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PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCES AND THEOLOGY
IN THE ISLAMICATE WORLD OF THE NINTH CENTURY

Proceedings of the Conference held in Beirut, October 21-22, 2019

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Pauline KOETSCHET and Elvira WAKELNIG

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Résumés/Abstracts

PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCES AND THEOLOGY
IN THE ISLAMICATE WORLD OF THE NINTH CENTURY

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Hybrid Vigor as a Metaphor for Creative Overlapping Traditions in Early Islamic Intellectual History

George SALIBA

La notion d'hybridité était bien connue de la civilisation islamique que ce soit dans le règne animal ou végétal, illustrée notamment par l'exemple de la génération de mules, en général stériles, à partir de l'accouplement d'un âne et d'une jument. Cet article montre qu'al-Ġaḥiẓ (m. 869 CE) était même au fait de la possibilité d'une forme d'hybridité dont le résultat du processus d'hybridation s'avère supérieur aux parents. Il en donne pour exemple le cas, dans le règne animal, du pigeon *rā'ibī* qui est plus gros que son père, le *warsān* (pigeon des bois) et que sa mère, le pigeon ordinaire, devenant ainsi une variété supérieure aux deux espèces dont il est le produit. Sur le plan intellectuel et culturel, l'auteur de l'article, utilise la notion d'hybridité comme une métaphore pour expliquer comment la civilisation islamique naissante a réussi à produire une synthèse plus vigoureuse que les deux traditions dont elle est l'héritière. Cette hybridité est illustrée par le cas de 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣūfī (d. 964 CE), qui a essayé de superposer en une seule et même représentation des constellations célestes, la tradition grecque et la culture arabe traditionnelle.

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The notion of hybridity was well known in early Islamic civilization both in the animal and plant kingdoms, notably exemplified by the generation of mostly sterile mules from horses and donkeys. This article shows that al-Ġaḥiẓ (d. 869 CE) was even aware of the possibility of another form of hybridity in which the product resulting from the process of hybridization is superior to the parents. He offers examples of it in the animal kingdom when he cites the case of the *rā'ibī* (pigeon) being bigger than its father, the *warsān* (wood pigeon), and its mother, the common pigeon, thereby becoming a superior variety to the already existing species that produced it. On the intellectual and cultural level, the author proposes to use the concept of 'hybrid vigor' as a metaphor to explain how early Islamic civilization managed to initiate a new cultural production that mainly surpassed the earlier traditions it came to inherit. This

'hybrid vigor' is best exemplified by the case of 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Šūfī (d. 964 CE), who was trying to forge for the celestial constellations a similar vigor hybridity generated by the incoming Greek scientific and philosophical tradition with the already existing native tradition applied to the representation of such constellations.

Arabic Zoology and the *tashīr* Question

Guillaume DE VAULX D'ARCY

Cet article part à la recherche des sources philosophiques de la position d'al-Ġazālī sur les animaux telle qu'elle est exprimée dans *Al-Ḥikma fī maḥlūqāt Allāh*. Dans quelle mesure le théologien a-t-il lu la littérature zoologique et philosophique pour écrire ces chapitres consacrés au règne animal ? Un tel parcours, qui nous ramènera au troisième/neuvième siècle, manifeste l'existence d'une influence inverse : celle du dogme coranique de la domination de l'animal par l'homme (*al-tashīr*) sur l'histoire de la taxinomie.

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This article traces the philosophical source of al-Ġazālī's theological position on animals. To which extant are the chapters on animals in *Al-Ḥikma fī maḥlūqāt Allāh* informed by the zoological and philosophical literature that he may have read? Such a journey back to the formative period of Islamic sciences reveals an opposite influence: that of the Qur'anic dogma of animal subjugation to man (*al-tashīr*) on the history of animal taxonomy.

Al-Kindī on Composition, Three-Dimensionality and Body

Emma GANNAGÉ

Le traité d'al-Kindī *Sur la philosophie première* inclut une définition du corps comme une substance « ayant trois dimensions » que le philosophe décrit en termes de composition : le corps est une espèce de la substance, il est donc « composé de la substance, qui est son genre, et du long, du large et du profond qui sont sa différence ». Il est un corps, du fait qu'« il est aussi (*wa-huwa*) composé d'une matière et d'une forme ». Suivant la manière dont on lit *wa-huwa* on peut se demander si al-Kindī admet une correspondance entre la composition du genre et de la différence propre à la définition et la composition hylémorphique du corps. Cela impliquerait d'identifier la différence, ici 'les dimensions', avec la forme substantielle du corps en tant que composé hylémorphique. La première partie de l'article s'intéresse à la manière dont al-Kindī conçoit la tridimensionnalité comme forme du corps et donc comme substance à partir de laquelle le corps, en tant que composé hylémorphique, dérive sa substantialité. Cela n'empêche qu'ailleurs, dans le même traité, al-Kindī considère, le long, le large et le profond comme des « parties accidentelles » du corps vivant. Dans quelle mesure cela ne contredit pas ce qui précède, fait l'objet de la seconde partie. Enfin, la troisième partie de l'article montre comment al-Kindī identifie la différence de la substance composée avec la forme substantielle du composé hylémorphique dans la mesure où elle spécifie la substance.

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On First Philosophy includes a definition of body as “a three-dimensional substance,” that al-Kindī explained in terms of composition: body is a species of the genus substance and hence it “is composed of substance which is its genus and of long-wide-deep which is its differentia.” Yet it is a body in that “it is *also* (*wa-huwa*) composed of matter and form.” Depending on how we read the conjunction *wa-huwa* in this quote one can wonder whether al-Kindī assumes a one-to-one correspondence between the definitional composition by genus and differentia and the hylomorphic composition of body. That would entail identifying the differentia, here ‘dimensions’, with the substantial form of the body as a hylomorphic compound. The first section of this article addresses al-Kindī’s conception of three-dimensionality as the form of body and hence as a substance from which body as a hylomorphic compound, draws its substantiality. Nevertheless, elsewhere in *On First Philosophy*, al-Kindī still characterizes length, width and depth as “accidental parts” of a living body. Why this does not entail a contradiction is the object of the second section. Finally, the third section of the article shows how al-Kindī identifies the differentia of the compound substance with the substantial form of the hylomorphic compound insofar as it specifies the substance.

A Lively Debate on Matter and Body before (and after ?) Avicenna – Part One Andreas LAMMER

Cet article enquête sur la poursuite, en arabe, d’un débat grec au sujet de la corporalité ou pas de la matière. Dans ses œuvres de maturité, le philosophe chrétien Jean Philopon a soutenu que la conception péripatéticienne commune d’une matière première incorporelle devait être rejetée sur des bases tant épistémologiques que physiques, arguant que la matière était elle-même tri-dimensionnelle et donc corporelle. Avicenne a, par la suite, adopté la position péripatéticienne d’une matière première incorporelle, malgré la critique de Philopon. Le point de vue d’Avicenne peut être considéré comme une potentielle réponse directe à la nouvelle conception de Philopon, d’autant plus s’il était avéré que la critique de Philopon était connue des philosophes arabes qui ont précédé Avicenne et qu’elle aurait si ce n’est provoqué, du moins influencé, un débat dans la tradition philosophique islamique précisément sur la nature de la matière et du corps. Investiguant plusieurs textes clés grecs, syriaques et arabes qui ont contribué à façonner la conception de la matière et du corps dans l’antiquité tardive et les débuts de la pensée islamique, cet article examine l’hypothèse que des traces d’un tel débat existent et essaie d’en apporter les preuves. De surcroît, les résultats de cet article pourraient aussi nous aider à comprendre les critiques les plus anciennes de la position d’Avicenne, dans la tradition post-avicéniennne, étant donné que celles-ci peuvent être aussi considérées comme la poursuite de ce même débat. Cette contribution constitue la première partie d’un article dont la deuxième partie sera publiée dans un prochain numéro des *Mélanges de l’Université Saint-Joseph*.

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This article searches for the Arabic continuation of a Greek debate about whether matter is already corporeal. In his mature works, the sixth century Christian philosopher John Philoponus prominently argued that the common Peripatetic conception of an incorporeal prime matter should be rejected on both epistemological and physical grounds, claiming that matter itself was three-dimensional and, thus, corporeal. Avicenna later adopted the Peripatetic position

of an incorporeal prime matter despite Philoponus' criticism. Yet, Avicenna's discussion could be regarded as a potentially direct response to the novel position of Philoponus, especially if it could be shown that the latter's critique was known among Arabic scholars prior to Avicenna and that it had spurred, or at least influenced, a debate within the Islamic philosophical tradition precisely on the nature of matter and body. Investigating several key texts in Greek, Syriac, and Arabic that were influential in shaping the late ancient and early Arabic conception of matter and body, this article probes the assumption that traces of such a debate can, indeed, be found and attempts to provide evidence of it. What is more, the results of this article may inform also our understanding of the earliest criticisms of Avicenna's position in the post-Avicennian tradition as these, too, could be seen as a continuation of the earlier debate. The article is being published in two parts in this and in a subsequent issue of the *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph*.

From Paul the Persian to al-Fārābī: The Evolution of the Reading Order of Aristotle's Books on Natural Science in the Early Abbasid Context

Jawdath JABBOUR

On considère généralement que la pensée d'al-Fārābī représente la première tentative dans le contexte arabo-islamique de dresser une réflexion globale sur l'architecture du savoir — au sein de laquelle la question de la structure de la philosophie elle-même est centrale — dont les prémisses s'appuient sur des critères épistémologiques. Ce rôle fondateur a cependant toujours été abordé sans le replacer dans le contexte de la réflexion des philosophes arabo-islamiques sur l'architecture du savoir au début de l'époque abbasside (IX^e-X^e siècles). Cette contribution s'intéresse à plusieurs des classifications des œuvres naturelles d'Aristote accessibles en arabe à cette période. Son but est de mettre en évidence la solidité et la continuité, dans les contextes intellectuels de l'Antiquité tardive et du début de l'Islam, de plusieurs de leurs caractéristiques, ainsi que d'étudier les variations introduites par ces classifications dans l'architecture de la connaissance naturelle théorique. Cette approche vise en même temps à relier ces variations aux problèmes philosophiques qui sont restés constants dans la transmission de la philosophie, « d'Alexandrie à Bagdad » ; le plus essentiel étant la question de la nature de l'âme et de son rapport à la matière.

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It is generally considered that al-Fārābī's thought presents the first attempt in the Arabo-Islamic context to build a global reflection on the architecture of knowledge, in which the structure of philosophy itself occupies a central place, and which is grounded on epistemological criteria. This foundational role, however, has always been addressed without placing it back within the context of the Arabo-Islamic philosophers' reflection on the architecture of knowledge in the early Abbasid era (9th – 10th centuries). This paper focuses on several of the classifications of Aristotle's natural works accessible in Arabic at this period. Its purpose is to highlight the soundness and continuity of many of their features throughout the Late antique and Early Islamic intellectual contexts, as well as to study the variations introduced by these classifications within the architecture of theoretical natural knowledge. This study aims, at the same time, to relate these variations to philosophical problems that remained constant in

the transmission of philosophy “from Alexandria to Baghdad,” the most essential one being the question of the nature of the soul and its relation to matter.

New Arabic Evidence on the Division of Medicine. A Text in the Margin of MS Paris, BnF, Arabe 2859, the Alexandrians’ Summaries of Galen, Ibn al-Ṭayyib’s Galenic Commentaries, and Ḥunayn’s *Medical Questions*

Ruth HAMMERSCHMIED and Elvira WAKELNIG

La page de titre d’un manuscrit parisien contenant la traduction arabe de traités de Galien présente une division de la médecine ajoutée par une main tardive. Cette division est basée sur du matériel lié aux deux ouvrages galéniques *Sur les écoles (de sectis)* et *La Méthode thérapeutique dédiée à Glaucon (ad Glauconem de methodo medendi)*, mais ne peut être identifiée à aucun modèle particulier de division conservé en grec. Elle offre en revanche des parallèles remarquables avec l’introduction à la médecine la plus connue en arabe, à savoir, les *Questions médicales* de Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, et apparaît, presque littéralement, au début de la version abrégée du résumé alexandrin de *Sur les écoles* composée par Ibn al-Ṭayyib. L’article présente une édition et une traduction de cette division de la médecine, et étudie ses relations avec d’autres divisions conservées en grec, en latin et en arabe. La conclusion qui s’impose est que la source ultime de la division présentée remonte à l’Antiquité tardive.

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On the title page of a Paris manuscript containing the Arabic translation of Galenic treatises, a later hand has added a division of medicine. This division draws on material related to Galen’s *On Sects* and *Therapeutics to Glaucon* but cannot be linked to any particular model preserved in Greek. However, it shows remarkable parallels to the most famous introduction to medicine in Arabic, that is, Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq’s *Medical Questions*, and appears, almost verbatim, at the beginning of Ibn al-Ṭayyib’s *Résumé of the Alexandrian Summary of On Sects*. The article presents an edition and translation of this division of medicine, and studies its relations to other divisions preserved in Greek, Latin and Arabic. The conclusion that suggests itself is that the ultimate source of the division at stake goes back to Late Antiquity.

* * *

The Arabo-Latin tradition of the *De clisteribus*

Nicholas AUBIN

Cette étude de la tradition arabo-latine de l’œuvre (pseudo-) galénique *Kitāb al-ḥuqan wa-l-qawlanġ (De clisteribus et colica)* examine les citations arabes, les paraphrases et les témoignages du texte qui ont survécu, et les compare à la version arabo-latine contenue dans deux manuscrits de la fin du Moyen Âge dont l’auteur offre une édition critique. L’article inclus aussi une édition critique et une traduction en anglais du seul résumé arabe indépendant préservé de cette œuvre par le médecin et philosophe Abū al-Faraġ b. al-Ṭayyib. Cet article montre comment divers penseurs, dont al-Rāzī et Maïmonide, ont pu utiliser et adapter la même œuvre galénique de différentes manières, pour répondre à divers besoins pédagogiques et produire des œuvres dans des genres variés.

In this study of the Arabo-Latin tradition of the (Pseudo-) Galenic work *Kitāb al-ḥuqan wal-qawlanġ* (*De clisteribus et colica*), I examine the surviving Arabic quotations, paraphrases and testimonia of the text, and collate these with a critical edition of the Arabo-Latin version contained in two late-medieval manuscripts. I also give a critical edition and English translation of the only surviving self-contained Arabic summary of the work by the prolific physician and philosopher Abū al-Faraġ b. al-Ṭayyib. This article shows how various thinkers, including al-Rāzī and Maimonides, were able to use and adapt the same Galenic work in different ways, to suit various pedagogical needs and to create works in a variety of genres.

Les définitions de la grammaire et de ses parties par Bar Hebræus

Georges BOHAS

Dans cet article je tente de montrer comment Bar Hebræus fusionne la tradition grammaticale grecque et la tradition arabe en étudiant la définition de la grammaire et de ses parties. Sont successivement abordées, après la définition de la grammaire, la définition du mot, celle du nom, puis du verbe et de la particule, et enfin celle de la morphophonologie et de la phonétique, en mettant en regard le texte de Bar Hebræus avec celui d'al-Zamaḥṣarī qui semble bien être sa source arabe de référence.

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In this article I attempt to demonstrate how Bar Hebræus fused the Greek and Arabic grammatical traditions in the study of the definition of grammar and its parts. I successively address the definition of grammar, the definition of the word, that of the noun, then that of the verb and the particle, and finally the definitions of morphophonology and phonetics, comparing the text of Bar Hebræus with that of al-Zamaḥṣarī which seems to be his Arabic reference source.

Al-Yānyawī's Prologue to the *Translation of the Most Luminous Commentary on Logic*: A Short Philosophical Manifesto

Teymour MOREL

Le polymathe ottoman Yanyalı Esad Efendi, alias As'ad al-Yānyawī, l'un des principaux savants de l'époque d'Ahmed III et de son grand vizir İbrahim Paşa (xii^e/xviii^e s.), est fameux pour avoir traduit en arabe, sous forme paraphrastique, des commentaires à la *Logique* et à la *Physique* d'Aristote par Ioannes Cottunius (m. 1658), de l'école de Padoue. Sa *Traduction du Commentaire très lumineux sur la logique* participe, à cet égard, d'un projet de retour à la pensée aristotélicienne pour lequel il reçut l'appui des plus hautes instances de l'Empire. Mais qu'est-ce qui se trouvait exactement derrière cette entreprise de revivification d'une tradition philosophique, délaissée depuis longtemps en Islam au profit de la tradition avicennienne et des courants nés dans son sillage ? Pour répondre à une telle question, un élément clé est le prologue de cette traduction dans lequel al-Yānyawī nous donne des indications précieuses sur les motivations de son entreprise de refondation et sur le mode opératoire qu'il adopta. Parmi les points centraux de son exposé se trouve notamment une critique de la philosophie

islamique qui semble être tirée à la fois d'al-Ġazālī et d'Averroès. Cet article propose une édition critique accompagnée d'une traduction commentée de la première partie du prologue, où est exposé le projet d'al-Yānyawī.

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The Ottoman polymath Yanyalı Esad Efendi, aka As'ad al-Yānyawī, one of the leading scholars of the reign of Ahmed III and his Grand Vizier İbrahim Paşa (12th/18th c.), is famous for producing Arabic paraphrastic translations of commentaries on Aristotle's *Logic* and *Physics* by Ioannes Cottunius (d. 1658), of the School of Padua. Al-Yānyawī's *Translation of the Most Luminous Commentary on Logic* was part of a project to return to Aristotelian thought, for which he received the support of the highest authorities of the Empire. What were the precise motivations behind this undertaking to revive a philosophical tradition that had long been neglected in Islam in favor of the Avicennan tradition and the philosophical currents born in its wake? A critical element to answer this question is found in the prologue to this translation, where al-Yānyawī provides us with valuable insights into his motivations and his *modus operandi* concerning the refoundation enterprise. Among the central points of his presentation is a critique of Islamic philosophy that seems to be drawn from al-Ġazālī and Averroes. This article offers a critical edition with an annotated translation of the first part of the prologue, where al-Yānyawī's project is outlined.

Les constructions érémitiques dans le Ṭūr 'Abdīn (Turquie du Sud-est) et la figure de Mor Barṣawmo: Architecture et phénomène cultuel

Alexandre VARELA EXPÓSITO

La région du Ṭūr 'Abdīn, au sud-est de l'actuelle Turquie est un des lieux les plus importants du christianisme d'expression syriaque. Parmi les nombreuses églises et monastères de la région, nombre d'édifices sont dédiés à Mor Barṣawmo, un ascète du v^e siècle. Dans cet article, on analysera de quelle manière cette figure est devenue le saint patron de certaines églises dévolues à la pratique de l'ascétisme et de la vie érémitique. Dans la seconde partie de ce travail, on présentera un catalogue des églises et monastères dédiés à Mor Barṣawmo et on mettra en regard leurs caractéristiques communes afin d'établir le panorama d'un phénomène cultuel qui semble apparaître dans la région aux alentours du XII^e siècle.

*

In today's Southeastern Turkey, the Ṭūr 'Abdīn region is one of the most important places for Syriac Christianity. Among the numerous churches and monasteries in this area, several buildings are dedicated to Mor Barṣawmo, an ascetic saint from the fifth century. This paper analyses how this figure became the patron saint of some churches dedicated to ascetic and eremitic religious practices. The second part of the paper includes a catalogue of churches and monasteries dedicated to Mor Barṣawmo and compares the material characteristics they share to establish a map of a cult phenomenon that seems to appear after the twelfth century in the region.

Spolia chrétiens dans des églises médiévales du Liban

Lévon NORDIGUIAN

Dans la partie libanaise du comté de Tripoli certaines églises intègrent dans leur maçonnerie des blocs gravés de croix employés souvent sans tenir compte de leur orientation normale. Il s'agit donc de *spolia* chrétiens. Cette étude s'intéresse plus particulièrement à un groupe de blocs où la croix est nettement décalée vers l'une de leurs extrémités. Nous les interprétons comme étant à l'origine des stèles funéraires provenant du dépouillement de tombes de l'époque protobyzantine. Si notre hypothèse est avérée, elle ouvrirait un nouveau champ de recherches archéologique.

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In the Lebanese part of the county of Tripoli, some churches integrate in their masonry many blocks engraved with crosses often used without taking into account their normal orientation. They are thus Christian *spolia*. This study is concerned, specifically, with a group of blocks in which the cross is clearly shifted towards one of their ends. We interpreted these as being originally funerary steles of despoiled tombs from the proto-byzantine period. Should our hypothesis turn out to be valid, it would open a new field of archaeological research.

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NOTULES

*Nouvelles découvertes dans les manuscrits
en langues syriaque et arabe*

Deux manuscrits jumeaux du *Tārīḥ al-ḥukamā'* (extraits) de Ġamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Yūsuf al-Qifṭī: Paris, BnF, Arabe 5889 et Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kutuphanesi, Ragıp Paşa 988

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Les manuscrits Paris, BnF, Arabe 5889 et Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Ragıp Paşa 988, qui renferment le *Tārīḥ al-ḥukamā'* (Histoire des philosophes) de Ġamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Yūsuf al-Qifṭī (568/1172 – 646/1248), se révèlent être des manuscrits jumeaux. Le présent article se penche sur les inscriptions et les éléments codicologiques permettant d'affirmer leur gémellité. Il est également question d'une troisième copie qui aurait pu servir de modèle commun. Certains éléments indiquent par ailleurs que le grand vizir Râgıp Paşa (1111- 1176/1699-1763) est le dénominateur commun entre ces manuscrits.

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The manuscripts Paris, BnF, Arabe 5889 and Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Ragıp Paşa 988 that include *Tārīḥ al-ḥukamā'* (History of the Philosophers) by Ġamāl al-Dīn Abū al-

Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Yūsuf al-Qifī (568/1172 – 646/1248), turn out to be twin manuscripts. This article investigates the inscriptions and the codicological elements that support the thesis of their twinship. A third copy which could have been the model common to both is also being addressed. Moreover, certain elements point to the Grand Vizier Râgıp Paşa (1111-1176/1699-1763) as the common denominator between these two manuscripts.

Arabic Zoology and the *tashīr* Question

Guillaume DE VAULX D'ARCY

This paper examines the relationship between philosophy and religious sciences within the particular field of zoology.¹ If the theological recast of zoological material reflects an obvious influence of philosophical sciences on religious ones, the opposite question should also be raised: did the theological status of animals in the Qur'an influence their scientific taxonomy?

The core theological concept concerning animals in Islam is the idea of their subjugation to man, as expressed in surah 16 (*al-naḥl*):

And livestock (*al-an'ām*) – He created them too. You derive warmth and other benefits from them: you get food from them. (v. 5)

And [He created] the horses, mules and donkeys for you to ride and use for show, and other things you know nothing about. (v. 8)²

Domestication of horses, mules or donkeys is not a historical innovation, but a divine plan. Thanks to Sarra Tlili's work,³ we know that this idea of subjugation is expressed via two roots. The first one is *d-l-l*, as exemplified in surah 36 (*Yā-sīn*):

Can they not see how, among the things made by Our hands, We have created livestock (*an'ām*) they control (*mālikūn*), and made them obedient (*dallalnāhā*), so that some can be used for riding, some for food, some for other benefits, and some for drink? Will they not give thanks? (v. 71-73)

The second root is *s-ḥ-r*, as seen in surah 22 (*al-ḥaḡḡ*):

It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches God but your piety. He has subjected (*saḥḥara*) [the cattle (*al-an'ām*)] them to you in this way so that you may glorify God for having guided you (v. 37).

¹ It is my great pleasure to thank the two anonymous readers and, particularly, Emma Gannagé to whom the final version of this article is indebted.

² Unless otherwise specified, all translations of Qur'anic verses are cited from *The Qur'an*, A new translation by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, (Oxford World's Classics) Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004.

³ TLILI Sarra (2012), *Animals in the Qur'an*, Cambridge University Press, New York, p. 74-114.

The animals concerned by *al-tadlīl* are the cattle which include both *al-an'ām*, a denomination that will be used during the classical period in reference to sheep and goats, and *al-bahā'im*, which refers, in its restricted sense, to cows, camels and buffalos. *Al-tashīr* may have a greater scope than *al-tadlīl*,⁴ as in surah 31 (*Luqmān*):

Do you not see how God has made what is in the heavens and on the earth useful to you (*saḥḥara lakum*) (v. 20).

Here, *al-tashīr* delineates the relation of all the creation to man; all creatures are subjugated to man, even the Sun and the Moon (13:2) and the clouds and the winds (2:164). This extension implies that all animals may be subject to *al-tashīr*. Therefore, a religious treatise on *al-tashīr* may need to draw material from zoological works to offer a better description of animals' subjugation.

Hence, if one were to ask about the relation between zoology and theology, the answer would, in all likelihood, highlight the ostensible influence of zoological treatises on theological ones.

AN EXAMPLE OF A TREATISE ON *AL-TASHĪR*

Al-Ġazālī's opus, *Al-Ḥikma fī maḥlūqāt Allāh*, serves as a good starting point to examine such an influence. It is composed of sixteen chapters, each one discussing the wisdom extant in a part of the creation, ranging from the sky and the sun, to fish and plants. The general picture of the creation is framed around the domestic metaphor of *tashīr*:

Know, God may have mercy on you, that if you meditate on this world, you will find that it is like a well-built house equipped with all what is needed [...]. All of that was prepared and organized according to the nature [of man], and man is like the lord (*mālik*) of this house and in charge of its content.⁵

The first eight chapters describe the wisdom found in the organization of the "house" (the sky, the celestial bodies, and the earth and its different parts). The ninth and tenth chapters deal with the lord of this house, i.e., Man, and the remaining chapters are related to the wisdom found in his servants (the birds, the terrestrial animals, the insects, the fish and the plants). Borrowing zoological material was necessary in the composition of this third part. In the chapter dedicated to livestock, the *tashīr* perspective is clearly declared: "He created the livestock (*al-bahā'im*) for

⁴ TLILI, *Animals in the Qur'an*, p. 94-95.

⁵ AL-ĠAZĀLĪ Abū Ḥamid (1903), *Kitāb al-Ḥikma fī maḥlūqāt Allāh*, ed. AL-QABBĀNĪ Muṣṭafā, Maṭba'at al-Nīl, Cairo, p. 15.

the benefit of his worshippers and as a favour” (p. 79). Hence, the characteristics of livestock animals must fit their subjugation to man. This is how we can understand what they are endowed with and what they lack. I quote al-Ġazālī:

The Praised One created them [the livestock] with the ability to hear and see so that man can convey his needs. For if they were blind and deaf, man could not benefit from them neither reach his purposes through them. They were deprived from reason and intelligence by God’s wisdom in order to be subjugated to man and do not disobey when they are asked to provide hard labor, like the labor at the mill, where they carry heavy burdens and so on.⁶

The anthropological distinction, “God generously provided the intellect to man so that he becomes more aware than the animal (*al-bahīma*),”⁷ is teleologically interpreted. Based on Iblis’ story, it is the idea that reason is the source of all disobedience: “The first who used demonstration was Iblis (*awal man qāsa Iblīs*),” as al-Šahrastānī put it in a nutshell.⁸ Then, the lack of reason becomes the condition of blind obedience. This way, a single boy can lead an entire herd of goats without them dispersing or fleeing away. This example concurs with the following idea:

... And that is the same for all animals subjugated (*musahħhar*) to man, and that is only due to their privation of intellect (*al-‘aql*) and reflection (*al-tarawwī*). That is the reason of their submission (*taḍlīlihā*). (p. 82)

Conversely, al-Ġazālī asserts Man’s inability to accomplish his own duties (crafts and intellectual arts) without the support of animals in completing physical works. In the next paragraphs, al-Ġazālī compares the respective diets of the beast of prey and livestock to the size of their teeth and the strength of their jaws. Then he draws another comparison between animals’ offspring and human children. After that, he describes the proper function of different beasts of burden (the donkey, the horse, the camel, the bull, the goat and the dog) in the human economy. He concludes by analysing the different parts of their superficial anatomy, arguing that they are designed to fit the labour they have been assigned (the back, the eyes, the tail, and the trunk in the case of the elephant). In that sense, both intellectual deficiency and physical qualities are part of the same design. This idea is not original to al-Ġazālī, however, who was an avid reader of the philosophers and a great echoer of their texts and concepts despite accusing them of misbelief and condemning them. The core demonstrative part of his writings is often an arrangement of quotations.

⁶ AL-ĠAZĀLĪ, K. *al-Hikma fī maħlūqāt Allāh*, p. 79-80.

⁷ Ibid., p. 63. *Al-bahīma* means the common genus, i.e., the animals, as well as a certain species, that is, the grazing mammals.

⁸ AL-ŠAHRĀSTĀNĪ Muħammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm (1986), *Le livre des religions et des sectes*, tr. GIMARET Daniel and MONNOT Guy, vol. I, Peeters – Unesco, Paris, p. 581, n. 99.

Methodological Digression

Before enquiring about al-Ġazālī's sources on *tashhīr*, let us have a closer look at the way he recasts the material he draws from the philosophers. In a previous article, I analyzed one of these rewritings on the very topic of his attitude toward philosophers he accuses to be – ultimate paradox for scholars – idiots and stupid persons.⁹ In *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, he does not just name-call philosophers but develops a precise account of the concept of stupidity.

In the book dedicated to the disciplining of the soul, we can find a study of the cardinal virtues inherited from the Greeks. Regarding wisdom, we read the following:

As for Wisdom, exceeding the bounds in regard to its use is called 'malice' (*ḥubī*) and 'slyness' (*ġarbazā*), while its insufficiency is termed 'stupidity' (*balah*). Again, it is the mean to which the word 'wisdom' is applied. [...] When the intellect is balanced it will bring forth discretion and excellence of discernment, penetration of thought and correctness of conjecture, and an understanding of the subtle implications of actions and the hidden defects of the soul. When unbalanced in the direction of excess, then slyness, swindling, deception and cunning result, and when in that of defect, then stupidity, naivety, foolishness, heedlessness and insanity are the consequences. By naivety I mean an insufficient experience which is nonetheless combined with soul understanding: a man may be naïve in one matter and not in another. The difference between stupidity and insanity is that the intention of the stupid man is sound, only his means of realizing it are defective, since he is not possessed of a correct understanding of how to follow the way leading to his goal; the madman, on the other hand, chooses that which should not be chosen, so that the basis of his decision and preferences is flawed.¹⁰

Following Aristotle's doctrine of practical virtues, al-Ġazālī defines virtue as the right balance between two extremes. But, unlike the Stagirite, he applies this structure to theoretical virtues, and first of all to wisdom, rendering it a mean between two excesses, implying that one may be too wise! Although this idea is quite absurd for an Aristotelian mind, it is developed in a text with a high density of concepts, showing that al-Ġazālī is not merely misreading Aristotle's *Ethics*. On the contrary, far from being a vague evocation of an ancient book, the main part of the text combines tightly different Arabic exegesis of Aristotle's doctrine on wisdom. More precisely,

⁹ DE VAULX D'ARCY Guillaume (2014), « La bêtise des penseurs arabes », *Les cahiers de l'Islam* 1, p. 99-112.

¹⁰ AL-ĠAZĀLĪ Abū Hāmid (2005), *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, Dār Ibn Ḥazm, Beirut, "Bayān ḥaqīqa ḥusn al-ḥuluq wa-sū' al-ḥuluq," p. 935-6 ; *id.* (1995), *On Disciplining the Soul (Kitāb Rīyāḍat al-naḥs) and Breaking the Two Desires (Kitāb Kasr al-ṣahwatayn) Books XXXII and XXIII of the Revival of the Religious Sciences (Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-Dīn)*, tr. WINTER T. J., The Islamic Text Society, Cambridge, p. 20-21 (slightly modified).

he borrows the idea of wisdom as a mean from Miskawayh's *Tahdīb al-aḥlāq*¹¹ and the distinction of the three ways in which one can lack wisdom (stupidity, naivety and madness) from al-Fārābī's *Fuṣūl muntaza'a*.¹² The way al-Ġazālī rephrases and connects both texts is shown in the table in the following pages.

Al-Ġazālī recasts the philosophers' account of the ways in which the intellect is wrongly employed. He bases his argument on Miskawayh's definition of wisdom as a mean and uses al-Fārābī's account of the forms of unreason as the extreme endpoints. What is interesting in al-Ġazālī's philosophical "bricolage" (following Levi-Strauss understanding of the concept) is that it diffused philosophical material within the traditionalist milieu which, probably, was never exposed to philosophy. Indeed, thanks to al-Ġazālī, al-Fārābī's distinction will reach Ibn al-Ġawzī who reminds us of it in his *Book on Fools and Idiots*.¹³ This example shows that al-Ġazālī's arguments are often grounded in some hidden source that we need to unearth. Accordingly, we can wonder whether he borrowed his meditation on *tashīr* from previous thinkers.

¹¹ MISKAWAYH Abū 'Alī Aḥmad (1966), *Tahdīb al-aḥlāq*, ed. ZURAYQ Constantine, American University of Beirut, Beirut; *id.* (1968), *The Refinement of Character*, tr. ZURAYQ Constantine, American University of Beirut, Beirut.

¹² AL-FĀRĀBĪ Abū Naṣr (1993), *Fuṣūl muntaza'a*, ed. NAĠĠĀR Fawzī M., Dār al-Maṣriq, Beirut; *id.* (2004), *The Political Writings. Selected Aphorisms and Other Texts*, tr. BUTTERWORTH Charles E., Cornell University Press Ithaca/London.

¹³ IBN AL-ĠAWZĪ Abū AL-FARAĠ 'Abd al-Raḥmān (1990), *Aḥbār al-ḥamqā wa-l-muḡaffilīn*, Maktabat Ibn Sīnā, Cairo, p. 17.

<p>AL-ĠAZĀLĪ, <i>On disciplining the Soul</i>, tr. WINTER, p. 20-21.</p> <p>As for Wisdom, exceeding the bounds in regard to its use is called 'malice' (<i>hubt</i>) and 'slyness' (<i>ġar-baza</i>), while its insufficiency is termed 'stupidity' (<i>balah</i>). Again, it is the mean to which the word 'wisdom' is applied. [...]</p> <p>When the intellect is balanced it will bring forth discretion and excellence of discernment, penetration of thought and correctness of conjecture, and an understanding of the subtle implications of actions and the hidden defects of the soul.</p>	<p>الغزالي، إحياء علوم الدين، ص. ٩٣٥-٩٣٦</p> <p>وأما الحكمة فيسمى إفراطها عند الاستعمال في الأغراض الفاسدة خبثاً وجريزة ويسمى تفريطها بلها، والوسط هو الذي يختص باسم الحكمة...</p> <p>إذ من اعتدال قوة العقل يحصل حسن التدبير وجودة الذهن وثقابة الرأي وإصابة الظن والتفطن لدقائق الأعمال وحنفاً آفات النفوس.</p>	<p>مسكويه، تهذيب الأخلاق، تج. زريق، ص. ٣٦</p> <p>أما الحكمة فهي وسط بين السفه والبله وأعني بالسفه ههنا استعمال القوة الفكرية فيما لا ينبغي وكما لا ينبغي وسماه القوم الجريزة، وأعني بالبله تعطيل هذه القوة وإطراحها. وليس ينبغي أن يفهم أن البله ههنا نقصان الخفة، بل تعطيل القوة الفكرية بالإرادة.</p>	<p>MISKAWAYH, <i>The Refinement of Character</i>, tr. ZURAYQ, p. 23.</p> <p>Wisdom is a mean between impudence and stupidity, I mean here the use of the rational faculty for wrong ends and in the wrong ways. Some people have called it slyness. By stupidity, I mean the suppression and disregard of the rational faculty. We should not understand by stupidity here a natural deficiency, but the deliberate suppression of this faculty.</p>
<p>When unbalanced in the direction of excess, then slyness, swindling, deception and cunning result, and when in that of defect, then stupidity, naivety, foolishness, ...</p>	<p>ومن إفراطها تصدر الجريزة والمكر والخداع والدهاء ومن تفريطها يصدر البله...</p>		

<p>... heedlessness and insanity are the consequences.</p>	<p>... والعمارة والحقم والجنون.</p>	<p>الفارابي، الفصول المنتزعة، تج. نجار، ٤٩-٤٧ § 47§ الغمر هو الذي تخيله للمشهور مما ينبغي أن يؤثر أو يختنّب سليم، غير أنه ليست عنده تجربة ما سيبهله من الأمور العلمية أن يعرف بالتجربة. والإنسان قد يكون غمراً في صنف من الأمور غير غمر في صنف آخر.</p>	<p>AL-FĀRĀBĪ, <i>Selected Aphorisms</i>, tr. BUTTERWORTH, p. 35 §47. The simple person is someone who has an unimpaired imaginative grasp of what is generally accepted concerning what is to be preferred or avoided, except that he has no experience of the practical affairs of which one becomes cognizant through experience. A human being may not be simple with respect to one sort of affairs and not simple with respect to another sort.</p>
<p>By naivety I mean an insufficient experience which is nonetheless combined with soul understanding: a man may be naïve in one matter and not in another.</p>	<p>وأعني بالعمارة قلة التجربة في الأمور مع سلامة التخيل فقد يكون الإنسان غمراً في شيء دون شيء</p>	<p>49§ الحق هو أن يكون تخيله المشهورات سليماً وعندّه تجارب محفوظة، وتخيله للغايات التي يهوى ويتشوق سليماً، له روية لكنها روية تخيل له أبداً فيما يؤدي إلى تلك الغاية أنه يؤدي إليها، أو تخيل له فيما يؤدي إلى ضد تلك الغاية أنه يؤدي إليها، فيكون قلبه ومشورته على حسب ما تخيل له رويته الفاسدة. فلذلك يكون الأحق في أول ما تشاهد صورته صورة عاقل ويكون مقصده مقصداً صحيحاً، وكثيراً ما توفقه رويته في الشر ولم يعتمد الوقوع فيه.</p>	<p>§49. Stupidity is when someone's imaginative grasp of generally accepted things is unimpaired and he has preserved experiences. His imaginative grasp of the goals he has a passion and longing for is unimpaired, and he deliberates. But his deliberation inevitably makes him imagine that what does not lead to that [particular] goal does lead to it, or it makes him imagine that what leads to the contrary of that goal leads to it. So his action and advice are in accordance with what his corrupt deliberation makes him imagine.</p>
<p>The difference between stupidity and insanity is that the intention of the stupid man is sound, only his means of realizing it are defective, since he is not possessed of a correct understanding of how to follow the way leading to his goal; ...</p>	<p>والفرق بين الحقم الجنون أن الأحق مقصوده صحيح ولكن سلوكه الطريق فاسد فلا تكون له روية صحيحة في سلوك الطريق الموصل إلى الغرض</p>	<p>49§ الحق هو أن يكون تخيله المشهورات سليماً وعندّه تجارب محفوظة، وتخيله للغايات التي يهوى ويتشوق سليماً، له روية لكنها روية تخيل له أبداً فيما يؤدي إلى تلك الغاية أنه يؤدي إليها، أو تخيل له فيما يؤدي إلى ضد تلك الغاية أنه يؤدي إليها، فيكون قلبه ومشورته على حسب ما تخيل له رويته الفاسدة. فلذلك يكون الأحق في أول ما تشاهد صورته صورة عاقل ويكون مقصده مقصداً صحيحاً، وكثيراً ما توفقه رويته في الشر ولم يعتمد الوقوع فيه.</p>	<p>§49. Stupidity is when someone's imaginative grasp of generally accepted things is unimpaired and he has preserved experiences. His imaginative grasp of the goals he has a passion and longing for is unimpaired, and he deliberates. But his deliberation inevitably makes him imagine that what does not lead to that [particular] goal does lead to it, or it makes him imagine that what leads to the contrary of that goal leads to it. So his action and advice are in accordance with what his corrupt deliberation makes him imagine.</p>

<p>...the madman, on the other hand, chooses that which should not be chosen, so that the basis of his decision and preferences is flawed</p>	<p>وأما المجنون فإنه يختار ما لا ينبغي أن يختار فيكون أصل اختياره وإيثاره فاسداً</p>	<p>48§ الجنون هو أن يكون تخيله دائماً فيما ينبغي أن يؤثر أو يجتنب أصداء الأشياء المشهورة وأصدادها ما قد جرت العادة به، وربما عرض له مع ذلك أن يختل أصداد المشهورة في سائر الأمور الموجودة في كثير من المحسوسات.</p>	<p>Therefore, when first observed, the stupid person has the form of an intelligent person, and his intention is sound. Frequently, his deliberation lands him in evil, even though he was not aiming to fall into it.</p>
			<p>§48. The mad person is one who, with respect to what is to be preferred or avoided, always imagines the contraries of the generally accepted things and the contraries of what is customary. In addition, it sometimes happens that he imagines the contrary of what is generally accepted about the rest of the matters found in much of what is perceived by the senses.</p>

Al-Ġazālī's Source on *tashīr*

We can begin our inquiry with an idea clearly identified among philosophers, namely that of animal's divine inspiration (*ilhām*). Al-Ġazālī writes on birds:

See how God inspired the females the knowledge of carrying the eggs and then how they were inspired to carry grass and to level it on the place of brood and birth.¹⁴

The idea was widespread at the turn of the third-fourth/ninth-tenth centuries, and endorsed by Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, for instance:

It would have been more worthy of the wisdom of the Wise One – more worthy also of the mercy of the Merciful – for him to have inspired (*alhama al-ġamī'*) all His creatures with the knowledge of what is to their benefit as well as to their harm in this world and the next.¹⁵

Khalidī's translation of *al-ġamī'* into "all His creatures" can be questioned, for *al-ġamī'* refers to "all His worshipers" in the previous expression *yulhimu 'ibādahu aġma 'in*. However, he may be right if we keep in mind al-Rāzī's argument concerning animals' skills: "God exempted [man] from the imams like He inspired (*alhama*) the geese how to swim innately and exempted them from the imams."¹⁶ The argument is also present in Ibn al-Rāwandī's *Book of the Emerald*.¹⁷ However, both authors do not have in mind the *tashīr* issue, but the mention of the geese is to be understood merely as an analogy with man in the context of a dispute over prophecy: better than the sending of prophets, God's wisdom implies His inspiration of all His creatures with their own means of salvation, i.e., innate knowledge for animals, and reason for man. So, al-Ġazālī may have read the argument in a version earlier than al-Rāzī's formulation, that is, in the one presented in Epistle 22 of the *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'*:¹⁸ "We [animals] are inspired (*alhama... ilhāman*) innately, directly by God, with all we need know, without messenger go-between or summons from beyond the veil" (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 327 / tr., p. 258).¹⁹

¹⁴ AL-ĠAZĀLĪ, K. *al-Ḥikma fī maḥlūqāt Allāh*, p. 74.

¹⁵ AL-RĀZĪ Abū Ḥātim (2011), *The Proofs of the Prophecy (a'lām al-nubuwa)*. A Parallel English-Arabic Text, tr. KHALIDĪ Tarif, Brigham Young University Press, Provo, I-1, p. 2.

¹⁶ Ibid., VII-1, p. 212.

¹⁷ STROUMSA Sarah (1999), *Freethinkers of Medieval Islam. Ibn al-Rāwandī, Abū Bakr al-Rāzī and Their Impact on Islamic Thought*, Brill, Leiden, p. 79-80.

¹⁸ This version may be considered earlier than al-Rāzī's text on the basis of our dating of the *Rasā'il* around 270-80 / 880-90. Indeed, we made the hypothesis that al-Kindī's heir, Aḥmad Ibn al-Ṭayyib al-Saraḥsī, was the author of the *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'* as a whole; see DE VAULX D'ARCY Guillaume (2019), *Les Épîtres des Frères en Pureté (Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā')*: *Mathématique et philosophie*, présentation et traduction, Belles Lettres, Paris, p. 22-48.

¹⁹ The first pagination refers to Butrus al-Bustānī's edition: *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' wa-Ḥillān al-Wafā'*, ed. AL-BUSTĀNĪ Butrus, 4 vol., Dār Ṣādir, Beirut, 1957, the second to Goodman and McGregor's English

The concept of natural inspiration opens different tracks that help us restrict the potential sources of al-Ġazālī's chapter on *bahā'im*, in his *al-Ḥikma fī maḥlūqāt Allāh*, to three: al-Rāzī, Ibn al-Rāwandī or *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'*. The actual comparison with those three texts resulted in a clear dependance on Epistle 22 of *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'*. Indeed, al-Ġazālī's explanation of the livestock's perfect obedience to man, mentioned above, can be compared with the same argument in the fable of Epistle 22, in the mouth of the cricket:

The Creator understood, the cricket replied, that a powerful frame and mighty body are fit only for toil, brute labour, and bearing heavy loads. Had He linked great souls with such bodies they would not so readily be led to drudgery and menial labour. They'd be fractious and unruly and would refuse to bear a rider. (Epistle 22, *Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 364 / tr. p. 298)

In both texts, the idea is that of the double condition that justifies domestication for labour (*al-kadd*) purposes. While al-Ġazālī identifies it with the possession of the sensitive perception and the lack of intellectual speech, *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'* expresses the same idea through the duality of animals' weak soul and strong body. In Epistle 22, this duality specific to domesticated animals is contrasted with the reverse duality of a strong soul in a weak body characterizing insects like bees, ants, termites, and silkworms. Concerning livestock, the weakness of their soul implies that another stronger soul can command their body, like the boy leading on an entire herd in al-Ġazālī's text.²⁰ The way al-Ġazālī expresses his idea could also be the result of the influence of the zoologist Ibn Abī al-Aš'at, although no direct relation can be established between them. However, the latter's view of domestication based on the intellect (*al-'aql*) as an inner principle of action in man, and an exterior principle of action in domesticated animals, may also stem from his reading of the *Epistles of the Brethren in Purity* – as will be explained below.

We can now read al-Ġazālī's text in the light of *Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'*. The following table presents parallels between a passage from al-Ġazālī on the development of chicks and its source in Epistle 22, showing that the theologian is reading Iḥwān al-Ṣafā''s text while writing his own version of the argument.

translation: GOODMAN Lenn E. and MCGREGOR Richard (2012), *The Case of Animal versus Man* before the King of the Jinn: A Translation from the Epistles of the Brethren of Purity, Oxford University Press and the Institute of Ismaili Studies, Oxford/ New York.

²⁰ Such an idea may have originated in al-Kindī's "Epistle on the Prostration of the Outmost Body" where the philosopher defines obedience as following someone else's will. See AL-KINDĪ Ya'qūb b. Ishāq, *Risāla fī al-ibāna 'an su'ūd al-ġirm al-aqṣā*, in ABŪ RĪDA Muḥammad 'A.H. (1950) (ed.), *Rasā'il al-Kindī al-falsafiyya*, Dār al-Fikr al-'arabī, Cairo, p. 246.

<p>AL-ĠAZĀLĪ, <i>Epistle On the Wisdom Found in God's Creatures</i></p>	<p>1) <u>Distinction between human education and animals' natural gift.</u> Look at the four-legged animals and how they follow their mother independantly without requiring to be carried nor to be taught as human do. If [God] did not give to their mothers what He gave to human beings' mothers in matter of reason, science, concern for education, and faculty to achieve it with the thought, the hand and its well-disposed fingers, that's because they were given the maturity and the independence by themselves.</p>	<p>الغزالي، رسالة في الحكمة في مخلوقات الله، ص. ٨١</p> <p>انظر إلى أولاد ذوات الأربع كيف تجدها تتبع الأمهات مستقلة بنفسها لا تحتاج إلى تربية وحمل كما يحتاج الآدميون، إذ لم يجعل في أمهاتها ما جعل في أمهات البشر من العقل والعزم والرفق في أحوال التربية والقوة عليها بالفكر الأكف والأصابع المهيأة ولغيره، فذلك أعطيت النهوض والاستقلال بأنفسها.</p>	<p>رسائل إخوان الصفا، تح. البستاني، مج. ٢ ص. ٣٤٨</p> <p>وكذلك أيضاً حكم أولادكم في الجهالة وقلة المؤونة، يوم يولدون لا يعلمون من مصالح أمورهم، ولا يعقلون شيئاً من جر منفعة، ولا دفع مضرة، إلا بعد أربع سنين أو سبع أو عشر يحتاجون أن يعلموا كل يوم علماً جديداً، وأدباً مستأنفاً إلى آخر العمر يوم الممات. ونجد أولادنا إذا خرج أحدهم من الرحم أو البيض يكون معلماً أو ملهماً كل ما يحتاج إليه من أمر مصالحه ومضاره ومنافعه، لا يحتاج إلى تعليم الآباء والأمهات.</p>	<p><i>Epistles of the Brethren in Purity</i>, Epistle 22, tr. GOODMAN and MCGREGOR, p. 277-78</p> <p>1) <u>Distinction between human education and animals' natural gift.</u> The same is true of your children. So ignorant and backward are they at birth that they have no notion of what's good for them. They don't know how to care of themselves or stay out trouble until they're over four years old, or seven, or ten, or twenty! Every day they need new knowledge and fresh training to the end of their lives. But our young, as soon as they issue from the womb and the egg, are ready taught inspired, aware of their interests and what their welfare requires. They need no instruction by fathers or mothers.</p>
<p>2) <u>The example of hens and quails' chicks</u> You can notice this with the chicks of some birds like those of the hens and the quails which peck the grain as soon as they hatch out from the egg. And none of them is weak.</p>	<p>ولذلك ترى فراخ بعض الطير مثل الدجاج والدراج يدرج ويلقط عقيب خروجها من البيضة، وما كان منها ضعيفاً</p>	<p>فمن ذلك فراخ الدجاج والدراج والقيح والطهوج وما شاكلها، فإنك تجدها تنفشر عنها البيضة، وتخرج، وتعدو من ساعتها، أو تلتقط الحب،</p>	<p>2) <u>The example of hens and quails' chicks</u> With the chicks of hens, quail, partridges, mountain quail and the like, for instance, you'll find that as soon as they hatch they immediately start racing around, pecking for grain,</p>	

		<p>وتهرب من المطالب لها، حتى ربما لا تلحق. كل ذلك من غير تعليم من الآباء والأمهات، بل وحياً وإلهاماً من الله تعالى، كل ذلك رحمة منه لخلقه وشفقة ورأفة وتحنناً.</p>	<p>and running from anyone who chases them, so fast that they rarely get caught – all without direction by fathers or mothers but by God's inspiration and guidance. This is a mark of God's mercy toward His creation, His kindness, bounty, and grace.</p>
<p>3) <u>Comparison with pigeon</u> They do not need to be raised like the chicks of pigeon and doves need from their mother which care for them and help them by providing food and regurgitating it into their mouth, and that until they grow and emancipate.</p>	<p>لا نهوض له مثل فراخ الحمام واليماص جعل في الأمهات عطفاً عليها، فصارت تعين الطعام في حواصلها، ثم تمجه في أفواه فراخها ولا يزال كذلك حتى ينهض وتستقل.</p>	<p>وذلك أن هذا الجنس من الطيور، لما لم يكن الذكر يعاون الأنثى في الحضنة وتربية الأولاد، كما يعاون باقي الطيور كالحمام والعصافير وغيرهما، أكثر الله عدد فراخها، وأخرجها مكتمية مستغنية من تربية الآباء والأمهات من شرب اللبن، أو زق الحبوب والغذاء مما يحتاج إليه غير هذا الجنس من الحيوانات والطيور.</p>	<p>3) <u>Comparison with pigeon</u> For in birds of this sort, unlike other birds – doves, sparrows, and such – the male does not help the female brood and rear the young. So, God gives them many chicks and makes them self-reliant, not needing nurture by fathers and mothers – milk to drink, or the cracking of seeds, or provision of food, as the young of other sorts of birds and beasts require.</p>
<p>4) <u>Eulogy</u> All of this is witt and fair wisdom. Glory to the wise Organizer.</p>	<p>فكل أعطى من اللطف والحكمة بقسط. فسبحان المدبر الحكيم.</p>	<p>وكل ذلك عناية من الله تعالى وتقديس، وحسن نظر منه لهذه الحيوانات التي تقدم ذكرها.</p>	<p>4) <u>Eulogy</u> All this is by God's providence, glorified and sanctified be He, His concern in caring for these animals, as already mentioned.”</p>

* We saw in the previous argument that al-Gazālī also attributes animal's knowledge to God's inspiration.

Both texts contain four consecutive parts: 1) a general statement on human and animal knowledge, 2) its illustration with the case of hens and quails, 3) a comparison with pigeons, 4) and finally a eulogy. Only the two subdivisions of the first paragraph are reversed, where Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' begins with the statement on the human need for education, while al-Ġazālī begins with the statement on animal's innate wisdom.

A more accurate reading of both texts in parallel yields some further remarks: 1) The emphasis on the immediate independence of new-born animals is contrasted with that of the human need for education. Animals are said to be able to dispense with such an education: “*lā yahtāḡu ilā ta'lim*” in the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'’s wording, and “*lā yahtāḡu ilā tarbiya*” in al-Ġazālī’s one. But although the Brethren in Purity insist on the human need for education as a deficiency, a lack of *ilhām*, al-Ġazālī interprets this need positively as the sign of additive powers. Indeed, both demonstrations have opposite goals: the speech put in the mouth of the nightingale aims at refuting man’s superiority, while al-Ġazālī aims at justifying animals’ subjugation to man. At any rate, the material itself is the same and both insist on the central role of parents (“*al-abā' wa-l-umahāt*” / “*al-umahāt*”). 2) The example is the same and is introduced in the same manner: “*fa-min ḍalika fawāriḥ al-diḡāḡ wa-l-dirāḡ*” / “*wa-li-ḍalika tarā fawāriḥ ba'ḍa l-tayr miṭl al-diḡāḡ wa-l-dirāḡ*.” Not only are the species similar, but the kind of behavior that is described as well: their hatching out from the egg: “*fa-innaka taḡiduhā tanqaširu 'anhā al-bayḍa wa-taḥruḡu, wa-ta' dū min sā'atihā*” / “*wa-yalquṭ 'uqayb ḥurūḡihā min al-bayḍa*.” Once more, al-Ġazālī’s talent is to reword the same ideas in a more concise manner. The next idea attributing animal’s knowledge to God’s inspiration is not ruled out by al-Ġazālī immediately, but he will make use of it a few pages later in considering the females’ behavior, as mentioned above. 3) The next sentence addresses the topic of the ‘mother instinct’ through the instance of pigeon females feeding their chicks. 4) The presence of a eulogy in both texts shows that the demonstration came to its end at the same point. Thus, we can conclude that, even if al-Ġazālī did not copy/paste the passage of the *Epistles*, he definitely had the text before him and rephrased such an excerpt of Epistle 22 on animals in his chapter on the constitution of birds.

Now that the main source of al-Ġazālī is established, two remarks are in order. First, this source does not only provide bare zoological material but also develops theological principles, namely the anatomic foundation of *al-tashīr*, and the generalization of *al-ilhām* to animals. Second, the distinction between theology and zoology is not a valid one as far as al-Ġazālī’s source is concerned. Therefore, the reflection on the question of *al-tashīr* in theology and its counterpart in Arabic zoology may have not been independent from one another. This opens the door to a possible influence of the *tashīr* question on the development of zoology. Thus, it is crucial to come

back to zoology during this formative period and trace its evolution. In a previous publication, we established that animal classification in Arabic zoology evolved from an eco-biological criteria basis to an anthropological criterion.²¹ In the present article, the influence of *al-tashīr* on such an evolution will be highlighted.

BACK TO THE FORMATIVE PERIOD

As mentioned above, we have identified, in a previous article, a revolution that occurred in animal taxonomy during the third and fourth centuries of Islam. Our thesis consisted of two assertions:

1. Islamic zoology moved from a taxonomy in seven kingdoms based on ecological and behavioural criteria, to a classification of animals in three kingdoms determined by the political relation of domestication of certain animals by man.

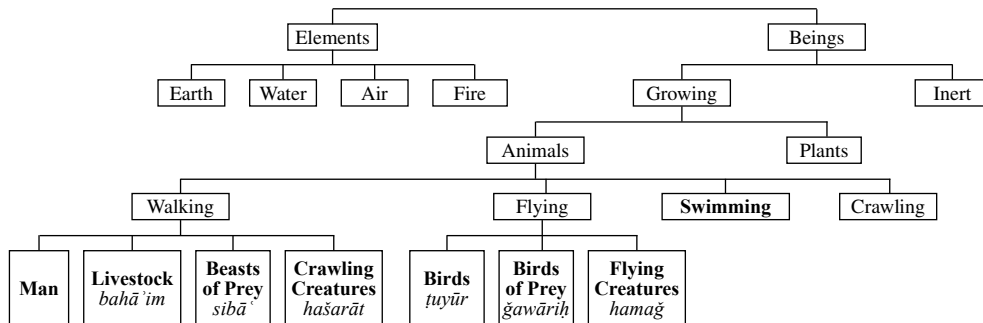
2. This evolution is a zoological answer to the *tashīr* problem.

This taxonomic transformation can be summarized in three steps. First al-Ġāhiz's *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān* exposed the classical classification based on criteria inherited from the ancients. Second, Iḥwān al-Ṣafā', despite accepting this classical classification, weakened it by focusing on man's relationship to animals. And third, Ibn Abī al-Aṣ'at's *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān* built a totally new taxonomy based on this last criterion. Animals are no longer distinguished in relation to their environment (water, earth or sky), but in relation to their link to the intellect (*al-'aql*). This results in three main classes: animals endowed with an intellect (namely, man), animals that obey the intellect (domesticated animals), and animals that refuse the subjugation to intellect (wild animals). In the present article, we would like to demonstrate that such a revolution must be approached through the doctrine of the *tashīr*. Arabic zoology and Islamic theology are indeed inseparable.

²¹ DE VAULX D'ARCY Guillaume (2020), "Trouble dans le genre : le rhinocéros est un oiseau. Les débuts islamiques de l'anthropozoologie," *Anthropozoologica* 55, p. 257-268. One can find further developments in DE VAULX D'ARCY Guillaume (tr.) (2021), *Les Épîtres des Frères en Pureté (Rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā')*, *Le procès animal de la domination humaine*, Présentation et traduction de l'épître 22, Les Belles Lettres, Paris, "présentation," p. 54-63.

Step 1. The Classical Classification of Animals in al-Ġāhīz and the *tashīr* at the Margin

Al-Ġāhīz's *Book of Animals* is not a systematic opus. However, its eclectic ideas unfold at the very beginning of the book within the framework of a clear classification of all the beings.²² This classification is summarized in the following diagram:



We have highlighted in bold letters the main animal orders. This taxonomy is systematized thanks to the restriction to two criteria only: first the way of moving (walking, flying, swimming, crawling), second, the way of feeding (herbivore or carnivore). But despite the distinction between walking and crawling animals, all the earth beasts are gathered in one family (the walking animals). Does that mean that the way of moving is finally not a criterion of classification? The answer is negative as regards land animals:

That applies to the four divisions of animals we mentioned [living] in water, on land and in the air, the crawling (*yansāh*) ones among snakes and worms, as well as the walking (*yamṣī*) ones among riding animals and people.²³

The way of moving is a sub-criterion of land animals, likewise for the way of feeding. The emphasis on such a criterion must be related to Aristotle's definition of animals as living beings endowed with the ability of moving. But we can suggest also that this criterion for distinguishing between livestock and crawling creatures is no more than an *ad hoc* one that allows to rationalize a simpler distinction between big and small beasts, such a distinction persisting among the flying animals between birds and flying insects (*hamaḡ*). Thus, we can say that the classification, despite this

²² AL-ĠĀHĪZ Abū 'Uṭmān 'Amr (1965), *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, ed. HĀRŪN 'Abd al-Salām M., 8 vol., 2nd ed., Mustafa al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa-awlādūhu, Cairo, vol. I, p. 26-31.

²³ *Ibid.*, vol. VII, p. 110.

attempt to systematize it, is based on less philosophical criteria: the environment, the size, the position of predator-prey. This results, for each environment (at least the two visible ones), in a triad (*bahā'im*, *sab'* and *ḥašarāt/hamagħ*). Aside from man, who is a family of walking animal among others, it yields seven families: fish (*al-samak*), livestock (*al-bahā'im*), beasts of prey (*al-sibā'*), crawling creatures (*al-ḥašarāt*), flying and swarming creatures (*al-hamağ*), birds (*al-ṭuyūr*) and birds of prey (*al-ğawāriḥ* or *al-itāq*).

We can conclude from this taxonomy that, in al-Ğāḥiẓ's work, domestication is of little relevance to the understanding of the world of animals. Surely al-Ğāḥiẓ distinguishes between wild (*waḥṣī*) and domestic (*ahlī*) animals, but it is a distinction of states rather than an essential distinction. Indeed, tamed animals can revert to a state of wildness and *vice versa*: "Know that the wild can be domesticated and that the domesticated can get wild (*wa-lam inna l-waḥṣī yasta'nisu wa-l-ahlī yastawaḥišu*)."²⁴ This marginality of the domestication problem is correlated with the isolation of his reflection on *al-taṣḥīr* in the economy of the book. However, *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān* contains the main testimony on the theological debates around *al-taṣḥīr* among the Mu'tazilites. Let us quote the following unique and quite important passage.

فضل الإنسان على سائر الحيوان
فأقول: إن الفرق الذي بين الإنسان والبهيمة، والإنسان والسبع والحشرة، والذي صير الإنسان إلى استحقاق قول الله عز وجل: «وسخر لكم ما في السموات وما في الأرض جميعاً منه» ليس هو الصورة، وأنه خلق من نطفة وأن أباه خلق من تراب، ولا أنه يمشي على رجليه، ويتناول حوائجه بيديه، لأن هذه الخصال كلها مجموعة في البهائم والمجانين، والأطفال والمنقوصين. والفرق الذي هو الفرق إنما هو الاستطاعة والتمكين، وفي وجود الاستطاعة وجود العقل والمعرفة، وليس يوجب وجودهما وجود الاستطاعة.

The superiority of man over animals.

I say: The difference between man and beasts (*al-bahīma*), and between man, beasts of prey and crawling animals, such a difference that ensures that he deserves what God says when He says: "And He has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth -all from Him" (45:13), does not consist in the form, and that man was created from a drop of sperm and that his ancestor was made of clay. Nor does it consist in his standing position and his reaching what he needs with his hands, for all those properties are also shared by idiots, fools, children, and impaired minds. So, the difference that makes the difference is the capacity or the capability (*al-istiṭā' wa-l-tamkīn*), because the existence of reason and knowledge comes with the existence of the capacity, but their existence does not determine necessarily the existence of the capacity.²⁵

²⁴ AL-ĞĀḤIẒ, *al-Ḥayawān*, ed. HĀRŪN, vol. VI, p. 27.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. V, p. 542-543.

Like the chapter on classification, this text is very well structured. Its aim is not merely to illustrate the zoological reality of *al-tashīr* or to naturalize it (like in al-Ġazālī), but most significantly to justify it, which indicates that there had been actual doubts about the legitimacy of such a theological assessment. The first possible justification, that is, the thesis of the distinctive form, is most probably based on Qur'an, 95:4: "We create man in the finest state (*aḥsan taqwīm*)" and may have been adopted by the Mu'tazilites, but we were not able to identify textual proof. In any case, the position that al-Ġāḥiẓ refutes may be traced back not only to the *Kalam*, but also to Greek zoology, meaning to Aristotle himself in the *Parts of Animals*, IV 10: "Man alone of all animals stands erect. Standing thus erect, man has no need for legs in front, and in their stead has been endowed by nature with arms and hands" (686b 20).²⁶ Aristotle's thesis is that the "free hands" standing position is due to the existence of reason, which is itself the sign of man's divine nature. Al-Ġāḥiẓ does not only see the echo of Aristotle's thesis in *al-tashīr* issue, but also refutes it in order to assert the Mu'tazilite thesis of freewill. To a certain extent, he considers Aristotle as a theologian among other theologians.

The previous classification contained a distinction between man and other walking animals, but not based on any criterion. This passage echoing the theological reflection on *al-tashīr* provides us with a clear one, that is man's capacity of choice. Not only does it specify the place of man among the walking animals, but also his fundamental separation from all other kinds of living beings.

Step 2. The *tashīr* and the Impossibility of the Previous Classification

Al-tashīr becomes central in the original Epistle on Animals of *Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'* which takes the form of an animal fable. We are referring to the well-known "Case of the Animals versus Man before the king of the Jinn" which tells the story of the shipwreck of a group of men who seek refuge on the island of the Jinn where all animals live in peace. The men's claim of dominance over the animals results in an inevitable trial. On a philosophical level, this text is an allegory of the system of *Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'*, similar to Plato's allegory of the cave in *The Republic*. In this perspective, the animals of the fable represent human nations. On a theological level, the text is a response to the subjugation problem (*al-tashīr*): why should faithful worshipers of God like the cattle submit to man, i.e., the rebellious and most recent of creations? In this view, animals stand for the creatures of God.

²⁶ This text was available in the Arabic translation of Ibn al-Biṭrīq (d. ca 815). See ARISTŪTĀLĪS (1978), *Aġzā' al-ḥayawān*, tarġamat Yūḥannā Ibn al-Biṭrīq, ed. BADĀWĪ 'Abd al-Raḥmān, Wakālat al-maṭbū'āt, Koweit, p. 205.

On a scientific level, it is a treatise of zoology, and the animals of the fable are simply animal forms.²⁷ They are classified in seven main nations (*umam*). First, facing man is the livestock (*al-bahā'im*) which was unable to flee from man's control. Then, each of the six independent nations of animals (beasts of prey, birds, flying critters, birds of prey, aquatic animals and crawling critters) sends him a deputy.²⁸ This is exactly al-Ġāḥiẓ's classification, which is also demonstrated in a more extensive way in the *Comprehensive Epistle*.²⁹ Each genus is described using the same sets of criteria as in al-Ġāḥiẓ. For instance, the animals of prey are described as follows:

Before the king his forces gathered: every sort of predator and untamed carnivore – panthers, cheetah, bears, jacals, wolves, foxes, wild cats, hyenas, all sort of apes and weasel – in short, every meat-eating beast with claws or fang (*kull dī maḥlab wa-nāb ya'kul al-luḥmān*). (Epistle 22, *Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 240 / tr. p. 252)

The expression is almost identical to the one found in al-Ġāḥiẓ who also speaks of “meat-eating beast with claws (*dawāt al-anyāb wa-akkālat al-luḥūm*).”³⁰ But the classical organization of this material is disrupted by the plot of the fable: the landing of human survivors on the island implies a spatial distribution of animals between those that escape and those that are captured by man. The distinction between domesticated and wild (or turned feral) animals determines the classification of species. For instance, the rhinoceros cannot be classified among the livestock anymore, and placed between the elephant and the buffalo as was the case in al-Ġāḥiẓ,³¹ for he is not tamed unlike these other two large mammals.

The framework of the trial produces two major genera: one composed of the domesticated beasts (*bahā'im*) living under man's subjugation and one gathering the feral beasts and the other five genera. This results in different complications regarding the classical classification:

1. Some animals such as dogs and cats have two families, for they are beasts of prey by nature and domesticated animals by situation. The text solves the problem by distinguishing their predator body from their anthropomorphic soul.³²

²⁷ For a French translation and a complete analysis of the fable see DE VAULX D'ARCY, *Le procès animal de la domination humaine*.

²⁸ “The assembly [of the livestock] agreed that this was sound, practical advice. So, they sent six of their number to each of the six kinds of animals (for the seventh were already present, the beast and the cattle). On messenger went to the beasts of prey, one to the birds of prey, one to the fowl, one to the swarming creatures, one to the crawling creatures, and one to the aquatic animals,” (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 238/ tr. p. 150).

²⁹ *Al-Risāla al-ġāmi'a: tāġ rasā'il Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' wa-Ḥillān al-Wafā'*, ed. ĠĀLIB Muṣṭafā, Dār al-Andalus, Beirut, 1984, p. 215. Other classifications are incomplete (Epistle 33, *Rasā'il*, vol. III, p. 204, 207).

³⁰ AL-ĠĀḤIẒ, *al-Ḥayawān*, ed. HĀRŪN, vol. I, p. 28.

³¹ *Ibid.*, vol. VII, p. 115; 117.

³² *Rasā'il*, ed. BUSTĀNĪ, vol. II, p. 219; 244-245.

2. Some animals may no longer have a family, for they are wild herbivorous four-legged animals, like the rhinoceros or certain species of elephants and buffaloes whereas *al-bahā'im* include only domesticated beasts. The text resolves this predicament by adding another criterion to the classification of these animals: their society. Since in the literary tradition the rhinoceros is located in the Island dominated by the fabulous bird, the '*anqā*', it becomes then a member of the same category, that is, the nation of birds!³³ That means that the definition of a nation does not overlap with that of a genus; it is not based on biological criteria but on the sociability of animals.

However, the division between the animals who escaped man into the deserts, the forests, the depth of the sea and the summit of the mountains on the one hand, and those who live "prisoners of the sons of Adam" on the other, is only a topological distinction; it considers animals due to their proximity to or distance from man. It is not until later that it becomes a logical distinction.

Tashīr

Such a modification of animal geography is the result of the human claim on animals. Indeed, the fable is the trial of *al-tashīr*.³⁴ In that sense, it ties in with the objectives of al-Ġāhiz's text on the same topic. Al-Ġāhiz's aforementioned quote applies quite well to the trial. Indeed, it is the inquiry about "such a difference that assures that [man] deserves what God says when He says: 'And He has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth' (45:13)." But now the justification of the Qur'anic dogma is at the heart of the whole work. In addition, the taxonomy does not simply accompany such a theological reflection but is encompassed within it. Qur'anic verses on *al-tashīr* provide the first argument in favour of animal subjugation to man:

The King replied, 'What proof of evidence have you to back up your claims?'
'Your Majesty,' said the human, 'we have both traditional arguments (*šar'iyya sam'iyya*) and rational proof of our position.' (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 206 / tr. p. 103)

The argument is based on quotations from Qur'an 16:5-6; 40:80; 16:7-8; 43:13, and leads to the conclusion that:

There are many other verses in the Qur'an, Torah, and Gospels which show that they [the livestock] were created for our sake and that they are our slaves and we their masters. (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 206-7 / tr. p. 104)

³³ *Rasā'il*, ed. BUSTĀNĪ, vol. II, p. 258; 262. For more detailed information on the case of the rhino, see DE VAULX D'ARCY, "Trouble dans le genre: le rhinocéros est un oiseau," p. 173, n. 61.

³⁴ NETTON Ian Richard (2002), *Muslim Neoplatonists: An Introduction to the Thought of the Brethren of Purity (Ikhwan al-Ṣafā')*, Routledge, London, p. 92.

The mule refutes the man's argument by quoting the precise verses on *al-tashīr* that also includes cosmic elements (the Sun, the Moon, the clouds, and the winds), which shows that man misinterpreted the Qur'an:

God made all His creatures on land as in the skies. He set some in service to others, for their good or to preclude some evil/ He subjected animals to man only to help humans and keep them from harm, not, as their deludedly suppose and slanderously claim, to make them our masters and us their slaves." (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 207-208 / tr. p. 106, modified)

Hence, the trial becomes an inquiry into the benefit of *al-tashīr*. To find the difference between man and animal is to find the benefit in man's subjugation of animals. For possessing a gift implies the duty to use it for the benefit of the party which is deprived of it, like the Sun shining to enlighten the darks (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 222/ tr. p. 125). Therefore, whatever makes man superior to animals should serve the latter's interest. And indeed, on the one hand animals should not envy man's sciences for they are directly inspired by God (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 310-314/ tr. p. 242-247), nor man's kitchen because it brings more diseases than pleasure (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 315-323/ tr. p. 248-254), nor his religion which is the direct consequence of man's vices (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 324-329/ tr. p. 255-259), nor his clothes which are weaved with material taken from the animals themselves (*Rasā'il*, vol. II 329-332/ tr. p. 259-261), nor his crafts because animals are endowed with the same crafts (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 338-341/ tr. p. 269-272 and vol. II 345-349/ tr. p. 275-258), nor men's unity which is only physical (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 366-369/ tr. p. 301-306), nor diversity for animals are more diverse than men (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 369-372/ tr. p. 307-309). But on the other hand, being subjugated to the immortal soul of man brings them the benefit of access to immortality (*Rasā'il*, vol. II 374-376³⁵).

Reading the text against the backdrop of the theological debate on *al-tashīr*, we first notice that it argues against Aristotle and al-Ġāhiz's view on the distinctive property of man.³⁶ Contrary to the biological argument of the philosopher and the moral argument of the Mu'tazilite, Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' bring forward a soteriological thesis: it is not due to man's nature nor freewill, but rather to the destiny of his soul that animals have to obey him. The universal soul will separate from matter only through

³⁵ The English translation is based on manuscripts that present a different ending. For an analysis of the manuscript tradition, see DE VAULX D'ARCY, *Le Procès animal de la domination humaine*, introduction technique, p. 77-89.

³⁶ See respectively *Rasā'il*, ed. BUSTĀNĪ, vol. II, p. 209 for the presentation of the Aristotelian argument, and vol. II, p. 210 for its refutation; vol. II, p. 309 for the presentation of al-Ġāhiz's argument, and vol. II, p. 311 and II, p. 345 for its refutation by the bee.

the human form. This thesis is inherited from Plato's *Timaeus* (41 c-d),³⁷ which was a philosophical reference of great importance during the second half of the third/ninth century.³⁸ The argument convinces not only the presiding judge, but also the entire assembly of Jinns and animals themselves who declare: "Ah humans, now at last you've come to the truth. You have spoken well and answered aright" (*Rasā'il*, vol. II, p. 376/ tr. p. 313). Now, all creatures accept man's domination on animals. This outcome has zoological consequences: animal life is not only commanded by natural law, but also by human law. However, the fable is not really representative of a zoological system and the scientific consequences of this acceptance of *al-tashīr* are yet to be taken into account. That will materialize with Ibn Abī al-Aš'at, whose treatise abounds in elements inherited from Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'.

Step 3. Ibn Abī al-Aš'at's New Taxonomy (d. 975) and the *tashīr* as a Principle

The taxonomy created by Ibn Abī al-Aš'at is entirely new in its premises. And even if the families of animals are similar to the traditional ones, their foundation has nothing to do with the ecological and behavioural logic of the former classification, for this new taxonomy is justified on the basis of Galenic concepts.³⁹ On the other hand, the great majority of genera constitute one unified grand category in a new division between three orders. Ibn Abī al-Aš'at's classification is based on two principles: nature and reason. Nature is possessed by all, reason only by man. So, nature is the principle of existence of animality,⁴⁰ and reason the principle of differentiation between the three orders of animals: first, animals that possess reason as an internal principle of organization, that is, Man; second, animals having reason as an external principle of organization, that is, domesticated beasts; and third, animals that are not governed by reason, namely wild beasts. Empirically speaking, it is the relation to

³⁷ "The part of them worthy of the name immortal, which is called divine and is the guiding principle of those who are willing to follow justice and you-of that divine part I will myself sow the seed, and having made a beginning, I will hand the work over to you" (tr. Benjamin Jowett).

³⁸ For more on this point, see RASHED Marwan (2009), "Les débuts de la philosophie moderne," in BÜTTGEN Ph., DE LIBERA A., RASHED M. and ROSIER-CATACH I. (eds.), *Les Grecs, les Arabes et nous. Enquête sur l'islamophobie savante*, Fayard, Paris, p. 121-169, 2nd part : "Trois platonismes du IX^e siècle," p. 145-162.

³⁹ For a presentation of Ibn Abī al-Aš'at, see KRUK Remke (2001), "Ibn Abī al-Ash'ath's *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*: a Scientific Approach to Anthropology, Dietetics and Zoological Systematics," *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften* 14, p. 119-168, for the Galenic inspired taxonomy, see more precisely p. 149-158.

⁴⁰ IBN ABĪ AL-AŠ'AT Abū Ġa'far Aḥmad (2008), *Al-Ḥayawān*, ed. by AL-ḤARBĪ 'Abd al-Razzāq Aḥmad, Markaz al-buḥūṭ wa-l-dirāsāt al-islāmiyya, Bagdad, p. 28.

man that determines the main structure of the taxonomy, and the distinction is that between animals that obey him, and animals that flee away from him.

More theoretically, Ibn Abī al-Ašʿaṭ speaks of the “ruling animal (*al-ḥayawān al-mālik*)” in the case of man, of the “ruled animal (*al-ḥayawān al-mamlūk*)” in the case of domesticated animals, and of “the animal that neither rules nor is ruled” (*al-ḥayawān ḡayr al-mālik wa-ḡayr al-mamlūk*) in the case of wild animals.⁴¹ Therefore, Ibn Abī al-Ašʿaṭ’s book is composed of three chapters, one for each order. Regarding nature, this common principle plays the additional role of a principle of differentiation on a subordinate level, distinguishing between animal families and genera. The reason behind this is that nature is composed of four elements: each human nation under the first order, and each family of animals under the second and third order are characterized by the domination of one element over the others. The first order, i.e., the human genus, is divided into the same number of groups as in Epistle 22 of Iḥwān al-Šafāʾ: it is composed of seven nations.⁴²

Other elements correspond to or concur with Epistle 22, such as the question of dogs and cats’ domestication. Indeed, the fable dedicates a long discussion to the cats’ betrayal amongst the beasts of prey at the lion’s court.⁴³ How could they abandon their brothers in order to live by man’s side, who is a stranger to their nature? Avidity is the cause of their betrayal. Along these lines, the text specifies that even if the dog’s form is that of a beast, his soul is that of a human.⁴⁴ Similarly to Iḥwān al-Šafāʾ, Ibn Abī al-Ašʿaṭ wonders why cats live in the company of man, although their form is very different from other “ruled animals” but similar to that of the beast of prey which belongs to the category of “the animals that neither rule nor are ruled.” His answer is identical to the Iḥwān’s explanation: it is due to cat’s avidity.⁴⁵

Iḥwān al-Šafāʾ’s interpretation in terms of souls pleads in favour of a change of taxonomic order in Epistle 22; a change from the order of the forms based on Aristotelian criteria to the order of the souls based on the relation to reason. This is confirmed by the interpretation of *al-tašhīr* in Epistle 40:

And [God] put the vegetative soul at the service of the animal soul and under its domination (*musahḥara lahā*). In the same way, because of the inferiority of the animal soul to the rank of the human soul, He put it at the service of the human and rational (*nāṭīqa*) soul and under its domination. (*Rasāʾil*, vol. IV, p. 369)

⁴¹ We follow here Remke Kruk’s translation which expresses very well the political nature of such a criterion. See KRUK, “Ibn Abī l-Ash’ath’s *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*,” p. 119-168.

⁴² *Rasāʾil Iḥwān al-Šafāʾ*, ed. AL-BUSTĀNĪ, vol. II, p. 234 and 238; Ibn Abī al-Ašʿaṭ, *Al-Ḥayawān*, ed. AL-ḤARBĪ, p. 21.

⁴³ *Rasāʾil Iḥwān al-Šafāʾ*, ed. AL-BUSTĀNĪ, vol. II, p. 244-246.

⁴⁴ This view is inherited from AL-ĠĀHĪZ, *al-Ḥayawān*, ed. HĀRŪN, vol. I, p. 190 and p. 215.

⁴⁵ IBN ABĪ AL-AŠʿAṬ, *al-Ḥayawān*, ed. AL-ḤARBĪ, p. 243.

Reason is the principle of the animal order and reason exists through man. This is precisely the basis of Ibn Abī al-Aš‘at’s taxonomy. This argument is evident in the following quote concerning the presentation of the ruled animals:

إن الخيل والبغال والحمير والإبل والبقر والغنم والمعز وسائر ما جرى مجراها، ذا أربع كان أو ذا جناح أو غيرهما بالقوى الطبيعية فيه كما هي في الحي المالك والحي المملوك والحي الذي لا مالك ولا مملوك مثلا بمثل، إلا أن تقوم هذه الحركات في الحي المالك والحي المملوك بالعقل. فإن الإنسان هو المؤلف ذكورها مع إناثها ومدبرها في حملها ومولدها ومدبر أطفالها ومدبر ما أكلها ومشاربها ومسكنها ومراعيها وحافظ صحتها عليها متى كانت موجودة ومسترجعها متى كانت مفقودة. ولو أخذ أخذ بعقله أن الإنسان قد خلا من موضعه من مواضع الأرض لم يمكن وجود شيء من هذه الحيوانات المملوكات فيه، ولا أعلم أن أحدا ذكر لنا أن نوعا من أنواعها بمكان لا إنسان فيه وإنما هي ملك الإنسان خلقت له لينتفع بها وقد قلت إنها شبيهة بالزرع والزرع مرتبط بالوجود مع الزرع والمملوك مع المالك موجودين معا.⁴⁶

Concerning the horse, mules, donkeys, camels, cows, sheep, goats and so on, whether they are four-legged or winged animals or other ones, their movements [are driven] by the natural force in them, as is exactly the case in the ruling animal, the ruled animal and the animal that neither rules nor is ruled. But in the case of the ruling and the ruled animals, *these movements are done through reason*. Indeed, it is man who mates their males with their females and manages the latter during their pregnancy and delivery; he manages their offspring, and provides them with food, drink, lodging and quarters, preserves their health when they are healthy and restores it when it is missing. If someone assumes intellectually that man could disappear from his place on earth, it would then be impossible to find any ruled animal in such a place, and I do not know of anyone who mentioned to us [the existence] of one of these species in areas empty of man. That is because *they are the property (mulk) of man and were created for his benefit*. That’s why I said that they are like crops given that the existence of crops depends on the farmer. In the same way, the property and the master or the lord exist interdependently.

Ruled animals are those who are under the command of reason manifested in man. A few remarks concerning this passage are in order. First, like *al-bahā’im* in epistle 22 of Iḥwān al-Šafā’, what characterizes ruled animals is communal life: ruled animals are found where man lives, whereas the animals that neither rule nor are ruled are found wherever man is not. But whereas in the fable this geographical situation was just a contingent fact; a historical accident caused by the landing of a group of men on the island, in Ibn Abī al-Aš‘at’s view, it is a universal proximity: no ruled animal can be found in a place free of man. It is universal because it is necessary: their existence “depends on the farmer.” Second, this necessity is related to the role played by the ruler in the vital acts of mating, delivery, and caring for the offspring to name a few. This ruling is part of ruled animals’ nature: “If we rule [the

⁴⁶ IBN ABĪ AL-AŠ‘AT, *al-Ḥayawān*, ed. AL-ḤARBĪ, p. 27.

animal], that is because there is something in his nature that hosts this ruling.”⁴⁷ And third, this structure can indeed be called *al-tashīr*: “they are the property of man for his benefit,” for it is prescribed by nature. Moreover, Ibn Abī al-Aš‘at’s conception of *al-tashīr* is closer to Iḥwān al-Šafā’s conception than to al-Ġazālī’s: “the property and the owner exist interdependently,” each one is subjugated (*musahḥar*) to the other. We can then say that Ibn Abī al-Aš‘at naturalizes *al-tashīr*.

Ibn Abī al-Aš‘at’s revolutionary work on zoological taxonomy will be more or less adopted by his successors. Whereas Avicenna was unaware of his work, ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baġdādī (d. 1231) dedicated one of the three chapters of his *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān* to him (the first one being dedicated to Aristotle, and the second one to al-Ġāḥiẓ).⁴⁸ Ibn al-Baḥtīšū‘ (d. 1300) uses the term of domesticated animals (*al-ḥayawān al-ahliyya*) to draw an entire category of animals distinguished from the beasts of prey (*al-ḥayawān al-muftarisa*),⁴⁹ and al-Marwazī (d. 1125), al-Qazwīnī (d. 1283) and, above all, al-Waṭwāt (d. 1318) attempted a synthesis between the classical classification and his system.⁵⁰

CONCLUSION

The examination of both the *tashīr* problem and the taxonomic problem shows the shared history of theology and zoology in Islam. We had first to move back from second hand works like al-Ġazālī’s apologetic treatise on *The Wisdom Found in the Creatures of God* to the philosophical source from which he drew, that is, the Epistle on Animal from the *Epistles of the Brethren in Purity*. It is against this backdrop that we could understand the theoretical debate on *tashīr* with al-Ġāḥiẓ. During this formative period of Islam, philosophical sources were mobilized as theological work. Concerning our very topic, once the Aristotelian question of the specificity of man’s nature was interpreted in the Qur’anic terms of *al-tashīr* by al-Ġāḥiẓ, the introduction of Aristotle in theology became in turn an introduction of *al-tashīr* in zoology.

⁴⁷ IBN ABĪ AL-AŠ‘AT, *al-Ḥayawān*, ed. AL-ḤARBĪ, p. 150.

⁴⁸ The treatise is lost. See KRUK Remke (2008), “‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baġhdādī’s *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*: a chi-maera?,” in AKASOY Anna and RAVEN Wim (eds.), *Islamic Thought in the Middle Ages*. Studies in Text, Transmission and Translation, in Honour of Hans Daiber, Brill, Leyden/ Boston, p. 345-362.

⁴⁹ IBN BAḤTĪŠŪ‘ Abū Sa‘īd ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Ġibrā‘īl, *Kitāb Manāfi‘ al-ḥayawān*, MS Paris, BnF, Arabe 2782 (previously 939), fol. 3b-14b.

⁵⁰ See AL-QAZWĪNĪ Zakariyyā (1848), *‘Aġā‘ib al-maḥlūqāt wa-ġarā‘ib al-mawġūdāt*, ed. WÜSTENFELD F., Dieterische Verlag Buchhandlung, Göttingen; AL-MARWAZĪ Šaraf al-zamān Ṭāhir (2020), *Ṭabā‘i al-ḥayawān*, ed. HĀDĪ Yūsuf, 2 vol., Mu‘assasa-i Pizhrūhishī-i Mīrās-i Maktūb, Tehran; AL-WATWĀṬ Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm (2000), *Manāhiġ al-fikar wa-mabāhiġ al-‘ibar*, ed. AL-‘ARABĪ ‘Abd al-Razzāq Aḥmad, Dār al-‘arabiyya li-l-mawsū‘at, Beirut.

The theological creed triggered a taxonomic revolution in zoology, whose genealogy we tried to trace from the moment of its inception until it became the principle of a new taxonomy.

This study of the relation between a distinct science (zoology) and a theological dogma (*tashīr*) is of twofold significance:

1. On the epistemological level, it sheds light on the influence of an Islamic dogma (*tashīr*) on a philosophical science (zoology). Although scholars are used to scrutinize the theological impact of philosophical sciences, this article reveals a strong influence of a Qur'anic dogma, i.e., *al-tashīr*, on the development of zoology and animal taxonomy. Arabic doctrines on the relation between philosophy and religion reveal two trends: on the one hand, mainstream academic research establishes influence of philosophical sciences on theology, following what we can call a Farabian epistemology based on the following principle: reason comes first, before revelation, for prophecy is an image of the philosophy of its time.⁵¹ But on the other hand, our study definitely falls under the same view as the Kindian epistemology, for this later states that scientists are the heirs to the prophets.⁵²

2. On the historical level, it brings forth an argument in favour of a definition of a specifically Islamic moment in the development of universal thought. Sciences did not develop independently from the Islamic creed; they were not just Islamicate, but directly under the influence of religious dogmas. In the particular domain of zoology, the Islamic moment is that of the birth of anthropozoology.

⁵¹ AL-FĀRĀBĪ Abū Naṣr (1969), *Kitāb al-ḥurūf*, ed. by MAḤDĪ Muḥsin, Dār al-Mašriq, Beirut, § 108.

⁵² For an analysis of this doctrine, see our article: DE VAULX D'ARCY Guillaume (2019), "Man ḥadaṭa ḥadīṭ Abī al-Dardā' fi al-'ulamā' waraṭat al-anbiyā' wa-man warraṭahu?," *MIDEO* 34, p. 127-144.