

## 4 The Philosophical Context of the Zeyrek-Hocasāde Debate

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The philosophical theology of the fifteenth-century Ottoman world combined post-classical Avicennan philosophy (*ḥikma*) with (mostly Ash'arite) philosophical theology (*kalām*). This trend could be observed in Ottoman medrese handbooks, since discussions related to physics, metaphysics, and theology were mostly covered in three key texts belonging to past Perso-Islamic scholars from the Il-Khanid and Timurid courts studied through their commentaries and glosses at the fifteenth-century Ottoman medreses. These texts were as follows: Abharī's *Hidāya al-ḥikma* in Avicennan philosophy (via commentaries by Central Asian scholars Ibn Mubārakshāh al-Bukhārī (d. ca. 735/1335) or Mullāzāde al-Kharziyānī (d. 809/1407)),<sup>1</sup> as well as two works in philosophical theology, Tūsi's *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* (via Iṣfahānī's commentary and Jurjānī's gloss) and Ījī's *al-Mawāqif fī 'ilm al-kalām* (via Jurjānī's commentary and Ḥasan Çelebi's gloss). The fact that these urtexts were studied through their commentaries highlights the influence of Timurid and post-Timurid philosophical theology on Ottoman educational institutions, cur-

<sup>1</sup> A great deal of confusion has surrounded the real identities of Ibn Mubārakshāh and Mullāzāde, who were often conflated with other figures. For their identification, see El-Rouayheb, "The Fourteenth-Century Islamic Philosophers".

ricula, and study practices. Many comments and modifications of Ottoman scholars were dependent on the arbitrations of such post-classical verifiers as the general framework.

In light of the formulations on God's unicity (*tawḥīd*) present at Ottoman medreses, this chapter intends to provide an intellectual background to the current discussion. After mentioning the early interreligious context of unicity debates, the chapter will first outline the doctrines included in classical Arabic philosophy - through referencing Avicenna's modal designation of God as the Necessarily Existent vis-à-vis his ontological conceptions, such as existence, quiddity/essence, and necessity. Afterwards, the chapter will trace the later interpretations of Avicenna's formulation by looking at how the philosophers' unicity appeared in Jurjānī's popular commentary on Ījī's *al-Mawāqif*, which was the main text for the Zeyrek-Ḥocazāde debate.

#### 4.1 God's Unicity in Early Interreligious Debates

Going back to the early interreligious dialogues in Late Antiquity, God's unicity was one of the most referenced issues in the early Muslim theological corpus - both as theological attempt to describe God as One, and as apologetic to justify the Christian description of his consubstantiality. This is because unicity, on the one hand, concerned the central conception of Muslim monotheism and, on the other, represented a philosophical effort to find a logically coherent predication of the One (the Aristotelian-Neoplatonist First Principle).<sup>2</sup> From the ninth century onwards, Christian scholars penned debates in order to explain the ways in which how Christian theological corpus upheld the unity and trinity of God. For the Muslim critics though, the principles of the Trinity and hypostases in Eastern Christianity had apparent problems in the eyes of God's singularity, since their binary presence could imply plurality in God's essence.

In reply to his Muslim adversaries in his *Treatise on the Affirmation of the Unity of God*, the tenth-century Nestorian Christian scholar Yaḥyā ibn 'Adī, for instance, attributed two different meanings to unicity: 'uniqueness' and 'oneness'. By using these different shades of meaning, he achieved a 'modulated' understanding of monotheism to prove that the Trinitarian formulation upheld the Divine Unity.<sup>3</sup>

The philosophical definition of God in the Islamic tradition, as well as 'Adī's exposition, was based on Aristotle's Chapter Six of *Metaphysics* Λ, which stated that the One, i.e. the First Cause, is one neither as a genus nor a species, nor by virtue of some relations or as a continuous or indivisible being.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the One is 'one *qua* substance', and it has plurality only in virtue of the constituent parts of its definition, i.e. attributes that may be predicated of His divine essence. Also these aspects of the Trinity are inseparable from the One in divine knowledge since the Intellect is in-

<sup>2</sup> Lizzini, "What Does *Tawḥīd* Mean?", 254.

<sup>3</sup> Lizzini, "What Does *Tawḥīd* Mean?", 263; Martini Bonadeo, "On Ideas in Motion", 242.

<sup>4</sup> In the words of Bertolacci, Avicenna places God's existence outside the context of common logico-ontological categories, saying that God is not a substance (Bertolacci, "The 'Ontologization' of Logic", 44).

separable from its knowing and the object of its knowledge.<sup>5</sup> In the cases of unicity and trinity, God is only one in definition, which implies that He is one in essence and, therefore, His multiplicity and diversity should be understood from a certain point of view not applicable to contingent beings.<sup>6</sup>

## 4.2 Background in Philosophy I. God as the Necessarily Existent (*al-wājib*)

The specific arguments in the Zeyrek-Hocazāde debate unfolded in a particular philosophical context, which took its cue from the Muslim Peripatetic Avicenna. One of the most significant contributions of Avicenna's ontology was his introduction of modal concepts, such as necessity, possibility, and impossibility, when describing the existence of God in relation to that of other beings. All of these aspects of Avicennan philosophy found their ways into Timurid and Ottoman medrese handbooks in philosophical theology via modifications. To show how particular beings differ from God in terms of essence, existence, and modality, Avicenna defines God as *the* Necessarily Existent, that whose existence does not depend on the existence of any another, but rather must be necessary by virtue of being itself. In turn, he sees all other existents as being contingent on another, thereby addressing them as 'possibly existents'.<sup>7</sup>

There are various cosmological proofs of God's necessary existence, including arguments from distinct aspects, such as causality, priority, simplicity, and unicity. However, in order to argue for these aspects for God, the philosophers (represented here by Avicenna) must also consider the complex relationship among certain concepts, such as necessity, quiddity/essence, and existence, by reducing them into one in the reality of God to be able to acknowledge His unicity. Being *the* Necessarily Existent does not entail that this aspect is an attribute of God, but God's quiddity/essence itself is simply the same as the Necessarily Existent, suggesting that God does not have a quiddity apart from it. Thus, all these aspects must be essentially one in the Necessarily Existent, implying neither multiplicity nor particularity.<sup>8</sup> This formulation brought with it numerous questions discussed in later centuries: In what sense does contingent existence differ from God's

5 Martini Bonadeo, "On Ideas in Motion", 243; Lizzini, "What Does *Tawhīd* Mean?" 263; Endress, "Theology as a Rational Science", 232-3.

6 'Adī developed his position over time, arguing in his *Risāla fī tathbīt* that in addition to being one in definition, the Creator was also one in species. This point is linked to his defense of Christian Trinity since both definitions of the Creator provided valid explanations for the hypostases: God being one in species answers the question how three hypostases may be one God, while that God is one in definition answers the question how the one God may be three hypostases (Holmberg, *A Treatise*, 39-40). Israel of Kashkar follows 'Adī especially in the utilization of God's being one in species.

7 Hourani has provided various translated passages from four treatises along with certain sections from *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt* and *Dānish-nāma*, in which Ibn Sinā concentrated on the question of necessary and possible existence (Hourani, "Ibn Sinā"). Also on the Avicennan doctrine of God: Donaldson, "Avicenna's Proof"; Adamson, "From the Necessary Existent to God".

8 This concept was an Avicennan trademark which may have found its way into the medieval Latin tradition via Thomistic commentators with certain modifications (Carlo, *The Ultimate Reducibility*). For an exposition of the Avicennan thesis that the Necessarily Existent is 'pure existence' and its textual influences in the medieval Latin tradition, see Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 78-82; for the critique of the Avicennan unity of God's essence and existence by Ockham (1237-1347) and Duns Scotus (1265-1308), 83-4.

existence? How could it be deemed that different from contingent beings, God's existence is not composite? More importantly, how could the relationship between God's essence and existence be construed so that His existence would not connote multiplicity?

### 4.3 Background in Philosophy II. Existence, Quiddity/Essence, and Necessity in Post-Classical Philosophical Theology

As indicated above, the distinction between essence and existence is a distinguishing feature of Avicennan metaphysics.<sup>9</sup> It is a contested phenomenon which continued to haunt the post-classical commentators of Graeco-Arabic philosophy in the following centuries<sup>10</sup> including the early Ottoman scholarship,<sup>11</sup> and this feature pervades the Zeyrek-Ḥocazāde debate. This notional differentiation was also carried over into the ontological proof of unicity, consequently including necessity in its formulation.<sup>12</sup> Avicenna did not distinguish God's necessity from His existence, since this would cause diversity in His unity. He regarded God's 'necessary existence' on a par with His 'necessity of existence', thereby implying the unicity of these notions (essence, existence, and necessity) in God's essence. Avicenna sees essence and existence as inseparable and mutually correlative, such that existence may be interpreted as being always and everywhere a 'necessary concomitant' of the essence.<sup>13</sup>

Following the third-century Hellenistic philosopher Plotinus' principle of simplicity, Avicenna points that quiddity and existence correspond to the distinction between intrinsically and extrinsically necessary existence, which makes him achieve a simpler formula than the Neoplatonists since, according to the latter, God as One is distinguishable from God as God. God exists through or by virtue of His quiddity and so has 'proper existence' (*wujūd khāṣṣ*) that is entirely of His own. 'Many-in-the-one' seems to be a fundamental aspect of His essence,<sup>14</sup> such that God's proper existence is unique to him with no 'acquired sense of existence' (*wujūd muḥaṣṣal*) in the mind or the concrete. It should be noted that the philosophers are interpreted to have made a distinction between God's 'special existence' and the universal category of existence, which is also called 'absolute exist-

<sup>9</sup> For the Avicennan distinction between quiddity/essence and existence, see Wisnovsky, *Avicenna's Metaphysics in Context*, 149-53; "Essence and Existence"; Bertolacci, "The Distinction of Essence and Existence".

<sup>10</sup> For the post-classical context, see Eichner, "Essence and Existence"; Benevich, "The Essence-Existence Distinction".

<sup>11</sup> For example, the fifteenth-century scholar 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī al-Ṭūsī finds Avicenna's equating existence with essence in God faulty following Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī ('Alā' al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*, 209-29).

<sup>12</sup> With regard to different senses of necessity (i.e. essential versus predicative) and how this terms is related to the distinction between essence and existence, see Benevich, *Essentialität und Notwendigkeit*, 43-70.

<sup>13</sup> This is a formulation that also diffused into the Christian Latin tradition: Black, "Mental Existence", 25; and MacIntyre, "Essence and Existence", esp. 60. For the reception of the Avicennan concomitance of essence and existence in medieval Europe with regard to Aquinas, see Corrigan, "A Philosophical Precursor" and Wippel, "The Latin Avicenna". Aquinas recognizes the primacy of the existential over the essential order, whereas Avicenna argues for the vice versa (Black, "Mental Existence", 44).

<sup>14</sup> Wisnovsky, "Essence and Existence", 31-2.

ence' (*wujūd muṭlaq*). This distinction was often conflated into one category, in which God is equated to 'absolute existence' by the later theologians and the Akbarī Sufis.<sup>15</sup>

The concept of pure quiddity is simple and ontologically distinct with essential constituents that are embraced all at once due to its essential irreducibility. God's pure quiddity preserves its irreducible and special mode of existence even when it is a part of a complex or a composite being as a mode that essentially precedes that of the universal existence; and it is not in itself a genus, although 'genus-ness' can be attached to it in the mind. As Damien Janos has argued, quiddity itself neither exists in the mind nor in the concrete in a contingent and composite mode, but exists in the mind in a mode which concerns only itself and which excludes all other things.<sup>16</sup> In God's intellect, quiddity is for all intents and purposes indistinguishable from His essence without producing multiplicity. This means that God can be regarded as only existence, as well as only necessity. In God, necessity, quiddity, and existence become one. In this context, existence and essence have been interpreted as being *coextensive* and *coimplicative* in Avicenna (albeit not coextensive in terms of acquired existence (*wujūd muḥaṣṣal*), which is restricted to things that owe their existence to another)<sup>17</sup> that is, extensionally identical but intentionally distinct.<sup>18</sup>

Examining the relationship among these three concepts in the context of the necessarily and possibly existents, Avicenna first considers the link among them by way of three possibilities, i.e. identicalness, a strong relation of concomitance, or a weaker form of accidentality. Eliminating the last two, he then demonstrates that equivalence is the best way to describe His nature ontologically. In order for God to retain His unicity, His necessity should be equal to His quiddity/essence, which is due to His necessary existence. This formulation links all three concepts, i.e. existence, quiddity, and necessity, without undermining God's singularity.

For the Ottoman context at hand, the key passage is included in Jurjānī's post-classical handbook of philosophical theology, *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*, a commentary on the Il-Khanid theologian Ījī's popular work with the same title. Position Two, Observation One, Intention Three (2.1.3) in the book is a section that lists all accepted positions in philosophy and theology with regard to the relationship between existence and quiddity/essence among the necessarily and possibly existents. According to Ījī/Jurjānī's outline there are three cases: (i) Ash'arī's view that existence and essence are identical in both God and the possibly existents; (ii) the philosopher's (and the Akbarī Sufis')<sup>19</sup> view that existence and essence are only identical for God but su-

15 Altaş, "Varlık, Varlığın Birliği", 110-13.

16 Janos, *Avicenna on the Ontology of Pure Quiddity*, 189, 201-3, 211.

17 See Jari Kaukua's "Review Article" of Damien Janos' *Avicenna on the Ontology of Pure Quiddity*, especially pages 156-7. For the distinction of special and acquired existences, see Ibn Sinā's *Madkhal* I.12 in Ibn Sinā, *al-Shifā'*, 471-88, 500-1, 531-6.

18 Janos, *Avicenna on the Ontology of Pure Quiddity*, 393-2, 531. Yet it should be also noted that essence enjoys a logical priority over existence (Wisnowsky, "Essence and Existence", 29).

19 The term also appears in Jurjānī's designation of these types of the Sufis with the epithets of *muwahḥid*, *wujūdiyūn*, *muḥaqqiq*. The main differences between the philosophers and the Akbarī Sufis are as follows: the latter group does not hold the distinction between *wujūd khāṣṣ* and *wujūd muṭlaq*, basing their method on *kashf* rather than 'aql, and taking existence as negative (*salbī*). For instance, see the case of the thirteenth-century Akbarī Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī

peradded for possibly existents; and (iii) the theologians' view that existence is superadded or occurs externally to essence both in the necessarily and possibly existents.<sup>20</sup>

According to Ījī, the philosophers' rationale is based on the notion that if existence is superadded to God's quiddity/essence, then existence has to subsist in it, implying need, composition, or multiplicity, the aspects to be avoided for unicity. Subsequently, subsistence and superaddition imply that existence is in need of a quiddity, and the relation of need is only reserved for the possibly existents whose existence depends on others.<sup>21</sup> One of the main reasons why the post-classical theologians tended to go against Avicenna's equating existence (and necessity) with quiddity/essence in necessary existence is that the theologians had the doctrinal tendency of (a) refuting 'modulation'; (b) seeing existence as a species/genus' nature; (c) omitting the distinction between special and absolute existence; (d) equating 'abstracted existence' with 'absolute existence'; and (e) regarding that absolute quiddity has existence.<sup>22</sup> And all these points that Ījī covered also appear in the Zeyrek-Hocazāde debate.

As a conclusion, neither Ījī nor his commentator Jurjānī seems to single out one view over another with a clear preference, which leads one to wonder whether they were agnostic about the exact nature of existence and quiddity/essence vis-à-vis one another.<sup>23</sup> Alnoor Dhanani has recently observed that if we assume that mental existence is ruled out, then the first case that is attributed to Ash'arī above would probably be Ījī's preferred position, whereas Jurjānī was probably inclined towards the third option (iii) above in order to rule out the philosophers' equating necessity with quiddity in God.<sup>24</sup>

The philosophers argue that as God's existence and quiddity/essence are equal to one another, it could be assumed that necessity will be the same as both concepts in the Necessarily Existent so that God's unicity still holds to be true. And in the post-classical paradigm, the nature of *i'tibārāt*, which is only distinguished in the mind conceptually, can be interpreted as having conformed to the philosophers' equating necessity and existence in necessary existence.

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(Altaş, "Varlık, Varlığın Birliği", 104-12; Keklik, *Allah-Kâinat ve İnsan*, 73-5). With regard to the Sufi doctrine *waḥdat al-wujūd*, Jurjānī has further other texts including his gloss on al-İşfahānī's commentary on the *Tajrīd*, which affirm the view (ii) above (see Heer, "Five Unedited Texts").

**20** Al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*, 2: 135-68; for the philosophers' view, 135-7. For the summary of accepted positions in philosophy and theology in this medrese handbook, Dhanani, "Al-Mawāqif fī 'ilm al-kalām", 381-4. A fourth option can be attributed to the Mu'tazilites, who, different from the philosophers, argued that non-existent (*ma'dūm*) beings can exist conceptually in the external immutability (*thubūt*); that is why, existence can be superadded to quiddity. With regard to the statuses of existence and quiddity among the possibly existents, see İbn Kemāl, "Risāla fī ziyāda al-wujūd".

**21** Al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*, 2: 135-6.

**22** It should be noted that Jurjānī's views regarding the nature of existence vis-à-vis God are also included in two other texts in addition to *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*: his treatise on *marātib al-wujūd* and gloss on İşfahānī's commentary on the *Tajrīd* (Heer, "Five Unedited Texts"; Altaş, "Varlık, Varlığın Birliği", 105-6). Among the Islamic manuscripts copied for Meḫmed II, there is a manuscript at the Topkapı Palace R.472 belonging to Jurjānī, *Risāla al-wujūdiyya*, a simple production with small blind-tooled stamps in the form of the *tshang* knot (see Raby, "East and West in Mehmed the Conqueror's Library", 311).

**23** Eşref Altaş seems to be in the same opinion, though he also expresses that Jurjānī tends to have an unfavorable take on the Akbarī Sufi position as implied in his *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*, 8: 35 (also quoted in Altaş, "Varlık, Varlığın Birliği", 121-2).

**24** Dhanani, "Al-Mawāqif fī 'ilm al-kalām", 384.

The Zeyrek-Ḥocazāde debate concerns the validity and use of this formulation in the context of unicity. Zeyrek maintains that the philosophers' proof is incomplete since necessity is a superadded accident to quiddity which cannot be defined in the way that the philosophers formulated. Ḥocazāde's counterposition in this context features a synthesis with Avicennan metaphysics, highlighting the dynamism and flexibility of fifteenth-century Ottoman knowledge production (see § 4.4).

#### 4.4 The Rise of Conceptualism. *I'tibārāt*, Avicenna, and Beyond

With its probably roots in Yaḥyā ibn 'Adī's separation between universals and quiddities,<sup>25</sup> *i'tibār* is a term initially employed by Avicenna with a variety of meanings. According to Damien Janos' recent study, the expression *i'tibār* appears 324 times in all *al-Shifā'* with its conceptual, psychological, and logical shades of meaning in Avicenna's philosophy.<sup>26</sup> An *i'tibār* is neither faculty- nor object-specific, and can be infinitely multiplied at will – a term that chiefly refers to the rational operations of the mind and its ability to unite and divide intellectual/mental conceptions, as well as creating and multiplying relations and distinctions between them.<sup>27</sup> *I'tibārāt* require that a mental operation is feasible or possible and its object intrinsically conceivable, in which human mind can devise various considerations with no multiplicity.<sup>28</sup> They are not primary or necessary notions, rather suppositional and presumed. Strictly speaking, an *i'tibār* is divested from *nafs al-'amr* ('the thing in itself' or 'the fact of the matter') since it is purely conceptual and suppositional.<sup>29</sup>

The term also appears in Islamic philosopher and physician Abu'l-Barakāt al-Baghdādī (d. 547/1152 [?]), who employed it as a distinguished method of reflection through careful arbitration.<sup>30</sup> In post-classical philosophy, the term was further modified into a broader category launched by the twelfth-century scholar Suhrawardī, probably having influenced by the Persian mathematician and philosopher 'Omar Khayyām (d. 526/1132), who was said to have incidentally passed away while perusing a section highly relevant to the current discussion, i.e. "the One and the Many" included in the Metaphysics of Avicenna's *Shifā'* III.2-3.<sup>31</sup>

25 Janos, *Avicenna on the Ontology of Pure Quiddity*, 81, 85; Frank, *Beings and Their Attributes*, 53.

26 Janos, *Avicenna on the Ontology of Pure Quiddity*, 85-7.

27 Janos, *Avicenna on the Ontology of Pure Quiddity*, 96, 100-1.

28 Janos, *Avicenna on the Ontology of Pure Quiddity*, 93, 107, 235-6.

29 Janos, *Avicenna on the Ontology of Pure Quiddity*, 121-2, 206. For a recent study on *nafs al-'amr* as objective truth and Taşköprizāde's new formulation of this term in the Ottoman context, see Spiker, *Things as They Are*, 1-5, 82-99, 155-62.

30 To bracket out Avicennan epistemological realism, Abu'l-Barakāt used *i'tibār* as a method of critiquing apodeixis in philosophy, i.e. "establishing something through personal reflection or careful consideration (Griffel, *The Formation of Post-Classical Philosophy*, 563, 490, 493-7; also see Pines, "Nouvelles études", 97). On a similar note the medieval Muslim poet Usāma ibn Munqidh (d. 584/1188) used the term as "a way of gaining knowledge by contemplation via instructive examples or proofs" (Ibn Munqidh, *The Book of Contemplation*, xxxiv; via Nur's unpublished paper "On the Meaning(s) of *i'tibār* in Arabic").

31 The earliest account on the life of Khayyām is in Zahir al-Din al-Bayhāqī's *Tarīkh al-ḥukamā' al-Islām* completed before 549/1154-55, which also served as the source for *Chahār Maqāla* of Niẓām-e 'Arūḍī (d. 552/1157 [?]), as well as *Nuzha al-arwāḥ* of Muḥammad Shahrazūri (d. af-

The term *i'tibâr* was construed as a critique of the distinction between essence and existence in God<sup>32</sup> by later Avicennan scholars,<sup>33</sup> as well as Abū Ḥashim's controversial coinage of *aḥwāl* (states) as an intermediary category that neither falls under existence nor non-existence. Abū Ḥashim devised his theory of states as a response to the Mu'tazilite position, which entailed that all attributes could collapse into God's self, a case, according to him, that reduced the semantic content of God's attributes into meaningless attributive assertions.<sup>34</sup> To uphold against the skepticism about the real existence of attributes including existence, Khayyâm undermines *aḥwāl* since this principle is in violation of the Law of Excluded Middle enunciated by Aristotle, i.e. that there cannot be an intermediate between contradictories, but of one subject we must either affirm or deny any one predicate.<sup>35</sup> Khayyâm rather sees existence as conceptually (*ma'nā i'tibārī*) superadded (*zā'id 'alā*) (not extramentally), which can be separated in the mind (*tafṣīl fī al-'aqlī*).<sup>36</sup>

In his translation-cum-commentary of a treatise on existence attributed to Avicenna, *Risāla fī al-wujūd*, Khayyâm divides attributes into various types, such as essential (*dhātī*), accidental (*'araḍī*), necessary concomitant (*lāzim*), as well as a fourth category, conceptual (*i'tibārī*), the latter of which is separable from the characterized thing *only* in the faculty of estimation (*mufāriq bi'l-wahm*) without any existence in the outside world.<sup>37</sup> Based on the distinction between an existential and an accidental attribute, the classic example that Khayyâm used to address non-existential mental constructs is 'blackness' as color, a quality not located in a body. For Khayyâm, the observed 'blackness' in bodies is indeed something superadded in concrete reality, yet when 'blackness' is separated from the corporeality, that is, as the attribute of coloriness, it indicates something conceptual/mental without

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ter 687/1288). See Denison Ross, Gibb, "The Earliest Account of 'Umar Khayyâm", 470 (Arabic) and 473 (English).

**32** Wolfson translates the term as "mental and estimative considerations" (*i'tibārāt dhīniyya wa-taqdīriyya*) (Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, 199). By ruling out certain aspects regarding the relationship between quiddity and existence, Suhrawardī argues that existence cannot be a concrete thing that could be added to the former, and existence should be taken among "beings of reason" (*i'tibārāt 'aqliyya*). As for mental considerations vis-à-vis the Necessarily Existing, see al-Suhrawardī, *The Philosophy of Illumination*, 45-7, 83, as well as Sajjad H. Rizvi, who offered the translation mental considerations or notionals for *i'tibārāt*, in "An Islamic Subversion of the Existence-Essence Distinction?", 222-3. The nature of 'beings of reason' (sing. *ens rationis*) garnered the attention of scholars like the sixteenth-century Spanish Jesuit philosopher Francisco Suárez who, in one of his expositions, defined them as "shadows" of true beings that can only be treated derivatively and distinct from real essences (Novotný, *Ens rationis from Suárez to Caramuel*, 38; for the intension and extension of 'beings of reason', see also 48-51). As for mental considerations as opposed to extramental realities in mathematics and natural philosophy, Fazlıoğlu, "Hakikat ile İtibar".

**33** Unlike the commonly held view, Suhrawardī rather responds to Rāzī's univocity of existence (Wisnovsky, "Essence and Existence", 46).

**34** Wisnovsky, "Essence and Existence", 36; Thiele, "Abū Ḥashim al-Jubbā'ī's (d. 321/933) Theory of 'States' (*aḥwāl*)".

**35** Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, 176, 199-200.

**36** For the edition of the text: Khayyâm, "Risāla fī'l-wujūd", 106, 113; Griffel, *The Formation of Post-Classical Philosophy*, 413, 498.

**37** Wisnovsky, "Essence and Existence", 37.

an existential notion.<sup>38</sup> *I'tibârî* notions associated with God are only many-in-the-one without violating His oneness.<sup>39</sup>

The term *i'tibârî* is often used in opposition to *wujûdî*, which denotes external existence, that is, a real external addition. This term is regarded within the broadly construed category of mind-dependent concepts, that is, intellectual predicates that we are bound to use in all cognition. These entities consist of a wide variety of logical second-order concepts, such as universal, particular, genus, species, and differentia, as well as second intentions/intelligibles like quiddity/essence, existence, privation, necessity etc.<sup>40</sup> The *i'tibârî* nature of necessity according to Suhrawardî<sup>41</sup> was a conceptualization that denoted no real value, in which, for him, all reality relies on the hierarchy of light; in other words, quiddity and existence are only distinguishable in the mind, not in concrete reality.<sup>42</sup> This view is also acknowledged in common handbooks of philosophical theology studied at Ottoman medreses, as in the case of Shams al-Dîn al-İşfahânî's (d. 748/1348) commentary on the *Tajrîd i'tiqâd*.<sup>43</sup>

The term was initially rejected by Fakhr al-Dîn Râzî in *al-Mulakkhâş fî al-hikma* due to his earlier Ash'arite epistemological convictions.<sup>44</sup> The nature of mental considerations and their utilization for certain philosophical terms, such as existence and quiddity, were also common issues discussed among the works of following generations of verifiers, such as Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-'Allâma al-Ḥillî (d. 648/1250) and the above-mentioned İsfahânî, who were famed early commentators on the *Tajrîd* by Naşîr al-Dîn Ṭûsî (Râzî's great rival in interpreting Avicenna). Following the philos-

38 Khayyâm, "Risâla fî'l-wujûd", 103-4; Wisnovsky, "Essence and Existence", 38-40; Aminrazavi, *The Wine of Wisdom*, 180-3.

39 Hayyâm, *Ruba'îler ve Silsilat-al-Tartîb*, XXVIII, as well as 130 (Persian) and 180 (Turkish). Also see the term *bi-i'tibâr-ı 'aqlî* in Khayyâm's Persian translation-cum-commentary of an invocation to God attributed to Avicenna concerning God's existence, unicity, eternity, omnipotence etc. In Khayyâm's Persian translation, the passage is as follows: "He does not belong to any genus because there is no plurality in His Self; neither *intellectually* (*bi-i'tibâr-ı 'aqlî*), so as to make the limit of His essence plural by Him, like the limit of whiteness in color and quality; nor (physically) in the composition parts, like that of a body in matter and form. In the names and meanings attributed to God, such as existent and necessary are adjectives and relative concomitants which do not constitute plurality, like some many relative and negative names" (Akhtar, "A Tract of Avicenna", 228 (Persian) and 223 (English)).

40 Starting with Suhrawardî, *i'tibârât* has been defined as 'second intentions', i.e. necessary entailments of the first-order concepts in which they are grounded - rather than arbitrary mental constructs (Kaukua, "*I'tibârî* Concepts in Suhrawardî", 41-2, 48-53). The term is also translated as "intellectual frictions" in Walbridge, *Science of Mystic Lights*, 45-6 or "beings of reason" in al-Suhrawardî, *The Philosophy of Illumination*, xxi.

41 The term can be traced to Suhrawardî's *Mashâri'* (Benevich, "The Necessary Existent", 138).

42 Wisnovsky, "Essence and Existence", 45. Following the Avicennan thesis that essence and existence are identical in necessary existence, Abharî also endorses the view that existence is a mental construct in his *Muntahâ al-afkâr* via the influence of Suhrawardî, as opposed to Râzî's understanding of existence that is being shared without its gradations (Eichner, "Essence and Existence", 126-8).

43 İsfahânî often mentions the term 'mental consideration' in the contexts of specification (al-İşfahânî, *Tasdîd al-qawâ'id*, 1: 425-6), singularity (437-8), as well as the ontological modalities, such as necessity, possibility, and impossibility (253). Furthermore, he counts quiddity, essence, reality (477), thingness (243), cause and effect (489) as secondary intentions that are sometimes used interchangeably with mental considerations. This is because both denote abstractions derived from primary intentions (i.e. from things with extramental existence).

44 Except in a passage in *al-Mabâhith al-mashriqiyya*, Râzî does not seem to accept mental existence arguably due to its lack of presence (*hudûr*) (Eichner, "Knowledge by Presence", 118-20).

ophers' position, the latter holds that existence as a mental consideration is equal to the quiddity of God's reality (*ḥaqīqa*), thereby being self-evident (*badīhī*), whereas the former takes existence as a reality that precedes the quiddity of reality due to its being simple, by concluding that they cannot be the same.<sup>45</sup>

The common view in the post-classical world was that existence and necessity are mental considerations denoting no concrete reality; thereby being connected to quiddities in general but as in a relationship of priority/posteriority. There are certain other objections to both Ḥillī's and İsfahānī's positions in the context of fifteenth-century scholarship. For instance, Jurjānī objects to the former saying that existence does not have extramental existence, hence existence and quiddity are self-evident *i'tibārāt* belonging to the same type of entities with no relationship of priority/posteriority. As an objection to this point, though, the Ottoman scholar Taşköprizāde brings a twist to the self-evident nature of existence vis-à-vis quiddities in his epitome on the *Tajrīd*. He argues that existence cannot be solely reduced to a mental consideration because it is a mental concept that can be abstracted from extramental existents or, more precisely, that it is a secondary intention/intelligible 'by modulation' (*bi'l-tashkīk*).<sup>46</sup> The exact natures of existence and quiddity will continue to occupy a significant place in the centuries to come, and there is much that is worthy of further study, not least the further uses of *i'tibārāt* in metaphysics, but also its analogous transformations over time in *ḥikma* and *kalām*.

#### 4.5 Main Intellectual Context I. God's Unicity in *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*

The main focus of the Zeyrek-Ḥocazāde debate is a discussion about the proof of God's unicity included in Position Five, Observation Three (5.3) of Jurjānī's *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*, a section that outlines various proofs by various Muslim schools of thought (including theologians and philosophers) marshalled against the claims of the Dualists (see Appendix). More specifically, the discussion covers various versions of *burhān al-tamānu'* (the proof from reciprocal hinderance), a classical formulation devised against the possibility of one or more beings with absolute attributes who could act as partners to God – thereby concluding that the world would not be able to come into existence due to each partner's conflicting powers.<sup>47</sup> This proof is directed at preventing the existence of two gods at the same time, by showing the impossibility of a commonality between two such existents, and by further affirming that God has to be unique and one.<sup>48</sup>

Owing to the influence of Avicenna's ontology, post-classical theologians continued to classify 'what exists' into the categories of the necessarily and possibly existents.<sup>49</sup> As the only being with necessary existence, God was of-

<sup>45</sup> Altaş, "Taşköprizāde'nin Tecrīd Hâşiyesi", 2319.

<sup>46</sup> Altaş, "Taşköprizāde'nin Tecrīd Hâşiyesi", 2320.

<sup>47</sup> See a short overview of *burhān al-tamānu'* and Taftāzānī's hesitation in acknowledging this proof (al-Taftāzānī, *A Commentary on the Creed of Islam*, 37-9; Yavuz, "Vaḥdāniyyet", 428).

<sup>48</sup> Gimaret, "Tawḥīd".

<sup>49</sup> The concept of God as the Necessarily Existent here existed in pre-Avicennan theological discussions but the ontological distinction between the necessarily and possibly existents was

ten used interchangeably with the term ‘the Necessarily Existent’ in post-classical manuals of philosophical theology. Since now God can be defined as the Necessarily Existent, the interplay between the concepts of necessity and existence becomes significant in the philosophers’ version of this proof.

All Muslim schools in both philosophy and theology agreed on the validity of this proof’s logical consequence, because the proof from reciprocal hinderance was one of the central arguments upholding the main tenet of monotheism, which underscored the singularity (*waḥdāniyya*) and oneness (*aḥadiyya*) of God.<sup>50</sup> Though used interchangeably, it should be noted that both terms have certain nuances in theology and Sufism: *waḥdāniyya* expressed a superior notion defined as recognizing God’s unity vis-à-vis His essence, attributes, and other creations in a universal way (*kullī*). *Aḥadiyya*, on the contrary, denotes oneness as in knowing God’s essence through His essence without taking His attributes and creations into the equation.<sup>51</sup>

Over the centuries, not only did Muslim scholars develop arguments to eliminate commonality and partnership to God in order to demonstrate God’s oneness, but they also avoided attributing to Him those particular qualities used for the possible existents, such as commonality, multiplicity, individualization, and composition,<sup>52</sup> because all of these qualities implied contingency and particularity, as opposed to necessity, oneness, or singularity. Nevertheless, a contention arose among these schools especially when the theologians further investigated whether the philosophers based their proofs on premises that had been demonstrated to be certain and valid, having looked for loopholes in their argumentation.

Muslim philosophers provided proofs in favor of monotheism, but their proofs resulted from their conceptualizations and terminologies and, therefore, drew fierce criticism from their theologian counterparts. For the latter group, the main problem of the philosophers was their premises, especially their assertions about the Necessarily Existent, i.e. that, in the case of God, necessity would be the same as quiddity/essence, as well as ‘pure existence’ (i.e. existence as it is), a debated Avicennan designation.

thanks to Avicenna. See Wisnovsky, “Avicenna’s Islamic Reception”, 203, 211.

<sup>50</sup> The tenth question of Jurjānī’s famed debate with the Sufi shaykh Shāh Ni’matullāh Walī in 815/1412 covers the question of unicity’s definition. As an Akbarī Sufi, Ni’matullāh Walī sees *tawḥīd* as a specific term closely associated with Ibn ‘Arabī’s ontological unity between God and His creation, a view that will be associated with *waḥdat al-wujūd* (the unity of being) in the generations to come. The tenth question concerns the difference between the terms ‘the One’ (*aḥad*) and ‘the Singular/Unique’ (*wāḥid*) in God, and Walī responds that God is One (*aḥad*) in essence but Unique in terms of attributes, such that he defines Unicity (*wāḥidiyya*) as the “unity of the attributes of the One which are subsumed in him”. On the other hand, Jurjānī wants to distance unicity from its Akbarī connotations by arguing that *tawḥīd* presupposes the plurality of beings (*dar tawḥīd kardan ta’addud lāzim ast*), and using this notion to prove *waḥdat al-wujūd* would be similar to “explaining water by referring to a desert image” (*ke bā sarāb-e bayābān ḥaqīqat-e āb-e ḥaywān rā rūshan gardānd*), so this term only encourages a seeker on the path of the truth but the real *tawḥīd* can only be experienced in the Afterlife (Binbaş, “Timurid Experimentation”, 286-9; for Jurjānī’s Persian text, Muṭlaq, “Iskandariyya yā Risāla dar uṣūl al-dīn”, 1446-7).

<sup>51</sup> Uludağ, “Ahadiyyet”, 484.

<sup>52</sup> As for commonality and composition as aspects to be avoided in the Necessarily Existent, see al-İşfahānī, *Tasdiḍ al-qawā’id*, 945-7.

#### 4.6 Main Intellectual Context II. Aspects of the Philosophers' Proof

According to *Sharḥ al-mawāqif* 5.3, two philosophical artefacts filtered their way into the philosophers' version of *burhān al-tamānu*.<sup>53</sup> The first is by resorting to the 'argument from entification' (*ta'ayyun*), which asserts that it is impossible to have two equal Necessarily Existents, since differentiation by entification will eliminate the possibility of a common quiddity and an entification existing at the same time. This will, otherwise, lead to the affirmation of a Necessarily Existent with entification, which is impossible.<sup>53</sup> There can be no such cases of the Necessarily Existents since entification refers to a being with a particular identity and existence that cannot be associated with God. In other words, in order for these Necessarily Existents to distinguish themselves from one another, the principle for differentiation, i.e. entification, has to penetrate into their individual haecceities. This will assume that each haecceity (*huwiyya*), which is applicable to all existents,<sup>54</sup> will be composite of both a common quiddity and an entification, thereby undermining the Necessarily Existent's singularity.<sup>55</sup>

The philosophers define necessity as "what distinguishes the Necessarily Existent from others", just as the term 'entification' suggests a sense of 'differentiation'.<sup>56</sup> This crossover between necessity and entification is where Ḥocazāde bases his initial argument regarding how this meaning of necessity corresponds to the senses of necessity in the philosophers' initial thesis. The philosophers' reasoning here, according to *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*, relies on the assertion that necessity is an existential notion (*wujūdī*), that is, externally existing (a term that is often used in juxtaposition to *i'tibārī*). This approach might be based on a previous misrepresentation by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, an argument criticized by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī in his *Ishārāt* commentary and ruled out in Ḥocazāde's *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*.<sup>57</sup>

In later centuries, Jurjānī observes that in order to make their proof more complete and certain, the philosophers ought to demonstrate the existentiality of necessity, which is missing in their exposition. This is because the Necessarily Existent has to exist necessarily, and the philosophers assume that if existence is identical to the quiddity in the Necessarily Existent, then necessity will be equal to God's quiddity/essence *only due to the condition of existentiality*. Adding to this point, Jurjānī's text further asserts that the philosophers' version should be taken as incomplete, since it does not adequately demonstrate the immutability (*thubūt*) of necessity and entification, giving the impression that both can denote diversity when present together.

The philosophers' first criterion for the proof acknowledges the requirement of entification for necessity; the second aspect, which is also based on

<sup>53</sup> One of the exchanges between the Akbarī Sufi Qūnawī and Ṭūsī concern the status of 'entification' (*ta'ayyun*) with regard to the necessarily and possibly beings. Ṭūsī argues that entification is only reserved for individuals since they need an additional entification to come out, whereas God cannot have this additional quality since His so-called 'entification' (i.e. appearing in existence) corresponds to His very reality - not amounting to whether it is equal to His existence or superadded to it (Konevi, *el-Mūrāselāt*, 117-18).

<sup>54</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī, *Tasdīd al-qawā'id*, 2: 278.

<sup>55</sup> Al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-mawāqif*, 8: 45-6.

<sup>56</sup> Jurjānī defines entification as "that which distinguishes a thing from another insofar as it does not participate in the other" (al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-ta'rīfāt*, 65).

<sup>57</sup> Ḥocazāde, *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*, 193. See also ch. 4 and Conclusion.

the same premises, asserts that, contrary to Avicenna's position about entification's being concomitant (*lāzim*) to quiddity in *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt*,<sup>58</sup> it has to be superadded (*yanḍimmu 'alayhi*) to quiddity (and necessity) in order to prevent God's multiplicity. To prove this, *Sharḥ al-mawāqif* then outlines two other possibilities, namely 'entification's requiring necessity' or 'necessity's and entification's requiring one another', ruling out both options by resorting to the problems of posteriority (*ta'akhhur*) and separation (*infikāk*) in each aspect respectively. Ottoman scholars in the current debate indeed commented on both cases.

For Jurjānī, the reason why necessity requires a superadded entification is because entification, otherwise, may become a prior term or a cause to necessity. This is impossible because *first* necessity and entification have to be separated from one another since the latter is a superaddition; and *second*, necessity is the cause for entification (not the other way around). So, for Jurjānī, a thing is always in need of entification to differentiate itself from others, but entification does not necessarily need to be an 'existential' quality, that is, a real quality that externally exists. Quiddity requires entification to restrict the species' quiddity by an individual to be able to come out and, if this process of entification should be necessary for the case of God, then this leads us to the conclusion that there cannot be two differing Necessarily Existents existing and requiring entification at the same time.

In conclusion, in order to refute the position of the Dualists, *Sharḥ al-mawāqif* lists various positions regarding God's unicity that are put forth by various past schools of thought, including the philosophers' classical position. When parsing out their formulation, Jurjānī (and Ījī) observe that for the philosophers it is impossible for a thing to exist without entification, albeit not meaning that entification always requires necessity since it is also true for the possibly existents (i.e. *the first aspect*). In other words, once these two equally Necessarily Existents are differentiated from one another via entification, they would also contradict the principle of singularity that the Necessarily Existent connotes. This means that necessity requires entification to emerge and, for this reason, necessity cannot be more than one when requiring entification (i.e. *the second aspect*). By this way, the quiddity that requires an entification restricts the species of that quiddity by an individual, preventing another Necessarily Existent from appearing.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Avicenna's point about "entification's being a necessary concomitant (*lāzim*)", see al-Taḥṭānī, *al-Ilāhīyāt min al-Muḥākamāt*, 77.

<sup>59</sup> A similar view was also mentioned in Ḥocazāde in response to Ghazālī's point about the first aspect of the philosophers' proof (Ḥocazāde, *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*, 181-2; also see Conclusion).

