

**ULUSLARARASI  
SEYFUDDÎN ÂMÎDÎ SEMPOZYUMU  
BİLDİRİLERİ**

**INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE ON SAYF AL-DIN AL-AMIDI PAPERS**

بحوث مؤتمر سيف الدين الآمدي الدولي

**EDİTÖRLER**

Doç. Dr. Ahmet ERKOL

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Abdurrahman ADAK

Yrd. Doç. Dr. İbrahim BOR

İstanbul 2009



© Eserin Her Türlü Basım Hakkı Anlaşmalı Olarak  
Ensar Neşriyat'a Aittir.

ISBN : 978-605-5623-02-9

**Kitabın Adı**

Uluslararası Seyfuddin Âmidî Sempozyumu Bildirileri

**Editörler**

Doç. Dr. Ahmet ERKOL  
Yrd. Doç. Dr. Abdurrahman ADAK  
Yrd. Doç. Dr. İbrahim BOR

**Kapak Düzeni**

Etik Ajans

**Sayfa Düzeni**

Utku SÖNMEZ

**Baskı-Cilt**

Nesil Matbaacılık

**1. Basım**

Ekim 2009

**İletişim**

Kıztaşı Cad. No: 10 Fatih / İstanbul

Tel : (0212) 491 19 03-04 Faks : (0212) 491 19 30

www.ensarnesriyat.com.tr e-mail : ensar@ensarnesriyat.com.tr

## AL-AMIDI AND HIS INTEGRATION OF PHILOSOPHY INTO KALAM

### ÂMİDÎ VE FELSEFENİN KELÂMA DAHİL EDİLMESİ

الآمدي والتحاق الفلسفة بعلم الكلام

Jules Janssens\*

Despite the obvious presence of common interests between falsafa and kalām in their very origin, as may be illustrated by al-Kindī and early Mu'tazilite thinking, classical Islamic authors made a sharp distinction between both currents of thought. During the tenth century, a growing divergence seems to oppose the adepts of *'aql* and those of *naql*, al-Fārābī being illustrative of the former, al-Ash'arī of the latter<sup>1</sup>. Ibn Sīnā still strongly distances himself of the Mutakallim<sup>an</sup>, especially with respect to their argumentative method: it amounts at best at dialectical proofs instead of really demonstrative ones, as logically required for true knowledge. Nevertheless, he is more attentive to religious topics than was al-Fārābī, his great predecessor, and he even does not hesitate to introduce kalām notions (e.g., *shay'*) into his philosophical exposé<sup>2</sup>. Ibn Rushd will vehemently retorts Ibn Sīnā for this; according to the former, the latter has simply made too many concessions to kalām.

---

\* De Wulf-Mansioncentrum, KU Leuven (Leuven Katoliek Universiteits – Belçika)

- 1 I do not want to deny that kalām had any influence on falsafa in that period, or, inversely, falsafa on kalām, but it seems that there existed a tendency to a growing opposition. I agree with P. ADAMSON and R. TAYLOR, in their *Introduction to The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*. Cambridge, 2004, p. 4 that there was indeed an impact of kalām on falsafa, although in a qualified way.
- 2 See my *Ibn Sīnā and His Influence on the Arabic and Latin World*. Aldershot, Hampshire, 2006, studies II-V; regarding the notion of *shay'*, see TH.-A. DRUART, «*Shay'* or *res* as concomitant of 'Being' in Avicenna», in *Documenti e Studi sulla Tradizione Filosofica Medievale*, 12 (2001), 125-142 and R. WISNOVSKY, «Notes on Avicenna's Conception of Thingness (*shay'iyya*)», in *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 10 (2000), 181-221.

Already before Ibn Rushd, Ab<sup>o</sup> ʿĪmād al-Ghazālī had undoubtedly noticed the presence in, or, at least, a major influence of kalām ideas and notions on Ibn Sīnā. Despite his *Tahāfut*, it is clear that he paid great attention to Ibn Sīnā's ideas on a wide range of issues in many of his writings. He even did not hesitate to copy *verbatim*, or almost *verbatim* large fragments of Avicennian writings, while paraphrasing many others<sup>3</sup>. This does not mean that he became a (secret) follower of Ibn Sīnā, but makes clear that he considered the latter's work worthy of serious attention. On the doctrinal side, the exact nature of his criticism against Ibn Sīnā has still to be determined, but from the *Tahāfut* one may deduce that his main objection concerned some of Ibn Sīnā's (and of other philosophers, as well) claims to have delivered demonstrative proof regarding delicate issues (as e.g., the eternity of the world), where in fact this appears not to be truly the case. Moreover, al-Ghazālī condemns an attitude of blind imitation (*taqlīd*) to the great «authorities» in philosophy, but this aspect is in all likelihood not directed against Ibn Sīnā; but against his followers, especially those of the very times of al-Ghazālī himself<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand, the *Tahāfut* testifies also of the full, or, at least, large acceptance of philosophical logic, since it unambiguously suggests that a genuine demonstrative proof cannot be refuted. In other of al-Ghazālī's works, especially in the *Miyāz*, one sees for the first time in the history of Islam, a serious attempt to integrate philosophical, more specifically Aristotelian, logic into the framework of kalām and fiqh. Hence, it comes as no surprise that he, in his autobiographical work *Al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl*, stresses that the logical part (as well as the mathematical) of the philosophical sciences has to be accepted as utterly valid and true. It is worthwhile to note that a same emphasis is present in the second prologue of the *Tahāfut*. Moreover, it is indicated in both works that many philosophical doctrines of the natural sciences have to be agreed on, as for example the nature of an eclipse, although one also finds a few mistaken ideas, as e.g., the impossibility of the resurrection of the body.

3 See my *op. cit.*, studies VIII-XI.

4 On al-Ghazālī's general attitude against *taqlīd*, see R. FRANK, «Al-Ghazālī on *Taqlīd*. Scholars, Theologians, and Philosophers», in *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften*, 7 (1991-2), 207-52; regarding *taqlīd* with respect to philosophy, including a particular reference to the disciples of Ibn Sīnā, see FR. GRIFFEL, «*Taqlīd* of the Philosophers: al-Ghazālī's Initial Accusation in His *Tahāfut*», in S. GÜNTHER (ed), *Ideas, Images, and Methods of Portrayal*. Leiden-Boston, 2005, 273-296 (for a direct opposition against Ibn Sīnā's disciples, see already my study X, p. 17, *pace* Griffel, p. 285, n. 39).

According to al-Ghazâlî, a larger quantity of misconceptions only occurs in the field of metaphysics, but note that even in this case he never asks to reject the philosopher's entire metaphysics.

Al-Ghazâlî's work was undoubtedly of a pioneering kind, and, as one may expect, it did not remain entirely free of ambiguities, and was obviously in several respects in need of further elaboration and/or precision. Therefore, it is no surprise that it has already been highly disputed in traditional times, but despite the existence of some harsh criticisms<sup>5</sup>, it became of central importance in (Ash'arite) kalâm. However, for a really positive integration of falsafa in kalâm and an elaboration of a new synthesis, one has to wait F.D. al-Ræzî, who, starting from a kind of eclectic position, seems to have moved towards a «real synthesis»<sup>6</sup>. As to al-Æmidî, he, on his turn, has clearly tried to integrate falsafa into a kalâm framework, and this as much as possible, but he has done so in a way that turns out to be closer to al-Ghazâlî's basic outline than to Ræzî's «synthesis». In the present study, I will try to justify this claim based on an analysis of al-Æmidî's conceptions of soul and of *ma'ad* in his *Kitâb al-mubîn fî sharî alfæz al-îukamæ' wa l-mutakkalimæn'* Afterwards, he will look at the same topics in his more outspoken kalâm works *Abkær al-afkær fî uÛl al-din* and, closely related to the former, *Ghæyat al-maræm fî 'ilm al-kalâm*<sup>8</sup>. I will try to show that al-Æmidî not only accepts philosophical logic, but also puts it into contribution in order to defend specifically kalâm views. Moreover, I will try to offer as much evidence as possible to indicate that he does not dismiss philosophical views that are scientifically established.

As is evident from the title of the former of his three works, i.e., *Kitâb al-mubîn fî sharî alfæz al-îukamæ' wa l-mutakkalimæn'*, it is a book on definitions, «termini technici». That very same title also indicates that these definitions

5 Al-<sup>TM</sup>urt<sup>shî</sup>, a contemporary of al-Ghazâlî, already vehemently criticized him, see A. Aka-soy, "El Siræf al-mul<sup>q</sup>k de al-<sup>TM</sup>urt<sup>shî</sup> y la antropología almohade", in J. CORRO, A. FIDORA, J. OLIVÉS PUIG, J. PARDO PASTOR (eds), *Què és l'home? Reflexions antropològiques a la Corona d'Aragó durant l'Edat Mitjana*. Barcelona, 2004, 13-34, especially pp. 17-20.

6 See A. SHIHADÉH, «From al-Ghazâlî to al-Ræzî: 6th./12th. Century Developments in Muslim Philosophical Theology», in *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 15 (2005), 141-79, esp. 170-77.

7 I will always refer to the edition by 'A. AL-A'SAM, *Al-muÛtaliî al-falsafî 'inda l-'Arab*. Cairo, 1989, pp. 303-88.

8 The former will be referred to in the edition of A. AL-MAHDÎ. Cairo, 2002 (I wish to thank E. Platti for having put at my disposal a copy of the section on *ma'ad*, t. IV, pp. 249-315); the latter will be quoted according to the edition by H. AL-LATÎF. Cairo, 1971 (I wish to thank M. Özervarli for having provided me a xeroxed copy of the work).

either belong to the *falæsifa* or to the *Mutakallim*<sup>9</sup>, or to both. The book is divided into two parts. In the first part, one finds a pure enumeration of the terms, a thorough analysis of each of them being offered only in the second; hence, this latter is from a doctrinal point of view the most, not to say the only significant. The terms are not alphabetically ordered, but according to meaning<sup>9</sup>. The whole is structured as follows: logic (philosophical -excluding however the categories, but integrating *fiqh*) – physics and psychology – metaphysics, especially ontology including, as Bahmanyær had done before, all the categories as well as the primary divisions of being, i.e., unity/plurality; priority/posteriority; cause/caused and *qadîm/lædith* (all philosophical divisions, excepted the latter, where a *kalæm* termed division might have replaced the usual Avicennian of necessary/possible<sup>10</sup>), but also, although minimally and somewhat ambiguously, «theology» (philosophical *laqq*, seven attributes (*kalæm*), and a few religious themes about resurrection, prophecy and miracles. The work ends with a definition of three sciences, i.e., the natural, the divine, and the universal, all in philosophical terms. Basically the overall structure corresponds to Ibn Sînæ's usual scheme (with exception of the *Dænesh-Næmeh*, where metaphysics follows immediately after logic, a scheme also present in al-Ghazælî's slightly reworked version, i.e., the *Maqæ'ÿd*): logic - physics (including psychology) – metaphysics (ontology, or universal science and '*ilm ilæhî* proper). It can also be observed that the vast majority of the definitions are philosophical, and that only now and then *kalæm* term and definitions are given.

A significant part of the work is devoted to the definitions of the soul and its many faculties. Let us first concentrate on that of the soul itself. According to al-Æmidî, soul means «the first perfection of each natural body of which nature it is (*min sha'nihi an*) to perform the activities of living» (356, 3-4). At the remote background of this definition, one easily recognizes Aristotle's *De Anima*, II, 1, 412 a 27-28 where soul is defined as «the first perfection (*entelecheia*) of a natural body potentially possessing life», and it is immediately added:

9 This fact is already stressed by A'sam in the introduction of his book, p. 118.

10 The close connexion between the two has been rightly stressed by H. EICHNER, «Dissolving the Unity of Metaphysics: From Fakhr al-dîn al-Ræzî to Mullæ Şadræ Shiræzî», in *Medieo*, 32 (2007), 139-197, p. 162. However, it has to be noticed that Ibn Sînæ's in one of his earliest works, *al-ÿikma al-'Aræ=iya*, *The Philosophy for 'Aræ=i*, treats the couplets "necessary-possible" and "pre-existent-originated" in the immediate succession, a fact that suggests that they were closely related in his mind.

«and such will be any body which possesses organs». The latter element of «possessing organs» becomes integrated into the (new) definition given by Aristotle a few lines later, i.e., at 412 b 5-6. The notions of «first perfection», «natural body» and «life» are all in common between al-Æmidî and Aristotle. But the very wording is somewhat different, and the notion of «organs» completely lacks in the former. Compared to Ibn Sînæ's definition in the *De Anima* of the *Shifæ'*, this notion is still absent, but now the wording is almost identical. Indeed, Ibn Sînæ defines soul as «the first perfection of a natural instrumental body to which it belongs (*lahu an*) to perform the activities of living»<sup>11</sup>. Note that the replacement of the expression *lahu an* by that of *min sha'nihi an* has maybe been inspired by Ibn Sînæ's definition of the soul as given at the end of chapter one of his treatise *Alwæl al-nafs*, which is as follows: «Soul is the first perfection of a natural instrumental body, or (in other words) a body potentially possessing life, i.e., (one)) of which nature it is (*min sha'nihi an*) to live by growth and to remain by nutrition»<sup>12</sup>. Anyhow, no major shift in meaning is involved in this replacement. Less innocent is obviously the omission of the characterisation of the natural body to which the soul is related, as *æli*, «instrumental» (by which the Arabic translation(s) render Aristotle's words «possessing organs»<sup>13</sup>). It is implied by this formulation that the soul has to be a substance, i.e., to be the form of the body. But Ibn Sînæ interprets this formula in a rather Platonically inspired dualistic manner, making the body literally «the instrument» of the soul, and qualifying the latter rather as its «quasi-form» than as its «form» *tout court*<sup>14</sup>. Hence, al-Æmidî's omission

11 IBN SÎNÆ, *al-Shifæ'*, *Kitæb al-nafs*, ed. F. RAHMAN. London, 1970, p. 12, 6-7. In what follows, all references are always to this edition.

12 IBN SÎNÆ, *Alwæl al-nafs*. R. *fi l-nafs wa baqæ'ihæ wa ma'ædu-ihæ*, in F. AHWANI (ed), *Alwæl al-nafs*. Cairo, 1952, pp. 45-142, p. 56, 4-5.

13 Regarding the complex issue of the existence of several translations into Arabic of Aristotle's *De Anima*, see A. ELAMRANI-JAMAL, «De Anima. Tradition arabe», in R. GOULET (ed), *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques. Supplément*. Paris, 2003, , pp. 346-358. In the by Badawi wrongly to Isîaq ibn Æunayn attributed translation, the notion *æli* is attested in both occurrences of Aristotle's text, see A. BADAWI (ed), *Atis'atæ-îs. Fi l-nafs*. Cairo, 1954, p. 30. This was also the case in the authentic translation of Isîaq, as attested by Ibn Rushd, both directly (in his *Middle Commenatry*, see A. IVRY (ed, transl., notes, and introd.), *Averroes. Middle Commentary on Airistole's De Anima*. Provo, Utah, 2002, p. 44, 15) and indirectly (in his *Great Commentary* as conserved in the Latin translation, see F. CRAWFORD (ed), *Averrois Cordubensis Commentariu Magnum in Aristotelis De Anima Libros*. Cambridge, Massachussets, 1953, , p. 136, 4 and 138, 3)).

14 See IBN SÎNÆ, *K. al-nafs*, p. 6, 1.

might be indicative of a reluctance on his part against the conception of soul as a substance, certainly as understood by Ibn Sîna, since such a conception seems almost unavoidably to involve a disdainful attitude towards the body, and all what is related to it. Hence it risks to include a trivializing, not to say a nullifying of the reality of bodily resurrection, an issue which was so extraordinarily important in Revelation, and hence, at once, for all genuine Mutakallim<sup>n</sup>. As to the qualification of «natural body» by «each», although not explicitly present in Ibn Sîna, it is quite natural, given the fact that the latter will repeat the same definition for each of the three types of sublunary souls, i.e., the vegetative, the animal and the human; moreover, it has a direct basis in Aristotle's additional remark where, as seen, mention is made of *any* body possessing organs.

Al-Æmidî distinguishes between basically four kinds of souls: besides the three already mentioned sublunary ones, he also evokes the celestial. Probably based on Ibn Sîna's discussion, which immediately follows the latter's definition of the soul in the *De Anima* of the *Shifæ'* and which concentrates on the utility of accepting the existence of soul, included in the superlunary world, al-Æmidî insists that all these types of soul somehow partake in the above given definition. Nevertheless, each of them has its specific characteristics. Of the celestial soul, it is said that «what qua motion belongs to each of the spheres, is not perfected in a power (I read with 2 mss. *Fî quwwat<sub>m</sub>*) different from (the concerned sphere) (*ghayrahu*) among the spheres, otherwise the celestial soul would be outside (that sphere)» (356, 5-7). Ibn Sîna's *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Shifæ'*, IX, 4, p. 407, lines 12-18, constitutes a possible source of inspiration of this definition. In these lines, it is stressed that a body, even if it has a psychological power, cannot be the principle of another body, and also that a celestial soul is the perfection and form of its body, not a separate substance. Moreover, the attribution of the motion of the celestial spheres to their specific souls is certainly a genuine Avicennian idea. Ibn Sîna, in his *Kitāb al-Îd<sup>q</sup>d*<sup>15</sup>, states that soul can be defined *inter alia* as an incorporeal substance, which is the perfection of a body that it moves by a choice that is derived from a rational principle, i.e., an intellect that either is in potency or in act: when in potency, this intellect forms a *differentia specifica* (*fa'Öl*) of the human soul, whereas when in act, it is a *differentia specifica*, or better a *proprium* of the celestial soul. Soul here clearly appears as a principle of motion. This is absolutely true with regard to

15 Ibn Sîna, *K. al-Îd<sup>q</sup>d*, ed. A.-M. Goichon. Cairo, 1963, p. 14, § 25, l. 3-6 (Ar.).



the celestial soul, but also the human soul turns out to be a principle of motion, although in a much weaker sense, since its intellect, being in potency, can only be characterized as its *differentia specifica*, not its *proprium*, as stressed by Ibn Sînæ. Al-Æmidî, on his turn, even if he does not deny a certain equivocality between both kinds of souls, puts no explicit emphasis whatsoever on it. He rather gives the impression to minimize it, especially by naming at once the four types of souls. The celestial souls appear as «natural» as the three other ones, and consequently the sharp distinction between the sublunary and superlunary worlds, which prevails in Ibn Sînæ's thought, is substantially reduced, not to say completely abolished. In full accordance with Ibn Sînæ's (and Aristotle's) views, on the contrary, is the articulation of the specific faculties of each of the other three types of soul: nutrition, growth and reproduction for the vegetative soul; perception and motion for the animal soul; practical and theoretical reason for the human soul (356, 7-10).

Having offered a basic definition of the soul, al-Æmidî proceeds by outlining the nature of each of the three faculties of the vegetative soul (357 - 358, 6). *Najæt*, p. 320, 7-14 (= *Âlwæl*, p. 57, 10 - 58, 4) figures as main source<sup>16</sup>. Regarding the faculty of nutrition, al-Æmidî also specifies the four secondary physical powers that are at its disposal, i.e., digestion, retention, absorption and repulsion, as well as the way in which they precede each other. This time, the basic source of inspiration is Ibn Sînæ's *De Anima* of the *Shifæ'*, basically I, 5, p. 51, 11-12 and regarding digestion, moreover, II, 1, p. 52, 10-14. Besides, *al-Qæn<sup>n</sup> fi l-tibb*, I, 1, 6, 3 seems to have constituted an additional source of inspiration, especially with respect to the three other powers than digestion<sup>17</sup>.

Then al-Æmidî concentrates on the animal faculty of perception. Somewhat surprisingly he pays no attention whatsoever to the animal motive faculty, and hence also not to its subdivision into the concupiscent and irascible powers. Was he simply overlooking it? Or was he rather reluctant to deal with it, insofar as the concerned powers are directly related to action, and therefore, at least in the case of the human being, are directly related to the delicate issue of the will? Whatever be the case, he, on the contrary, deals in great detail with the faculties of perception. Among them, he first mentions the five external

16 I refer to the following editions: for the *Najæt*, the one by M. DÆNESH PAZHUH. Tehran, 1985; for the *Âlwæl*, that of F. AHWANI, referred to above note 11.

17 See IBN SÎNÆ, *al-Qæn<sup>n</sup> fi l-tibb*, ed. under the supervision of A. HAMEED. New Delhi, 1982, I, 1, 6, 3, p. I, 124, 13-28.

senses, which he presents according to the following order: touch, taste, smell, hearing and sight (358, 7-360, 5). The given definitions are almost copied *verbatim* from *Najæt*, p. 322, 1 – 323, 1 (= *Alwæl*, 59, 2 – 60, 2) – only a few minor modifications being present, although the order of treatment has completely been inversed. Al-Æmidî undoubtedly has opted for this inversion based on its presence in Ibn Sînæ's major work, i.e., *De Anima* of the *Shifæ'*, books 2 and 3, as well as in others of his writings, as e.g., *Uyæn al-ikma* and *Dænes-Næmeh*. After the exposé of the five external senses, that of the five internal ones follows, this order being quite naturally from an Avicennian perspective. Al-Æmidî concentrates on each of them, i.e., the common sense, the faculty of representation, imagination (sensitive with respect to animals, rational (*mu-fakkira*) with respect to humans), estimation and the retentive faculty (360, 6 – 363). Once again, *Najæt*, more precisely p. 326, 13 – 329, 14 (= *Alwæl*, p. 61, 11 – 62, 14) has been almost literally copied.

Regarding the human rational soul, al-Æmidî starts by presenting a basic distinction, i.e., between its theoretical part and its practical part (364, 1-4) – putting into contribution also this time the *Najæt*, but this time p. 333, 1-2, respectively p. 330, 10-11 (= *Alwæl*, p. 65, 1, respectively 63, 3). Al-Æmidî articulates a further distinction, namely between intellect as substance and intellect as accident (354, 5 – 366, 5). The former of the two is specified as meaning a quiddity free of matter and material appendices, which reminds one of Ibn Sînæ's *Îud<sup>ad</sup>*, p. 13, 7-10, and might have its ultimate source in Aristotle's *De Anima*, III, 5, 430 a 17-18. As to the intellect as accident, al-Æmidî, based again on *Îud<sup>ad</sup>*, i.e., p. 22, 10, first distinguishes between the theoretical and the practical. Then he deals with the five degrees of the theoretical intellect, i.e., material, in habitu, in act, holy and acquired (366, 6 – 368, 6). This time he has used *Najæt*, p. 333, 9 – 336, 1 (= *Alwæl*, p. 65, 6 – 67, 5), 339, 1-2, 11-14 and 341, 8-9. However, his definition of holy intellect deserves special attention. Contrary to what al-A'asam asserts, this notion is not absent in all major writings of the *falæsifa*<sup>18</sup>. At least regarding Ibn Sînæ, his affirmation turns out as not correct, since the notion of *al-'aql al-qudsî* figures in the title of one of the chapters of the *De Anima* of the *Shifæ'*, namely chapter six of book five. Moreover, the very same notion is clearly expounded in the *Najæt*, especially p. 339-341, where it is stressed that it involves a grasping without any learning or training, and it is typical of the prophet. Al-Æmidî agrees largely with this

18 'A. AL-A'ASAM, *Al-mu'atalil al-falsafi 'inda l-'Arab*, p. 368, note 730,

characterisation. However, he, contrary to Ibn Sînâ, articulates that grasping in terms of perception, not of an intuitive link with the Agent Intellect. He probably therefore does not mention Ibn Sînâ's technical term of intuition, i.e., *îlads*, which signifies the immediate grasping of the truth without a need for the grasping of the middle term of the syllogism<sup>19</sup>. He, moreover, places the holy intellect between the intellect in act and the acquired intellect, whereas Ibn Sînâ characterizes it as belonging to the genus of the intellect in habitu. In acting this way, al-Æmidî in all likelihood wanted to avoid the threat of a (too) naturalistic interpretation of prophecy as Ibn Sînâ clearly adhered to. As a good Mutakallim he had to defend the fundamentally supernatural nature of the phenomenon of prophecy.

Al-Æmidî ends his exposé on the intellect by distinguishing three more degrees: the first is related to «experience», the second refers to «the health of the first inborn nature» and the third consists in «an appropriate disposition in conduct and state» (368, 7 – 369, 1). This exposé is directly based on Ibn Sînâ's *Îud'ud*, p. 11-12, § 21, but Ibn Sînâ qualifies these three meanings as belonging to the masses, hence as pre-philosophical. It has to be noted that al-Æmidî limits himself to describe them very briefly, which might indicate that also for him they are not very important. The last term he discusses inside the section dealing with «psychology» is that of *r<sup>2</sup>î*, spirit. It is a medico-physiological term, signifying according to al-Æmidî, «a vaporous body, springing from the heart and being the source of life and breathing» (369, 2-3). The qualification as «vaporous body» reminds one somehow of Galen's notion of the *pneuma*, but the basic location in the heart is clearly indicative of the cardiocentrism of Aristotle. The combination of both currents was already typical of Ibn Sînâ<sup>20</sup>. Unsurprisingly, al-Æmidî also this time has found in the latter a leading guide, more precisely in his *De Anima* of the *Shifæ'*, V, 8, p. 263, 9-10 and his *Qænn*, I, 1, 6, 1, p. 123, 1-2 and I, 1, 6, 4 (entirely, but especially p. 126, 23-24 and p. 127, 24-25).

Having surveyed the section on the soul in the *Mubîn*, it is crystal clear that al-Æmidî owes a lot to Ibn Sînâ. Regarding the faculties of the soul, he agrees almost completely with the Shaykh al-ra'îs, although a, in the final analysis small, reserve might be pronounced with respect to the very notion

19 For a thorough study on this notion in Ibn Sînâ, see D. GUTAS, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*. Leiden, New York, K benhavn, K ln, 1988, pp. 159-76.

20 See D. GRACIA and S. VIDAL, «Avicenna, sobre el corazon», in *XXVII Congreso Internacional de Historia de la Medicina*. Barcelona, 1981, P. II, 711-22.

of the holy intellect, as well as the basic definition of the soul. But is this not an overhasty conclusion? After all, the *Mubîn* is a book of definitions explicitly recognized as deriving from two different currents of thought. Therefore it is all but necessary that the author agrees with all of them. However, let me observe that the general structure of the work already pointed into a positive acceptance of Ibn Sînæ's philosophical project, at least up to a certain degree. But, of course, this neither permits a definite judgment. The consultation of other of his writings is required to formulate such one. In this sense an enquiry into his two major kalæm works, i.e., *Abkær* and *Maræm*, can – and undoubtedly will – significantly contribute to a better evaluation.

But, before dealing with them, I want to concentrate on a few of the «religious» definitions near the end of the *Mubîn*. The first concerns happiness (*sa'æda*), which is defined as the realization in a thing of all its possible perfections, such as e.g., seeing for the eye (386, 4-5). This is a clearly philosophical definition, and might have been inspired by Ibn Sînæ's *Ilæhiyyæt* of the *Shifa'*, IX, 6, especially p. 419, 13-17<sup>21</sup>. As to misery (*shaqæwa*), it is said to be just the opposite (386, 6). Then al-Æmidî analyses the conception of resurrection, evoked by the Arabic terms *lâshr* and *i'æda*. It is explained in kalæm terms as «the origination (*ijæd*) of what has been annihilated after its existence» (386, 7). In this case, al-Æmidî probably felt totally unsatisfied by Ibn Sînæ's theory of *ma'æd*, which was highly intellectual in nature, and this despite his acceptance of the possibility of an «imaginal» resurrection<sup>22</sup>. As to prophecy, al-Æmidî offers a double definition, one according to the philosophers and implying the «holy intellect»; another explicitly designated as being of kalæm nature, and based on the Qur'aen 2, 252: «You are my prophet (*ras'ul*)» (386, 8 – 387, 1). It looks as if both definitions are valid for al-Æmidî, but also this time regarding the holy intellect, he limits himself to indicate the absence of any learning or training<sup>23</sup>. Finally, al-Æmidî explains miracles (*mu'jizæt*) as events that are in rupture with custom, showing hereby a genuine Ash'arite attitude (387, 2-3). It is striking that in this «religious» part, philosophy is not totally dismissed, but is nevertheless pushed into the background, while an outspoken preference is given to the kalæm way of expression.

21 All references, here and in what follows, are to the edition by G.C. ANAWATI, S. ZAYED, M. MUSA and S. DUNYA. Cairo, 1960.

22 J. MICHOT, *La destinée de l'homme selon Avicenne*. Louvain, 1986 has offered serious arguments for, as well as a detailed analysis of this idea in Ibn Sînæ's doctrine of *ma'æd*.

23 See *supra*, p. 000.

Let us now turn to his kalâm works and see whether he still leaves place there for any philosophical thought.

In the *Abkær*, b. IV, qæ'ida 6, a'öl 1, fa'öl 3, entitled: *Fî l-ma'æd al-nafsænî*, al-Æmidî first extensively deals with the very conception of the soul. He distinguishes two major opinions: the one considering the soul as an accident ('ara'), the other as a substance (IV, 274, 5). Regarding the former, one detects once again two currents; the one conceives of the soul as a special accident among the accidents and as not being a body, although a soul is embedded in each body – this is according to al-Æmidî the conception of a group of the mutakallim<sup>n</sup>; the other makes it a quality or a special form in the body – a view attributed to some of the «old philosophers» (IV, 274, 6 – 275, 1). With respect to the soul as a substance, one also finds two different basic conceptions, i.e., one which posits this substance as composite, namely as a body; another which, on the contrary, claims its simplicity (IV, 275, 2-3). Regarding the former, three more major ideas can be distinguished: (1) *nafs* (soul or self) is a specific body (*juththa*), composed of atoms and accidents (=view of many of the Mutakallim<sup>n</sup>); (2) it is a body (*jism*) entering this specific body (*juththa*), e.g., an element, blood, etc. (=opinion of several among the ancient philosophers); (3) it is a kind of vital spirit (*r<sup>al</sup>*), a very fine body (=conception of the physicians) (IV, 275, 4- 276, 12). Finally, of those who consider the soul a simple substance, some, e.g., the shi'ites, Mu'ammâr, but also al-Ghazælî, understand it in the sense of a simple located substance-atom (*jawhar*), others, for example the majority of the philosophers and all the adepts of transmigration, as a simple spiritual substance (276, 13-18). It is striking that al-Æmidî points to the presence of each of the three major ideas, i.e., accident, composed substance and simple substance, in both kalâm and falsafa, but, at the same time, expresses a sharp demarcation between them. Moreover, the number of theories he is referring to is astonishing. Unfortunately, he offers rarely names, but everything indicates that he evokes theories that had existed before him, or were existing at his time. It would be worthwhile to identify them in a precise manner, but this exceeds the limits of the present paper. He was clearly familiar with a wide range of ancient views, as can be illustrated for example, by his evoking a theory that identifies the soul with blood - a doctrine already mentioned by Aristotle in his *De Anima*, 405 b 5-6, and attributed by the latter to Critias. Certainly, in this case, as in many others - although not all - Ibn Sînæ's *De Anima* of the *Shifæ'*, especially chapter 2 of book I, constituted in all likelihood his direct source of information. Finally, it is surprising to

see that he pays such a detailed attention to all kinds of different philosophical views, but especially to the most «common» doctrine, i.e., the conception of the soul as a simple spiritual substance, since he mentions no less than fifteen arguments in favour of this latter, and this mainly based on Ibn Sīnā's *De Anima*, V, 2.

When one turns to al-Æmidī critical evaluation of the entirety of all these positions, it immediately strikes that he does not accept one (IV, 294, 6 – 302). On the contrary, he formulates objections against all. Probably, he articulates the in his eyes less improper position, when he states, while he discusses the so-called argument in favour of the accidentality of the soul, that the latter is a kind of body having a by God posed particular accident in it, hence being neither just a body, nor a separate accident (IV, 294, 15-16). Without entering into all the details of these refutations, let me just remark that on many occasions, both regarding kalām and philosophical theories, al-Æmidī insists that those who are in favour of the concerned theory fail in offering a real proof (*dalāla*) for their view. Moreover, regarding both currents, he several times points to internal inconsistencies, as may be illustrated by the two following cases: 1. when al-Ghazālī identifies the soul with a single substance-atom, he overlooks that all substances-atoms are homogeneous (*mutamæthil*) and therefore that there is no possibility to explain why a given substance-atom is a soul, and another not (IV, 298, 14-17); 2. when the philosophers claim that it is proved that the soul has to be a simple spiritual substance because it grasps indivisible individuals and, moreover, a divisible body impossibly cannot be impressed by indivisible things, al-Æmidī (IV, 299, 7-11) points to the fact that this contradicts their own conception of relation, since the relationship, although in itself indivisible, is partaken by two divisible individuals (the reference is clearly to Ibn Sīnā's theory of relation as developed in the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Shifā'*, III, 10). Note that in the latter case, al-Æmidī does not reject the premiss of the philosophical argument, i.e., the possibility for the human being to grasp by something the simple intelligibles; he, on the contrary, explicitly states that this has to be admitted. Having expounded all his objections, al-Æmidī simply, and quite logically, concludes that there is no definite view on the true essence of the soul, and that one has to identify and clarify this essence through personal judgment (*ijtihād*). In other words, in his view there is no direct Revelation, which imposes a particular view on the essence of the soul.

Among the adepts of the soul as simple substance, there do exist furthermore four topics of debate: they concern the originating of the soul, or not; its being one, or plural; its perishing with the perishing of the body, or not; and



its transmigrating, or not (IV, 281, 4 – 290). Before paying special attention to the third of them, i.e., the one concerning the *ma'ad*, let me give a few brief remarks regarding the others. In the *Abkær*, al-Æmidî clearly distinguishes between Plato and his followers, who defend the pre-existence of the soul, on the one hand; and Aristotle and his followers, who are in favour of the idea of the origination of the soul, on the other (IV, 281, 11-12). In the *Aræm* (293, 6 – 294, 5), he, regarding these latter, only quotes the first out of three arguments in the *Abkær*, i.e., the one that states that the soul cannot be pre-existent to the body, since this would imply the impossibility to designate it as either unique or multiple (*Abkær*, IV, 282, 17- 283, 13). If the *Abkær* (IV, 304, 9- 305, 16) formulates an objection against this very same argument by refuting that the soul can be considered as one in species, but especially by stressing that the concerned argument offers no direct nor correct rejection of the theory of transmigration (but al-Æmidî immediately adds that he does not agree with that theory), this is no longer the case in the *Maræm*. There, al-Æmidî rather concentrates on the reversed side of the argument: in the same way as the origination of the body implies that of the soul, the passing away of the body requires that of the soul as well, and he herewith enters fully the issue of *ma'ad* (294, 6 – 295, 4). Although al-Æmidî accepts the existence of multiple souls, he insists in the *Abkær* that the philosophical arguments in favour of it in no way exclude, also not from a logical point of view, the possibility that a willing agent (*fæ'il mukhtær*) has caused them (IV, 306, 18-20). In a similar vein, he stresses that the philosophical proofs against transmigration are weak, precisely insofar as they make the need for a soul dependent upon a body, not upon a free agent (IV, 314, 2). Al-Æmidî even presses the philosophers hard when he wonders why there cannot be transmigration, provided one dialectically (*jadal<sup>m</sup>*) accepts the latter's claim that a body needs by itself a soul to govern it (IV, 314, 5-6). The same objection reappears in the *Maræm*, although not so sharply formulated (297, 12 – 298, 2). He there (298, 3 – 299, 2) even develops an intellectual argument which is in agreement with the philosophical way of investigation, and which consists in showing that the acceptance of transmigration makes radically impossible the identification of what particularizes an individual soul. More precisely, it states that none of the bodies, between which the soul transmigrates, can be responsible for its particularization. As far as I can judge, the actual formulation of this argument is proper to al-Æmidî, although it might have a remote basis in Ibn Sînæ's refutation

of transmigration, as expressed e.g., in his *Ishæræt*, IV, 37-39<sup>24</sup> or *Najæt*, 386, 12 - 387, Whatever be the case, it shows that al-Æmidî does not hesitate to develop a purely rational argument in order to reject a theory that is clearly in contradiction with religious beliefs.

When dealing with the issue of *al-ma'æd*, al-Æmidî, at least in the *Abkær*, discusses separately the resurrection of the body and that of the soul. This could give the impression that he thinks that one can conceive of one of them without of the other. This would be a rather surprising attitude for a Muta-kallim, and it reveals on closer examination –not unexpectedly– that he in fact does not adhere to such a view. In fact, he defends the resurrection of the human person as the totality of a body with a soul and clearly avoids any kind of dualistic interpretation. Why then this separate discussion? It is clear that this has to do with his willingness to present, and critically examine as much theories as possible. But since in his view most of the rational thinkers, both philosophers and adepts of transmigration, deny bodily resurrection, (IV, 261, 4), but not all of them deny the resurrection of the soul –on the contrary, Aristotle and the most excellent of the philosophers have argued in favour of it (IV, 287, 11-12), this splitting almost imposes itself. It might sound bizarre that he presents Aristotle as an outspoken adherent of the survival of the soul, but his Aristotle is undoubtedly an Avicennized Aristotle. Concerning bodily resurrection, al-Æmidî presents evidence of the Qur'aen and the ĩadĩths (IV, 262, 3 – 267, 12). This does not mean that he thinks that this kind of resurrection is totally irrational – in fact, not all, but only many of the rational thinkers reject its possibility. However, al-Æmidî does not hesitate to dismiss the Mu'tazilite claim that it can be proven on exclusively rational grounds (IV, 262, 12-13). In all likelihood, for al-Æmidî human reason has its limit(s). It is not able to prove everything, nor is what it judges possible –and such even if it is in the divine power to realize it– is necessarily the case, as suggested in the *Maræm*, chapter 1, with respect to a possible infinity of past generated existents.

Let us now concentrate on his exposé on the afterlife of the soul according to those who understand the soul as a simple spiritual substance. Al-Æmidî first presents a group, designated by him as the majority of the ancient philosophers, that opposes a survival of the soul after the perishment of the body. In favour of this view, two arguments are presented: the one based on the Aristotelian adagium that what generates has to perish (*De Caelo*, I, 12, 282 b

24 I refer to the edition by S. DUNYA. Cairo, 1972.



8-9), the other on another famous Aristotelian adagium, namely that nature does nothing in vain (*De Anima*, III, 9, 432 b 21 and III, 12, 434 a 31) (*Abkær*, IV, 286, 18 – 287, 2). Al-Æmidî will object against the first of these arguments that it has no real support, since its defenders are unable to prove -in the proper sense of the term- that the soul has indeed no pre-existence (IV, 309, 2-9). Regarding the second, he had already said in an earlier discussion (IV, 305, 19-20) that he only could agree with the adagium insofar as it would be qualified by «most of the time», not by «always». Al-Æmidî then evokes a philosophical theory according to which only that part of the soul will survive that is linked with the direct grasp of the universal intelligibles, and consequently does not preserve what it has acquired by means of its corporeal instrument (IV, 287, 3-10). Al-Æmidî might have had in mind al-Færæbî, but this deserves further investigation<sup>25</sup>. Whoever he was referring to, he severely objects to this view that all the acts of the soul ultimately have their source in an eternal willing Agent (IV, 309, 12-21). Already earlier, we saw a reference to this kind of agent. It well illustrates a genuine Ash'arite spirit. As to the most excellent philosophers, they have developed three arguments in favour of the survival of the soul (IV, 287, 11 - 289, 4). The first insists that nothing that has been generated can be annihilated by itself, and this is a fortiori true in the case of the soul since its cause is the Agent Intellect, which is an eternal being. The second invokes the absence of any essential causal priority of the body over the soul. Finally, the third insists that the soul, being immaterial, and therefore simple, cannot be subject to destruction. The major weakness of the first two arguments is -once again!- that the possibility of a willing Agent as cause is simply overlooked (IV, 310 – 312, 14). Regarding the third, al-Æmidî remarks that the presence in the soul of a receptive potentiality (*quwwa*) to annihilation does not entail necessarily that it has to be composed, since such a potentiality is only a privative, not an existential idea (IV, 312, 15 – 313, 5, especially 312, 17-18). The former of these counter-arguments show a kalâm inspiration, while the last is clearly philosophical in nature. In the *Maræm* (285-7), only the last two arguments, which have been directly been inspired by the chapter in

25 It has been believed that al-Færæbî simply denied a survival to the soul, especially in his (lost) commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, but PH. VALLAT, *Farabi et l'école d'Alexandrie*. Paris, 2004, has convincingly shown that this is not the case, see especially the following statement: «Farabi tient pour nulle et non avenue toute théorie portant sur l'existence post mortem qui n'est pas en même temps une théorie de la séparation telle que lui-même la comprend» (p. 123).

the *Najæt*, entitled: That the soul does not die with the death of the body (p. 378-86), are present. A systematic refutation is no longer recorded, but this does not mean that al-Æmidî completely agrees with the philosophical argumentation. In my view, it only shows that he probably found the latter worthy of attention, especially insofar as it entails a logical coherence once one has accepted the philosopher's conception of the soul as a simple substance<sup>26</sup>. But he never says that he really does this. On the contrary, he later will defend the Islamic way of dealing with the afterlife, which is almost completely foreign to that of the philosophers, and which clearly turns out the preferred one of al-Æmidî.

I now want to discuss a last issue, presented by al-Æmidî in the context of the resurrection of the soul: the different states of happiness of the souls in the hereafter according to their degree of perfection, as expressed by the philosophers (*Abkær*, IV, 291, 5 - 294, 3). In fact, al-Æmidî bases his exposé directly on the *Ilæhiyyæt* of the *Shifæ'*, IX, 7 (almost *verbatim* identical with *Alîwæl al-nafs*, c. XV). With Ibn Sînæ, he distinguishes four states (*læl-s*)<sup>27</sup>: 1. The (intellectually) perfected souls and morally pure, having eternal joy, although the later is quite different from the sensible joy; 2. The perfected souls, but morally unjust, being subject to temporal punishment; 3. The not perfected souls, but morally just, living a kind of «imaginal» resurrection; 4. The not perfected souls and morally deprived, being condemned to eternal suffering. As to the totally unconscious souls, e.g., the ones of children or madmen, they will neither enjoy nor suffer. Al-Æmidî once again detects weaknesses in this doctrine,

26 If one rejects this interpretation, one must accept that al-Æmidî has fundamentally changed his mind after having written his *Abkær*, or, elsewhere, that he is hiding his real thought in the *Maræm*. But I cannot find any indication for such a fundamental change, nor for any esoteric attitude. Perhaps an indepth analysis of the passages dedicated to the soul and to the issue of the *ma'ad* in his late work *al-Nær al-bæhir fl l-likam az-zaawæhir*, could have permitted a more precise judgment in this respect, but I had no access to this work. Nevertheless, insofar as al-Æmidî in it directly and intimately links the capacity of human speech and of rationality with the very reality of the divine providence (see G. ENDRESS, «Die dreifache Ancilla. Hermeneutik und Logik im Werk des Sayfaddîn al-Æmidî», in: D. PERLER und U. RUDOLPH (eds), *Logik und Theologie. Das Organon im arabischen und im lateinischen Mittelalter*. Leiden, Boston, 2005, p. 117-143, p. 140), he seems still to incline to a rather *kalæm* than philosophical way of thinking.

27 In the *Maræm* (288 - 292, 2), he only distinguishes between two states, but each of them is subdivided anew into two further ones in such a way that one refinds the same division as that of the *Abkær*.

not just from the religious side, but already on purely philosophical grounds: how can intelligibles been imprinted in the soul after its total separation from the body, but, especially, how can in the case of imaginal resurrection, the soul perceive particulars, whereas it is always affirmed by the philosophers themselves that the soul can only intellect universals (IV, 315, 3-7 and 15-16)? Once again, this criticism lacks in the *Marʿam*, but the latter's discussion of the main issues of the classical Islamic key-notions regarding the afterlife (day of convention, bridge, balance, etc.) (299-314) makes obvious that al-ʿEmidī also in that writing does not accept the philosophical approach of defending only the survival of the soul.

From the preceding, one may conclude that al-ʿEmidī was a genuine Ashʿarite Mutakallim, who, however, had a genuine interest in philosophy. In accordance with al-Ghazālī's advice, he accepted of philosophy all what is not in direct contradiction with religious belief. The way he analyzes and discusses several opinions makes evident how familiar he was with the tools of (philosophical) logic<sup>28</sup>. He clearly surpassed the level of purely theoretical knowledge: he *de facto* applied that logic. From the *Mubīn* it is moreover clear that he also agreed with a great deal of philosophical doctrines in the field of the natural sciences, as I have tried to show with respect to the conception of the different faculties of the soul. Also this is in line with al-Ghazālī's opinion, as e.g., expressed in the eighteenth question of the *Tahāfut*, where it is explicitly affirmed that there is no need to reject the philosopher's views regarding the description of the soul's faculties<sup>29</sup>. But al-ʿEmidī on other occasions profoundly disagreed with several of the philosophical views, among which the one on *maʿād*. However, he was not satisfied by simply opposing them to Revelation, but he developed serious logical arguments against them. Even when he rejected a given doctrinal view, he always did so in a qualified way, indicating whether there is reason for a total, or only for a partial rejection - as has been illustrated by his attitude towards the Aristotelian adagium that na-

28 See Endress-paper, quoted in the preceding note.

29 AL-GHAZĀLĪ, *The Incoherence of the Philosophers. A parallel English-Arabic text*. Trnansl., introd., annotated by M. MARMURA. Provo, Utah, 1997, p. 185, 14-7 (English translation: «This, in brief, is what they [i.e., the philosophers] have detailed regarding the animal and human faculties, going to great length in mentioning them, abandoning any discussion of the vegetative powers, since talking about them is not to our purpose. There is nothing in what they have mentioned that must be denied in terms of the religious law. For these are observed matters which God has ordained to flow according to habit»).

ture does nothing in vain, an adagium which he judged partially false, namely when understood in the sense of «always», but partially correct, when understood in the sense of «most of the time». In all this, it is clear that al-Æmidî did not radically oppose (philosophical) reason. On the contrary, he valorised it as much as possible, but, at the same time, dismissed any blind trust. For him, as for al-Ghazæli, human reason has to recognize its limits. Nevertheless, once more as of al-Ghazæli, also for him a blind trust (*taqlîd*) in tradition has to be rejected. In other words, in order to obtain a genuine religious thought *'aql* and *naql* have to be combined together in a dynamical research to the Truth (*al-Îlaqq*).