [in contrast], by virtue of it being something renewed? [Now if it were a starting point] from the aspect of it being constant, then how did something [existing] at times but not at other times emerge from something unchanging and similar in its states? But if [the circular motion is a starting point] by virtue of it being [something] renewed, then what is the intrinsic cause of its renewal? [The proposed cause] would require another cause, forming an [infinite] chain. The [chain] would be the end result of repetition [of what are now induced] compulsory [causes].

**Article 77 [p18]**

{This has been omitted because it deals largely with peripheral remarks}. 
CHAPTER TWO

A second type of proof that they [i.e. the Philosophers] have for this question [presently being debated].

First discussion. Second proof.

Articles 78 & 79 [p18]

They [i.e. the Philosophers] maintain that a speaker [who says] that the world is posterior to Allah and that Allah is prior to the world is not alone [in his standpoint]. For he [i.e. the speaker] may [well] intend [by this] that Allah is prior [to the world] by nature, not temporally [prior], just as [by analogy], one is prior to two, which is in accordance with nature. Nonetheless, [the number] one may possibly accompany [the number] two in [terms of] existence and time. [In a] similar [sense] is the priority of cause to effect, and the priority of the motion of a person and the motion of his shadow that follows him, understood. [Analogous as well] is the [case of] the priority of motion of the hand to that of the ring [on one of its fingers], and the priority of the motion of the hand in water to that of the [motion of] the water. [For all] these [events] are equal to each other as regards time\(^{19}\), [even] though some of them are causes and some of them are effects. Therefore, it is said that the shadow moved because of the movement of the person, and the water moved because of the movement of the hand in the water. Conversely, it is not said that the person moved by virtue of the movement of the shadow, nor that the hand moved by the instrument of the movement of the water, even though [the members of each related couple] are equivalent [to each other] in time [of occurrence]. Thus, if by the precedence of the Creator with respect to the world, this [connotation of the term] is intended, the necessary conclusion is that both [Allah and the world] are temporal events or both are eternal. Furthermore, it is not possible for one of them to be eternal in time, while the other is an event restricted in time.

\(^{19}\) i.e. they occur simultaneously
**Article 80 [p19]**

But if it is meant [by the term under discussion] that The Maker is precedent to the world not intrinsically by His [very] essence, but [simply] with respect to time, then it follows that before the birth of the world and of time [as we understand it] there was a primeval time during which the world was not in existence. [This conclusion] proceeds from [the fact that] non-existence antecedes existence. Moreover [we conclude that] Allah would have preceded [the world] in time by a [very] extended interval. This interval would have had a boundary in the sense of its ending, but no boundary in the sense of its beginning. [The final] conclusion would be that before [common] time there was an [extraordinary] time which had no end to it. But this conclusion is incompatible [with what went before]. By virtue of this contradiction, speaking of time as a created event is unthinkable. Hence, if the eternity of time is a necessary conclusion, the eternity of motion is [likewise] a necessary conclusion, for time is an expression of the extent of motion.²⁰ Moreover, the existence of the generator of motion is also made necessary, as it is that which, by the continuity of its motion, perpetuates time.

**Articles 81 till 89 [p19 - p21]**

{These have been omitted from translation for al - Ghazali simply elaborates on the foregoing by citing more examples}

**Article 90[p22]**

But as concerns [on the one hand] the non-existence that preceded the world, and [on the other hand] the primary boundary of essential existence, [these two limits] would not be conceived of being interchanged so that [the first part] becomes the last. Nor can the non-existence surmised at the final annihilation of the world, which [logically] is a non-existence that follows, be conceived as becoming the preceding non-existence. These two extremities [represent] the limits of the

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²⁰ This is a fundamental tenet of the Philosophers
existence of the world, the one being first and the other being second. [These two extremities] are essential and established, and interchanging them via a change in relationship [to us] is definitely unthinkable. Now this [situation] is different from the [case of] “above” and “below”. We therefore can possibly say that the world has neither an “above” nor a “below”, but we cannot say regarding the coming into being of the world that there is neither a “prior” [time] nor a “posterior” [time]. Nor is it possible for you [Theologians] to say that the world’s coming into existence has neither a “prior” [time] nor a “posterior” [time]. So the “prior” [time] and the “posterior” [time, relating to the world’s existence] have been [duly] confirmed; and there is no [further] meaning to time intervals except that which is [normally] expressed by [the terms] “prior” and “posterior”.

Articles 91 & 92 [p22 & p23]

In reply, we [Theologians] say that this [argument] makes no difference [to the truth of our position]. [We say] this because for there is [in reality] no [definite] object of intention in the intimation [associated with] the expressions ‘above’ and ‘below’. Nevertheless, [we will] deviate [from our original intentions] and [adopt the use of] the expressions ‘beyond’ and ‘outside’. We say that the world has ‘within’ and a ‘beyond’. Hence [we ask] whether beyond the world there is something which is either filled or empty. [The Philosophers] would say [in reply] that there is nothing which is empty or full. But if you intend by [the term] ‘beyond’ the uppermost surface [of the celestial sphere], then the term ‘beyond’ may be applied to it. But if you intended anything else [in using this term], then [we submit] that there is no [realm] beyond the world. In like fashion, if the question of whether the birth of the world has a period prior [to it] is posed to us, we would reply [as follows]: “what is intended by this question is [in fact] whether the birth of the world has a beginning that [may be designated as] an outermost point whence it had its inception? Should [this be the case], then [we admit] that in this respect the world has a ‘prior’ [time]. [For] this is analogous to the world having a yonder [region]. [Our conception is founded] upon the
interpretation that this region is roofless, remote and external to the world.
But if, on the other hand, by the term ‘prior’ [time] you mean something else, then [know that] there is no prior time in relation to the world. [For] this is analogous to intending [by the term] ‘beyond the world’ something other than its [enveloping] surface. [In this event] it would [be said] that there is nothing exterior to the world. Now if you Philosophers should say that a beginning [instant] of birth with [absolutely] no [time-interval] prior to it is an irrational [proposition], it would be said in rebuttal that the [physical] boundedness of the presence of a body with no exterior to it is [equally] absurd. And [finally] if you [Philosophers] were to say that the exterior of such a [bounded] body is its [outermost] surface, which is simply a discontinuation [of that body] and nothing more, we would say [in reply] that the prior time-period [of the world] was the inception of its coming into being, this being its outermost [temporal] boundary, nothing more.”

**Article 93 & 94 [p23]**

It remains for us [Theologians] to say that *Allah* has [a type of] existence which is not [shared] by the world. And this [most elevated] rank [of existence] does not entail establishing [the existence] of anything else. And that which indicates that [i.e. the truth of the assertion of another existence besides Allah] is [none other than] the activity of the imagination which is specially [related] to [matters of] time and space. And certainly the opposition, even if they were to be convinced of the eternity of body, [yet] their imagination succumbs to surmising that it [i.e. that body] came into being [as an event in time]. [On the hand] though we [Theologians] might believe in its birth [as an event], our imagination would perhaps succumb to surmising that it were eternal – this [observation applies] with respect to body. But if we were to return to the [question of] time, the opposition is incapable of hypothesizing the birth of a time-span which is [not itself] preceded by some [previous] time-span. Now [we submit] it is possible to pose [an idea] as a hypothesis within the imagination [that is] contrary to one’s belief. However, this
idea [about the birth of time] is among those [ideas] that cannot be posed within the imagination, and the same applies to the [idea of] space. Indeed, [both] one who affirms the bounded ness of body, and one who doubts it, are incapable of surmising [the existence of] a body beyond which there is neither empty space nor occupied space. Their imaginations [simply] will not yield to accepting this idea. Nevertheless, it is said that if a clear mind does not reject the existence of a bounded body, this [position being adopted] on the strength of proof, then one should not incline towards [the prodding] of the imagination. In like manner, a clear mind does not reject [the idea of] the inception of an existence [of something which had been] preceded by absolute nothingness. And should the imagination fall short [in conceiving] this, do not [simply for this reason] incline towards [its urgings and thereby ignore the voice of reason]. [After all], this [inadequacy of the imagination is a consequence of] the imagination not as yet having acquaintance itself with a bounded body except that besides it is [always either] another body or air conceived as empty space. [It is] for [this reason] that it [i.e. the imagination] is unable in abstentia to conceive of that [sort of birth]. In like manner, the imagination is not conversant with an event, except that it [i.e. the event] has followed something else. Hence, it shies away from hypothesizing about an occurrence having [no prior time-interval preceding it], and [in particular when] this occurrence [results in] an existing thing that has been completed.

Article 95 [p24]

This then is the cause of the error [in the argument of the Philosophers]. All resistance [to them] crystallizes with this objection.
Their [i.e. The Philosophers] second form [of proof] for the necessity of time’s eternity.

Articles 96 & 97 [p24]

They [the Theologians] say that there is no doubt therein [i.e. in the belief] that according to us, Allah was capable of creating the world before He [actually] created it. [The] scale of this time [could well be] a year, a hundred years, or [even] a thousand years. Indeed, these estimates are [quite] different [from each other, both] in scale and magnitude. Therefore, there is no avoiding confirmation [of the presence] of something before the coming into being of the world. [This something] was extended and has been assessed [as to its size]. Some parts of this something are estimated to be more expansive and longer than other parts. And if you [Theologians] then should say to us that it is not possible to apply the expression ‘years’ except after the birth of the heavens and their [attendant] revolutions, we [Philosophers] will quit [using] the expression ‘years’, and [instead] furnish a different wording and say the following: “Assuming that the heavens of the world since its initial coming into being have already revolved, for example, a thousand revolutions [till now], would Allah have been capable of creating before [this present] world a second one like it? [As an additional condition, this hypothesized second world ought to have been] such that it would have terminated [its revolutions having arrived] at the present time with a thousand one hundred revolutions. Should you [Theologians] say ‘no’ [to this proposition], it would be as if The Eternal had reverted from [a state of] incapacity to [a state of] potency, or [alternatively it would be as if] the [second, hypothesized] world had reverted from being impossible [to create] to being possible [to create]. But should you [Theologians] say ‘yes’ [to this proposition], and this is unavoidable, then [we ask], was Allah capable of creating a third world such that it terminates [in its revolutions, having completed] at the present time a [total of] a thousand two hundred revolutions?
Again, there is no way out but to say ‘yes’. Hence, we would [then] ask whether the world which, according to the system of our postulates we would call ‘the third [world]’, despite it being the most recent, could possibly have been created [simultaneously] with the world we have [already] named ‘the second world’? This ['third world'] would then [eventually] have reached us, terminating with a thousand one hundred revolutions. [In so doing], both ['second' and 'third'] worlds would be equivalent with respect to the [orbital] distance [covered, even] with respect to motion and velocity. But [should] you [Theologians] say ‘yes’ to this [conclusion], then this [answer] would be absurd. [This] is indeed [so], as it is impossible for two motions to be equal in rapidity and slowness, and [even though] the number of their revolutions differ, yet [they] arrive at termination [of their revolutions] at the same time. And [in defense] you might say that the ‘third world’ which terminates [in its revolutions] at our present time with [a total of] a thousand two hundred revolutions, could not [possibly] have been created [simultaneously] with the ‘second world’ which terminates [in its revolutions] at our [present] time with a [total of] a thousand one hundred revolutions. You [Theologians] might say [in addition] that instead it is unavoidable that Allah created it before the ‘first world’ by an extent [in time] that equals the extent [in time] whereby the ‘second world’ preceded the ‘first world’.

We have called this [world] ‘The first [world]’ because of [its quality of] being more in affinity with our imagination. It is the ‘first world’s’ [beginning] that we project back from our present time in our hypothesis. Hence we conclude the time-span of our present world to be double [in extent] to the time-span of [any] other possible-world. Thus it is unavoidable [that we conclude] that one possible-world’s time be double that of all [other possible-worlds taken together.] Now these virtual, measured possible time-spans, some of which are longer than others by a knowable amount, could have no reality except that of [actual] periods of time.”

21 i.e. our present epoch
Article 98 [p25]

“But these [temporal] quantities [used in our hypothesis] are not attributes of the essence of The Creator, exalted be He above our speculation. Nor are these [quantities] attributes of the non-existence of the world. Indeed, non-existence is not something to be determined by different scales [of measurement]. Nonetheless, quantity is an attribute, and [as such], it necessitates a possessor [of the attribute of] quantity. And that [something] is nothing except motion while quantity [in the sense used here is nothing] but time. [Time, in turn] is [simply] the measure of the extent) of motion.22 Therefore, by your [i.e the Theologians] own [postulates], there was prior to the [actual] world something which possessed differing quantities, and this is time. Hence by your own [axioms], before the [birth of the world] there existed an [actual] time-span.

Articles 99 & 100 [p25]

The rebuttal to this argument of the Philosophers is [to say] that all this is the work of the imagination. The shortest method to repel it is [to undertake] the comparison of time with space. Indeed, we [Theologians] ask whether it was within the capacity of Allah to create the roof of the uppermost heaven thicker than the one he [actually] did by a cubit. Should [the Philosophers] reply with ‘no’, this [implies] incapacity [on His part]. Should they reply with ‘yes’, then this [implies that He could have created the roof thicker] by two cubits, or three cubits, [thereby] proceeding in like fashion without end. In this process, there is the [implicit] confirmation of a dimension beyond the world. This dimension has both extent and quantity. Indeed, that which is greater in thickness [than the celestial roof] by two cubits would not fill-up spatially [that very same volume] which something greater in thickness by [only] one cubit would fill-up. By this criterion, beyond [the confines] of the world there is [the attribute of] quantity, and [this attribute] calls for that which possesses quantity. These entities are [none other than] body and space. Therefore, [we have shown that]

22 al-Ghazali does not contest this fundamental tenet of the Philosophers.
beyond the world there is either empty [space] or filled [space], so what is the reply [of the Philosophers] to this conclusion? In like fashion, we may ask if *Allah* is capable of creating the sphere of the Earth smaller than that which He actually created? [And if so], could this [reduction] have been [of the order of] a cubit, or even two [cubits]? In addition, [considering both paradigms], is there not between these two scenarios, a difference in that [dimension] which recedes in [extent of] fullness and occupancy [of space.]? In fact, the [extent of] fullness that recedes by the reduction [in thickness of the celestial roof] of two cubits is greater than that [corresponding extent] which recedes with a reduction [in thickness of the celestial roof] of [only] a cubit. [This] result [indicates] that space is [an entity capable of being] measured. But, [as we have seen before], nothingness is not a [substantial thing], so how could it be a measured [quantity]?

Our answer [therefore] to the flights of the imagination wherein [it] proposes the [existential] possibilities of time-spans before the birth of the world is akin to your [i.e. Philosophers’] answer to the flights of the imagination wherein [it] proposes the [existential] possibilities of [actual space] beyond [the confines] of the world. There is no difference [between the two answers].

*Articles 101 & 102 [p26]*

But the Philosophers might say that they do not claim that which is not possible is [nevertheless] decreed by [Allah]. And the world’s being bigger [in size] than it [actually] is, and not smaller than that [hypothesized, inflated size] is [logically] not possible. Hence, [it is for this reason], that it was not decreed.

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23 The first scenario appears in the paragraph immediately preceding this one.
24 The quite different concepts of ‘the void’ or ‘empty space’ and ‘absolute nothingness’ must be carefully distinguished at this point.
25 Space exists only as the possibility of the extention of matter. So where no matter can possibly exist as, for example, beyond the limits of the world, no space can be present. This tenet underpins al-Ghazali’s rebuttal.
26 A fundamental postulate of al – Ghazali is that what is not logical is not ever decreed by Allah.
Article 103 [p26]

This explanation\textsuperscript{27} is false in three aspects.

Article 104 [p27]

One of these [aspects] is that it is [a reflection of] stubbornness of mind. For indeed the mind, to the proposition of the world being larger or smaller than it [actually is ] by a cubit, does not react as [it does] to the [proposition of] the unity of black and white; or [to the proposition of] the unity of existence and non-existence. That which is [completely] forbidden [by the mind] is unifying the negation [of something] with its affirmation. All absurdities have their origins in this [error]. This explanation [of the Philosophers] is therefore arbitrary, weak and false.

Article 105 [p26]

The second aspect [of the falsity of their explanation] is that if the [magnitude] of the world cannot possibly be greater or smaller it than [actually is] is, then its present magnitude is [something] necessary [and] not something [merely] possible. But that which is necessary is independent of [any] cause.[In that case], [you should rather] say what the atheists say as regards denial of The Maker and denial of The Cause that is the cause of all causes. But [as is known], this is not your tenet.

Article 106 [p27]

The third aspect [of the falsity of their explanation] is that the [aspiring] repudiator of this false explanation is not incapable of opposing it with a similar [argument]. Therefore, we [of the opposition] may say [in like fashion] that the world could not possibly have come into being before it actually did, but [rather] that its birth coincided with [the moment of] possibility [of its birth].This explanation [of ours requires] no further classification of details. But you [Philosophers] may say [in rebuttal] that The Eternal [in this case] reverted from capability

\textsuperscript{27} Lit. ‘excuse’
to incapacity. In reply, we would say ‘no’, for the existence of the world had not been previously possible, and therefore had not been decreed for existence. Moreover, abstention on His part, from realizing that which is not possible does not imply incapacity in Him. And if you [Philosophers] should ask how the [birth of the world] could have been [at first] forbidden, but then became possible, we would ask [in reply] why [its birth] could not be forbidden under [certain] circumstances, and possible [in other circumstances]. The [Philosophers] may say that the circumstances [were always] the same, but [to this the following] would be said [in reply]; “Extent [in all directions of space] is the same, so how could a [specific] measured [distance] be possible while a distance greater or smaller than it by the scale of a fingernail is prohibited. So if [by your own admission] that [latter scenario] is not impossible, it is [likewise] not impossible [for the birth of the world to have been once prohibited, but then later possible].

This then is the method of countering [the explanation of the Philosophers].

Article 107[p27]

In replying [to the Philosophers], that which has to be confirmed is that whatever was mentioned in their proposed possibilities [as regards the world’s creation] is meaningless. What is [in fact] indisputable is that Allah, The Exalted, is Eternal and Capable of anything [He wills]. If He wills something, no action whatsoever is ever impossible for Him. In this [counter-] proposal [of His unrestricted will] there is nothing that essentially requires the affirmation of an [infinitely] prolonged time-span. [And this requirement would not materialize] unless the imagination adds something else [to befuddle our perceptions] through its deceptive [influence].

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28 A logical error appears here in the Arabic original. The correct rendering should be: “from incapability to capacity”.
29 Space and time being isotropic, al-Ghazali applies those premises and results about space and time accepted by the Philosophers to prove his thesis of the possibility of the temporal creation of the world.
30 Or non-creation
CHAPTER THREE

Epilogue

In support of al-Ghazali’s refutation of the theses of the Philosophers are the modern findings of Physics. Scientists are unanimous that the entire universe began with a single ‘Big Bang’, and have even been able to calculate when this cosmic explosion occurred. “… the universe began about 18 billion years ago in a primordial, cataclysmic event”.31 The ‘Big-Bang’ Theory, founded upon empirical observation of a constantly expanding universe, requires the creation of the universe from a condition of infinite density (of matter), which may logically be regarded as nothing at all. Simply put, the ‘Big-Bang’ Theory proclaims creation of the world ex nihilo! The ‘Big-Bang’, if true, affirms that space is an entity created in time. But what about time itself? According to the Theory of Relativity, space and time form a single, complex matrix referred to as ‘space-time’ which is inseparable. Hence, according to Physicists, if space was created, then so was time! Another confirmation of the truth of al-Ghazali’s position vis-a-vis the Philosophers is afforded by the so called Second Law of Thermodynamics. This law claims that the entire universe and its processes will ‘run down’ and reach a state of equilibrium. In other words, all of the energy contained within it will become completely evenly distributed, resulting in the world’s death. But if, as the Philosophers claim, the universe is eternal, why has it not yet reached its state of maximum entropy and died? After all, it had all eternity to do so!

In subsequent chapters of the Tahafut, al-Ghazali continues to challenge the doctrine of the Philosophers on the world’s pre- eternity from the aspect of causality.32 Their doctrines may also be refuted by purely logical investigations into the nature of infinity. To have pursued these themes here, however, would have exceeded the bounds of this thesis.

We affirm with al-Ghazali our belief in “a Creator of the universe who exists changelessly and independently prior to

32 a good treatment of this is provided by Fakhry
creation"\textsuperscript{33} and Who continues in existence subsequent to creation of the world and time. We conclude by saying: \textit{Al- hamdu lillahi, rabbil `alamin.}

END

\footnotesize\textsuperscript{33} Ibid
BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX
الآول

(٦) قولهم يستحيل صدور حادث من قدم مطلقاً؛ لأننا إذا فرضنا القدم ولم يصدر منه العالم مثلاً، فإننا لم نقدر لأنه لم يكن للوجود مريح بل كان وجود العالم ممكناً صرفاً. فإذا حدث بعد ذلك لم يخلل، اما أن تتجدد مريح أو لم يتجلد. فإن لم تتجدد مريح بقي العالم على الامكان الصرف كما قبل ذلك؛ وان تجد مريح، فإن حدث ذلك المريح، ولم يحدث الآن ولم يحدث من قبل؟ والسؤال في حدوث المريح قائم.

(٧) وبالأمل، أعناeworld القديم إذا كانت مشابهة، فإننا أن لا يوجد عنه شيء قط، وإنما أن يوجد على الدوم. فأنا أن يميز حال الترك عن حال الشروق فهو مجال.

(٨) وتخفيه أن يقال، إن لم يحدث العالم قبل حدوثه؟ لا يمكن أن يقال.

على جزء من الأحداث، ولا على استحالة الحدوث. فإن ذلك يؤدي إلى أن يتقلب القدم من العجز إلى القدرة والعالم من الاستحالة إلى الامكان، وكلها
مطالعان. ولا أمكن أن يقال لم يكن قبله غرضاً ثم تجديد غراض ولا أمكن أن يحال على فقد الله ثم على وجوده: بل اقر الب ما يتخيل أن يقال، لم يرد وجوده قبل ذلك فيزمن أن يقال حصل وجوده لائحة صار مريداً لوجوده بعد أن لم يكن مريداً. [قد تكون] قد حدثت الإرادة. [وجودها]؟ في ذاته مجال لائحة ليس مجال الحوادث [وجودها]؟ لا في ذاته لا يجعله مريداً.

(9) ولنترك النظر في مجال [وجودها]؟ أليس الأشكال قائمة في أصل [وجودها]؟، وإنه من أين حدث، ولم يحدث الآن ولم يحدث قبله؟ أحدث الآن لا من جهة اللّه؟ فإن جاز حادث من غير محدث، فليكن العالم حادثاً لا صانع له ولا فإن حادث وحدث طبيعة، فلماذا لم يحدث ذلك بالوجود حادث؟ أين بعد الله أو قدرة أو غرض أو طبيعة، فلماذا إن تؤدي ذلك بالوجود حادث؟ عاد الأشكال يعينوه، أو لعدم الإرادة؟ فتفتقر الإرادة إلى إرادة وكذل الأرادة الأولى ويتسلسل إلى غير نهاية.

(10) فلذن قد تحقق بالقول للملطئ أن صدور الحادث من القدم من غير تغير أمر من القدم، في قدراً أو آلة أو وقت أو غرض أو طبيعة مجال. وتقدير تغير مجال، فإن الكلام في ذلك التغير الحادث كلام في غيره والكل مجال ومهمه كان العالم موجوداً واستحال حدوثه ثبت قبدها غيره. وهذا [أخيل]؟ ادلبهم وباشرة كلهم في سائر مسائل الأدوات أردة من كلهم في هذه المسألة، إذ يقرون هاهنا على فون من التخيل لا يكون منه في غيرها. فلذلك فتحنا هذه المسألة وقمنا أقوى ادلبهم.

(12) الاعتراض من وجهين:
(13) احدهما أن يقال: إم تناقصون على من يقول أن العالم حدث بإراده.
قد اقتضت وجوهه في الوقت الذي وجد فيه، وأنه يمتد إلى الغاية التي
استمر البهاء. وأن يستدئ الوجود من حيث أبتدأ. وأن الوجود فيه لم يكن ممادا
فلما يحدث لذلك، واتن فيه فيه وقته الذي حدث فيه مراد بالارادة القديمة، لماذا:
أنتني؟ فأنا المالك لهذا الاعتقاد، وما الحيل له؟
(14) فان قال:
(15) هذا مثال بين الحالات، لأن الحادث موجب ومسبب. وكما يستحيل
حادث بغير سبب وموجب، يستحيل وجود موجب قد تم بشرائط إيجابه
وأركانه وأسبابه. حتى لم يبق شيء، مستور البهاء. ثم يتاخر الموجب. بل وجود
الموجب عند تحقيق الموجب يتم شروطه ضروري وتأخره حال حسب استحالة
وجود الحادث الموجب بلا موجب.
(16) فقيل: والعالم كان المراد موجودا والأرادة موجودة ونسبيتها إلى
المراد موجودة، ولم يتجدد مريد ولم تتجدد [تتجد؟] الأرادة. ولا تجدد للأرادة نسبة لم
تكن. فان كل ذلك تغير. فكيف تجدد المراد، وما المالك من التجدد قبل ذلك؟
(17) وحال التجدد لم يبقي مع الحال السابق في شيء من الأشياء وأمر من الأمور
وحال من الأحوال ونسبيها من النسب; بل الأمور كما كانت بعينها لم يكن
يوجد المراد ويقبض بعينها كما كانت، فوجد المراد، ما هذا إلا غاية الإحالة.
(18) وليس استحالة هذا الجسد في الموجب والمراد ضروري الذي ذاك، بل
وفي العرق والوضعي. فانت الرجل لم تلقف بطلاق زوجته ولم تصل البيونة في
الحال لم يتصور أن تخجل بعد، لأنه جعل الفضول علة للحكم بالوضع
(19)
والأصطلاح، فلم يعقل تأخر المعلول إلا ان يقلل الطلاق بمجيء الغد أو بدخول الدار فلا يقع في الحال ولكن يقع عند مجيء الغد وعند دخول الدار؛ فإنه جعله علة بالإضافة إلى شيء مرتبط، فلنا لم يكن حاضرا في الوقت، وهو الغد والدخول، توقف حصول الموجب على حضور ما ليس محاضر؛ فا حصل الموجب الا وقد تجذر أمر وهو الدخول وحضور الغد، حتى لو اراد ان يؤخر الموجب عن اللفظ غير منوط بحصول ما ليس محاضر، لم يعقل. مع أنه الواضح وانه اختار في تفصيل الوضع، فإذا لم يكتب وضع هذا بشروتين ولم تعقله فكيف تعقله في الإجابات الناتجة العقلية الضرورية؟

181 وأما في العادات فما يحصل بقصدها لا يتأخر عن القصد مع وجود القصد إليه، فلا يعقل. فان تحقق القصد والقدرة وارتغعت المواضع لم يعقل تأخر المقصود. وأما يتصور ذلك في العزم، لان العزم غير كاف في وجود الفعل، بل العزم على الكتابة لا يوقع الكتابة ما لم تتجذر قصد هو أنبعاث في الإنسان.

182 فان كانت الإرادة القديمة في حكم قصدنا إلى الفعل، فلا يتصور تأخر المقصود إلا يبانع ولا يتصور تقدم القصد فلا يعقل قصد في اليوم في الغد إلا بطريق العزم. وإن كانت الإرادة القديمة في حكم عزمنا، فليس ذلك كافيا في وقوع المعزوم عليه؛ بل لا بد من تجذر أنبعاث قصد عند الإيجاد، وفيه قول بغير القدم. ثم يبقى عن الأشكال في ان ذلك الأبعاث أو القصد أو الإرادة ما شئت ستجمه، لم حدث الآن ولم يحدث قبل ذلك؟ فإنا ان يبقى.

20 حادث بلا سبب أو يتسلسل إلى غير نهاية.
ورجع حاصل الكلام إلى أنّه وجد الموجب بثوب شروطه ولم يبق أمر منظور، ومع ذلك تأخر الموجب ولم يوجد في مدة لا يرتقي الوهم إلى أوبها، بل ألف سنين لا تنقص شيئاً منها، ثم انقلب الموجب بثوب من غير أمر تجدد وشرط تحقق، وهو مجال في نفسه.

(22) والجواب أن يقال:

استحالة ارادة قديمة متعلقة بحادث شيء، أي شيء كان تعرفونه بضرورة العقل أو نظره وعلى لغتك في المنطق، تعرفون الانتقاء بين هذين الحقين بحد أوسط أو عن غير حد أوسط؟ فإنّا ذهبتا حداً أوسط، وهو الطريق النظرى، فلا بد من اظهاره، وإن ذهبتا معرفة ذلك ضرورة، فكيف لم يشارك ذلك في معرفته مخالفك، والفرقة المعتقدة [بحدث؟] العالم باردة قديمة لا يخصها بلد ولا يخصها عدد ولا شك في أنهم لا يكرون العقول عناياً مع المعرفة، فلا بد من اقامة برهان على شرط المنطق يدل على استحالة ذلك، إذ ليس في جميع ما ذكرتموه الا الاستعباد والتمثيل بعزمان وارادتنا، وهو فاسد، فلا تشاهد الارادة القديمة الفصول الحادة، وأما الاستعباد المجزد فلا يكفي من غير.

ويله.

(23) فان قيل: نحن بضرورة العقل نعلم أنه لا يتصور موجب بثوب شروطه من غير موجب ويجوز ذلك ماكر لضرورة العقل، قلنا:

وعما الفصل بينكم وبين خصومكم إذا قالوا لكم أنا بالضرورة نعلم احالة قول من يقول ان ذاتاً واحداً عالم جميع الكليات من غير أن يوجب ذلك كثرة ومن غير أن يكون العالم زيادة على الذات ومن غير أن يتعدى العالم.
مع تحدي المعلوم؟ وهذا مذهبيكم في حق الله، وهو بالنسبة الينا والى علومنا في غاية الإحالة؟ ولكن تقولون: لا يقياس العلم القديم بالحديث. وطائفتنا منكم استشعروا احالة هذا، فقالوا: إن الله لا يعلم الا نفسه، فهو العاقل وهو العقل وهو العقول، والكل واحد. فلو قال قائل آحاد العقل والعاقل والعقول معلوم الاصحالة بالضرورة، إذ تقدير صانع للعالم لا يعلم ضففه مثال بالضرورة وقلم اذا لم يعلم الا نفسه، تعالى عن قولكم وعن قول جميع الزائنين عقلوا كبيرا لم يكن يعلم صنعه البه.(25) بل لا تتجاوز الازمات هذه المثلية فقول:

(26) لم تنكرن على خصومكم أذ قلتم العلم محله لأنه يؤدي إلى اثبات دورات للعقول لا نهاية لأعدادها ولها حصر لأحدهما مع أن لها سببا وراءا ونصفا، فان ذلك الشمس يدور في سنة، وفلك زحل في ثلاثين سنة، فتكون أدورا زحل ثلاث عشر دورات الشمس، ودوران المشترى نصف سدس دورات الشمس، فإنه يدور في اثني عشر سنة، ثم كأنه لا نهاية لأعداد دورات زحل، لا نهاية لأعداد دورات الشمس، مع أنه ثلاث عشر سنة، بل لا نهاية لأعدادذلك الكواكب الذي يدور في سنة وثلاثين ألف سنة مرة واحدة، إذا نهاية للحركة المشترقة التي للشمس في اليوم والليلة مرة. فلو قال قائل، هذا مما يعلم استحالته ضرورة، فهذا تفصلون عن قوله؟ بل لو قال قائل: اعداد هذه الدورات شعف أو وتر، أو شعف ووتر جميعا، أو لا شعف ولا وتر، فإن قلم شفع ووتر جميعا أو لا شعف ولا وتر، فإن قلم ضرورة، وان قلم شعف، فالشعف يصير وترًا واحد، فكيف أوزع ما لا نهاية له واحد؟ وان قلم وتر، فالوتر يصير.
بواحد شفعا، فكيف أعوز ذلك الواحد الذي به يصير شفعا؟ فيلزمكم القول
بأنه ليس شفع ولا وتر.
(27) فكان يقول: "أما يوصف بالشفع والوتر المتناهي وما لا يتناهي لا
يوصف به، قلت:"
(28) جملة مركبة من أحادها سدس وعشرين حسبًا، ثم لا يوصف بشفع
ولا وتر، يعلم بطلانه ضرورة من غير نظر، فبذا تنتفصول عن هذا؟ فان قيل;
ملأ الغلف في قولكم أنه جملة مركبة من أحادن، فان هذه الثورات معدومة، أما
الماضي فقد انقرض وأما المستقبل فلم يوجد، والجملة إشارة إلى موجودات
حاضرة ولا موجودة هنا، قلت:"
(29) العدد يقسم إلى الشفع والوتر ويستحيل أن يخرج عنه، سواء كان
المعدد موجودًا بائيا أو فائدا؛ فذا فرضنا عدداً من الأفراس لزمنا ان نعتقد
أنه لا يخلو من كونه شفعا أو وتر، سواء قدرناها موجودة أو معدومة؛ فان
أنعدمت بعد الوجود لم تتغير هذه القضية. على أن نقول لهم:
(30) لا يستحيل على أصلكم موجودات حاضرة هي أحاد واحدة متغايرة
بالوصف ولا نهاية لها، وهي نفس الأدميين المفارقة للابدان بالموت، فهي
موجودات لا يوصف بالشفع والوتر. فهم تكرون على ي يقول: بطلان هذا
يعرف ضرورة كما ادعتم بطلان تعلق الإرادة القديمة بالآحادات ضرورة؟ وهذا
الرأى في النفس هو الذي اختاره ابن سينا، ولهما مذهب رسول الله.
(31) فكان يقول: "الصحيح رأى أفلاطون، وهو أن النفس قديمة وواحدة
وأما تنقسم في الأبدان فذا فارقتها عادت إلى أصلها وأحصنت، فلنا:
(32) فهذا أفقِج وأشع فأولئِكِ أن يعَتَدَ مما لئلا ضرورة العقل. فأنَا نقول:
نفس زئب عين نفس عمرو أو غيره؟ فإن كان عينه، فهو باطل بالضرورة. فان
كل واحد يشعر بنفسه ويعلم أنه ليس هو نفس غيره. ولو كان هو عينه
لتساويلا في العلوم التي هي صفات ذاتية للنفس داخلة في النفس في كل
إضافة. فإن قلم: أنه غيره، واننا نقسم بالتعلق بالابدان، فانها: انقسام الواحد
الذي ليس له عظم في الحجم وكبيرة مقدارية محل بضرورة العقل، كيف يصير
الواحد اثنين بل ألفاً لم يعود ويصير واحداً؟ بل هذا يعقل فيه لم عظم وكبيرة كإم
البحر ينقسم بالجداول والابراه ثم يعود إلى البحر فاننا لا كبيرة له كيف
ينقسم؟
(33) والمقصود من هذا كله أن نبين أنهم لم يجزوا خصومهم عن
معتقدهم في تعلُّق الإرادة القديمة بالأحداث إلا بدعويا للضرورة، وأنهم لا
ينفصلون عن يدوى الضرورة عليهم في هذه الأمور على خلاف معتقدهم، وهذا
لا يخرج عنه.
(34) فكان قيل: هذا يتقلب عليك في أن الله قبل خلق العالم كان قادرًا
على الخلق بقدر سنة أو ستين، ولا نهاية لقدرته. فكانه صبر ولم يخلق ثم خلق
ومدة الترك متناء أو غير متناء؟ فإن قلم متناء صار وجود البديء متناهي
الأول. وإن قلم غير متناء، فقد انقضى مدة فيها امكانيات لا نهاية لاعدادها.
(35) قلنا:
(36) المدة والزمان مخلوق عندنا ومنبيب حقيقة الجواب عن هذا في
الانفصال عن دليلهم الثاني.
(٣٧) فان قيل:

(٣٨) فنم ت تكون على من يترك دعوى الضرورة ويبدع عليه من وجه آخر، وهو أن الأوقات متساوية في جواز تعلق الأراة بها؟ فما الذي ميز وقتا مغينا عما قبله وعما بعده وليس محالا أن يكون التقدم والتأخر مراداً؟ بل في البياض والسود والمونكة والمكان، فانكم تقولون: يحدث البياض بالارادة القديمة، وأغلب قابل لل السود قبوله للبياض. فلم تعلقت الأراة القديمة بالبياض دون السواد وما الذي ميز أحد الممكنين عن الآخر في تعلق الأراة به؟ وعند الضرورة نعلم أن الشيء لا يميز عن مثله إلا مخصوص، ولو جاز ذلك جاز أن يحدث العالم، وهو ممكن الوجود كما أنه ممكن العدم، ويخصوص جانب الوجود اليمين جنب العدم في الإمكان غير مخصوص. وإن قلت أن الأراة خصصت فالسأول عن اختصاص الأراة وإنا لم نختصست، فإن قلت القدم لا يقال له لم قد يكون العالم قدماً ولا يطلب صاعقه وسببه لأن القدم لا يقال فيه لـ

(٣٩) فإن جاز تختصص القدم بالاتفاق بأن الممكنين معنية المستبعد في يقال العالم مختصص بيئات مخصوصة كان يجوز أن يكون على هيئة أخرى بدلا منا. فيقال وفق ذلك الفواق، كأ قلت اختصاص الأراة بوقت دون وقت وهيئة دون هيئة الفواق. وإن قلت أن هذا السؤال غير لازم لو أنه وارد على كل ما يريد، وعائد على كل ما يمكنه، فقول لا بي هذا السؤال لازم لا أنه عائد في كل وقت وملائم لم نخالفنا على كل تقدير.

(٤٠) فلنا:
(41) إذا وجد العالم حيث وجد وعلى الوصف الذي وجد، ومكان الذي وجد بالرضا والرضا صفة من شأنها تميز الشيء عن مثله. ولولا أن هذا شأنها لوقع الاكتفاء بالقدرة. ولكن ما [تساوت] نسبة القدرة إلى الضدين، ولم يكن بد من مخصوص يخص الشيء عن مثله، فقد قيل: للقدوم وراء القدرة صفة من شأنها تخسيص الشيء عن مثله. فقول القائل، لم ابحث القدرة بأحد المثنين. كقول القائل، لم اقتضي العالم الاحاطة بالعلوم على ما هو به؟ فقيل:

لأن العالم عبارة عن صفة هذا شأنها، فذكى الارادة عبارة عن صفة هذا شأنها، بل ذاهبا تميز الشيء عن مثله.

(42) فان قيل:

(43) اثبات صفة شأنها تميز الشيء عن مثله غير معقول، بل هو متناقض، فإن كونه مثل معناه أنه لا تميز له وكونه مميزا معناه أنه ليس مثلًا ولا ينبغي أن يظن أن السوادان في مخلصين متينين من كل وجه. لأن هذا في مخلص وذاك في مخلص آخر، وهذا يوجب الفيزيك، ولا السوادان في وقته في محل واحد متينين مطلقًا؛ لأن هذا فارق ذلك في الوقت، فكيف يساوي من كل وجه؟ وإذا قلت السوادان مثلان، عينهما في السوادانية مضافًا [الجهاز] على الخصوص لا على الإطلاق، ولا قلت أحد المخلص والزنام، ولم يبق تغاير، لم يعقل سوادان، ولا عقلت الأثنيتين اصلا. يحقق هذا أن لفظ الارادة مستعار من ارادة. ولا يتصور من أن تميز بالرضا الشيء عن مثله. بل لو كان بين بدي العظأن قدان من الماء يتساويان من كل وجه بالإضافة إلى غرضه، لم يكن يأخذ أحدها. بل إنما يأخذ ما يراه أحسن أو أخف أو أقرب إلى جانب.
بينه، أن كان عادته تحريك الليمين، أو سبب من هذه الأسباب، انا خفي وأما جلى، واللا فلا يتصور تميز الشيء عن مثله بحال.

(44) والاعتراض من وجهين:

(45) الأول، أن قولكم إن هذا لا يتصور، عرفتوبه ضرورة أو نظرًا ولا يمكن دعوى واحد منها. وتمثيلكم باردتنا مقاسة فاسدة تضاهي المقاسة في العلم. وعلم الله يفارق عمانا في أمور فقروناها، فلم تبع المفارقة في الإرادة؟ بل هو كقول الفاصل، ذات موجودة لا خارج العالم ولا داخله ولا متصلا ولا منفصلاً. لا يعقل لنا لا تن인데 في حقنا، قبل هذا عمل توهيمك، وانا دليل العقل فقد ساق العقلاء إلى التصديق بذلك. فم تتكلم على من يقول دليل العقل ساق إلى أثاث صفة الله تعالى من شأنها تميز الشيء عن مثله؟ فان لم يطابقها اسم الإرادة، فلتم باسم آخر فلا مشايخة في الأمواء، وانا أطلقتها ثم باذن الشرع. واللا الإرادة موضوعة في اللغة لتعيين ما فيه غرض، ولا غرض في حق الله. وانا المقصود المعنى دون اللفظ.

(46) على أنه في حقنا لا نسلم ان ذلك غير متصور. فانا نفرض تمريين متضاويتين بين يدي المشهد فيهما العاجز عن تناولهما جميعاً، فإنه يأخذ احدهما لا محله بصفة شأنها تخصيص الشيء عن مثله. وكل ما ذكرتته من اقتضيات من الحسن أو القرب أو تميز الآخر، فانا نقدر على فرض انتفائه، وبين مكان الآخر، فانه بين أمرين: إذا ان قلم ان أنه لا يتصور التساوي بالإضافة إلى اغراضه فقط، وهو حقيقة وفرضه ممكن، وإذا ان قلم التساوي إذا فرض بق الرجل المشهد أبدا متحيراً ينظر اليهما فلا يأخذ احدهما مجزد.
الإرادة والاختيار المنطفي عن الغرض وهو أيضاً مجال، يعمل بطلانه ضرورة، فاذن لا بد لكلّ ناظر شاهداً أو غائباً في تحقيق الفعل الاختياري من أثبات صفة شأنها تخصيص الشيء عن مثله.

(47) الوجه الثاني في الاعتراض هو أنّا نقول:

(48) أنتم في مذهبكم ما استفتيتم عن تخصيص الشيء عن مثله. فانّ العالم وجد من سبيه الموجب له على هيئة مخصوسة مماثلة نفسياً. فالم اختص ببعض الوجه، واستحالة [عُمّى] لشيء عن مثله في الفعل أو في الزوم بالطبع أو بالضرورة لا تختلف؟

(49) فأن قلت:

(50) أن النظام الكلبي للعالم لا يمكن إلاّ على الوجه الذي وجد، وإنّ العالم لو كان أصغر أو أكبر مما هو الآن عليه، لكان لا يتمّ هذا النظام: وكذا القول في عدد الأقاليم وعدد الكواكب، وزعم أنّ الكبير يخالف الصغير والكثير يفارق القليل في ما يراد منه، فليس متسائلاً، بل هي مختلفة إلاّ أن القوة البشرية تضعف عن درك ووجه الحكمة في مقدارها وتفاصيلها. وإذا اتكرك الحكمة في بعضها كالحكمة في ميل ذلك البروج عن معدل النهار، والحكمة في الأيوج والفك الخارج «عن)، المركز، والأكثر لا يدرك السرفيها ولكن يعرف اختلافها. ولا بعد في أن يعزّي الشيء عن خلافه Tango نظام الأمر به، وإذا الاوقات فتشابهة قطعاً بالنسبة إلى الإمكاني، وإلى النظام، ولا يمكن أن يدعى أنه لو خلق بعد ما خلق أو قبله بلحظة لم تصدر النظام. فانّ تماثيل الأحوال يعم بالضرورة.
(54) فان قيل: فلن يكون ثابت الوضع من غيره.

(55) لعل الموضع الذي عليه نقطة القطب يفارق غيره بخاصة تناسب كونه محلا للقطب حتى يثبت، فكأنه لا يفارق مكانه وحيزه ووضعه أو ما يفرض اطلاقه عليه من الاساس، وسائر مواضع الفلك يبذل بالدور وضعها من الأرض ومن الافلاك، والقطب ثابت الوضع. فلعل ذلك الموضع كان أولى.

(56) لم يكن خط المنطقة مازا بالنقاطين حتى يعود القطبين إلى نقطتين متبادلتين على المنطقة؟ فان كان في مقدار كبر السماء وشكه حكمة، فما الذي ميز محل القطب عن غيره حتى تعيين لكونه قطبًا دون سائر الاجزاء والنقاط، وجميع النقط متبادلة.

(57) إذا اجزاء الكرة متساوية؟ وهذا لا يخرج عنه.

(58) فان قيل: إذا اجزئ الكرة متساوية: وي العمود الذي عليه نقطة القطب يفارق غيره بخاصة تناسب كونه محلا للقطب حتى يثبت، فكأنه لا يفارق مكانه وحيزه ووضعه أو ما يفرض اطلاقه عليه من الاساس، وسائر مواضع الفلك يبذل بالدور وضعها من الأرض ومن الافلاك، والقطب ثابت الوضع. فلعل ذلك الموضع كان أولى.

(59) إذا اجزاء الكرة متساوية: وهذا لا يخرج عنه.

(60) وان كان كتا نقدر على معارضتكما بتمثيله في الاحوال اذ قال قائلون، خلقه في الوقت الذي كان الاصلح الخلق فيه; لكنك لا تتصر على هذه المقبلة، بل نفرض على أصلكئ خاصا في موضوعين لا يمكن أن يقدر فيه اختلاف احدهما اختلاف جهة الحركة والآخر تعيين موضوع القطب في الحركة عن المنطقة.

(61) اما القطب، فيبان أنه أن السماء كورة متزوجة على قطبين كأنهما ثابتان.

(62) وكرة السماء مشابهة الاجزاء، فأنها بسيطة، لا سلأ الفلك الأعلى الذي هو الناين، فأنه غير مكووكك اصلا، وما متحركان على قطبين شان وجنوب.

(63) فقول ما من نقطتين متبادلتين من النقاط التي لا نهاية لها عندنها، ويتصر أن يكون هو القطب، فلم تعيين نقطتين الشمالي والجنوبي للقطبية والثبات؟ ولم يكن خط المنطقة مازا بالنقاطين حتى يعود القطبين إلى نقطتين متبادلتين على المنطقة؟ فان كان في مقدار كبر السماء وشكه حكمة، فما الذي ميز محل القطب عن غيره حتى تعيين لكونه قطبًا دون سائر الاجزاء والنقاط، وجميع النقط متبادلة.
(56) قلنا:

في هذا تصرّف بتفاوت إجزاء الكرة الأولى في الطبيعة وانها ليست متشابهة الإجراة. وهو على خلاف أصلكم، إذ أحد ما استدلتم به على لزوم تكون السماء كرى الشكل أنه بسيط الطبيعة متشابه لا يتفاوت. وابسط الأشكال الكرة. فإن التربيع والتسديس وغيرها يقضي خروج زوايا وتفاوتها، وذلك لا يكون إلا بامر زائد على الطبيعة البسيطة. ولكن عند خالف مذهبكم، فليس يدفع الالتزام به. فإن السؤال في تلك الحاضية قام إذ سائر الإجراة هل كان قابلاً تلك الحاضية أم لا؟ فإن قالوا: نعم، فإن اختصت الحاضية من بين المتشابهات ببعضها؟ وإن قالوا: لم يكن ذلك إلا في ذلك الموضع وسائر الإجراة لا تقبلها، فنقول: سائر الإجراة من حيث أنها جسم قابل للضرور متشابه بالضرورة. وذللك الحاضية لا يستحقها ذلك الموضع محرج كونه جميلاً ولا محرج كونه ساء. فإن هذا المعي يشترك فيه سائر إجراة السماء. فلا بد وأن يكون تخصصه به تتحكم أو بصفة من شأنها تخصص الشيء عن مثيله. وألا فما يستقيم لهم قوام أن الأحوال في قبول وقف العالم فيها متساوية. يستقيم خصومهم أن إجراة السماء في قبول المعي الذي لا يجلب صار ضربة الوضع أولي به من تبذل الوضع متساوية. وهذا لا مخرج منه.

(58) الالتزام الثاني تعيين جهة حركة الأفلاك بعضها من المشرق إلى المغرب وبعضها بالعكس مع تساوى الجهات، ما سبيها وتتساوي الجهات كتساوي الأوقات من غير فرق؟

(59) قيل:
(60) لو كان الكل يتور من جهة واحدة، لما تباثت أوضاعها، ولم تحدث مناسبات الكواكب بالتالي والتفسير والمقارنة وغيرها؛ ولكن الكل على وضع واحد لا يختلف قط، وهذه المناسبات مبدأ الحوادث في العالم.

(61) قلنا:

(62) لست نلزم (عدم) "اختلاف جهة الحركة، بل نقول: الكل الأعلى يتحرك من الشرق إلى الغرب والذى يفتح بالعكس؛ وكل ما يمكن تحصيله بهذا، يمكن تحصيله بعكسه، وهو أن يتحرك الأعلى من الشرق إلى الغرب وما شبه في مقابلته فيحصل التفاوت؛ وجهات الحركة بعد كونها دورية وبعد كونها متقابلة متساوية، فلم تثير جهة عن جهة تامًا لها؟

(63) قالوا: الجهات متقابلان متوضئان فكيف يتساوى؟ قلنا:

(64) هذا كقول القائل التقدم والتأخر في وجود العالم يتضادا فكيف يدعى تشابهها؟ ولكن زعموا أنه يعلم تشابه الأوقات بالنسبة إلى مكان الوجود وإلى كل مصلحة يتصور "فرضتها" في الوجود. فكذلك يعلم تساوي الأحيان والأوضاع والأماكن والوجهات بالنسبة إلى قبول الحركة وكل مصلحة تتعلق بها. فان سأغرهم دعوى الاختلاف مع هذا التشابه، كان خصومهم دعوى الاختلاف في الاحوال وال천ات أيضًا.

(65) الاعتراف الثاني على أصل دليلهم أن يقال:

(66) استبعدم حدوث حادث من قديم، ولا يذك من الاعتراف به. فان في العالم حوادث ولا أسباب. فان استندت الحوادث إلى الحوادث إلى غير نهاية، فهو مجال وليس ذلك معظد عاقل. ولو كان ذلك ممكنًا، لاستغتنم عن
الاعتراف بالصناع واثبات واجب وجود هو مستند الممكنات. وإذا كانت الحوادث لها طرف ينتهي إليه تسألها، فيكون ذلك الطرف هو القديم؛ فلا بد أن يكون أصلهم من تجوز صدور حادث من قدم.
(76) فإن قيل:

(78) فتمن لا يبعد صدور حادث من قدم، أي حادث كان، بل يبعد صدور حادث هو أطول الحوادث من القديم، إذا ليفارق حال الحدوث ما قبله في ترتيب جهة الوجود، لا من حيث حضور وقت ولا آلة ولا شرط ولا طبيعة ولا عرض ولا سبب من الأسباب. فأما إذا لم يكن هو الحادث الأول، جاز أن يصدر منه عند حدوث شيء آخر من استعداد المخل القابل وحضور الوقت الموافق أو ما يجري هذا الجريء.

(79) قلت:

(80) فالسؤال في حصول الاستعداد وحضور الوقت وكل ما يتجدد قائم.

(71) فإن قيل:

(72) المواز الغابلة للصور والإعراض والكفييات ليس شيء منها حادثأ. والكفييات الحادثة هي حركة الأفلاك، اعنى الحركة الدورية وما يتجدد من الأوصاف الإضافية لها من الثلاثية والتسديس والتزيع، وهي نسبة بعض أجزاء الفلك والكواكب إلى بعض، وبعضها نسبة إلى الأرض، كما يحصل من الطلوع والشروق والنزول عن منتهى الارتفاع. والبعد عن الأرض يكون الكوكب في الأوج، والقرب يكون في الحيض، والميل عن بعض الاقطار
بكونه في الشمال والجنوب. وهذه الإضافة لازمة للحركة الدورية بالضرورة؛
فوجيها الحركة الدورية. وأما الحوادث فإنها يحويه مقعر فلك القمر (وهي) العناصر بما يعرف فيها من كون وفساد وامتصاص وانفجار واستغلال من صفة
الصفة، فكل ذلك حوادث مستند بعضها إلى بعض في تفصيل طويل.
والآخرى تنتمي مبادئ اسبابها إلى الحركة السماوية الدورية ونسب الكواكب
بعضها إلى بعض أو نسبها إلى الأرض.
(73) فيخرج من مجموع ذلك أن الحركة الدورية الدائمة الأبديّة مستند
الحوادث كلها. وتحرك السماء حركتها الدورية، نفس السماء. فانها حية،
nازالة منزلة نفسها بالنسبة إلى أبتدائنا. ونفسها قدية؛ فلا جرم (إن)
الحركة الدورية التي هي موجبة أيضا قدية. ولم [تشابه] [16] أحوال النفس لكونها
قدية، [تشابه] [16] أحوال الحركات، أي كانت دائرة أبدا.
(74) فذن لا يتصور أن يصدر الحادث من قدم البواسطة حركة دورية
أبديّة تشبه القدم من وجه، فانه دائم أبدا، وتشبه الحادث من وجه، فان كل
جزء يفرض منه كان حادثا بعد ان لم يكن. فهو من حيث إنه حادث بأجزائه
وإضافاته مبدأ الحوادث، ومن حيث إنه أبدى تشبيه الهوادث، صادر عن
نفس أزليّة. فان كان في العالم حوادث، فلا بد من حركة دورية؛ وفي العالم
حوادث، فالحركة الدورية الأبديّة ثابتة.
(75) فذن:
(76) هذا التطويل لا يغنيكم. فان الحركة الدورية التي هي المستند [حادثة
ام قدية]؟ فان [كانت قدية]؟ فكيف صار مبدأ لأول الحوادث؟ وان كان
(70)
حادثًا، اقتصر إلى حداث آخر وتسلسل. وقولكم أن من وجه يشبه القدم ومن وجه يشبه الحادث، فإنه ثابت متجمد، أي هو ثابت التجذب، متجمد الثبوت، فنقول: أحًا مبدأ الحوادث من حيث أنه ثابت، أو من حيث أنه متجمد؟ هل كان من حيث أنه ثابت، فكيف صدر من ثابت متشابه الأحوال شيء في بعض الأوقات دون بعض؟ وإن كان من حيث أنه متجمد، فاً سبب تجذبه في نفسه؟ فيحتاج إلى سبب آخر وتسلسل. فهذا غاية تقرير الألزم.

(77) ولهم في الخروج عن هذا الألزم نوع احتيال ستورده في بعض المسائل بعد هذه كيلا يطول كلام هذه المسألة بانتشار شجعون الكلام وفقونه. على أنه نسبين أن الحركة الدورية لا تصلح أن تكون مبدأ الحوادث وأن جميع الحوادث مخلوطة الله إبتداء، وتبطل ما قالوه من كون السماء حيوانًا متحركًا بالاختيار حركة نفسية كمحكعة.

دليل ثان لهم في المسألة

(78) زعموا أن القائلين بأن العالم متأخر عن الله والذين متقدم عليه ليس

يخلو:

(79) أما أن يريد به أنه متقدم بالذات لا بالزمان، كتقدِّم الواحد على الاثنين، فإنه بالطبع، مع أنه يجوز أن يكون معه في الوجود الزمان، وكتقدِّم العلة على المعلم، مثل تقدِّم حركة الشخص على حركة الظلل التابع له وحركة اليد مع حركة الحامل وحركة اليد في الماء مع حركة الماء، فإنها متساوية في الزمان وبعضها علة وبعضها معلم، إذ يقال تحرك الظلل حركة الشخص وتحرك
لماء، حركة اليد في الماء، لا يقال تحرك الشخص لحركة الظل، وحرك اليد بحركة الماء، وإن كانت متساوية، فإن أريد بتقدم البريق على العالم هذا، لن أكن بحادثين أو قديمين، واستحالة أن يكون أحدهما قديما والآخر حادثا.
50 (20) أريد أن أقدم على العالم والزمن، ولا للذات بل بالزمان فاذن قبل وجود العالم والزمن كان العالم فيه معدوما، إذ كان العدم سابقا على الوجود، وكان الله سابقا عبادة مدينة لها طرف من جهة الآخر ولا طرف لها من جهة الأزل، فاذن قبل الزمان زمان لا نهاية له، وهو منتقاض، ولأجله يستحيل الفعل بحدود الزمان، وإذا وجب قدم الزمان، وهو عبارة عن قدر الحركة، وجب قدم الحركة، وجب قدم المتحرك الذي يدوم الزمان بدون حركته.
60 (31) الاعتراض هو أن يقال:
(32) الزمان حادر وخلوق وليس قبله زمان أصلا، ونعني بقولنا أن الله متقدم على العالم والزمان أنه كان ولا عالم ثم كان ومعه عالم، ومفهوم قولنا كان ولا عالم، وجود ذات الباري وعدم ذات العالم فقط، ومفهوم قولنا كان ومعه العالم، وجود الذاتين فقط، فنعني بالتقدم انفراده بالوجود فقط، والعالم كشخص واحد. ولو فننا، كان الله ولا عيسى مثالا ثم كان ومعيسا معا، لم يتضمن اللفظ إلا وجود ذات وعدم ذات ثم وجود ذاتين، وليس من ضرورة ذلك تقدير شيء ثالث، وإن كان الهم لا يمكن عن تقدير ثالث، فلا النفت إلى أغلبيت الاوهام.
(83) فان قيل:

(84) لقولنا كان الله ولا عالم مفهوم ثالث سوى وجود الذات وعدم العالم.

بدليل آنا لو قدرنا عدم العالم في المستقبل كان وجود ذات وعدم ذات حاصل.

ولم يصب ان نقول كان الله ولا عالم بل الصحيح أن نقول يكون الله ولا عالم ونقول للناقض كان الله ولا عالم. فين قولنا كان ويكون فرق إذ ليس ينبوب أحدهما مناب الآخر. فلنبحث عن ما يرجع إليه الفرق. ولا شك في أننا لا يفترقان في وجود الذات ولا في عدم العالم بل في معيث ثالث. فاننا إذا قلنا عدم العالم في المستقبل كان الله ولا عالم، قبل لنا هذا خطأ فان كان آنا يقال على مايض، فدل ان تقتلك مفهوما ثالثا وهو الماضي. والماضي بذاته هو الزمن والماضي يغير هو الحركة، فانها تضيء بضيع الزمان، فباطئرة يلزم أن يكون قبل العالم زمان قد انتهى حتى انتهى إلى وجود العالم.

(85) قلنا:

(86) المفهوم الأصل من اللقين ووجود ذات وعدم ذات. والامر الثالث الذي فيه افتراق اللقين نسبة لأزمة بالإضافة اليها بدائل آنا لو قدرنا عدم العالم في المستقبل ثم قدرنا لنا بعد ذلك وجودا ثانيا لكننا عند ذلك نقول. كان الله ولا عالم. ونصح قولنا سواء أردنا به عدم الأول أو عدم الثاني الذي هو بعد الوجود. وآية ان هذه نسبة، ان المستقبل بينه يجوز أن يصير ماضيا فيعتبر عنه بلفظ الماضي. وهذا كله لعجز الوهيم عن فهم وجود مبدأ إلا مع تقدير قبله، وذلك القبل الذي لا ينقض الوهيم عنه، ينطيل أنه شيء محقق موجود هو الزمان، وهو كعجز الوهيم عن أن يقدر ينادي الجسم في جانب الرأس مثلما الا:
على سطح له فوق، فتكون أن وراء العالم مكاناً، أنا ملائ وآنا خلا. وآنا قيل، ليس فوق سطح العالم فوق ولا بعد ابعد منه، كأعلى الوهم عن الذاذان لقبته، كما إذا قيل، ليس قبل وجود العالم قبل هو وجود واضح، نفر عن قبوله. (87) وكا جاس أن يكون الوهم في تقديره فوق العالم خلا، هو بعد لأيادة

لله يقال له، الخلا ليس مفهوماً في نفسه. وآنا البعد فهو تابع للجسم الذي تباعد أقطاره. فاذا كان الجسم متناهي كان البعد الذي هو تابع له متناهي وانقطع الملا، والخلا غير مفهوم، فثبت أنه ليس وراء العالم لا خلا ولا ملائ، وإن كان الوهم لا يذعن لقبوله، فكذاك يقال، كما ان البعد المكان تابع للجسم، فالبعد الزماناء تابع للحركة فائه امتداد الحركة كان ذلك امتداد أقطار الجسم. وكا أن قيام الدليل على تناؤ خلا أقطار الجسم من اثبات بعد مكان وراءه، فقيام الدليل على تناؤو الحركة من طريقه يمنع من تقدير بعد زمان وراءه، وإن كان الوهم متشابهًا بخيالة وتقديره ولا يرعى عنه، ولا فرق بين البعد الزماناء الذي تنقسم العبارة عنه عند الاضافة إليها قبل وبعد وبين البعد المكان الذي تنقسم العبارة عنه عند الاضافة إلى فوق وتحت. فان جاز اثبات فوق لا فوق فوقه جاز اثبات قبل ليس قبله قبل محقق إلا الخيال وهمين كما في الفوق، وهذا لازم. فليتأمل. فانهم اتفقوا على أنه ليس وراء العالم لا خلا ولا ملائ.

(88) فان قيل:

(89) هذه المواجهة موجزة لأن العالم ليس له فوق ولا تحت بل هو كره ليس للكرة فوق وتحت; بل إن سميت جهة فوقاً من حيث الله يلي رأسك.
والآخر تتنا من حيث أنه يبل رجلك، فهو اسم تبتد له بالأضافة الباكر، والجهة التي هي تحت بالأضافة الباكر فوق بالأضافة الباكر، إذا قدرت على الجانب الآخر من كرة الأرض وافقاً بحاذئ أخص قدمه أخص قدمك، بل الجهة التي تقذرها فوقك من أجزاء السماه ناراً هو بينه تحت الأرض ليلا وما هو تحت الأرض يعود إلى فوق الأرض في الدور، وأنا الأول لوجود العالم لا يصور أن ينقلب آخراً، وهو كما لو قذرنا خشيّة أحد طرفها غليظ والآخر دقيق واصطلاحنا على أن نسمي الجهة التي تل الدقيق فوق ال، حيث ينتهي، وجانب الآخر تحت، لم يظهر هذا اختلاف ذاتق في أجزاء العالم، بل هي أساليب مختلفة فيهم بها فناث، حتى لو عكس وضعها انتكس الاسم، والعالم لم يبدل فالفوق والتحت نسبة مخصوصة الباكر لا تختلف أجزاء العالم وسماه فيه.

(10) وأنا العدم المتقدم على العالم والنهي الأولى لوجوده ذاتق لا يتصور أن يتبدل فيمبر آخر، ولا العدم المتقدر عند أناء العالم الذي هو عدم لاحق يتصور أن يصير سابقاً، فطرفا نهاية وجود العالم الذي أحدهما الأول والثاني آخر طرفا ذاياان ثابتان لا يتصور التبدل فيه بتبديل الأضافات البئرة، خلاف الفوق والتحت، فالفوق يمكننا أن نقول ليس للعالم فوق ولا تحت، ولا يمكن أن نقولوا ليس لوجود العالم قبل ولا بعد، وإذا ثبت القبل والبعد فلا معنى للزمان سواء ما يعبر عنه بالقبل والبعد.

(99) فلناث:

10 (93) بيت أنا نقول:

(94) الله وجود ولا عالم معه، وهذا القدر أيضا لا يوجب اثبات شيء آخر.
والذي يدل على أن هذا عمل الوهم أن تخصص بالزمان والمكان، فإن الحصم وإن اعتقى قدوم الجسم، بذعن وما يتقدير حدوثه؛ ونحن، وإن اعتقينا حدوثه، ربما أذعن وهمنا لتقدير قدومه هذا في الجسم. فإذا رجعنا إلى الزمان، لم يقدر الحصم على تقدير حدوث الزمان لا قبل له. وخلاف المعتقد يمكن وضعه في الوضع تقديرا وفرضها، وهذا ما لا يمكن وضعه في الوهم كاف في المكان فإن من يعتقد تناهي الجسم ومن لا يعتقد، كل واحد يعجز عن تقدير جسم ليس وراءه لا خلاء ولا ملاء، بل لا يذعن وهمه لقبول ذلك. ولكن قبل صريح العقل إذا
لا يمنع وجود جسم متناوِح بحكم القانون لا يلتفت إلى الوجه، فكذلک صريح العقل لا يمنع وجودًا مفتوحة ليس قبله شيء، وان قصر الوجه عنه فلا يلتفت إليه؛ لأن الوجه ما لم يألف جسما متناعيا إلا وجبه جسم آخر أو هواء تخيله خلاص، لم ينكن من ذلك في الغائب. فكذلک لم يألف الوجه حادثا إلا بعد شيء آخر.

فناع عن تقدير حادث ليس له قبل هو شيء موجود قد انقضى، فهذا هو سبب الغفلة والمقاومة حاصلة بهذه المعرضا.

صيغة ثانية لهم في الزمان قدم الزمان

قالوا:

لا شك في أن الله عز وجل قادر على أن يخلق العالم قبل أن خلقه بقدر سنة ومائة سنة وألف سنة وان هذه التقديرات متفاوتة في المقدار والكبيرة، فلا بد من أثبات شيء قبل وجود العالم ممتد متثر، بعضه أحد وأطول من البعض. وان قلم، لا يمكن إطلاق لفظ سنين، ولنورد صيغة أخرى فقولون: اذا قدرنا ان العالم من اول وجوده قد دار ذلك إلى الآن بالف دورة مثلًا. فهل كان الله قادرًا على أن يخلق قبلا عالما ثانيا مره ينتهي إلى زماننا هذا بالف ومائة دورة؟ فان قلم، لا فكانه انقلب القدم من العجز إلى القوة، أو العالم من الاستحالة إلى الامكان، وان قلم، نعم، ولا بد منه، فهل كان قادرًا على أن يخلق عالما ثانيا ينتهي إلى زماننا بالف ومائة دورة؟ ولا بد من نعم. فقولون: هذا العالم الذي نحن نعيش بحسب ترتيبنا في التقدير ثالث، وان كان هو الأسبق، فهل
امكن خلقه مع العالم الذيتيناه ثانياً وكان ينتهى الينا بالف ومائة دورة والآخر بالف ومائة دورة وهما متساويان في مسافة الحركة وسرعتها؟ فان قلتم، نعم، فهو محال، اذ يستحيل أن يتساوي حركتان في السرعة والبطء ثم تنتهان الى وقت واحد والإعداد متفاوتة، وان قلتم ان العالم الثالث الذي ينتهي الينا بالف ومائة دورة بل لا، بيدا، ان يخلقه قبله بمقدار يساوي المقدار الذي تقوم العالم الثاني على العالم الأول، ومثينا الاول ما هو أقرب إليها وهما [اذ] ارتفعا من وقتنا الى التقدير، فيكون قدر امكنا هو ضعف امكان آخر ولا بد من امكان آخر هو ضعف الكلى، فهذا الامكنا المقدر المكمم الذي بعضا اطول من البعض

بمقدار معلوم، لا حقيقة له إلا الزمان.

فليست هذه الكيفيات المقدرة صفة ذات البارى، تعالى على التقدير، ولا صفة عدم العالم، إذ العالم ليس شيئا حي يقدر بمقدار مختلفة، والكية صفة، فتستدعى ذاكرة، وليس ذلك إلا الحركة، والكية الازمان الذي هو قدر الحركة. فان قيل العالم عندكم شيء ذو كمية متفاوتة وهو الزمان، فقيل العالم عندكم زمان.

لا اعتراض:

ان كل هذا من عالم الوهم، وأقرب طريق في دفعه المقابلة للزمان بالمكان. فاننا نقول، هل كان في قدرة الله أن يخلق الفلك الأعلى في سمكه أكبر مما خلقه بذراع؟ فان قالوا، لا، فهو تجريبي، وان قالوا، نعم، فبدرايين وثلاثة أذرع وكذلك يرتفع الى غير نهاية، وتقول، في هذا اثبات بعد وراء العالم له
مقدار وكبيرة، أذ الأكبر بذراعين ما كان يشغل ما يشغل الأكبر بذراع. فوراء العالم يحكم هذا كله. فتستدعى ذا كرم، وهو الجسم أو اللحمة، فوراء العالم خلاء أو ملاء. فما الجواب عنه؟ وكذلك هل كان الله فادرا على أن يخلق كره العالم أصغر مما خلقه بذراع؟ ثم بذراعين وهل بين التقديران تفاوت فيها ينتهي من المال؟ والشُغل للاحتياج، إذ المال المنتهي عند تقضان دراعين أكثر وما ينتهي عند نقصان ذراع، فيكون الخلاء مقترا، والخلاء ليس بشيء، فكيف يكون مقدر؟ وجوابنا في تخيل الوهم تقدر الامكانيات الزمانية قبل وجود العالم كجوابكم في تخيل الوهم تقدر الامكانيات المكانية وراء وجود العالم، ولا فرق.

(101) فان قيل:

(102) تقول ان ما ليس يمكن فهو مقدر، وكون العالم أكبر مما هو عليه ولا أصغر منه ليس يمكن، فلا يكون مقدورا.

(103) وهذا المدرن باطل من ثلاثة أوجه:
(104) احدها: أن هذا مكابرة العقل، فإن العقل في تقدير العالم أكبر أو أصغر مما هو عليه بذراع ليس هو كتقديره الجمع بين السواد والبيض والوجود والعدم. والمتمتع هو الجمع بين النفي والاثبات، والبه ترجع الجملات كلها. فهو تخطى بارداً فاسداً.

(105) الثاني: أنه إذا كان العالم على ما هو عليه لا يكون أكبر منه ولا أصغر، فوجوده على ما هو عليه واجب لا يمكن، والواجب مستغن عن علة. فقولوا بما قلنا النهيون من نفي الصانع ونفي سبب هو سبب الالبساب، وليس هذا مذهبكم.
(106) الثالث هو أن هذا الفاسد لا يعجز الحكم عن مقابلته مثلاً، فنقول:
اته لم يكن وجود العالم قبل وجوده ممكنًا بل وافق الوجود الأمكن من غير زيادة ولا نقصان. فان قلقن قد انتقل القديم من القدرة إلى العجز، فلننا، لان الوجود لم يكن ممكنًا فلم يكن مقدرة. وامتناع حصول ما ليس يمكن لا يدل على العجز. فان قلقن كيف كان ممتنعًا قصار ممكنا؟ فلننا، ولم يستحيل أن يكون ممتنعًا في حال ممكنا في حال؟ فانتقل الاعمال متساوية، قيل لكم، والمقدار متساوية. فكيف يكون مقدر ممكنًا وأكبر منه أو أصغر مقدر ظفر ممتنعًا؟ فلن لم يستحل ذلك، لم يستحل هذا. [قله]" طريق المقاومة.
(107) فالتحقيق في الجواب أن ما ذكره من (تقدير) الآثار لا يعني [له] 26 ما ذكر المسم النعت على (تقدير) الآثار لا يعني:

ولا يوجب الإبلات زمن ممتنع، إلا أن يضيف اليوم بتبليسه إليه شيئًا آخر.