

# A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF INDIAN, MAINLY BUDDHIST, THOUGHT ON SOME ASPECTS OF KALĀM DOCTRINES

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In *Beiträge zur islamischen Atomenlehre*, published in 1936 in Berlin, I pointed out similarities between the atomic doctrines of the Kalām and those of various Indian philosophical and/or theological systems, but failed to propose a definite hypothesis accounting for these similarities. In the above work I also quoted some of the Islamic sources referring to Jahm’s disputation with the Samaniyya,<sup>1</sup> but did not discuss, as I shall do in the present article, the implications of points raised in this debate for the doctrine of early Islam.

My inability at the time of writing the *Beiträge* to formulate a supposition accounting for the similarities between Indian and Islamic atomic theories was due, I believe now, to my not having sought out an able source of information bearing on religion and scholarship in Central Asia in the first half of the seventh century. This evidence also helped me to interpret the sparse accounts of and reference to Jahm’s disputation with the Buddhists occurring in the writings of Arabic polemicists and doxographers.

In 620 (or 627) the Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chuang, a Buddhist monk, started on his voyage to “the countries of the West”, his final destination being India. He brought back 657 Buddhist works,<sup>2</sup> and devoted the last twenty years of his life to translating seventy-five of them.

In his reports concerning the “countries of the West” he gives various details concerning the Buddhist movements and communities, of which only two instances will be quoted here.

Speaking of the city of Balkh, he mentions the following Buddhist buildings: a hundred monasteries, a temple and several hundred Stūpas.<sup>3</sup> Three thousand Buddhist monks studied the doctrine of the Hīnayāna branch of Buddhism. [p. 183]

In 644, a short time after Yuan Chuang’s visit, Balkh was captured by the Muslim invaders.

In the kingdom of Kāpīsā (in the region of Begram in Afghanistan) there were, according to our traveller, a hundred monasteries, in which six thousand monks studied the doctrines of Mahāyāna Buddhism. He mentions also

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<sup>1</sup>To whom I refer (*Beiträge*, pp. 121–122) as follows: “Von der kaum greifbaren indischen Sekte der Samaniyya”. This mistaken view has been taken over by G. Vitestam in the introduction to his edition of Abū Saʿīd ʿUthmān Ibn al-Dārimī, *K. al-Radd ʿalā ʿl-Jahmiyya*, Lund-Leiden 1960, p. 15, n. 3, p. 16. This introduction contains a detailed analysis of al-Dārimī’s exposition of Jahm’s Kalām.

<sup>2</sup>More than four hundred of them belonged to the Mahāyāna branch of Buddhism.

<sup>3</sup>Buddhist monuments.

a monastery in that country inhabited by approximately three hundred monks who studied the doctrines of Hīnayāna Buddhism. There were also a thousand “heretics”, i.e., members of Indian non Buddhist sects.

These citations from Yuan Chuang, to which others may be added, prove that some of the countries conquered by Muslims in Central Asia, as well as others with which this invasion brought them into close contact, had been strongly influenced by Buddhist missionary activities, and that they formed a part of that considerable portion of Asia which, in the course of many centuries, had been converted in various degrees, and whose local elites had been moulded by Buddhist thought.

Buddhist missionary activities included the establishment of monasteries, which were sometimes centres of study (see above). This meant that Buddhist texts, originally composed in Sanskrit,<sup>4</sup> had to be procured, and translations into the local language made available. Some of the texts translated and studied were doctrinal treatises which, for want of a more suitable term, may be called philosophical (this was the case in China and Tibet).

Buddhist treatises of this kind are frequently full of polemics, and a careful reader may not only apprehend the views of their author, but receive a fair amount of information about Indian philosophical standpoints which are at variance with these views.<sup>5</sup>

At this point, we shall consider the disputation of Jahm b. Ṣafwān with the Samaniyya.<sup>6</sup>

We shall start with the following quotations concerning Jahm:<sup>7</sup> [p. 184]

Jahm (d. 745) is said in Al-Ash‘arī’s *Maqālāt al-islāmiyyīn*<sup>8</sup> to have been killed in Merv by Salm b. Aḥwaz al-Māzinī in the last period of the rule of Banū Umayya.

After enumerating heretical opinions professed by the Jahmiyya, Abū ‘l-Ḥusayn al-Malatī states:<sup>9</sup> “This is the sum of the discourse (*Kalām*) of the Jahmiyya. They were called after Jahm, because Jahm b. Ṣafwān was the first who derived this discourse from that of the Samaniyya, who are a subdivision (*ṣinf*) of the Iranians (*al-‘ajam*) in the region cd Khurāsān. They induced him to have doubts with regard to his religion in such a way that for forty days he stopped praying. For he said: ‘I will not pray to someone whom I do not know’ ”.

According to Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal’s *al-Radd ‘alā al-zanādiqa wa ‘l-jahmiyya*,<sup>10</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Or in other Indian languages.

<sup>5</sup>Indian religious influence went hand in hand with the diffusion of Indian science in Tibet, in Central Asia, in Indochina, in Indonesia, and among certain groups China and Japan; cf. J. Filliozat, *La doctrine classique de la médecine indienne*, Paris 1975, p. 1. It seems probable that the fact related by al-Birūnī (*Fī taḥqīq mā li ‘l-hind*, Hyderabad 1958, p. 123) that the translation of the Sanskrit medical treatise of Caraka was made at the behest of Banū Barmak is connected with the Buddhist antecedents of this family: They were descended from the superior of one of the Buddhist monasteries of Balkh, see also Pines, *Beiträge zur islamischen Atomenlehre*, pp. 118–120

<sup>6</sup>Samaniyya is the Arabic form of Samaṇa (in Sanskrit Śramaṇa), a common designation for Buddhists. The written appellation of the Buddhists as encountered in the Sogdian script is *šmm*.

<sup>7</sup>His theological views will not be discussed here unless they have an immediate relevance to his discussion with the Buddhists.

<sup>8</sup>Ed H. Ritter, Berlin 1929, I, p. 280

<sup>9</sup>In *K. al-Tanbih wa ‘l-radd ‘alā ahl al-ahwā’ wa ‘l-bida’*, ed. S. Dederling, Istanbul 1926, p. 77.

<sup>10</sup>Ed. Darul-fünun İlahiyat Fakültesi Mecmusai, V–VI, 1927, p. 314f.

Jahm and his Buddhist opponents enter their debate of the condition that the worsted party will adopt the victor's religion.

The question posed by the Samaniyya is: "What is Jahm's reason for asserting that there is a God?" The fact is that none of his five senses perceive Him, nor can anyone be found who has perceived Him in this manner. This question at first discomfits Jahm, and his perplexity lasts forty days.<sup>11</sup> Finally he comes up with the following argumentation. He asks his opponents if they believe that a soul<sup>12</sup> is present in them. Upon their replying in the affirmative, Jahm points out that the soul (like God) cannot be perceived by the senses. According to Ibn Ḥanbal, this analogy between the soul and God may be regarded as the s point of Jahm's doctrine concerning God.

Another account of Jahm's disputation occurs in Ibn al-Murtaḍā's *Ṭabaqāt al-mu'tazila*,<sup>13</sup> in the section dealing with Wāṣil's b. 'Aṭā'. It may be rendered as follows:

It is reported that some Samaniyya said to Jahm b. Ṣafwān: "Does the knowledge of what is regarded as good<sup>14</sup> follow (*yakhruj*) from the five senses (*mashā'ir*)?" He answered:<sup>15</sup> [p. 185] "No". They said: "Tell us about the object of your worship (*ma'būd*). Do you know Him ('*araftahu*) by any of them?" He answered:<sup>16</sup> "No". They said: "Consequently He is unknown". Hereupon he remained silent and wrote about this to Wāṣil:

You may posit a sixth<sup>17</sup> (source of knowledge),<sup>18</sup> namely inference (*dalīl*). Hereupon they will say: "He (God) does not follow either from the senses or from inference". Thereupon I shall ask them whether they distinguish between the living and the dead, between rational being (*al-'āqil*) and a madman. There is no doubt about an affirmative answer. Now this is known by means of inference.

When Jahm gave this answer, they (the Samaniyya) said: "This is not your discourse (*Kalām*)". He informed them (of the facts). Hereupon they went to Wāṣil, had a conversation with him, and were converted by him to Islam.

The introduction of an appeal to Wāṣil into Ibn al-Murtaḍā's version of Jahm's disputation obviously represents an attempt by a Mu'tazilī author to glorify the founder of the sect; one may draw upon it in my opinion in analysing the philosophical or theological problems raised by the disputation as related by Ibn al-Murtaḍā.

<sup>11</sup>In connection with these forty days, one is reminded of al-Malaṭī's statement (see above) according to which Jahm, because of doubts instilled in him by the Samaniyya, stopped praying for forty days.

<sup>12</sup>*Rūh*; in this passage the translation of the Arabic term as "soul" rather than as "spirit" seems to be appropriate.

<sup>13</sup>Ed. by Diwald Wilzer, Wiesbaden 1961; see p. 34. Ibn al-Murtaḍā died in 1437, but his work is based on earlier sources, principally, it seems, on a work of 'Abd al-Jabbār; see Diwald Wilzer's *Einleitung*, p. XVI.

<sup>14</sup>*Al-Ma'rūf*; the translation "what is known" seems to me less appropriate than the one adopted in the text.

<sup>15</sup>Literally "said".

<sup>16</sup>Literally "said".

<sup>17</sup>Besides the five senses.

<sup>18</sup>The text has *wajh*, which may be translated "aspect".

The latter's version and that of Ibn Ḥanbal, though dissimilar in some respects, have clearly one important point in common. They deal with what may be called sources of knowledge, which are designated in Sanskrit as *pramāṇas* (singular *pramāṇa*). It is my contention that there is an unmistakable resemblance between the various Kalām doctrines in this matter and those of Indian schools. The fact that Arab conquests in central Asia brought about an encounter between Buddhist centres of learning (see above) and Muslim missionaries, whose theological doctrines may be supposed to have been rather inchoate, may account to some extent for this resemblance.

It should be considered in this connection that this encounter and clash of two civilizations may have engendered the need for interpreters versed in the languages and the thought of the warring parties; some of these may have been Buddhist converts to Islam.

In both Ibn Ḥanbal's version of the disputation and that of Ibn al-Murtaḍā, the Samaniyya start with the assumption that knowledge can be acquired only by means of the five senses. Since God cannot be perceived by them, it is impossible to know Him. He is unknown. [p. 186]

The thesis that knowledge can be obtained only by means of the five senses was put forward in India in the first place by Lokāyata heretics.<sup>19</sup> There were among them adherents of schools of thought which denied the validity of inference (*anumāna*) altogether.<sup>20</sup>

The Buddhists do not reject inference, but assert that knowledge attained by inference cannot transcend the domain of what may be perceived by the senses.<sup>21</sup> According to a Buddhist author,<sup>22</sup> "God (*īśvara*) is an unreal substance".<sup>23</sup>

A possible resemblance between Ibn Ḥanbal's version of Jahm's reply to the Samaniyya, according to which both the soul and God, though not perceived by the senses are, nevertheless, known to exist, may be found in a doctrine of the Vedānta school. The latter affirmed the identity of Ātman (the Self of the Soul) with Brahman, an appellation which in this context may be translated as God. This teaching goes back to the Upaniṣads. This knowledge is acquired by a kind of extrasensory vision.<sup>24</sup>

In Ibn al-Murtaḍā's version of the disputation, Jahm, on Wāṣil's advice (or Wāṣil himself), answers the Samaniyya, who refuse to accept his assertion that God is known by means of inference, by pointing out that it is by resorting to inference that the living are distinguished from the dead and rational beings from madmen. I have not encountered an identical statement in Indian

<sup>19</sup>Sometimes referred to as "materials", a designation which does not seem to me to be felicitous.

<sup>20</sup>See for instance Jayatileke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, London 1963, p. 71ff.

<sup>21</sup>See Th. Stcherbatsky, *Erkenntnis theorie und Logik nach der Lehre der späteren Buddhisten*, Munich 1924, p. 209. Some of the Buddhist thinkers dealt with by Stcherbatsky are contemporaneous with or even posterior to some of the Mutakallimūn referred to in the present article. This need not, in my opinion, affect the argumentation, as it seems more than probable that to a large extent the later Buddhist authors took over the doctrines of their predecessors.

<sup>22</sup>Dharmakīrti.

<sup>23</sup>See Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, New York 1962, p. 405.

<sup>24</sup>See Jayatileke, op. cit., p. 613; Deussen, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie* I iii, Leipzig 1926, p. 587; cf., for instance, Śaṅkara's *Commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa*, IV, 1, 4. It should, however, be noted in this connection that there are examples in Greco-Roman philosophy of an analogy being drawn between human perception of God and one's own soul.

philosophical texts, but some parallels may be mentioned. Thus, a passage in Gauḍapāda's *Commentary* on the Sāṃkhya-Kārikā (6–7), a treatise expounding the doctrines of the Sāṃkhya school, presents a certain analogy to the argumentation attributed to Jahm and to Wāṣil. According to this passage, the *Puruṣa* and the *Pradhāna* Prakṛiti (Nature), which cannot be perceived by senses, are apprehended by means of inference. The *Puruṣa* and Prakṛiti are the two primordial entities in the Sāṃkhya school. According [p. 187] to this same passage, it is likewise by means of inference that one pigeon is distinguished from others belonging to the same species. Both the similarity of this passage to the argumentation under discussion and its difference from it are obvious: Inference has in both texts two roles: through its instrumentality, it is possible both to apprehend transcendent entities and to distinguish among things that are perceived by the senses. The main divergence then (there are, of course, others) derives, in my opinion, from the structure of the two theologies or philosophies in question. The *Puruṣa* of the Sāṃkhya is something quite different from the God of Islam, but he too is, as stated above, a transcendent entity.

A somewhat closer resemblance to Jahm's argumentation as given in Ibn al-Murtaḍā's version may be found in Annambhaṭṭa's *Tarka-Saṅgraha*, which sets forth in the main the doctrines of the Nyāya school, amalgamated to some extent with those of the Vaiśeṣikas.<sup>25</sup> One finds in the author's *Commentary* on his own text a proof of the existence of God (*īśvara*) by means of inference (*anumāna*). This proof, which is stated in an abridged form, can be assimilated to the so-called "cosmological proof", as set forth by some Western philosophers or theologians: the existence of the world entails the existence of a Maker, just as the existence of a pot that of a potter.<sup>26</sup>

As Fouchet points out (p. 13), inference (*anumāna*), which is not explicitly mentioned in this, is also assigned the function of apprehending the distinctiveness of a thing or an element that singles it out when it is compared to all the others. The example given (pp. 134–135) is the distinctiveness of the earth apprehended because it, unlike everything else, has a smell (characteristic of it).<sup>27</sup> The Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika and Vedānta are non-Buddhist, so-called orthodox philosophical systems,<sup>28</sup> which means that they recognize the authority of the Vedas.

The two extant accounts of Jahm's disputation fit neatly into an Indian framework. This is particularly true of Ibn al-Murtaḍā's version, which clearly presupposes discussions concerning the *pramāṇas*.

As far as I know, a term corresponding to a wholly satisfactory extent to the latter does not appear in the Greek philosophical systems.<sup>29</sup> The [p. 188]

<sup>25</sup>The two schools tend to merge.

<sup>26</sup>See *Le Compendium des Topiques (Tarka-Saṅgraha)* d'Annambhaṭṭa, ed. A. Foucher, Paris 1949, pp. 42–43.

<sup>27</sup>O. Lacombe expounds in *L'absolu selon le Vedānta* (Psrís 1966, pp. 226–228) on a proof given in Śaṅkara's *Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣyam* that the cause of the world is a principle endowed with intelligence. This proof is based on the fact that the order obtaining in the world is of teleological nature. Lacombe believes that this proof requires the use of inference, *anumāna* not being explicitly mentioned in the text he quotes. I believe that this is correct. *Anumāna* is recognized in the Vedānta as a valid mode of obtaining knowledge.

<sup>28</sup>There are also others.

<sup>29</sup>The Stoic concept *kritērion* may seem to disprove this assertion. According to Chrysippos in book IV of his *Physics*, the *kritērion* of truth is the *katalēptike phantasia*. This is also the opinion of Antipatros and Apollōdoros. In the first book of his work *Peri Logou*, however, Chrysippos states that the *kritēria* are perception (*aisthēsis*) and *prolēpsis*. Boethus, for his

debates concerning the existence of God may have some similarity with the

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part, believes that the *kritēria* are reason (*nouns*), perception, desire (*orexis*) and knowledge (*epistēmē*), see Diogenes Laertius, VII 54. An explanation of the various terms mentioned above would entail a disquisition on the whole system of Stoic logic, which would go beyond the scope of the present article. From our point of view the significant point in the passage by Diogenes is the fact that the one Stoic term which might be thought to correspond to the Sanskrit *anumāna* does not occur in the enumeration of the *kritēria*.

I refer to the term *sēmeion* (“sign”), or as Mates proposes to call it, “signal”; on *Sēmeion*, see B. Mates, *Stoic Logic*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1961, p. 10ff. Mates states (p. 13) that the Stoics distinguished between commemorative (*hypomnestika*) and indicative (*endeiktika*) “signs” or “signals”. This statement appears to be false or doubtful as far as the early Stoics are concerned. According to Pohlenz (*Dir Stoa*, Göttingen 1949, II, p. 127) this distinction was first made in the “sceptical” 2nd Academy, and it is set forth by Carneades, op. cit., p. 88f. V. Brochard (*Les Sceptiques grecs*, Paris 1932, p. 269, n. 1 and p. 342f.) discusses whether the distinction in question, which is expounded by Sextus, was already known to his predecessor, the Sceptic Oinesidemos; this is denied by Brochard. It would seem that the early Stoics (this may also be true of Oinēsides), when speaking of *sēmeion* without any further specification, always had the “indicative sign or signal” in mind.

The difference between the two kinds of “signals” stands out clearly in the following quotations from Mates (pp. 13–14):

... The commemorative signal, having been observed in a clear perception together with the object signified, makes us remember that which was observed along with it when the object is not evident (Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicus*, VIII, 152).

For example, we have many times observed smoke and fire in conjunction. Consequently, when we see smoke, we immediately recall the (presently unseen) fire. The same relations hold, we are informed, in the case of the scar which follows the wound and in the death following rupture of the heart; for when we see the scar we recall the antecedent wound, and seeing the rupture of the heart, we foretell the impending death” (Sextus, *ibidem* VIII, 153).

The indicative signal, on the contrary, can never be observed in connection with the signified, since what is not observable as a *fortiori* not observable in connection with something else (Sextus, *ibidem*, 154).

The soul is an example of something that is naturally non-evident, for it never presents itself to our clear perception. Nevertheless, it is indicated, or signified indicatively by the bodily motions. For we “reason” that the body has a kind of internal power to manifest such motions (Sextus, *ibidem*, 154). It may be noted that the Buddhists accept only the kind of *anumāna* which is similar to “commemorative signals” and deny the validity of *anumāna* which may be quoted with the “indicative signals”. The Sāṃkhya, the Vaiśeṣika (see below) and other Indian “orthodox” systems, on the other hand, recognize, like the Stoics, the equal validity of the inference which may be identified with the “indicative signals”.

We are concerned in the present enquiry with the parallels between the Indian conceptions relating to *pramāṇas* and relevant doctrines occurring in the Kalām; our exposé of some traits of Stoic logic and epistemology was undertaken with the intention of finding out whether the latter presented equally close parallels to the Kalām opinions under discussion. A clear-cut answer to this question is rendered difficult, though I think not impossible, by the points of similarity that exist between the Stoic and the Indian teachings under discussion. The resemblance between Aristotelian Syllogistic logic and the corresponding Indian doctrines has often been remarked upon.

The kinship between some elements of Stoic logic and epistemology and the corresponding Indian teachings may appear to be at least as close. However, as regards the matters with which our enquiry is concerned, these two doctrinal systems, the Indian (which varies greatly from one school of thought to another) and the Stoic, dissimulate essential difference.

Both assigned to the *kritēria* and the *pramāṇas* similar functions; in the case of the Stoics this function is explicated in the expression *kritērion alētheias* (Diogenes Laertius, VII, 54), and both regard perception as *kritērion* or a *pramāṇa*. Beyond that they have little or nothing in common. *Prolēpsis*, which Chrysippus, in one of his two differing statements on the subject, transmitted by Diogenes Laertius, regards as being a *kritērion* (the other being perception), seems to indicate what V. Goldschmidt calls “les prénotions” (“notions communes” or “notions

one in which Jahm was engaged, but as a rule a different kind of vocabulary [p. 189] is used.<sup>30</sup> In what follows I shall try to assess the possibility of (probably indirect) Indian influence on the views of later Mutakallimūn concerning the sources of knowledge.

‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Hamadānī gives in his *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamṣa*<sup>31</sup> the following information (p. 48ff.) on the Mu‘tazilī doctrine regarding man’s knowledge of God (*ma‘rifat Allah*). According to him, the [p. 190] Mu‘tazilīs believed that this knowledge can be obtained in this life only through speculative thought (*dalāla, istidlāl*).<sup>32</sup> This knowledge is not obtained through perception (*mushāhada*) and is not necessary knowledge (*‘ilm ḍarūrī*). The perception of the senses (p. 51), first and foremost the sense of sight, is another source of knowledge. In fact, it is “necessary knowledge”, but not the kind that is immediate, as it depends upon the senses encountering objects and perceiving them. It may be noted that a definition of “necessary objects” (p. 48f.) accepted by some theologians, but rejected by others, is that it is knowledge that cannot be negated by the person that this has this knowledge because of a doubt or a difficulty. An example of immediate necessary knowledge is our awareness that we are willing, disliking, feeling disgust, desirous, thinking, believing and so forth (p. 51). A different example is our awareness of our perceptions.<sup>33</sup>

The statement according to which the knowledge of God is not necessary knowledge is negated by the *aṣḥāb al-ma‘arīf*<sup>34</sup> such as Jāhiz and Abū ‘Alī

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naturelles”) (see *Le système stoïcien et la notion du temps*, Paris 1959, p. 159ff.), but is not used in connection with inference, *anumāna*, which is one of the *pramāṇas* in most Indian systems of logic and epistemology. At this point we may ask why the Stoics did not consider the “sign” or “signal” as a *kritērion* of truth, or a *pramāṇa*. Perhaps the answer may be sought in an assertion made by Bréhier. He contends, speaking of the epistemology and logic of the Stoics, “ainsi le rapport du signe à chose signifiée est entre deux termes incorporels, deux inexprimables, et non pas, du tout entre deux réalités”, see E. Bréhier, *La théorie des incorporels dans l’ancien stoïcisme*, Paris 1980, p. 32. No attempt will be made here to set forth the arguments on which Bréhier bases his conclusions, and it should be borne in mind that the fragmentariness of the sources from which we piece together our knowledge of Stoic logic makes any sweeping assertion concerning the latter somewhat doubtful. The Epicureans had a theory of inference which was very different from that attributed by Bréhier to the Stoics, see P. H. de Lacy and E. A. de Lacy, *Philodemus: On Methods of inference. A study in ancient empiricism*, Philadelphia 1941, particularly p. 142ff. But their idea of *kritēria* in the technical sense, if they had one, seems to have been much less thought out than that of the Stoics and the equivalent ideas in the Indian systems of philosophy and in Kalām. It should be also noted that, unlike the “orthodox” Indian systems and the Kalām, both the Stoics and the Epicureans lacked, for obvious reasons, the motivation to set up a revealed speech as a source of knowledge.

<sup>30</sup>Is Ibn Ḥanbal’s assertion that Jahm’s doctrine concerning God was strongly influenced by Indian views (see above) to be dismissed out of hand as the kind of baseless accusation characteristic of Islamic sectarian polemics? I should hesitate to do so in view of the fact that Jahm’s negation of divine attributed and of various statements regarding God current in Islamic theology may lend colour to Ibn Ḥanbal’s charge. However, in view of the present state of our knowledge, any further discussion of this point would seem to me to be quite profitless.

<sup>31</sup>Ed. by ‘Abd al-Karīm ‘Uyhmān, Cairo 1965.

<sup>32</sup>Both these words are related to *dalīl*, which is used as a term for inference in Jahm’s disputation, as reported by Ibn al-Murtaḍā (see above).

<sup>33</sup>‘Abd al-Jabbār believes (p. 51) that things known in the perfection of reason (*kamāl al-‘aql*) are also necessary knowledge, for instance, the knowledge that a thing exists or is nonexistent. In other cases this knowledge may depend upon report (*khābar*) which may, for instance, connect a deed with him who did it. Bound up with this are rules with regard to deeds being good or bad.

<sup>34</sup>See on them J. van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre des ‘Aḍudaddīn al-Ījī*, Wiesbaden 1966, p. 17,

al-Aswārī. [p. 191] It should be noted that our statement only holds good in this world, i.e., in relation to people who have an obligation to fulfil God's commandments. In the afterlife, knowledge of God is necessary knowledge.

Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī contends that God is known through inference (*dalāla*) both in this life and in the afterlife. For what is known through inference cannot be known otherwise. In a parallel way what is known necessarily cannot be otherwise.

A latter-day Mutakallim whom 'Abd al-Jabbār believes to have been (Aḥmad b. Ḥasan) al-Mu'ayyad bi-'llah believed that there are some people, such as prophets, persons near God (*al-awliyā*) and righteous persons (*al-ṣāliḥūn*) who have a necessary knowledge of God while they are in this world and yet have the obligation to fulfil God's commandments.

An early Mu'tazilī, Abū 'l-Hudhayl (d. 841–842?), is reported to have contended that knowledge of the existence of God is obtained by means of inference (*dalīl*) which is based on the perception of the fact that bodies and other things that are subject to change are created. This leads to the knowledge that they have a Creator.<sup>35</sup>

With the exception of *aṣḥāb al-ma'ārif*, the Mu'tazilīs that are referred to above (as well as others that are not) appear to believe that cognition of God is inseparable from the knowledge of the inference (*dalīl*) entailing this knowledge. It seems probable that this conception has an historical connection with Jahm's

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p. 132ff., p. 329f., cf. p. 340; 'Abd al-Jabbār (op. cit., p. 67) states that the "*aṣḥāb al-ma'ārif* disagree with us" (with regard to his opinion that speculative thought [*al-nazar*], whose purpose is to obtain knowledge of God, is a religious obligation [*wājib*]). However, they (the *aṣḥāb al-ma'ārif*) are not of one mind. Some of them believe that all the species of knowledge (*al-ma'ārif*) are acquired through *ilhām* (inspiration, intuition); these deny absolutely that speculative thought is obligatory. There are, however, others who assert that the sciences are a species of knowledge acquired by nature (*tab'*), which is provided through speculative thought with a place (or substratum) in which to be. The latter consider speculative thought (with this in view) obligatory, but not in the perspective in which we consider it obligatory. Thus the difference of opinion between us and them remains (i.e., is not abolished). The verb *alḥama*, related to *ilhām*, is used by the physician and heretic Abū Bakr al-Rāzī (the Rhazes of the Latins) in his disputation against the hierarchical views of the Ismā'īlī missionary Abū Ḥatīm al-Rāzī, published by P. Kraus in *Raziana*, II, *Orientalia* V, V (1936), pp. 34–56; 358–378. The relevant passage is translated in S. Pines, "Shi'ite Terms and Conceptions in Judah Halevi's *Kuzari*", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* II, 1980, p. 203:

He (Abū Bakr al-Rāzī) said: The (things) most fitting for the wisdom and mercy of the Wise and Merciful one is that He should instil (*yulḥim*) into all His slaves (*'ibād*) the knowledge of what is useful and what is harmful to them, in this life and in what comes after (*fī 'ājilḥim wa-ājilḥim*) and that none of them should be superior to the other. In this way no quarrels or differences of opinion would occur between them and they would not perish. This would be preferable for them than the setting up of some of them as the Imāms (religious guides) of the others, in such a way that one sect proclaims its own Imām as the true one and the others as false; (for, as a consequence of this) they strike the faces of each other with the sword, (so that) a universal calamity ensues and they perish, because of their mutual aggression and strife. . .

The possibility that there may be some connection between al-Rāzī's use of *alḥama*, *ilhām* and the recourse to these terms by some Mutakallimūn cannot in my opinion be ruled out. Cf. also Muṭahhar b. Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī, *Kitāb al-bad' wa al-ta'rikh*, ed. Cl. Huart, Teheran 1962, p. 110. See also on *ilhām* van Ess, op. cit., p. 121f.

<sup>35</sup>See van Ess, op. cit., p. 160, 'Abd al-Jabbār, op. cit., p. 65. On these problems see also the views of Nāshī' al-Akbar (d. 906) set forth in his *al-Kitāb al-awsaṭ fī 'l-maqālāt*, ed. J. van Ess, *Frühe mu'tazilitische Häresiographie: Zwei Werke der Nāshī' al-Akbar*, Beirut 1971, pp. 109–110 of the Arabic text.

disputation. The latter (and perhaps also other discussions of a similar nature) can account for the impact of the Indian notion of *Anumāna* on Islamic thinking.

In a passage from *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa* (p. 88f.) ‘Abd al-Jabbār employs a somewhat different terminology than the one employed in the passages of this work quoted above. The indubitable reason (or so it appears to me) for this change in his vocabulary will be set forth presently.

... Know that the signs (that lead to the knowledge of something other than themselves), *dalāla*, are four: a proof (based on) [p. 192] reason (*ḥujjat al-‘aql*), the Book, i.e., the Qur’ān (*al-kitāb*), tradition (*al-sunna*), the consensus of the community (*al-ijmā‘*). The knowledge of God can only be obtained by a proof (based) on reason.

According to a tradition of which we are apprised by Jāḥiẓ,<sup>36</sup> Wāṣil b. ‘Aṭā, the founder of the Mu‘tazilī sect, was the first to have enunciated the four ways of reaching the truth (*al-ḥaqq*) that are enumerated in the above passage from *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, one of these ways being *ḥujjat al-‘aql*. In this enumeration the latter term clearly has approximately the meaning of *dalīl* and *dalāla* in the texts quoted above; i.e., it signifies “inference”. ‘Abd al-Jabbār is possibly thereby assigning a different, more extended meaning to *dalāla* and *dalīl*, which will be explicated below.

The passage in *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa* (p. 88f.), whose beginning has been translated above, continues as follows:

If it is asked:<sup>37</sup> “Why do you limit the signs (that lead to the knowledge of something other than themselves (*al-adilla*, plural of *dalīl*)) to these four?” Also, “Why do you say that knowledge of God can only be obtained by a proof based on reason?”

We reply<sup>38</sup> with regard to the first (question): “Because the sign (*dalīl*) is something that, when it is made an object of speculative thought,<sup>39</sup> leads the thinker to the knowledge of these four only and not of anything else”.

If it is asked:<sup>40</sup> “Are not reasoning by analogy (*al-qiyās*) and a tradition transmitted by one person (*khābar al-wāḥid*) considered by you as signs (*dalāla*) indicative of religious commandments (*al-aḥkām al-Shar‘iyya*)? Why then do you not number them among the ‘signs’?”<sup>41</sup> We would answer:<sup>42</sup> “They fall under (the sign): consensus (*ijmā‘*), or (the sign) Book (*kitāb*), or (the sign) tradition (*sunna*), and it is not obligatory to mention them separately. As for the second (question) with respect to the statement that knowledge of God can only be obtained by proof (based) on reason, this is because anything else (in the way of a sign) is but a ‘branch’ (*far‘*) of our knowledge of God, may He be exalted, in His Oneness (*tawḥīd*)

<sup>36</sup>See, for instance, S. Pines, *Beiträge zur islamischen Atomenlehre*, p. 126.

<sup>37</sup>Literally: “said”.

<sup>38</sup>Literally: “say”.

<sup>39</sup>*Idhā naẓara al-nāẓir*, literally: “when the speculative thinker thinks about it”.

<sup>40</sup>Literally: “said”.

<sup>41</sup>In addition to the four “signs” mentioned above.

<sup>42</sup>Literally: “say”.

and His Justice (*‘adl*). If we had made an inference (*istadlalnā*) from something pertaining (to one of) these (other signs) with regard to God and His Oneness and Justice,<sup>43</sup> [p. 193] this would be, from ‘a branch’ with regard to ‘the root’, and this is not permitted”.

This may be explained (as follows): The Book has been established as proof (*ḥujja*) only when it has been established that it is the discourse of the Wise One, who may not lie, for whom lying is out of the question. Now this is “a branch” of the knowledge, may He be exalted, in His Oneness and His Justice. As for tradition (*sunna*), it is a (valid) proof only when it established that it is a tradition (deriving) from the envoy of a Just and Wise One. The case of consensus (*ijmā‘*) is similar. Its being a proof has to be validated either by the Book or by tradition, and both of these are but “branches” with respect to the knowledge of God.

In this passage ‘Abd al-Jabbār states unequivocally that the fundamental beliefs of Islam relating to the Book, the Prophet and the consensus of the community are derivative, depending as they do on the knowledge of God, which can only be acquired by proof based on reason. This proof can, as has been noted, be equated, if another terminology is used, with inference. Other sources of knowledge (though not of the knowledge of God) are, according to ‘Abd al-Jabbār (as noted above), various sorts of “necessary knowledge” of which it is impossible to admit any doubt.

It seems to me that the Kalām conception of “necessary knowledge” is derived to a considerable extent from an Indian, primarily Buddhist, notion. This aspect of the matter will be discussed below after some relevant points in the teachings of the Ash‘arīs al-Bāqillānī and al-Juwaynī have been summed up, and al-Māturīdī and Sa‘adia briefly mentioned.

The Ash‘arī Muḥammad al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013) classifies and defines in his polemical work *al-Tamhīd ‘alā al-mulḥida al-mu‘aṭṭila wa al-rāfiḍa wa al-khawārij wa al-mu‘tazila*<sup>44</sup> the various kinds of knowledge and sources of knowledge. He differentiates between (1) the knowledge that characterizes God, which is eternal and to which the distinction between necessary knowledge and the speculative (*nazar*), inferential (*istidlāl*) knowledge does not apply and (2) the knowledge of created beings (who may be angels or *jinn* or men). The knowledge characterizing the latter is either necessary or speculative.

The various kinds of necessary knowledge listed by Bāqillānī (p. 36ff.) are:

The knowledge acquired through the instrumentality of the five senses; the knowledge that without occurring in one of the senses is produced (*tukhtara‘u*) in the soul. Such is man’s knowledge of his own soul (or of himself; *bi-nafsihi*) and of what he finds in it, as, for instance, health or sickness, pleasure or pain, anxiety or joy, strength (to do something) or weakness, will or reluctance, perception or blindness and other [p. 194] things that may occur in the soul and are apprehended by a living being when they are there. There is also the knowledge that one has of the purpose aimed at by a person who speaks<sup>45</sup> (or makes a discourse), the knowledge that when bodies exist they are either

<sup>43</sup>The Mu‘tazilīs call themselves “the people of Oneness (or Unification) and Justice”.

<sup>44</sup>Ed. M. M. Khodeiry and M. ‘A. Abū Rīda, Cairo 1947, see p. 35ff.

<sup>45</sup>The phrasing seems to indicate that it is not the self-awareness of the person who speaks that is meant here.

discrete and separate or joined together; that information (*khābar*) about the existence of a thing and about some of its particularities must be either true or false and that this holds true also for other statements that are contradictory so that reason cannot admit an intermediate position between the two.<sup>46</sup> There is, furthermore, the knowledge one has<sup>47</sup> of the shame felt by a person who is ashamed and of the fear experienced by a person who is afraid, of courage and of cowardice, of piety and recalcitrance, of (reverently) saluting and of scoffing, and (in general) the knowledge that comes about when certain characteristics are perceived. (Finally) there is the knowledge that is produced in the soul because of a continuous series of reports (*khābar*) that arrive and are spread concerning occurrence and existence of (a certain fact), such as the knowledge that comes about when men report information about China, Khurāsān, Persia (Fāris) and Kirmān or about the fact that Moses, Jesus and Muḥammad, may God pray for Him and for all the prophets, appeared. Such are also the reports concerning (various) events,<sup>48</sup> internecine struggles (*fitan*), realms and governments”.

Speculative knowledge, which is the knowledge obtained by means of inference (*istidlāl*), is based on the knowledge obtained through the senses and necessary knowledge (p. 36).<sup>49</sup>

Inference (*dalīl*) leads to the knowledge of what is hidden (*ghā'ib*) from the senses and is not known through necessary knowledge (*bi-idṭirār*, p. 39). The existence of the Creator (*al-ṣāni'*) is known by means of inference (*al-dalīl*, p. 44).

The views of ‘Abd Allah al-Juwaynī (Imām al-Ḥaramayn) on some of the topics that are dealt with more particularly in the present enquiry are stated in *K. al-irshād*.<sup>50</sup> They will be discussed here very briefly. Al-Juwaynī propounds the following classification of the various kinds of knowledge.

He distinguishes between the knowledge of God and the knowledge of created beings.<sup>51</sup> The latter kind of knowledge is divided among [p. 195] necessary (*darūri*), spontaneous (*badīhī*) and acquired (*kasbī*) knowledge.

Necessary knowledge does not depend on man’s capacity<sup>52</sup> and is connected with harm (*ḍarar*) or need (*ḥāja*). Spontaneous knowledge is like necessary knowledge, without, however, being connected with harm or need. Sometimes one of these two is called by the designation of the other. According to established habit, the characteristic of necessary knowledge is that it is continuous; one cannot rid oneself of it or doubt it. Such is the knowledge of things perceived, the knowledge that man has of himself (or of his own soul; *bi-nafsihī*), the knowledge that the conjunction of things that contradict each other is impossible and forth. Al-Juwaynī does not deal in this context with information (*khābar*). Acquired knowledge is the knowledge that comes about when there is the power to have it. All acquired knowledge is speculative. It is knowledge that is assured by correct speculation based on inference (*dalīl*).

The etymological explanation proposed by al-Juwaynī for the use of the

<sup>46</sup>The translation is *ad sensum*.

<sup>47</sup>Apparently by empathy.

<sup>48</sup>Or battles? *Waqā'ī*’.

<sup>49</sup>The wording seems to suggest that there are two distinct kinds of knowledge. This would not agree with our author’s statement (see above in the text) that the knowledge obtained through the senses forms a part of necessary knowledge.

<sup>50</sup>Edited and translated by J. D. Luciani, Paris 1938; see p. 8 of the Arabic text.

<sup>51</sup>*‘Ilm ḥadīth*, approximately: “knowledge that is created”.

<sup>52</sup>On the capacity of the slave (‘abd, of God).

adjective *al-darūrī* in the expression *al-ilm al-darūrī* (necessary knowledge) is of some interest, as it shows that recourse to this adjective gives rise to questions.<sup>53</sup>

Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad al-Māturīdī, who was born in the region of Samar-kand (d. 944), founded a school of Kalām which may be regarded as a rival of the Ash‘ariyya. In his *K. al-tawḥīd*<sup>54</sup> he names these sources of knowledge: “The ways by which one achieves knowledge of the reality (*ḥaqā’iq*) of things are: perception (*‘iyān*), reported information (*akhbār*)<sup>55</sup> and speculative thought (*nazar*)”. It may be noted that *akhbār* is given by al-Māturīdī the status of an independent source of knowledge, whereas ‘Abd al-Jabbār believes that it forms a part of “necessary” knowledge (see above).<sup>56</sup> The three sources of knowledge will be discussed here in the order proposed by al-Māturīdī.

Perception is what is apprehended by the senses. It is a knowledge to which no contradictory (statement can be offered) through ignorance. The level of whoever makes such a statement could not be considered on a par with the level befitting the nature of animals;<sup>57</sup> he is lower than they. For everyone knows that which assures the continuance of their [p. 196] existence and that which brings about their end, that which gives them pleasure and that which gives them pain, whereas he who does not accept the perception of the senses does not know these things. One engages in a disputation with him. However, one can say to him: “Do you know what you deny”? If he should say no, his denial would be annulled and if he should say yes, his denial would be affirmed. Al-Māturīdī says in relation to a person of this kind, that we know that he knows what is perceived (*al-‘iyān*), since this is necessary knowledge (p. 7). Al-Māturīdī goes on to speak of reported information. He who rejects all of it, contradicts himself, for his rejection must in itself be considered as information (*khabar*). He is ignorant... of his name, his essence, of the name of his substance<sup>58</sup> and the names of all things. He ought to be ignorant of percepts and to be incapable of giving information as to what he perceives. How can he achieve knowledge of what is hidden from him, and when will he achieve knowledge whereby he could make a living, or knowledge of the food he requires? All this can be obtained by him only by reported information (*khabar*). The various kinds of good and evil can only be grasped by reason<sup>59</sup> when these matters are talked over. Now if one must accept *al-akhbār* in general by the necessity of reason, one must (*a fortiori*) accept the *akhbār* of the messenger of God, because there is no *khabar* whose veracity is more manifest—because of the signs that make it clear—than that which is enunciated by them.

Al-Māturīdī goes on to expound the reasons for considering certain traditions concerning the prophets as trustworthy (pp. 7–9).

Speculative thought (*al-nazar*) is needed for several reasons, one of them being that it is necessary (*idṭirār*) for knowledge with respect to the senses

<sup>53</sup>Al-Bāqillānī (op. cit., p. 35f.) also saw fit to write a disquisition on the meaning of the word *darūra* (necessity). He accounts therein for the expression *ilm darūrī*. Another explanation for the use of this expression will be proposed below.

<sup>54</sup>Ed. by F. Khaleif, Beirut 1982, p. 7.

<sup>55</sup>The reading *ikhbār* is possible, but *akhbār* seems preferable.

<sup>56</sup>It should, however, be noted that *akhbār*, while not being regarded by al-Tawḥīdī as forming a part of the first source of knowledge he names, cannot but be accepted by “the necessity of reason”.

<sup>57</sup>*Bahā’im*, “beasts”, might be a more exact translation.

<sup>58</sup>*Jawhar*. This term possibly has here its old signification: “family”, “stock”.

<sup>59</sup>*Al-‘uqūl* (which is plural).

as far as objects too distant or too subtle to be perceived by the senses are concerned, and for knowledge with respect to reported information (*khābar*), with regard to which errors are possible. Thus one has to distinguish between the signs of the prophets and the deceptions of the sorcerers. God has proved (*dalla*) that signs came from Him by miraculous (*muʿjiza*) proofs<sup>60</sup> (*adilla*) such as the Qurʾān, the like of which could not have been achieved either by men or by *jinn*.

Moreover, he who rejects *nazar* has no way of justifying this rejection other than by an inference (*dalāl*) based on *nazar* (pp. 9–10).

Al-Māturīdī differs from the other Muslim authors discussed in the present article in that he states that the substances<sup>61</sup> are created by God can be proved by all the three sources of knowledge he has listed, and not only by inference. Thus it can be proved by *khābar*, [p. 197] by means of a proof (*dalīl*) the like of which man cannot put forward, for He has informed (*akhbara*) (us) that he is the Creator of all things.

Al-Māturīdī sets forth several more arguments pertaining to what he called knowledge of the senses,<sup>62</sup> which prove that all substances are created. I shall mention two of them which seem to me to be of considerable interest.

According to one of them every substance (*ʿayn*) feels that it is necessarily surrounded (or encompassed) (*muhāt*) by something other than itself. Now pre-eternity (*qidam*) is a condition of self-sufficiency (*ghinan*), for being pre-eternal (a substance) may dispense with what is other than itself, whereas necessity and being lacking make us need something other than oneself. This entails the createdness in time of (substances). According to a second argument, if a thing is living, it is clear that it cannot (by itself) remove the deficiency that causes it not to be perfect with respect to strength or knowledge; if, however, it is dead (not alive) it is dominated by what is alive. It follows, therefore, that neither of them can exist without something other than itself. This being so, the createdness in time of things is established. For being pre-eternal is incompatible with depending on something other than itself. This being so, the createdness in time of things is established.

Al-Māturīdī sets forth several arguments belonging to this category. One of them may be summarized as follows: Good and evil, big and small, light and darkness are subject to change and disappearance: they may be destroyed. It is patent that union brings about strengthening, whereas separation leads to annihilation. Now it is impossible that that which may be annihilated should exist (independently and) by itself.

The arguments which stem from the “knowledge of inference”<sup>63</sup> do not seem to me to be essentially different from those which derive from “the knowledge of the senses”, but are somewhat more elaborate. One of them, or rather a part of one of them, may be summarized as follows:

The world has various states (*aḥwāl*). There is gathering and separation, motion and rest, evil and good, increase and diminution. Now, according both to the senses and to reason, they are created in time (*hawādith*), for it is impossible to bring together contraries; consequently these must come about one after the

<sup>60</sup>In al-Māturīdī’s *K. al-tawḥīd* the translation “proof” (rather than inference) for *dalīl* (plural *adilla*) seems to be called for in most cases.

<sup>61</sup>Or “things”, *aʿyān*.

<sup>62</sup>*ʿilm al-ḥiss*, literally: “knowledge of the senses”.

<sup>63</sup>*ʿilm al-Istidlāl*, which in my opinion may be equated with *ʿilm al-nazar*, above.

other, which means that they are created in time, and all that is created in time comes about after non-existence (pp. 11ff.).

The last Mutakallim who will be discussed in this section of the present article is Saadia Gaon, a Jew, born in Egypt, who wrote in Arabic in Iraq. His main theological work, *K. al-Amānāt wa 'l-I'tiqādāt*, was [p. 198] composed in 933; he died in 943. He thus may be regarded as a contemporary of al-Māturīdī. Internal evidence suggests that he was influenced by pagan Greek doxographical texts, which had been translated into Arabic. He may have been aware, directly or indirectly, of other Greek philosophical texts, but the indications on this point are rather elusive.

In the introduction to *K. al-Amānāt wa 'l-I'tiqādāt*,<sup>64</sup> Saadia refers to the three sources of knowledge, which are characterized by him as follows:

1. The knowledge obtained by means of the five senses (*'ilm al-shāhid*).
2. The knowledge obtained by means of reason only (*'ilm al-<sup>ʿ</sup>aql*). The fact that truth is considered good and lies bad is given as an example of this knowledge.
3. The knowledge of what is necessary (*'ilm al-<sup>ḍ</sup>arūriyyāt*).

The result of regarding this kind of knowledge as untrue would be the invalidation of a cognition obtained by the senses or by reason (p. 14).<sup>65</sup> One of the examples adduced by Saadia in order to illustrate the third source is the inference from the perception of smoke to the existence of fire, which is not seen (p. 18). Saadia refers in the same context (p. 18) to a fourth source of knowledge, which is peculiar to the “community that proclaims the unity of God” (*jamā'at al-muwaḥḥidīn*), i.e., the Jews. This source of knowledge is the veridical discourse (*al-kalām al-ṣādiq*), which is transmitted in the revealed books and elsewhere (p. 15). Saadia is not, however, consistent in his listing of sources of knowledge. Thus he appears to enumerate in his *Commentary on the Book of Proverbs*<sup>66</sup> (written in Arabic) only two sources of knowledge: (1) the five senses, and (2) reason. As Saadia explains, the knowledge of all science<sup>67</sup> is hidden in reason, and the purpose of teaching is to influence them so that they become manifest.

It may be more significant, as far as the present article is concerned, to note Saadia's argumentation in *K. al-Amānāt wa 'l-I'tiqādāt*, chapters 1 and 2.

Saadia's object in chapter 1 is to prove that all existences have been created in time (*muḥdathāt*), and he starts by explaining his method in pursuing this enquiry (pp. 33ff.). He points out that as no valid answer can be provided in this matter by the senses, we must use reason (*'uqūl*) in order to discover the answer sought. Further on (p. 35), after quoting Biblical passages in which it is stated that God has created in time all things *ex nihilo*, he remarks, “thereupon

<sup>64</sup>In this I use Y. Qāfih's edition of this work: *K. al-Mukhtār fī 'l-Amānāt wa 'l-I'tiqādāt*, Jerusalem 5730, see p. 14.

<sup>65</sup>Saadia's attribution to the term *al-ḍarūriyyāt*, in the expression *'ilm al-ḍarūriyyāt*, of meaning which has nothing in common with, and indeed runs counter to, that of *ḍarūrī* as employed by Muslim Mutakallimūn, has sometimes been explained by the influence of Aristotelian vocabulary. It is probably connected with the difficulty experienced by some Muslim Mutakallimūn in accounting for the usual signification in Kalām of *ḍarūrī* in the expression *al-'ilm al-ḍarūrī*.

<sup>66</sup>*Mishlei, ṭalab al-ḥikma*, ed. Y. Qafih, Jerusalem 5736/(1976), pp. 18–19.

<sup>67</sup>*Kull 'ilm*, or: all knowledge.

I looked into this matter using speculative thinking (*nazartu bi-hadhā al-ma‘nā*) (in order to find out) whether this is true, as far as speculative thought (*nazar*) is concerned, as it is true according to prophecy”. Hence, we may note that, despite Saadia’s definition of the sources of knowledge, which does not quite fit into the pattern propounded by some of the Mutakallimūn discussed above, he, too, believes that in order to resolve the question treated in the chapter one must employ *nazar*.

The second chapter of *K. al-Amānāt wa ’l-Itiqādāt* (p. 76ff.) propounds the thesis that the Creator in time of (all) things is one. This cannot be grasped by the senses in view of the fact that man is a finite body and that, in consequence, his capacities are finite.

An affirmation of the oneness of God is found in the discourse of the prophets, where they also speak of Him as being Living, Omnipotent (*qādir*), Omniscient (*‘ālim*) and so forth (p. 82f).

His oneness can, however, also be inferred through speculative thought (*nazar*, p. 83). In the same context (p. 84) Saadia set forth his arguments (as proofs, *adilla*, plural of *dalīl*), which establish this thesis. Thus in this chapter, too, as in the first, Saadia does not seem to have any use for his unusual terminology as regards the sources of knowledge. Like other Mutakallimūn, quoted above, he resorts to *nazar* and to *adilla* in order to obtain some knowledge of God.

At this point an attempt will be made to sum up and to draw some conclusions. We have chosen as our starting point the account of a Chinese pilgrim, who traversed countries of Central Asia a short time before they were conquered by the Muslims, and found there a flourishing Buddhist culture. The Buddhist missionary activities which had transformed religious attitudes in a considerable part of Asia had also extended to these countries. Now we know from many examples that these activities were not confined to preaching the good word to ignorant masses. The missionaries aimed at creating elites who were versed in complex systems of thought and capable of appreciating and engaging in disputations on a philosophical and theological topics. In their studies some members of these elites acquired knowledge not only of Buddhist philosophy, but also probably to a lesser degree of the tenets of other philosophical schools (and also of Indian science). [p. 200]

The Muslim conquests brought about encounters and clashes between two missionary enterprises. The disputation of Jahm b. Ṣafwān with the Buddhists seems to have been a memorable encounter of this kind, and may have left a durable impression on Jahm’s theology. The questions posed according to the two extant versions of this disputation appear to fit into the framework of Buddhist thought.<sup>68</sup> One of the answers ascribed to Jahm, namely that the existence of God was known by inference (*dalīl*), was adopted by many Mutakallimūn.

In Kalām as we know it, it is, however, part of the sometimes elaborate doctrines concerning the sources of knowledge, which have numerous points of resemblance with the Indian teachings concerning the *pramāṇas* and may be regarded as having been originally conceived under Indian influence. The disputations of Jahm with the Buddhists do not by themselves adequately account for the origins of these Kalām doctrines. Their adoption appears to point to

<sup>68</sup>This holds good more particularly with regard to Ibn al-Murtaḍā’s version.

numerous and prolonged intellectual contacts between Muslims and Buddhists, and perhaps also to adepts of other Indian philosophical schools.

These origins may be clearly discerned in the theories of Mu‘tazilī, Ash‘arī and other Mutakallimūn who lived two or more centuries after these contacts may be supposed to have ceased, but at least one important point requires an explanation. The Buddhist view, as stated by the Buddhists themselves, recognizes two sources of knowledge (*pramāṇas*): perception (*pratyakṣa*) and inference (*anumāna*), whereas the Mu‘tazilī ‘Abd al-Jabbār and the Ash‘arīs al-Bāqillānī and al-Juwaynī speak of “necessary knowledge” (*‘ilm ḍarūrī*) and “speculative thought” or “inference” (*dalīl*).

If we assume, as seems plausible, that there is a correspondence between the Buddhist doctrine of two sources of knowledge, and that of the Mu‘tazilīs and the Ash‘arīs, we should have to suppose a correspondence between the connotations of *pratyakṣam*, whose etymology is evocative of perception, and *‘ilm ḍarūrī*, which seems to indicate another characteristic of the faculty in question.<sup>69</sup>

It seems to me that the particularity of the Buddhist notion of perception provides a strong argument in favor of such a correspondence. According to this notion perception also perceives itself; self-perception immediately follows upon perception and is considered part of the latter.<sup>70</sup> Beyond this, all mental phenomena, such as pleasures, volitions, ideas and so forth are also subsumed under *pratyakṣa*, and they too have self-awareness.

Let us now compare this view with those of some of the Mutakallimūn mentioned above. [p. 201]

As we have seen, the Mu‘tazilī ‘Abd al-Jabbār, the Ash‘arī al-Bāqillānī and others we have mentioned regard man’s knowledge (or awareness) of the states of his soul, i.e., of his own desires, volitions, thoughts and so forth, as a part of “necessary knowledge”. Our awareness of these, as ‘Abd al-Jabbār points out in *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamṣa* (p. 50), is direct, or, as he puts it, came about in us (from) the beginning (*mubtada*), i.e., without requiring a preliminary stage, whereas awareness of the perceptions of the senses generally presupposes that one has had such perceptions.<sup>71</sup>

This way of thinking, and the various categories of “necessary knowledge” propounded by the Mutakallimūn have, as far as I know, no counterpart in Greek philosophy, whereas their resemblance to the Buddhist conception of perception seems to me to be unmistakable.

The terms *ḍarūrī*, *ḍarūra* and various other forms derived from the same root seem to have been used in order to describe a certain kind of knowledge very early in the history of Kalām.<sup>72</sup>

As we have seen above, some Mutakallimūn appear to have felt that the choice for this purpose of terms denoting “necessary” seems to have posed a difficulty; it called for a justification or at least an explanation.<sup>73</sup> I believe that this may point to these terms possibly by attempts to translate a Sanskrit word, namely *niyata*. I shall try to explain in a few words why this hypothesis

<sup>69</sup>I shall presently try to account for the Arabic term.

<sup>70</sup>See Stcherbatsky, *Erkenntnistheorie und Logic*, p. 182ff., *Buddhist Logic*, p. 26ff.

<sup>71</sup>God, however, may create in us awareness of perception of senses without our having such perceptions.

<sup>72</sup>See van Ess, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

<sup>73</sup>See also van Ess, *op. cit.*, p. 114f.

is perhaps not quite as far-fetched as at first it appears to be.

*Niyata* derives from *ni-yam*, a verb which may connote constraint. The term *niyata* is used in Buddhist terminology in connection both with *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* (and logical theory in general).<sup>74</sup> In the latter case the translation “necessary” is sometimes indicated and used by Stcherbatsky.<sup>75</sup>

In the sphere of *pratyakṣa*, however, *niyata* may indicate an immediate sensation which has not been turned by Stcherbatsky into a “constructed synthetic object”.<sup>76</sup>

My hypothesis rests upon the assumption that in the course of the rendering and adaptation of Buddhist terms by various translators and by the Muṭakallimūn, the term *niyata* was translated, in accordance with its etymology and some of its connotations, as *darūrī*,<sup>77</sup> but that [p. 202] this word was given the meaning approximating that which *niyata* has when used in connection with *pratyakṣa*. There remains one “source of knowledge” (not acknowledged by all Indian and Kalām schools as having an independent status as a “source”) to be discussed here. I refer to information or veridical reports (*khābar* in Arabic).

We have seen above that al-Bāqillānī regards the knowledge resulting from a continuous series of reports (*khābar*) as “necessary knowledge”. Al-Māturīdī regards *khābar* as a separate source of knowledge; included in it are continuous reports concerning geographical, historical, political and other information concerning the prophets.

The independent status of this source of knowledge is recognized in India by all<sup>78</sup> the so-called Brahmanic schools of thought, i.e., those that recognize the authority of the Vedas. It is designated as *śabda* “word”, according to a definition found in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika *Tarkasaṅgraham* (p. 151): *Aptavākyaṃ śabdaḥ*. This means if we follow A. Fouchet’s French translation, “the word (or the testimony) is what is said<sup>79</sup> by a trustworthy person”. This appears to mean that *śabda* does not refer only to knowledge drawn from the Vedas. In Saadia’s *K. al-Amānāt wa ’l-’itiqādāt*, the term *al-khābar* is replaced, as we have seen, by *al-kalām al-ṣādiq*, veridical discourse, which is regarded as an independent source of knowledge. It should be noted that knowledge provided by this source is drawn only from the Jewish prophetic books and is intended solely for the benefit of the Jewish community.

Only a very small sample of the relevant Kalām texts has been referred to here. However, on the whole, they seem to me to be representative. Given the pronounced similarity between the Buddhist doctrine concerning sources of knowledge and those of the Muṭazilīs and the Ash’arīs, there is, I think, a strong probability<sup>80</sup> that the latter were influenced by the former.

Al-Māturīdī’s introduction of *khābar* as a separate independent source of knowledge and possibly Saadia’s *al-kalām al-ṣādiq* may be due to the influence of Brahmanic systems which consider *śabda* an independent *pramāṇa*. The doctrine concerning the sources of knowledge should, I believe, be regarded as one

<sup>74</sup>Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, p. 21, n. 1.

<sup>75</sup>Cf. *Buddhist Logic*, p. 140, n. 4. Cf. also the rendering of the term *niyama*, which is cognate with *niyata*; see Index III, 2.b. *niyama*.

<sup>76</sup>See *Buddhist Logic*, p. 21, n. 1; cf. p. 6.

<sup>77</sup>Or cognate words.

<sup>78</sup>Perhaps with one doubtful exception; cf. Stcherbatsky, *Erkenntnistheorie und Logic*, p. 92.

<sup>79</sup>Or, “has been said”.

<sup>80</sup>Particularly given the absence of parallel doctrines in Greek philosophy, including the Stoic system and the patristic literature.

of the two main contributions of Indian philosophy to the formation of Kalām thinking, the other one being, as I attempted to [p. 203] show in my study published in 1936, the Kalām atomic theory. The impact on later Buddhist thought appears most evident in the conception of certain Mutakallimūn according to which the existence of all accidents and all substances, which are atomic, lasts only a moment; in the next moment they are replaced by other newly created accidents and substances. This notion has a rather paradoxical resemblance to that in which “the elements of existence are momentarily flashes into the phenomenal world out of unknown source”.<sup>81</sup>

In more precise Buddhist terminology, they appear “out of nothing”<sup>82</sup> (or out of non-being). While in atheistic Buddhism these “momentary flashes” appear “out of nothing”, in monotheistic Islam they are created by God.

In further research, the strong probability that both Kalām theories concerning the sources of knowledge and those concerning the atoms have been influenced by Indian (Buddhist and non-Buddhist) conceptions may help to shed some light on the various groupings of the early Mutakallimūn.

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<sup>81</sup>Stcherbatsky, “*The Central Conception of Buddhism and the Meaning of the Word ‘Dharma’*”, Calcutta, pp. 31–32.

<sup>82</sup>Stcherbatsky, *op. cit.*, p. 23, n. 102.