Abstract. The aim of this article is to present a new witness of Averroes’ reception in the Muslim world, in the years that immediately followed his death. Indeed Abū al-Ḥaǧǧāq al-Miklātī (d. 1237) is an Aš’arite theologian, who was born in Fez. He is the author of a Quintessence of the Intellects in Response to Philosophers on the Science of Principles in which he aims at refuting the Peripatetic philosophers in their own field, using their own weapons. This article will first attempt to draw the portrait of this atypical theologian. It will then focus on showing that al-Miklātī – although he never mentions his name – is a reader of Averroes and in particular, of his Tahāfut al-Tahāfut, of which he makes various and unexpected uses. A close look at these uses will enable us to better define the nature of al-Miklātī’s work. More importantly, this article will try to prove that al-Miklātī provides us with a key passage of Averroes’ lost treatise On the Prime Mover. At the heart of the Rushdian criticism of Avicenna’s “metaphysical” proof, this passage should throw new light on Averroes’ precise understanding of this proof.


INTRODUCTION

It is a common assumption that, although Averroes has had an important influence on Jews and Christians, he had no heir among his
fellow worshippers and that, with Averroes’ death, philosophy itself disappeared from the Muslim West. There have been attempts to explain such a phenomenon, the reasons appear to be both political and theological, and the particular historical context led to a confusion of these two fields which was prejudicial for philosophy and philosophers. The truth is that we know little about the theological environment in which Averroes evolved and even less about the reception his work received in the Muslim world. In this context of

1 E. Renan, Averroës et l’averroïsme (Paris, 2002): “Quand Averroès mourut, en 1198, la philosophie arabe perdit en lui son dernier représentant, et le triomphe du Coran sur la libre pensée fut assuré pour au moins six cents ans.” Such a picture appears today as a mere caricature and has been discreditably noted by studies that defend the idea of a “second formatif” period of philosophy in the Islamic world “after Avicenna and beginning with influential reaction he provoked from al-Gazālī”. Cf. the introduction of P. Adamson (ed.), In the Age of Averroes: Arabic Philosophy in the Sixth/Twelfth Century (London and Turin, 2011), pp. 167, p. 2. Still, it seems that such studies rarely challenge this concept when it comes to the Muslim West, at the exception perhaps of the Andalusian mystic Ibn ‘Arabī.


3 The information and anecdotes we have about the theologians that opposed Averroes and other philosophers does not draw a glorifying portrait of them. The attacks they orchestrated seem to have been mainly sophistic and opportunist. I am thinking of someone like Muhammad ibn Zarqūn and Abū ʿAmīr ibn Rabīʿ, who was said “[to insult Averroes] in public and with obscenities” and “[to accuse] him of plagiarism” (cf. J. Puig Montada, “Materials on Averroes’ circle”, Journal of Near Eastern Studies (JNES), 51 [1992]: 241–60, pp. 253–5). As M. Benchérifa explains in his biography of Averroes, the motives which led to Abū ʿAmīr’s attacks were an old and profound rivalry between the two families and no doubt his lusting for the function of Qādī of Córdoba. Still, his opposition was also doctrinal and he wrote several works that all seem from their titles to be directed against Ibn Rušd, the grandson mainly but also the grandfather. However, only the titles of these refutations have reached us (thanks to one of his disciples, Abū al-Hasan al-Raḍānī, who wrote a bibliography of his masters) and so we are left with no information on the nature and content of the theologians’ doctrinal attack against Averroes (cf. Benchérifa, Ibn Rušd al-haftīd, pp. 180–3).

4 “It is generally accepted that the philosophical works of Averroes were not read in the Islamic world after Averroes’ fall from grace in Córdoba in 1195, and until the early twentieth century, when they were taken up again by Egyptian philosophers. There are, however, traces of the presence of his works amongst Western Muslims.” (C. Burnett, “The ‘sons of Averroes with the emperor Frederick’ and the transmission of the philosophical works by Ibn Rushd”, in Averroës and the Aristotelian tradition [Leiden, 1999], pp. 259–99, p. 275.) Burnett mentions the notorious example of Ibn Ḥālīd. One can also think of Ibn Taṣmīyya: according to Jon Hoover, “Ibn Taṣmīyya’s view of God’s perpetual creativity is remarkably similar to that of Ibn Rushd” (“Perpetual creativity in the perfection of God: Ibn Taṣmīyya’s hadith commentary on God’s creation of this world”, Journal of Islamic Studies, 15.3 (2004): 287–329, p. 295). Elsewhere, he even calls him “the nearest of the philosophers to Islam” (Maǧmūʿ Fatāwā Šayḫ al-İslâm Ȧḥmad Ibn Taṣmīyya, ed. ‘A. Ibn Qasim and M. Ibn Muhammad, 37 vols. [Cairo, n.d.], vol. 17, p. 295, quoted by
scarce information, every new source is precious. In the present article, I would like to present such a new witness: Yūṣuf Ibn Muḥammad Abū al-Ḥağǧāǧ al-Miklātī al-Fāsī.

Al-Miklātī,⁵ who died in 1237, was probably born in Fez, around 1155. There he received a first-class education in theology and seems to have also acquired a good knowledge of philosophical texts. In 1198⁶ he accompanied the Emir al-Mansūr Ibn ʿAbd al-Muʿmin on a trip to Andalusia. Because of his intelligence and erudition, he was chosen to defend the Ašʿarite credo against philosophers. This is precisely what al-Miklātī does in his only conserved work: The Quintessence of the Intellects in Response to Philosophers on the Science of Principles (Kitāb Lubāb al-ʿuqūl fī al-radd ʿalā al-falāsifa fī ʿilm al-uṣūl). It was edited in Cairo, in 1977, by Fawqiyya Hādīt,⁷ from one unique manuscript kept in the library of the Qarawiyīn University in Fez. It seems to have gone unnoticed among specialists.⁸ It is however referenced by Daiber⁹ who refers to Anawati¹⁰ for the enumeration of the chapters. As can be guessed from the title, the scope of this work is polemical: al-Miklātī intends to criticize the eternalist cosmology inherited from the Greeks and adopted by Arab philosophers. As an Ašʿarite theologian, he aims to prove that the world is adventice,¹¹ that it therefore has a beginning

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J. Hoover in p. 295). Burnett then adds: “What has not been sufficiently appreciated, however, is the apparent survival of interest in his philosophical works for at least one generation after his death, among scholars associated with the court of al-Nāṣir in Marrakesh.” (The underlining is mine.) In this article, Burnett examines the hypothesis of the presence of Averroes’ sons at the court of the Emperor Frederick and of their role in the transmission of their father's works. He also mentions one of Averroes' disciples who held an ambiguous position towards his former master: Ibn Tumlūs. Cf. A. Elamrani-Jamal, “Éléments nouveaux pour l'étude de l'Introduction à l'art de la logique d’ Ibn Tumlūs (m. 620 H./1223)”, in A. Hasnawi, A. Elamrani-Jamal and M. Aouad (eds.), Perspectives arabes et médiévales sur la tradition scientifique et philosophique grecque (Leuven and Paris, 1997), pp. 465–83. If we admit Elamrani-Jamal’s new datation, Ibn Tumlūs (c. 1150/5–1223) is the exact contemporary of al-Miklātī (c. 1155–1237).

⁵ He most likely owes this nickname to his affiliation to the tribe of Miklata. Cf. p. 11 of the long introduction to his work by the editor presented in note 7.

⁶ The year of Averroes’ death.


⁸ I am immensely grateful to Marwan Rashed for bringing my attention to this work and giving me the opportunity to study it under his direction.

⁹ H. Daiber, Bibliography of Islamic Philosophy, vol. 1 (Leiden, 1999). He describes it as “a dogmatic work, refuting Ibn Sīna, Fārābī and theological schools of Islam, esp. the Ašʿarites”.


¹¹ This is how I translate the terms derived from ḥadāt: ḥadīt = adventice, ḥadāt = adventicity, ḥudāt/iḥdāt = advention, muḥḍat = advented, muḥdīt = adventor. Although it is not the most intuitive one, this family of terms is the one that better enables to translate the range of Arabic terms. For instance it renders the difference between ḥadīt and muḥḍat, and ḥadāt and iḥdāt, although it fails to distinguish between ḥudāt and iḥdāt.
and that God is its creator (this is discussed in the first part of the book). But his work also treats a number of other topics including God’s unity, His attributes, whether He knows Himself, if He wants through an eternal will and speaks through an eternal speech. It deals as well with questions such as the Prophets, miracles, or punishment and reward.

In this article, I will focus on the first part which goes up to page 173. My aim is to present al-Miklātī and his work. To this end, I will first draw elements from the text, that will enable me to sketch some of the aspects of the intellectual personality of our Ašʿarite theologian. Then, in the second part of the article, I will show that he is a close reader of Averroes’ Tahāfut al-Tahāfut,12 of which he makes various – sometimes even surprising – uses. This will help us to grasp the exact nature and aim of al-Miklātī’s work. Finally, the third part of the article will focus on a different type of issue that will nevertheless bring to light another aspect in which al-Miklātī can be of interest to theoreticians: I will try to prove that he is quoting a passage from Averroes’ lost treatise On the Prime Mover.

I. AL-MIKLĀTĪ: REFUTING THE PHILOSOPHERS IN THEIR OWN FIELD

After the traditional tributes to God and His prophet, al-Miklātī evokes the context in which he was asked to write this book: “O unique scholar, you mentioned to me that philosophical doctrines are, in your region, an argument extremely widespread, boldly and freely professed [mashūra al-bayʿ wa-al-ibtiyāʾ], discussed in meetings, and that their advocates are openly glorified. You asked me to write a book in response to philosophers, which would contain the healing of this disease, would be composed according to rational science, and whose ambition would aspire to the eminence of its Supreme end”.13 This is indeed what al-Miklātī aimed at in his book

12 However, Averroes is not once named in al-Miklātī’s entire work.

13 Al-Miklātī, The Quintessence of Intellects in Response to Philosophers on the Science of Principles (Cairo, 1977), pp. 2–3. All the translations are mine. Around 1140, in the Muslim East, the popularity of philosophical ideas among scholars brought the Muʿtazilite theologian, Rūkn al-Dīn ibn al-Malāhīmī, to write a Tuhfāt al-mutakallimīn ft al-radd ‘alā al-falāṣīfa (The Unique Gift of for Theologians in Response to Philosophers). He was afraid that these Muslim scholars would follow the path of the Christians whose “leading proponents were inclined towards the Greeks in philosophy, to the point that they modelled the religion of Jesus upon [the doctrines of] the philosophers” and produced such absurdities as the three hypostases and the incarnation. Cf. H. Ansari and W. Madelung’s introduction to their edition of the text: Tuhfāt al-mutakallimīn ft al-radd ‘alā al-falāṣīfa (Tehran, 2008), and G. Schwarb, “Muʿtazilism in the age of Averroes”, in Adamson (ed.), In the Age of Averroes, pp. 251–82, at pp. 259–61.
The Quintessence of Intellects in Response to Philosophers on the Science of Principles. He then gives an additional precision regarding his target: the philosophers he confronts are Aristotle and his followers, the Peripatetics. He did not endeavour to show the fallacies of the doctrines and argumentations of the Stoics for they are too obvious. Consequently he concentrated his attacks on the “main philosophers” (ru‘asā’ al-falāsifa), drew the ultimate consequences of their concepts and intentions, and revealed the fallacies of their doctrines. Al-Miklātī’s goal in this book is to confront the philosophers on their own ground, using their own weapons.

1. Establishment of a glossary

To this end, he prefaces the discussion on whether the world has a beginning or not with an introductory part in which he gives the definitions of several words used by the theoricians. To constitute his glossary, al-Miklātī uses two sources: al-Fārābī’s Book of Letters (Kitāb al-Ḥurūf) on the one hand, and Averroes’ Epitome on Metaphysics on the other. Many questions will arise from the way al-Miklātī uses these two sources. In order to render these choices more visible, I will reproduce the lists of the terms defined in each of these three works:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Al-Fārābī, The Book of Letters, (chap.1)</th>
<th>Al-Miklātī, Quintessence, (section 3)</th>
<th>Averroes, Epitome on Metaphysics (chap.1)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That (ḥarf inna)</td>
<td>Existent</td>
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<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>Thing</td>
<td>Entity (huwiyya)</td>
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<td>Category</td>
<td>Essence</td>
<td>Substance</td>
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</tbody>
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Continued

14 From now on, will be referred to as Quintessence.
15 In the fourth introduction of his Tahāfut al-Falāsifa, al-Gazālī writes that, in this book, he will address the philosophers “in their own language, i.e. with the expressions [they use] in logic” (Algazel, Tahāfot al-Falāsifat, ed. M. Bouyges, Bibliotheca Arabica Scholasticorum, Série Arabe, tome II (Beirut, 1927), p. 16, l. 24).
16 There are actually three preliminary parts. The first one aims at determining the relation of this science – fundamental science – to the other religious sciences. The second one exposes the subject-matter of this science. In my Phd thesis, I will study more closely the place ascribed by him to kalam and its consequences as to his conception of the role of the mutakallim.
18 When no contrary indication is made, I will be quoting Arnzen’s translation: R. Arnzen, Averroes on Aristotle’s Metaphysics. An Annotated Translation of the So-called “Epitome” (Berlin, 2010).
19 Arnzen translates “mawgūd” by “being”.

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### Secondary categories

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<td>Substance</td>
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<td>Accident</td>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Relation</td>
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<tr>
<td>The same, the opposite,</td>
<td>Potency and actuality</td>
<td>Essence</td>
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<tr>
<td>the other, difference</td>
<td>The complete, the deficient</td>
<td>Thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection (&lt;em&gt;al-nisba&lt;/em&gt;)</td>
<td></td>
<td>One</td>
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<tr>
<td>The whole, the part, the total</td>
<td>Prior, posterior</td>
<td>The same, the opposite, the other, difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause and reason</td>
<td>On potency and actuality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accident</td>
<td>Matter (&lt;em&gt;al-hayūla&lt;/em&gt;)</td>
<td>The complete, the deficient, the whole, the part, the total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substance</td>
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<td>Principle</td>
<td>Element (&lt;em&gt;al-ustuquṣṣ&lt;/em&gt;)</td>
<td>Prior, posterior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essence</td>
<td>Necessity (&lt;em&gt;idṭirār&lt;/em&gt;)</td>
<td>Cause and reason</td>
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<td>Existent</td>
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<td>Thing</td>
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<td>For the sake of</td>
<td>Nature</td>
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<td>(&lt;em&gt;alladī min aqlīhi&lt;/em&gt;)</td>
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Three remarks may be made. First, regarding the choice of the terms defined, al-Miklātī follows Averroes’ list with very few exceptions.<sup>20</sup> Second, for the first five terms he defines, which are the only ones that figure in both al-Fārābī’s and Averroes’ lists, al-Miklātī chooses to copy al-Fārābī’s *Book of Letters* rather than Averroes’ *Epitome*. Third, the order in which the terms are defined is much closer to Averroes’ than to al-Fārābī’s, though again some differences can be observed concerning the first five terms. A more thorough study of the details of these differences will be pursued.

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<sup>20</sup> “Quantity”, “quality” and “relation” are not defined by al-Miklātī, most likely because they are subdivisions of the concept of “accident” and defined immediately after the definition of “accident” in Averroes’ *Epitome*, whereas here al-Miklātī gives al-Fārābī’s definition of ‘accident’. “Huwiyya” is also dropped, for, in the *Epitome*, its definition is joined to that of “existent” and al-Miklātī follows al-Fārābī’s definition of “existent”, not Averroes’. 

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in my PhD thesis, but I can already raise a few hypotheses to start drawing a portrait of al-Miklāṭī and defining the exact nature of his project.

2. Between al-Fārābī and Averroes: the meaning of al-Miklāṭī’s choices

That al-Miklāṭī’s list of terms is almost identical to Averroes’ may be accounted for by the fact that he comes only one generation after Averroes21 and is – as shall be shown in the second part of this article – a close reader of the Tahāfut al-Tahāfut.22 It does not therefore seem surprising that the terms of the debate should be those of Averroes. Yet, when it comes to choosing the definitions of these terms, al-Fārābī is sometimes preferred to Averroes. What can explain such a preference? It may be due to al-Fārābī’s perspective: if al-Miklāṭī is not interested in the linguistic complexities of the translation from Greek into Syriac and again into Arabic,23 he might however agree with the project of deriving the technical sense of words from their prosaic meaning. For, although al-Miklāṭī is refuting philosophers, his book does not solely address the philosophers but is intended for a larger readership which must nevertheless be of fine intelligence and high education.24 In his Epitome, Averroes also gives the meaning of the word for the masses but, whereas it is the starting point of al-Fārābī’s definitions, it appears only secondarily in the Epitome, after the word has been defined in its technical sense or senses, and Averroes does not seem to attach much importance to this perspective.25 This does not prevent al-Miklāṭī from resorting to Averroes when he finds the latter’s formulation more satisfying: he does so for the definition of the accident, inserting a sentence from the Epitome in al-Fārābī’s definition.26 Al-Miklāṭī seems

21 Averroes was born in 1126 and died in 1198 whereas al-Miklāṭī was born around 1155 and died in 1237.
23 In addition to the numerous homoioteleuta which corrupt al-Miklāṭī’s text and which my translation will make sure to indicate and correct, al-Miklāṭī skips whole paragraphs from the definitions of the Book of Letters that go into linguistic considerations of this sort.
24 Indeed, before entering the discussion and before the three preliminary sections, al-Miklāṭī enunciates four conditions one must fulfil in order to be qualified to read his work. Cf. pp. 4–6.
25 About the meaning of mawgūd for “the masses”, Averroes writes: “There is no need to take this [meaning further] into account” (chap. 1, p. 28).
26 Al-Miklāṭī (in Quintessence, p. 35) reproduces al-Fārābī’s presentation of the common meaning of the term, then he inserts Averroes’ definition (‘As for the theoreticians, ‘accident’ is predicated – according to them – of that which does not make known the quiddity
therefore to be an active reader who does not merely and passively copy the definitions that are offered to him but compares various definitions and chooses the ones he finds more accurate and clear. This is confirmed by his reorganisation of the order of the terms. If the term “existent” (mawgūd) is – both in Averroes and in al-Miklātī – the first term to be explained, it is caught in two completely different conceptual complexes. In the first introductory section, al-Miklātī explains that:

the mutakallim is the one who examines the most general [aʾamm] of things, i.e. the existent [al-mawgūd]. He divides it into ‘eternal’ and ‘advented’ [muḥdad], then examines which acts He must necessarily [do], which are impossible for Him, and which are possible, and [shows] that the sending out [baʾṭāt] of prophets is part of His possible acts and that this possible has occurred.27

Whereas in the Epitome the term “existent” is followed by and thought in connection with the terms “substance” and “accident”, it is immediately followed in the Quintessence by the terms “thing” (šayʾ) and “essence” (dāt). We can find an explanation for this at the beginning of the definitions of each of these terms. Before giving their meaning for the philosophers, al-Miklātī reminds the reader of the disagreement there is between the Ašʿarites and the Muʿtazilites on this matter:

You must know that “thing”28 in the vocabulary of the Ašʿarites among the theologians is synonymous with “existent”, whereas for the Muʿtazilites it is not. Indeed the non-existent and the possible [al-ḡāʾiz] are, for the Muʿtazilites, a thing and an essence but not an existent.

With this reorganisation of the order of the terms, we go from an Aristotelian framework to a theological one. One may also notice that if this order moves al-Miklātī away from Averroes, it moves him nearer to Avicenna. In the first book of the Ilāhiyyāt of his Šifāʾ, Avicenna notoriously devotes the fifth chapter to the study of “the existent, the thing and their first division” and concludes by saying that it is now clear in which way “the thing” differs from what is understood by ‘the existent’ and ‘the realised’ [al-ḥāṣil] and that, despite this difference, the two [that is, ‘the thing’ and ‘the existent’]
are necessary concomitants”. It seems therefore that we may have been a little too prompt in asserting that the terms of the debate were those of Averroes. If the latter is clearly present in this debate and most certainly plays a part in it, the exact nature of this part is yet to be determined.

3. A logical refutation that makes no compromises

By first establishing this glossary, al-Miklātī makes sure his refutation will attain its target and not be merely rhetorical. He does not want the discussion to be about words but about concepts. In accordance with his intention of confronting the philosophers with their own weapons, al-Miklātī submits both his argumentation and his refutation to the strictest logical rigour. Following in the steps of al-Ḡazālī, who recommended the use of logic to defeat the philosophers, he goes even further by casting all his arguments into the form of syllogisms, specifying the type of syllogism (hypothetical or predicative, continuous or not) and the premise on which there is contention (the major, the minor, or the inference). Though, as a theologian, he does not share many of the philosophers’ premises, he admits them for the sake of discussion (ḡadalān) and refutes them on a logical level – by pointing out a logical mistake in the argumentation – or by showing their contradiction with another of the philosophers’ doctrines. If he merely rejected the premises, there would be no possible discussion with the philosophers and his refutation would not affect their argumentations. Moreover he just as vehemently rejects rhetorical arguments presented by theologians, be they Āš’arites. An example can be found in the section where he establishes the impossibility of an infinite number of adventice things (ḥawādit). He starts by saying that “theologians have [written] a lot on this matter” and he intends to “present the fallacies [that corrupt] their proofs and show how to refute them” before giving his demonstration of this impossibility. The refutation here is aimed at the Qādī Abū Bakr al-Baqillānī and his followers. He shows that their proofs are erroneous because based either on a confusion between

29 Avicenna, The Metaphysics of the Healing. Āš-Šifā: Ilāhiyyāt, ed. M. E. Marmura (Provo, Utah, 2005), Book 1, chapter 5, p. 27, ll. 7–8. When no contrary indication is made, I will be quoting Marmura’s translation.

30 Though al-Miklātī does not produce the definitions himself but merely collects them, he can be said to establish the glossary for, as I have tried to show, he is far from being a neutral transmitter: by choosing the terms he wishes to define, the definitions he prefers and the order of the definitions, he is truly active and, in this preliminary section, what takes place is already a re-framing of the discussion.

31 Cf. for example p. 133, ll. 14 sq.

32 Quintessence, pp. 86–9.
judgements that apply to the whole and judgements that apply to the parts or on a petitio principii. One last element can be noted, al-Miklātī appears to have some knowledge – whether directly or indirectly has yet to be established – of Aristotle’s Organon. In the second introductory section, he explains that every speculative science includes subject-matters, questions and principles, which he defines by referring to the Posterior Analytics, and he recalls the Aristotelian rule that the first principles of a science cannot be demonstrated in this science.35

The picture we get from these first indications is that of an uncommon theologian, with no equivalent in the Muslim West that we know of: a highly demanding refuter, who will not be content with a sophistic or rhetorically brilliant refutation, and a sharp logical mind, which makes him a true disciple of al-Ḡazālī.

II. AL-MIKLĀTĪ, A CLOSE READER OF THE TT

His debt towards al-Ḡazālī will be confirmed by the rest of the text. Indeed his refutation often follows that of al-Ḡazālī’s Tahāfut al-Falāsifa: when satisfied by the argumentation, al-Miklātī merely copies the TF. But what is interesting in these passages where he is faithful to al-Ḡazālī’s words is not so much the similarities as the divergences. These differences – as I aim to show in this second part – are due to al-Miklātī’s reading of the TT.

1. Al-Miklātī’s Quintessence, a Tahāfut “Tahāfut al-Tahāfut”?38

One would indeed expect that a work of the nature of al-Miklātī’s would only be justified because something (or one should probably

33 He reminds them that “what is true of the whole is not necessarily true of each one [hukm al-gumla gayr hukm al-āhād],” p. 87, l. 15, and again p. 89, l. 14.
34 The principles presented in the Posterior Analytics have played an important part in the construction of Avicenna’s “metaphysical” proof of the existence of God and in Averroes’ criticism of this proof. Cf. H. A. Davidson, Proofs for Eternity, Creation and the Existence of God in Medieval Islamic and Jewish Philosophy, (New York and Oxford, 1987), pp. 284–8, pp. 312–18. As A. Bertolacci notes in his article “Avicenna and Averroes on the proof of God’s existence and the subject-matter of metaphysics”, Medioevo. Rivista di storia della filosofia medievale, 32 (2007): 61–97, p. 62, “the common background of the overall discussion is given by Avicenna’s and Averroes’ attempt of adjusting the epistemological profiles of metaphysics and physics to the canons of Aristotle’s Posterior Analytics”. Therefore, it is not unlikely that al-Miklātī’s knowledge of Aristotle’s Organon derives from such a context.
36 Al-Miklātī was also influenced by other theologians, notably al-Šahrastānī whom he quotes several times (without necessarily naming him).
37 Will be noted “TF” from now on.
38 Will be noted “TTT” from now on.
say someone) has happened since the TF that renders it insufficient, and that would be Averroes’ TT. In this perspective, al-Miklātī’s Quintessence would appear to be a TTT where Averroes has replaced Avicenna as the major representative of philosophers and the main target. Some elements seem in fact to corroborate this expectation.

When copying al-Gāzālī’s presentation of Avicenna’s arguments and his objections to them, al-Miklātī inserts objections made by Averroes and undertakes to refute them. Many examples can be found but I will limit myself to one. In the chapter pages 126 to 153, al-Miklātī criticises the philosophers’ conception of the human soul as “a self-subsistent substance, that is not situated [in any place], is neither continuous with the body [al-badan] nor separated from it, just as God the Blessed and Sublime is neither outside the world nor inside the world”. This corresponds to the eighteenth discussion of the TF (and the second discussion about the natural sciences in the TT, pp. 543 sq.). Al-Miklātī is discussing the validity of the following inference: “everything that inheres in something divisible is necessarily yalzimu an yakūna divisible”. He refers to “some of the latest Peripatetic philosophers”, i.e. Averroes, who justifies this inference. He quotes two paragraphs of the TT where Averroes distinguishes two types of division, and affirms that “everything that is susceptible to division in [either of] these two kinds of division inheres in a body of some sort”. He then adds that the converse is also evident, i.e. that “everything that is in a body is susceptible to division in one of these two kinds of division”. If this is verified, then – he concludes – the converse of its opposite, i.e. “what is not susceptible to division in any of these two sorts does not inhore in a body”, is also true. Al-Miklātī admits that, if a premise is true, then the converse of its opposite is also true. But he denies the validity of the premise for it has not been demonstrated. Indeed the converse of a universal premise is true only particularly and not universally so that it is not valid to admit that, because this premise, i.e. “everything that is susceptible to division in [either of] these two kinds of division inheres in a body of some sort”, is evident, its converse, i.e. “everything that is

39 I replace “qadīm bi-nafsīhī” in our text by “qāʾim bi-nafsīhī” as can be read in the TT. I will have to check the manuscript to determine whether this is a mistake of the editor who misread the word or if it is present as such in the manuscript.
40 In the same way, I replace “la yatâqazza” by “la yataḥayyaz”, which is graphically very close in Arabic.
42 The translation is mine.
43 The validity of this premise is admitted by al-Miklātī only for the sake of discussion (gādalan).
in a body is susceptible to division in one of these two kinds of division”, is evident too. This is what al-Miklātī writes:

All theoreticians [al-nuzzār] agree that it is not necessarily implied from a universal premise that its converse is true universally [layṣa yalzimu an tan‘akisa kulliyya], but it is only implied that its converse is true particularly. For if we say that every man is an animal, it is not necessarily implied that every animal is a man, but what is necessarily implied is that some animals are men. The claim in this way [al-muṭālaba bi-ḍālika] is sophistic.44

Thus, he rejects Averroes’ justification on logical grounds.

Another example of al-Miklātī’s use of Averroes could also lead to the interpretation mentioned above. At the beginning of the chapter I have just quoted, al-Miklātī, who is once again quoting al-Ḡazālī, surreptitiously replaces Avicenna’s doctrine by Averroes’. Al-Ḡazālī starts by saying that “the discussion of this question demands the exposition of [the philosophers]’ theory about the animal and human faculties”.45 Al-Miklātī expresses the same demand and copies al-Ḡazālī’s exposition. Averroes remarks that the doctrine al-Ḡazālī presents is that of Avicenna “who distinguished himself from the rest of the philosophers” on a number of points which Averroes enunciates. As we learn from al-Ḡazālī’s account, Avicenna distinguishes three internal senses: the representative faculty, the estimative faculty and the imaginative/cogitative faculty.46 But because “one thing does not retain another through the faculty by which it receives it”,47 each of the first two faculties has a corresponding faculty that retains the forms and intentions that they respectively receive, these are the retentive faculty and the memorative faculty, which brings the number of internal senses to five. Al-Miklātī appears to faithfully copy al-Ḡazālī for he literally transcribes the latter’s account of Avicenna’s doctrine, but while doing so, he introduces emendations and actually replaces Avicenna’s conception of internal senses with that of Averroes. Indeed, Averroes rejects Avicenna’s estimative faculty for he considers it superfluous: animals do not need another faculty in addition to the imaginative, it is the imaginative faculty in the animal that “determines that the wolf should be an enemy of the sheep and that the sheep should be a friend of the lamb”.48 Al-Miklātī replaces the term “estimative” in al-Ḡazālī’s account by “imaginative” and adds this precision: “Avicenna said that the perception [idrāk] of concord [muwāfaqa] and discord [muḥālafa] happens through another faculty, additional to the imaginative, and he

44 Quintessence, pp. 135–6.
45 TT, p. 543, l. 7.
46 It is called ‘imaginative’ in animals, ‘cogitative’ in men.
47 TT, p. 544, l. 21.
48 TT, p. 547, ll. 7–8.
names it the estimative. But, on this point, he is in disagreement with all Peripatetic philosophers.” 49 Moreover, Averroes considers that the retentive and the memorial faculties can both be located in the posterior part of the brain for “retaining and memory are two in function [bi-al-fi’], but one in their substratum”. 50 Therefore, there are, according to him, four internal senses: the common sense, the imagi-native or formative (al-mutasawwira), the cogitative (al-mufakkira) and the retentive or memorial. Consequently, where al-Gazālī wrote that there were first three then five internal senses according to philosophers, al-Miklātī writes that there are four. Averroes does not expose his complete theory of the internal senses and refers to his De Sensu et sensato for more detail. He does not mention here the cogitative faculty so that it is not clear if al-Miklātī enumerates four faculties because he knows the theory of the De Sensu et sensato or if he distinguishes the retentive and memorial as two distinct faculties.

But though these two elements seem to corroborate the hypothesis of a TTT, a closer look at the text will show that this is not the case. Indeed, the refutation is always limited and selective and neither Averroes’ doctrine as a whole nor any major doctrinal points are refuted or even discussed. Moreover, the rectification I have presented concerns an aspect which is minor from al-Miklātī’s point of view and represents no major issue for him. Thus, the status of al-Miklātī’s work still needs to be determined.

2. Averroes: an ally in spite of himself

Let us examine the other ways in which al-Miklātī uses the TT to try to better understand his relation to Averroes. More than once, al-Miklātī rectifies al-Ġazālī’s presentation of Avicenna’s doctrine by taking into consideration Averroes’ remarks or criticisms. I will focus on one example. 51 In the second discussion about the natural sciences page 552 of his TT, Averroes criticises al-Ġazālī’s restitution of Avicenna: “al-Ġazālī has not adduced the argument in the manner in which Avicenna brought it out”. 52 He then rectifies it by giving what he considers a more faithful account of the argument:

Avicenna built his argument only on the following: If the intelligibles inhered in a body, they would have to be either in an indivisible part of it, or in a divisible part. Then he refuted the possibility of their being in an indivisible part of the body, and after this refutation he denied that, if the intellect inhered in

49 Quintessence, p. 128.
50 TT, p. 547, ll.5–6.
51 Quintessence, p. 132.
52 TT, p. 552, l. 12.
a body, it could inhere in an indivisible part of it. Then he denied that it could inhere in a divisible part of it and so he denied that it could inhere in body at all.53

In his presentation of the philosophers’ proof of the indivisibility of the human soul, al-Miklātī begins by giving (a) his own formulation of the philosophers’ proof, then he integrates (b) Averroes’ formulation of Avicenna’s argument to prove the major premise of his syllogism, and finally invokes (c) al-Gazālī’s reformulation of the argument in support of Averroes’ restitution. I quote:

The philosophers say [that] (a) the proof that the human soul is indivisible is [as follows]: The human soul is the place of inherence of knowledge. It is impossible that the place of inherence of knowledge be a divisible body. Therefore it is impossible that the human soul be a divisible body. For (b) if the intelligibles inhere in a body, they would have to be either in an indivisible part [of it], or in a divisible part. And it is false according to their principles [al-ʿusūlīhim] that they are in an indivisible part of the body, for they reject the doctrine of the separate part [al-ḡuzʾ al-fard], and it is [also] false that they inhere in a divisible [part], because (c)54 if the place of inherence of knowledge is a divisible body, then the knowledge which inhere in it must be divisible too; but the knowledge which inhere in it is not divisible, and therefore the place of inherence is not a body.

This is representative of the way al-Miklātī proceeds: he rarely innovates in the arguments he uses in the sense that he takes the material of his criticism from different sources, but he reorganises this material, this stock of arguments that are at his disposal, in such a way that the argumentation he construes is new and original, and often more effective, for his selective mind leaves no place for digressions and reduces the argumentations to the bare essential. It also gives one first example of how the TT almost serves as a commentary of the TF that helps al-Miklātī correct some of its deficiencies.

Al-Miklātī makes another use of Averroes which seems to confirm this point: when criticising a common opponent, he uses Averroes’ arguments and objections. In the second discussion, in the course of the refutation of the incorruptibility of the world, al-Ḡazālī first dismisses the solutions adopted before him by various groups of theologians, beginning with the Muʿtazilites. Following al-Ḡazālī, al-Miklātī presents the philosophers’ argumentation.55 The world, according to them, cannot be annihilated for, if its annihilation was possible, it could only happen through an instantiator (muḥassis)56

53 Id., p. 552, ll. 12–17.
54 It is a literal quotation of al-Gazālī. See TT, p. 548, ll. 5–6.
55 Quintessence, pp. 113–14.
56 Al-Miklātī defines the “muḥassis” as “that which realises [al-muḥbit] existence rather than non-existence” (Quintessence, p. 67).
that would be the cause of the passage of the world from existence to non-existence. This instantiator would have to be either an [agent] endowed with choice (muḥṭār) or the occurrence of a contrary (tārayān dīd) or the absence of a condition (intifā’ šart). But, contrary to what theologians claim, it cannot be a choosing agent without implying a change in the will and consequently in the agent possessing the will. To avoid this inadmissible consequence, the Mu’tazilites said that the instantiator was in fact the occurrence of a contrary (tārayān dīd): in this case, nothingness (al-fanā’). They believe that God creates it in no place of inherence (fī ġayr mahall) and that it provokes the non-existence of the world at one and the same moment (fī dufatin wāhidatin). They add that nothingness disappears by itself, thus avoiding a regression ad infinitum, each nothingness needing another nothingness in order to stop existing. To criticise this position, al-Miklātī interlocks al-Gazālī’s objections and Averroes’, constructing thereby his own refutation.57 He begins by saying that what the Mu’tazilites mention is false and weak because “nothingness and non-existence are synonymous” which is a strict quotation of Averroes. He then raises a possible counter-objection of the Mu’tazilites who would say that nothingness is not non-existence but an existent which is an accident contrary to substance and which does not persist for two moments. To refute it, he uses one of al-Gazālī’s arguments58 which he reformulates as follows: “the Sublime Creator either creates [nothingness] in the world’s essence or creates it in no place of inherence. And if he creates it in the world’s essence, then it is not a contrary for it co-exists [li-iǧtimā’ihi] with the world”. To reject the second branch of the alternative, this time he uses one of Averroes’ objections (“the existence of an accident in no place of inherence is impossible”) and writes: “if he creates it in no place of inherence, its reality would be transformed [inqalabat] because it belongs to the accident’s reality [min ḥaqīqat al-’arad] to be in need of a place of inherence”. Finally, he invokes one last argument ad absurdum which he finds in al-Gazālī: “It follows from this that God the Sublime does not have the power to annihilate part of the world without [annihilating] the whole”. But this is absurd for it contradicts God’s omnipotence.

This use of Averroes, in favour of al-Miklātī’s own goal, making him almost an ally, is even more spectacular when directed against

57 Quintessence, pp. 115–16.
58 “It is impossible for [nothingness] to be created and to inhere in the world’s essence for then the inherent meets its place of inherence and co-exists with it if only for an instant, but if they could co-exist, then [nothingness] would not be the contrary [of the world] and would not annihilate it.” (TT, II, p. 134, ll. 10–12, the translation is mine).
Avicenna. One example is particularly interesting for it appears twice in the text and each time at key moments of the argumentation: first, in pages 67 to 69, in the course of the consolidation of al-Miklātī’s proof of the adventicity of the world,\footnote{59} then, in pages 162 and 163, following the proof by which he establishes the existence of a producer.\footnote{60} In both cases, Avicenna’s objection rejects the claim that positing eternity prevents from positing an instantiator and therefore does not allow philosophers respectively to prove the adventicity of the world in the first occurrence and to establish a producer in the second. This is how — according to al-Gazālī’s account — Avicenna’s argument goes: when the agent advents, what proceeds from Him and is connected to Him is either pure existence or pure non-existence or both. It cannot be the precedent non-existence, for the agent has no influence whatsoever on non-existence. It cannot either be both. It must then be pure existence. If so, the more permanent the existence, the more permanent the connection, and consequently the more influential and the better the agent. In other words, and this is indeed what can be read in the Ilahiyyāt of Avicenna’s Šifā\footnote{61}, the conception of an eternal world not only does not contradict the idea of a producer but is even a better conception of it, a conception that implies a more powerful God, \textit{i.e.} a truly powerful one. Al-Miklātī literally quotes al-Gazālī’s presentation of the Avicennian argument and adds one sentence by Averroes that synthesises Avicenna’s argument: “advention is nothing more than the connection of the act to existence, I mean that the act of the

\footnote{59} Unlike al-Gazālī in his \textit{TF}, al-Miklātī begins by giving a positive proof of the adventicity of the world before criticising the philosophers’ arguments in favour of eternity. His proof is as follows: “All existents except God the Sublime are possible [ḡāʾiz] in view of themselves; all possibles in view of themselves are adventice; thus all existents except God the Sublime are adventice.” (\textit{Quintessence}, p. 64). He then proves each of the minor and major premises and the validity of the inference of the consequent from the antecedent by refuting possible objections.

\footnote{60} \textit{Quintessence}, p. 159: “The proof [establishing the producer] is to say: if it is established that the world is adventice, then it is unavoidably established that it is possible; all possibles need an instantiator; therefore the world needs an instantiator. Then to say: its instantiator is either endowed with choice or not. [But it cannot be devoid of choice]. It has therefore been established that the producer of the world is an agent that instantiates it through power and will, and this is what we wanted to show.” It can be noted that al-Miklātī deduces the world’s possibility from its adventicity whereas, in the proof of the adventicity of the world, he deduced its adventicity from its possibility. It enables him to tie together the proof establishing a producer and the affirmation of the adventicity of the world, as al-Miklātī’s goal is to show that, contrary to what they claim, philosophers who admit the eternity of the world cannot establish a producer. This does not invalidate al-Miklātī’s proof for, as he states in page 168, the affirmation of the eternity of the world not only prevents the philosophers from establishing a producer of the world but also from affirming the latter’s possibility.

\footnote{61} Avicenna, \textit{Šifā: Ilahiyyāt}, Book VI, chapter 2, §9, p. 203.
agent is an existentiation [iğād], and in this matter, existence preceded by non-existence and existence not preceded by non-existence are equivalent." To refute this argument, al-Miklātī uses Averroes’ objection rather than al-Gazālī’s. This is what he writes:

What he says is sophistic for the division is not exhaustive [al-taqṣīm ǧayr ḥāṣīr]. Indeed, advention is connected with an existence combined with [bi-wuğād iqṭarana bihi] non-existence, i.e. existence in potentiality [al-wuğād bi-al-quwwa]. It is not connected with absolute existence, for that whose existence is at its ultimate perfection [mā kāna min al-wuğād ʿalā kamālihi al-āḥir] does not need an existentiation; and it is not [connected] with absolute non-existence, nor with both.

So, on two major questions (the adventicity of the world and the establishment of a producer of the world) and at an absolute key moment of his argumentation (the impossibility of holding together the belief in eternity and the belief in the existence of an instantiator), al-Miklātī invokes an objection that he finds in Averroes’ TT.

Thus the TT appears to be a tool used by al-Miklātī to improve the TF and Averroes seems to be almost as much an ally as an opponent. Therefore the Quintessence cannot be considered as a TTT, which would imply a change in the target, but is rather a sort of update of the TF, which takes into account some of the objections and new data supplied by the TT.

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62 TT, p. 164, ll. 2–5.
63 TT, pp. 163–4: “[This argument] is sophistic, because Avicenna leaves out one of the factors which a complete division [al-taqṣīm al-hāṣīr] would have to state. […] This argument is faulty, because the act of the agent is only connected with existence in a state of non-existence, i.e. existence in potentiality [al-wuğād alladīt bi-al-quwwa], and is not connected with actual existence, in so far as it is actual, nor with non-existence, in so far as it is non-existence. It is only connected with imperfect existence in which non-existence inheres. The act of the agent is not connected with non-existence, because non-existence is not an act, nor is it connected with existence which is not linked together with non-existence [al-wuğād alladīt la yuqrinahu ʿadam], for whatever has reached its extreme perfection of existence [mā kāna min al-wuğād ʿalā kamālihi al-āḥir] needs neither existentiation nor an existentiator.” I modified the translation slightly.
64 Quintessence, p. 163.
65 The existence of an instantiator is indeed a necessary step in both proofs, which actually imply a common preliminary syllogism: the world is possible, possibility implies an instantiator, hence the world needs an instantiator. From this need of an instantiator, the first proof deduces the adventicity of the world – as eternity contradicts the idea of an instantiator, and the second proof deduces the existence of a producer of the world by showing that this instantiator is endowed with power and will.
66 One might be surprised that a theologian defending creation ex nihilo may admit, with Averroes, that adventing is bringing existence in potentiality into actuality (while this corresponds to the process of generation – and corruption – which implies a precedent matter). But – as I will show in my PhD thesis – al-Miklātī is actually using the philosopher’s vocabulary and stripping it of its meaning, in a way that is similar to the way Averroes, in the TT, sometimes feigns to agree with al-Gazālī and to share his conception when he is actually professing the contrary.
3. Averroes does not replace Avicenna as the principal target of the criticism of philosophers

I would like to bring the reader’s attention to one more passage where it appears that Avicenna remains the true target of the criticism against philosophers, and that, although Averroes must also be ousted, it is only as an additional representative of Peripatetism and not as the author of a specific philosophical system. On the contrary, the criticism directed against Avicenna aims at destroying his whole doctrine.

In the chapter establishing the existence of a producer of the world (pp. 154–68), al-Miklātī exposes the views of the philosophers on this question: all philosophers admit the possibility that an existent proceeds from something other than God on the condition that it can be assigned to another existent and this one to another and so on until it ends in a necessary existent by itself, which is God. On the other hand, they do not agree on whether it is possible or not that more than one proceed from Him. Al-Miklātī enumerates the different positions, but the only one he presents thoroughly is Avicenna’s emanationist conception. Moreover, in the course of the refutation, Avicenna receives the same kind of special treatment: as I have said in the previous part, al-Miklātī first presents his proof establishing a producer, then consolidates it by proving separately each of the premises and inferences. He then concludes that the philosophers, because they believe in the eternity of the world, cannot establish a producer and, according to their principles, the world cannot be said to be the act of God, for “it is a condition of the act that it be preceded by non-existence and that it brings [a thing] from non-existence to existence, but this is impossible in the case of the eternal”. He then evokes two ways in which the philosophers have tried to get around this consequence. He begins with that of “some philosophers”, which designates Averroes most of the time. Indeed he quotes a passage from the TT:

If the world were eternal by itself and existent not in so far as it is moved – for each movement is composed of parts which are adventice [ḥādiṭa] –, then, indeed, the world would not have an agent at all. But if the meaning of ‘eternal’ is that it is in perpetual advenion [fi ḥudūt dā‘īm] and that this advenion has neither beginning nor end, certainly the term ‘advenion’ [al-iḥdāt] is more truly applied to him who brings about a perpetual advenion than to him who procures a discontinuous advenion [al-iḥdāt al-munqati‘]. In this way, the world is indeed advented by God the Praised and Sublime, and the name ‘advenion’ is even more suitable [awlā] for it than the word

68 Quintessence, p. 161, ll. 6–9.
‘eternity’, and the philosophers [al-hukamāʾ] only call the world eternal to safeguard themselves against the word ‘advented’ in the sense of ‘what is from something, in time and after non-existence’.  

Al-Miklātī quite abruptly rejects this distinction: Averroes, according to him, shifts the problem to the question of movement, which is a merely sophistic move “for the talk is not about the movement that is composed of parts which are adventice, but is about the celestial bodies and the separate intellects and the totalities of the four elements according to their principles, for all these existents have been characterised by eternity and the negation of a beginning [nafy al-awwaliyya] according to their principles. It is therefore impossible according to their principles that they are the act of God the Sublime, as we have shown.” Al-Miklātī accuses Averroes of feigning to resolve the problem of the contradiction between the affirmation of the eternity of the world and the establishment of a producer of this same world by slipping from the question of the existence of the world to that of the movement of the world, i.e. from the eternity of its existence to that of its movement. Al-Miklātī then exposes Avicenna’s way of resolving the contradiction and this corresponds to the second occurrence of the argument I have presented above: advention is nothing more than the relation of the act of the agent to existence, so that the supposition of a perpetual advention does not contradict the idea of an agent but rather implies an eternal and perfect agent. Against this argument, al-Miklātī opposes the objection we have already examined, which he finds in Averroes’ TT, and, just as in the case of Averroes, Avicenna’s argument is said of be sophistic. Al-Miklātī then concludes: “it has been made clear by this that it is impossible for those who profess eternity to establish a producer, according to their principle, and this is necessarily implied for all Peripatetic philosophers who profess eternity”. At this stage it seems that al-Miklātī has reached his goal, and Averroes and

70 Quintessence, p. 162.
71 This is a true problem for Averroes: as I shall show in the last part of this article, Averroes admits only Aristotle’s physical proof from motion. He will argue that the First Mover and the First Principle which Avicenna distinguishes are one and the same thing. Therefore the proof leading to the First Mover is a proof leading to the First Principle. Nevertheless this First Principle as a First Mover is only proved to be the principle of the motion of the world not of its existence. According to Wolfson (“Averroes’ lost treatise”, in note 90), Averroes’ answer to this difficulty is to say that, as its formal and final cause, God is the cause of the unity, order and motion of the world, and because the real existence of the world consists precisely in its unity, order and motion, it can be said that God in this sense is the cause of its existence. Cf. TT, III, pp. 167–8; p.172; pp. 180–1 + Long Commentary of Metaphysics, Lām, C44, pp. 1650–2.
72 One may be surprised that he starts by refuting Averroes before criticising Avicenna, but al-Miklātī is actually following the order of the TT. This suggests that al-Miklātī is dealing with arguments rather than their authors, at least in the case of Averroes.
Avicenna have received a similar treatment, both dismissed for being sophisticated. But he does not stop here: al-Miklātī adds one paragraph where he characterises Avicenna’s method and compares it with Aristotle’s. He then “succinctly” presents the whole of Avicenna’s argumentation, and criticises it. I will take a closer look at this restitution and criticism in the next part but what I wanted to show here is the discrepancy there is between the treatment of Avicenna and Averroes. If some of the latter’s objections are no doubt refuted, this refutation bears no comparison with the systematic refutation aimed at the former. The reasons behind such a difference can only be the object of speculation and so this does not need to concern us here. But what now appears clearly is that Avicenna remains the main target.73

There is still a lot to say concerning al-Miklātī’s relation to the TT and the various uses he makes of it. But this is something I will treat in the commentary of my translation of this work. In the rest of the present article, I would like to focus on a different aspect which shows another way in which this work can be a precious source of information.

III. AL-MIKLĀTĪ AS A NEW SOURCE OF AVERROES’ WORK

1. Aristotle and Avicenna face to face: the nature and purpose of this confrontation

As announced in the previous part of this article, I would like to draw to the reader’s attention one particular passage of al-Miklātī’s work which corresponds to the end of the first section of the chapter establishing a producer (page 163 to page 168). To begin with, let us focus on the first paragraph. This is what al-Miklātī writes:

وقد استدل أبو علي بن سينا على إثبات الصانع بمقدمات عامة لائحة بالنظر
في الموجود بما هو موجود بخلاف ما فعل أرسطو؛ لأن أرسطو، إذا جعل طريقه في ذلك من أمر الحركة ولذلك لم يصح له بيان وجوده إلا في آخر الثامنة من

السماع الطبيعي.”

73 This corroborates the idea developed by Peter Adamson in his introduction to In the Age of Averroes (pp. 5–6), in which he states that, in the period extending from al-Ghazālī’s death to the mid-seventh/thirteenth century, Avicenna is taken to be “the main representative of falsafa, and thus as a target of extensive criticism” and that, during this period, “most authors think of falsafa as being synonymous with Avicennism, rather than as synonymous with Aristotle and his commentators”, or in other words, that “in this period, falsafa means Avicenna”.

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Avicenna has proved the establishment of the producer through common ['āmma] premises, suitable [lā'iqa] in view of existent qua existent, as opposed to what Aristotle did, because Aristotle found his way in this matter from the nature of movement [min amr al-ḥaraka] and that is why he was able to show its existence only at the end of Book VIII of his Physics. And when he examined its essence and properties in the book named Lām of his Metaphysics, he admitted there its existence from physics; whereas Avicenna wanted [rāma] to show its existence in metaphysics through common premises.74

What exactly is the point of this comparison? This paragraph is composed of four elements which go in pairs, each pair made up of an opposition between Avicenna and Aristotle. First, the method is compared, then the science in which the proof must take place. Avicenna is said to base his proof on common or general premises. What this means seems to be made explicit by the end of the sentence: these premises are "suitable in view of existent qua existent". They do not concern a particular kind of existent, nor existent considered from one particular aspect – existent qua moved or existent qua quantity –, but rather concern existent qua existent. In other words, they are metaphysical premises. At first sight, this may appear as an objective characterisation of Avicenna’s proof, for he himself writes in his Išārāt that his proof consists in "examining nothing but existence itself", by considering "the state [ḥāl] of existence", and that it has "existence qua existence testify to the [first cause]".75 This "metaphysical" method which deals with existent qua existent and uses general premises is contrasted with Aristotle’s which, because it is based on the phenomenon of motion, is physical and concerns existent qua moved, i.e. the physical existent. This too could be endorsed by Avicenna as, when thus describing his proof in the Išārāt, he opposes it precisely to a proof that would be established on the examination, not of existent qua existent, but of existent insofar as it is created, in the case of the mutakallimūn, and moved, in the case of the

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74 Quintessence, p. 163.
physicists. Indeed, in both cases, the proof proceeds from the effect to
the cause, which Avicenna considers a less noble path. In *The
Provenance and Destination*, he presents the two kinds of proofs,
and in the *Appendices*, he distinguishes between the way the
Physicists establish the First Mover and the way the Theologians
establish it. In the *Fair Judgement*, he even goes so far as to reject
the method from motion as nonsensical and unworthy of its object.
Then the consequences of this divergence in the method are stated
by al-Miklātī: Aristotle could only show the existence of a producer
in physics so that, when he examined it in metaphysics, he did not
prove its existence there but accepted it from physics. Avicenna, on
the contrary, claimed to show its existence in metaphysics. Now, his
opposition to Aristotle on this point is never asserted in such an explic-
tic way. In the first chapter of the *Ilāhiyyāt of the Šīfā*, he shows that
the proof of God’s existence can take place in no other science than
metaphysics, and that what appears in physics aims only at giving
“a fleeting idea” of His existence. However, it seems that Avicenna
did not believe that it was Aristotle’s true belief that the proof from
motion was the appropriate proof of the existence of God. According
to Gutas, Avicenna considered this to be “only the apparent sense of
the *Metaphysics*; its innermost meaning and implicit doctrine was,
in fact, to establish the First Truth by means of the Theological
way”. This appears in the *Memoirs from a Disciple from Rayy* and in
the *Discussions*.

From this perspective, the opposition made between Avicenna and
Aristotle looks less like an objective comparison and more like a criti-
cism of Avicenna’s non Aristotelianism. By construing a proof from the
necessary, Avicenna contravenes the Aristotelian method. But
because he is a Peripatetic – and considered so by al-Miklātī,–
when he contravenes Aristotle’s rules, he in a way contradicts himself.
If this is so, then the adjective ‘āmma must be understood as having a
pejorative connotation: the premises are not said to be general merely

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76 Id., p. 146.
*Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition. Introduction to Reading Avicenna’s
is however not unlikely that Avicenna was led to develop such a rhetoric as a defence strat-
egy against attacks similar to the ones addressed to him by al-Miklātī, questioning the
compatibility of his proof with his Aristotelianism.
83 “This is necessarily implied for all Peripatetic philosophers who profess eternity”,
*Quintessence*, p. 163, l. 7. I underline.
because of the generality of their subject (existence *qua* existence) but are said to be common premises as opposed to appropriate premises, *i.e.* premises that are proper to their subject. But, in the *Posterior Analytics*,\(^8^4\) Aristotle writes that there can be a demonstration only from principles proper to the subject, not from common ones. Because his premises are common, Avicenna’s proof of the existence of God cannot be demonstrative.

If we reinsert this paragraph into al-Miklātī’s general argumentation – which I have presented at the end of the second part of this article –, what al-Miklātī seems to be doing is actually playing off the Peripatetics. Indeed al-Miklātī reproaches Avicenna with the exact opposite of what he was reproaching Averroes: Averroes was said to be sophistic because, instead of talking about being and existence, he talked about motion; Avicenna, on the other hand, deals with existence, existence *qua* existence, but by doing so, his proof is said to be logically deficient because based on common and inappropriate premises. This however is not a contradiction on al-Miklātī’s part. For it is precisely al-Miklātī’s aim to show that philosophers – Peripatetic philosophers – can in no way establish the existence of the producer as long as they profess the eternity of the world: for either they remain faithful to their Master and use a proof from motion, but then, all they can establish is a mover not a producer, or they build a proof from existence itself, *i.e.* existence, but then, their premises are common and their proof therefore cannot be demonstrative.

2. *The origin of this criticism*

The next question that comes to mind is where al-Miklātī found this criticism. The characterisation of the proof as a proof from existence *qua* existence, the accusation raised against it for not being Aristotelian, the assertion that the science where the proof must take place is physics and not metaphysics where it is merely accepted from physics, all this reminds us of Averroes’ criticism of Avicenna’s proof. But even if we admit that al-Miklātī’s source is Averroes, we still need to determine in which work or works he finds it. I have shown in the second part that al-Miklātī has a direct knowledge of the *TT*: what could he read there?

In the fourth discussion, page 276, Averroes writes:

The first man to bring into philosophy the proof [*al-burhān*] which al-Γazālī gives here as a philosophical one, was Avicenna, who regarded this method [*tariq*] as superior to those given by the ancients, since he claimed it to be

\(^{8^4}\) Cf. the beginning of I, 9.
based on the substance of the existent [gawhar al-mawgūd], whereas the older methods [turuq al-qawm] are based on accidents consequent on the First Principle.85

Here we have the opposition between a method based on existent itself and a method based on its accidents. These accidents that are not named here are motion and time, as appears from another passage, where the expressions are even closer to those found in al-Miklāṭī’s text. Indeed, in the tenth discussion, page 419, Averroes writes almost exactly the same remarks as in the fourth, only he is more explicit:

He said that it [the method of a necessary existent] was superior to the proof of the ancients, because the ancients arrived only at an immaterial being, the principle of the universe, through derivative things, namely motion and time; whereas this proof, according to Avicenna, arrives at the assertion of such a principle as the ancients established, through the investigation of the nature of the existent in so far as it is an existent [tabī‘at al-mawgūd bi-mā huwa mawgūd].86

Like in our text, two kinds of proofs are opposed, although we can note two differences: Aristotle is not directly named but designated by “the ancients” and time is mentioned as well as motion. Finally, Averroes’ criticism can be found in another passage of the TT, in the eighth discussion. After having formulated Avicenna’s proof in such a way that it is “the nearest to demonstrative method [al-ṭarīqat al-burhāniyya]”, Averroes concludes, in pages 395–6, that “the demonstration [al-burhān] which Avicenna uses in dealing with the necessary existent, when this distinction and this indication are not made, is of the type of common dialectical statements [min tabī‘at al-aqāwil al-‘āmma al-ḡadaliya]; when, however, the distinction is made, it is of the type of demonstrative statements [min ṭabī‘at al-aqāwil al-burhāniyya]”.87 Averroes uses the same adjective as in our text here, although it is accompanied by the adjective “dialectical” which leaves no doubt as to the pejorative meaning of ‘āmma in this context, and more generally characterises Avicenna’s statements (aqāwil) and not his premises (muqaddimāt). Though these similarities confirm the idea that Averroes is al-Miklāṭī’s source, the differences make it unlikely that he is quoting the TT. Indeed al-Miklāṭī – as appears from the glossary and from his use of the TT – tends to quote literally. More importantly, there is no trace in the TT of the last two elements of our paragraph: nowhere is it said that the science where Aristotle’s proof takes place is physical science and that the metaphysician must

85 I underline and modify the translation slightly.
86 The underlining is mine.
87 The underlining and the translation are mine.
admit it from there, and there are a fortiori no precise references to “Book VIII” and “Book Lām”, nor is it said that Avicenna on the contrary develops his proof in metaphysical science. The examination of another of Averroes’ works we know was read by al-Miklātī, the Epitome on Metaphysics, turns out to be just as unfruitful: there is a criticism of the propositions Avicenna uses but no trace of the adjective ʿāmma; and we do find the idea – absent from the TT – that the metaphysician accepts the existence of the first principle from physics, but without the precise references to Physics VIII and Metaphysics Λ. In one passage of the Long Commentary of Physics, the opposition between Aristotle and Avicenna on this point is explicit but again the double reference is missing:

For the metaphysician accepts the first moving principles from the physicist, and he has no way to demonstrate the existence of a first mover unless he accepts it as something well-known from the physicist. As for the opinion of Avicenna who thought that the metaphysician ought to demonstrate the existence of the First Principle, it is false and his method of proof [...] is a feeble method and is in no way demonstrative.

In the same way, similar elements can be found in other passages of the Long Commentary of Physics and in the Long Commentary of the Posterior Analytics, but they are never to be found together in the same text and the precise references are always absent. In the Long Commentary of Metaphysics we find the reference to Book VIII of Physics as the place where physical science shows the existence of the eternal substance (al-ġawhar al-sarmadī) and the affirmation that “there is no other way to show the existence of the separate substance than through movement [min qibali al-haraka]”. But here, in

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88 Chap. I, p. 24, ll. 10–13: “The demonstrations [al-bayānāt] employed by Ibn Sinā in this science [of metaphysics] in order to show [the existence] of the first principle are, on the other hand, altogether dialectical and untrue propositions [aqāwil], which do not state anything in an appropriate manner”.

89 Chap. I, p. 24, ll. 16–18: “Therefore, he who practises this science [of metaphysics] takes for granted the existence of the [first mover] from physics, as said before”.


92 Averroes, Šarḥ al-Burḥān li-Aristū wa-Talḥīṣ al-Burḥān, ed. ’A. Badawī (Kuwait, 1984), C76: “[...] the only way by which he [Aristotle] could demonstrate the existence of the prime mover was through a sign in that science, namely, physical science, and not as it was thought by Avicenna. Whence we have composed a special treatise to show the falsity of the universal [kullī] method whereby Avicenna thought the metaphysician can prove the existence of a First Principle”. Quoted in Wolfson, “Averroes’ lost treatise”, p. 411.


94 Lām, C5, p. 1422, ll. 5–7.

95 Lām, C5, p. 1423, l. 11.
C5, he is criticising Alexander’s interpretation and not Avicenna’s, although he believes that the former’s interpretation is the cause of the latter’s error. When talking about Avicenna in the following lines, he writes that according to him “the metaphysician is the one who demonstrates their existence [i.e. the existence of the principles of sensible substances, both eternal and non eternal ones]”. However I do not believe that this is al-Miklātī’s source for, as I already said, the confrontation is between Alexander and Aristotle – or rather Averroes in the name of Aristotle – so that Avicenna is not directly addressed. Furthermore the fact that it takes place in the commentary on Book Λ does not seem enough to explain the double reference in our text. And we do not find a characterisation of Avicenna’s premises. It is moreover unlikely that al-Miklātī is a reader of Averroes’ long commentaries.

Among his extant works, the text that gathers together the highest number of elements from our passage is the treatise On the Separation of the First Principle. Let us quote the beginning of the treatise:

Qādī (which means Sheriff or Judge) Abū-l-Walīd-ibn-Ruṣd says that those who have pursued science in the manner of the Peripatetics, that is, Aristotle and his followers, knew no other way to demonstrate the existence of a first principle that is separate and incorporeal except the method established by Aristotle at the end of Book VIII of his Physics; and the path along which they proceeded is that of motion. However, when the books of Abū-ʿAlī-ibn-Sinā reached us, we found that he used in these books another method, one based on the division of being itself [ex respectu divisionis ipsius entis], and that he believed this way to be superior to that of Aristotle: for Aristotle’s method proceeds from posterior things and from the nature of motion, whereas this way (namely, Avicenna’s) proceeds from a consideration of being as being [entis in quantum ens] to arrive at the first principle; and therefore this method must be proper to the philosophy that speculates about being as being. Hence it must be better to follow this method than to grant the existence of a separate principle on the basis of the authority of another science, as we find Aristotle doing; for he says that the divine science accepts the existence of the principles of being from physics, and that it accepts the number of those principles from a mathematical science, namely, astronomy. However, having frequently examined the methods followed by Ibn-Sinā, we discovered his mistakes, which we have written about elsewhere [in aliis locis].

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96 Lām, C5, p. 1424, l. 2.
97 C. Steel, G. Guldentops, “An unknown treatise of Averroes against the Avicennians on the first cause. Edition and translation”, Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales, 64 (1997): 86–135. The first title given by the translator, “Master Alfonso”, was: “Against some Avicennians, to prove that the First Necessary Being, i.e., the first principle, namely God, exists separated from matter, i.e., subsists in virtue of itself”.
98 Id., p. 97. The underlining is mine.
In this text, we find almost all the elements present in our text with two exceptions however: the premises are not said to be common, and there is no specific reference to Book Λ.

After this review of the texts that present similarities with our passage, there seems to be one last work where al-Miklāṭī could have found this criticism, but this work is unfortunately not extant: the lost treatise *On the First Mover* which Wolfson reconstituted from a refutation of the treatise by Moses ben Joseph al-Lāwī. This is not the same work as the precedent one, although they seem to share a same subject, and even though Wolfson, and Steel and Guldentops use the same references, as allusions to their respective treatise. It has been said that Averroes could not have written more than one treatise on the same subject so that either the two treatises are in fact one and the same or one must not be authentic. Yet, as Steel and Guldentops note, the two works do not deal with the same questions: “In our text, for instance, Averroes does not claim that Avicenna’s proof is not a scientific demonstration, nor does he discuss Avicenna’s assumption that there is a First Cause beyond the Prime Mover. Also, the text reconstructed by Wolfson is far less cosmological and contains no reference to the so-called Oriental Philosophy.” Moreover it seems to me that Averroes’ motivations and intentions are completely different from one treatise to another. From what can be gathered from al-Lāwī’s refutation, the treatise *On the First Mover* is clearly directed against Avicenna’s proof in his claim both that it is metaphysical and demonstrative and against the conception, which motivates this “new” proof, that the First Principle is distinct from (and beyond) the First Mover. Avicenna is the direct target of this work. On the other hand, the treatise *On the Separation of the First Principle* is motivated by Averroes’ encounter with an Avicennian who claimed that

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99 *Long Commentary of Physics*, VIII, C3: “We, moreover, have composed a special treatise concerning this, and he who would like to learn the difficulties which occur in this method, let him consult the work of Algazali, for many things which he inveighs against others are true.”; *Long Commentary of Posterior Analytics*, C70 quoted in note 91. Cf. Wolfson, “Averroes’ lost treatise”, p. 413, n. 29; p. 411, n. 25; Steel and Guldentops, “An unknown treatise of Averroes”, p. 92, n. 18, n. 19.

100 Cf. the translator’s preface in Steel and Guldentops, “An unknown treatise of Averroes”, p. 95: “it is reasonable that there should be no other such treatise, for another one would have been superfluous”. A. Elamrani-Jamal (in his article “Ibn Rushd et les *Premiers Analytiques* d’Aristote: aperçu sur un problème de syllogistique modale”, *ASP*, 5 [1995], pp. 51–74) provides us with a convincing counter-example: on such a technical question as that of the mode of conclusion of mixed syllogisms, Averroes wrote several short works to justify the truth and coherence of his Master’s statements. “La conscience de ce problème conduit Ibn Rushd à lui consacrer plusieurs petits traités ou Opuscules, après en avoir traité dans son *Commentaire moyen des APr.*” (p. 62) and A. Elamrani-Jamal concludes his article by saying: “Ses efforts dans ce domaine aride et difficile pourraient nous servir d’indicateur pour apprécier la rigueur de ses recherches sur d’autres grands problèmes qui l’ont occupé, relatifs à la psychologie ou à la métaphysique d’Aristote.” (p. 74.)

“Avicenna had never meant by the ‘necessary being’ something abstracted from the universe or separated from it, but rather he meant the whole universe” and that he consigned his true doctrine in his Oriental Philosophy. Averroes does not seem to believe that this is what Avicenna defended but he does see how his erroneous proof could lead to such an absurd theory. 102 Avicenna’s theory is therefore criticised, not directly because of what Avicenna himself holds to be true – indeed Averroes writes that the “mistakes” Avicenna made in the methods he followed are dealt with “elsewhere” – but because of the erroneous and blasphemous theory it could lead to. Up until now, I have proceeded by elimination, but are there any positive elements that indicate that the lost treatise is al-Miklātī’s source?

The presentation of Averroes’ treatise by al-Lāwī103 and by Averroes himself in his long commentaries on the Physics104 and the Posterior Analytics105 indicates that its object is the refutation of Avicenna’s method and his claim to prove the existence of the first principle in metaphysics. We also learn from al-Lāwī that:

by all this, Averroes tries to prove that the metaphysician is not able to establish [the existence] of the Necessary Existent, but must accept it from the physicist, or the demonstration must be done by using both sciences together, physics and metaphysics. [Averroes acts thus] only because the Philosopher had applied this method, I mean that he did not prove the existence [of the Necessary Existent] in Metaphysics, where he argued, having admitted that its existence had been proved in Physics.106

Moreover, al-Lāwī writes that:

in the course of that argument Averroes mentioned that the method followed by Avicenna in the proof of the Necessary Being is similar to the method of the mutakallimūn, by which he means that the propositions used therein are common and inappropriate propositions.107

102 Cf. also TT, X, p. 421.
103 Wolfson, “Averroes’ lost treatise”, p. 403: “Averroes has composed a treatise for the purpose of refuting this method, in which treatise he censures its inventor, namely, Avicenna, and ridicules the method, and argues in favour of the view that the first mover is identical with the Necessary Being.”
104 Quoted above in note 99.
105 Quoted above in note 92.
106 I translate from the French translation of the text in G. Vajda, “Un champion de l’avicenisme. Le problème de l’identité de Dieu et du Premier Moteur d’après un opuscule judéo-arabe inédit du XIIe siècle”, Revue thomiste, III (1948): 480–508, pp. 486–7. Vajda translated both from the Arabic original, which he found had been quoted by Joseph Ibn Waqar in one of his treatises (“al-maqāla al-šāmīa bayn al-falsafa wa-al-sarṭa”) and from the Hebrew translation, whereas Wolfson followed the Pamplona manuscript of the Hebrew translation. Wolfson’s quotation is slightly different and is only partial: “Hence it necessarily follows that the metaphysician cannot prove the existence of the Necessary Being but must accept it from the physicist as granted or else he must compose a proof for it out of the combination of the two sciences.” (p. 409.)
107 Wolfson, “Averroes’ lost treatise”, fragment 4, p. 417. The underlining is mine.
We can assume that these adjectives\textsuperscript{108} are not a simple gloss of al-Lāwī but were in the original text. Averroes’ attribution of the origin of the proof to theologians is absent from al-Miklātī’s text, which is not surprising as he intends to dismiss Avicenna’s proof.

There is another place where we seem to find all the elements of our text, and that is the beginning of al-Lāwī’s dissertation. At this point, he is not presenting Averroes’ treatise but talking in his own name. He explains the two motives of his study: first the excellency of its object, second, the divergences amongst philosophers on these questions. To illustrate these divergences, he presents Aristotle’s proof and method and compares them to those of later philosophers such as Alexander, Themistius, al-Fārābī and Avicenna. This presentation, which is too long for us to reproduce in its entirety here, begins thus: “Indeed, when, in \textit{Book VIII of his Physics}, the Philosopher wanted to establish the existence of the First Mover [...]”.\textsuperscript{109} Follows the development of Aristotle’s proof which ends in the establishment of a First Mover that is eternal and is neither a body nor a bodily force. This he establishes in his \textit{Physics} and does not go any further. According to al-Lāwī, this would have been excusable had it been due to the science in which the examination took place, \textit{i.e.} physical science. But, al-Lāwī adds, “however we note that not even \textit{in Book Λ of his Metaphysics}, which was the most appropriate place to establish the existence of the First Cause, did [Aristotle] rise above the First Mover. Indeed, in this treatise, he considers as \textit{given} the existence of the First Mover, \textit{demonstrated in Physics}”.\textsuperscript{110} Further on, about Avicenna, he writes: “When discussing the Necessary Being, \textit{i.e.} the First Cause, Avicenna demonstrates, using \textit{general premises}, drawn from the \textit{nature of being}, that it is an existent through itself, not through another”.\textsuperscript{111} Almost all the elements of our text are present here: the general/common premises, the divergence between Aristotle and Avicenna on the science in which the proof must take place and most importantly the double reference to \textit{Book VIII of Physics} and \textit{Book Λ of Metaphysics} which was absent from Averroes’ other works. Now al-Lāwī (second third of the thirteenth century) cannot be al-Miklātī’s source and it is very unlikely that al-Miklātī is al-Lāwī’s source, so al-Miklātī and al-Lāwī must have a common

\textsuperscript{108} \textit{Id.}, p. 418: Wolfson comments on these adjectives by saying that it is “an indirect way of saying that it is not a true scientific demonstration, for a true scientific demonstration, according to Aristotle, must be based upon premises which are appropriate (ἀρχαὶ ἀκρίδαι) and not something common (κοινόν τε)”.\textsuperscript{109} Vajda, “Un champion de l’avicennisme”, p. 482. The translation from the French and the underlining are mine.\textsuperscript{110} \textit{Id.}, p. 483. The translation from the French and the underlining are mine.\textsuperscript{111} \textit{Id.}, p. 483. The translation from the French and the underlining are mine. G. Vajda writes in a note that the Arabic text is not certain here. I was not able to have access to the Arabic manuscript to verify the text nor to see what adjective he translates by ‘general’.
source which we do not dispose of: the treatise in question. Al-Lāwī holds Averroes in high esteem as appears from the laudatory remarks he makes of him\textsuperscript{112} and considers him as a genuine defender of Aristotle and therefore probably a faithful source on the Philosopher,\textsuperscript{113} hence it is not surprising that he would use Averroes’ words to describe Aristotle’s method. Concerning Avicenna, as I have already noted, the characterisation of the premises as general can be taken as an objective description and is only a criticism for those who refuse the metaphysical nature of the proof.\textsuperscript{114}

Thus, although the treatise is not extant and therefore there can be no absolute certainty that this treatise is al-Miklātī’s source, the similarities we have noticed strongly support this hypothesis. Moreover it is not unlikely that al-Miklātī would have been interested in the treatise \textit{On the Prime Mover} both because of its subject – the proof of the existence of God – and because of its nature and size.

\section*{3. The restitution of Avicenna’s doctrine: content and origin}

Let us now examine what directly follows the paragraph where, if I am right, al-Miklātī – following Averroes’ lost treatise – opposes Avicenna to Aristotle. It is a restitution of Avicenna’s doctrine, which is then criticised by al-Miklātī. Al-Lāwī informs us that Averroes started his treatise by such a restitution: “In that treatise of his Averroes opens the discussion by reproducing some of Avicenna’s words on this problem”.\textsuperscript{115} Could this restitution be the one Averroes makes in the lost treatise? This is what al-Miklātī writes:

We shall now present, succinctly, what Avicenna says and show how to refute it, with God the Sublime’s help. Avicenna says: the proof establishing a producer is that the conception of every existent that can be conceived as an existent outside the soul is inevitably one of two things: either it is conceived

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\footnote{\textsuperscript{112} \textit{Id.}, pp. 483–4: “cet homme, dont nous ne nions pas les grandes qualités et l’autorité en matière de sciences spéculatives”.

\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Id.}, p. 483: “Quant à Abū al-Walīd Ibn Roṣd, il prend, selon son habitude, la défense de la doctrine du Philosophe et cherche à réfuter ses adversaires”; “Dans son désir de secourir le Philosophe […]”.

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{Id.}, p. 488: “Abū al-Walīd dit dans sa dissertation que la méthode suivie par Abū ‘Alī dans sa démonstration de l’Être Nécessaire ressemble à celle des adeptes du Kalām, autrement dit que les prémisses qui y sont employées sont de caractère général et ne sont point pertinentes. Mais cette affirmation n’est pas juste. En effet les prémisses générales qu’on nomme “logiques”, c’est-à-dire celles qu’on emploie dans les disciplines particulières qui spéculent sur l’être en une chose, [ces prémisses, dis-je] ne sont point pertinentes; elles sont dès lors inférieures aux prémisses démonstratives. \textit{Lorsque cependant elles sont employées dans les disciplines générales, c’est-à-dire celles qui spéculent sur l’être pris au sens absolu comme la métaphysique, elles sont pertinentes. Cela est clair pour quiconque possède la moindre formation logique}”. The underlining is mine.

\textsuperscript{115} Wolfson, “Averroes’ lost treatise”, fragment 1, p. 406.}
\end{footnotesize}
as an existent through no cause [lā bi-illā] or it is conceived as an existent through a cause. That which is conceived through no cause is called “a necessary existent” and that which is conceived through a cause [min qibali illā] is called “a possible existent”. This latter is then divided, according to Avicenna, into two parts: if its existence is perpetual, he calls it a necessary existent through another, [possible] through itself; and if its existence is not perpetual, it must necessarily be a possible existent through itself and through another. He said: and it is this latter that must necessarily be preceded by temporal non-existence and [must]\textsuperscript{116} be preceded in time by matter. He then posits [yaḍa'u] that it is a propriety of the possible existent through itself that it can only exist through another, whether it is, through this other, possible or necessary. He then posits that it is part of the properties of the necessary existent through itself to be one and simple, for if it was composed, it would necessarily be a possible existent through itself, a necessary existent through another, but it was said\textsuperscript{117} to be a necessary existent through itself, [and] this is a contradiction that cannot be. He also posits as part of its proprieties that there cannot exist two of its kind, I mean that there cannot exist two existents each of which is a necessary existent through itself, for duality requires a difference [muḡāyara] in at least one meaning, and the fact that they both are necessary existents by themselves requires that they share the meaning of ‘necessary existent’, so that there will be in each of them two meanings: one which they share and another by which [they diverge].\textsuperscript{118} But what corresponds to this description is a possible existent through itself, a necessary existent through another. He says: If this is valid, then we say: each of the four things, I mean the matter [al-hayūlā], the agent, the form and the end, each one of them, regresses to a first cause, I mean that the efficient causes regress to a first agent according to him, the matter [al-māddal] to a first matter, the end to a first end, the form to a first form. He then posits that for each of these first causes, except the agent, it is not possible for them to be a necessary existent through itself, rather [bal] the first of each is a possible existent through itself, necessary through another. That is because the first form of the first body – it is as if you said the body of the first heaven –, as it can only subsist, according to him, in matter and [conversely] matter exists only combined with the form, each one of the two – I mean the form and the matter – belongs to the genus of the possible through itself, necessary through another. It may well appear to be the same in the case of the end insofar as it is a form of that which possesses an end and a perfection of it. For it to exist, it is therefore necessary that what precedes the end exists. Now if all things are either composites or causes, and each of these is a possible existent through itself, although it is necessary through another, and as it has been established that the possible existent through itself – even if it is necessary through another – needs a necessary existent through itself in order to exist, or else there will be a regression ad infinitum, and as this latter [the necessary existent through

\textsuperscript{116} I have replaced “allā” by “an”.

\textsuperscript{117} According to the editor, the word cannot be read clearly in the manuscript.

\textsuperscript{118} I have replaced “yaṭarīfānī” by “yaftariqānī”.
itself] cannot be a composite, nor a form, nor a matter, nor an end, therefore it can only be an efficient cause. And if all this is so, then the all is originated [muḥtaraʿ] and created [muḥtadaʿ] by the necessary existent, even matter, and the form of the celestial body, or rather the entire celestial body. This is how Avicenna’s words end.\footnote{119} 

What is al-Miklāṭī’s source for this account? That it is Averroes and not Avicenna himself or another intermediary is suggested by some differences between this account of Avicenna’s doctrine and what he actually professes in his works, differences which correspond to Averroes’ “misunderstanding”\footnote{121} of Avicenna’s proof as it appears in his works.

One first difference lies in the fact that, according to what al-Miklāṭī writes, Avicenna considers the primary distinction of beings to be a distinction between the uncaused and the caused. The distinction between ‘necessary’ and ‘possible’ comes second, and this division is presented as an equivalent, a different nomination, of that primary division. Two things can be noted: first, the order of the distinctions, second, the equivalence drawn between them.

Indeed, in most of Avicenna’s works, things are presented the other way round: first, existents are divided into necessary existents and possible existents, or – as we shall see shortly – into a necessary existent through itself and necessary existents through another, and then, the necessary existent through itself is shown to have no cause, whereas the possible existent through itself, necessary through another, has a cause. For instance this is what can be read in his al-Ḥikma al-ʿarūḍiyyya:

‘The Necessary’ is that which is compulsory of existence [darūrī al-wuḡūd] in respect to the way it is, this being either in itself (such as the principle of existents) or through another (such as the fact that two and two are four). […] All that is necessary of existence in itself has no cause. Whatever has a cause will be […] possible of existence, while being necessary of existence through its cause.\footnote{122} 

and in the Ilāhiyyāt of his Šīfā’:

Things which fall into [the category of] existence bear dividing in the mind into two subdivisions. One is that which, when considered in itself, its existence does not follow necessarily […] and this thing is found to be in the domain of possibility. The other is that which, when considered in itself, its existence follows necessarily. We say that the necessary of

\footnote{119} I have replaced “bi-amrihi” with “bi-asrihi”.

\footnote{120} Quintessence, pp. 163–6. For the Arabic text, see below Appendix p. 195.

\footnote{121} Davidson, Proofs for Eternity, pp. 319, 320, 334–5.

existence in itself has no cause, and that the possible of existence in itself has a cause.123

Moreover, what appears in our text to be obvious, i.e. the equivalence between the terms of the two distinctions, is not always presented in this way by Avicenna. As Wisnovsky remarks, “in some texts, such as the Mabda’ wa-maʿād, Avicenna felt that the link between being possible of existence and being caused was so intuitive that he did not need to appeal to an argument for compositeness to forge that link. In other texts, such as the Hikma ‘arūdiyya and the Ilāhiyyāt of the Šīfā, he felt the need to buttress that intuition with an argument for compositeness.”124

One might argue that the distinction between the uncaused and the caused is the actual intention and meaning of Avicenna’s division of beings into necessary and possible. But, even if this were true, the priority in the presentation is nevertheless paramount, for – as shown by the references to the mind and to the permissibility in the mind of making the distinction – the distinction between necessary and possible is for Avicenna a distinction between primary concepts that “are imprinted in the soul in a primary way”125 so that the distinction itself may seem primary to him, whereas this is not true of causality. That causedness and uncausedness can be the only clear meanings of possibility and necessity is however affirmed by al-Gazālī: “The terms ‘possible’ and ‘necessary’ are obscure, unless one understands by ‘necessary’ that which has no cause for its existence and by ‘possible’ that which has a cause for its existence”126 and this is taken up by Averroes in his criticism of the body of the proof.127 Averroes will indeed object to the claim of evidence of the distinction between necessary and possible when understood as a distinction between what has no cause and what has a cause.128

There is however one text written by Avicenna which apparently contradicts what I have just said as the first distinction made in it is that between what has a cause and what has none. This is a short epistle on the affirmation of God’s unity (al-ṭawḥīd), known as

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123 Šīfā: Ilāhiyyāt, I, 6, 37, 7–11, text quoted by Wisnovsky, Avicenna’s Metaphysics, p. 256. The translation is his.
124 Wisnovsky, Avicenna’s Metaphysics, p. 263.
126 TT, IV, p. 277, ll. 12–13.
127 TT, IV, p. 276, ll. 10–11: “Avicenna wanted to give a general sense to this statement, and he gave to the ‘possible’ the meaning of ‘what has a cause’, as al-Gazālī relates”.
128 TT, X, p. 417, l. 13–p. 418, l. 1: “We have already said that if by ‘necessary existent’ is understood the causeless and by ‘possible existent’ is understood that which has a cause, the division of being into these two sections is not acknowledged […]”; TT, IV, p. 279, ll. 10–12: “To divide existents primarily into what is possible and what is not possible is not valid, I mean that it is not a division that comprehends [tahṣuru] existent qua existent” (the translation is mine).
al-Risāla al-ʿaršiyya. Its first section establishes a Necessary Existent. This is how it begins:

You must know that the existent either has a cause of its existence or has no cause. If it does have a cause, it is a possible [existent] [al-mumkin], whether before existence when we suppose it in the mind, or when it exists [fit ḥālati al-wugūd], for the coming into existence (duḥūluhu ḏī al-wugūd) of the possible of existence does not remove from it its possibility. If [on the other hand] it does not have a cause of its existence, in any way whatsoever, it is a necessary existent.

One may wonder to what extent this epistle questions what has been deduced from the analysis of Avicenna’s major works. The inversion of the order of the distinctions can perhaps be accounted for by the nature of the epistle and of the addressee. But this goes beyond the object of this article. What we need to establish is whether this text can be al-Miklātī’s direct source. This seems very unlikely, for the rest of the epistle does not correspond to our text. Moreover, there is yet another difference between al-Miklātī’s account and Avicenna’s theory which points less ambiguously towards Averroes. That it might be one of Averroes’ sources is a completely different question which again cannot be addressed here.

The second difference concerns Averroes’ understanding of Avicenna’s division of beings. Indeed Avicenna’s distinction between necessary and possible when considered independently of concrete existence is a conceptual distinction between what cannot be thought not to exist without implying a contradiction and what can be thought to exist or not to exist without any contradiction following either of the suppositions. When applied to existents outside the soul, the distinction is made more precise in two different ways: either the necessary is subdivided into necessary through itself and necessary through another, this latter is then shown to be possible through itself; or the precision “through itself” is added and the division is then between the necessary through itself and the possible through itself, whereupon it is specified that the possible through itself can exist in actual fact only when rendered necessary through another, namely its cause. In both cases, the result is a two-fold division of existents: the Necessary Existent through Himself which is God and the existents necessary through another, possible through themselves. The latter group includes all existents except God, i.e. both sublunary existents submitted to generation and corruption and eternal

129 Avicenna, Rasāʾil al-ṣayḥ al-raʾis Abī ʿAlī al-Ḥusayn ibn Ṭābil Allāh ibn Sīnā (Iran, 1980).
130 The translation is mine.
132 Id., p. 546, l. 11; p. 547, l. 12.
supralunar existents. Avicenna distinguishes inside this group between existents that are necessary through another perpetually (dāʿīman) and those that are necessary through another at one time and not at another.134 Thus, we end up with a three-fold division of existents: necessary through itself (God); possible through itself, necessary through another perpetually (supralunary beings); possible through itself, necessary through another at one time (sublunary beings). But the main separation is between God and the rest of existents. Averroes admits this three-fold division but, as an Aristotelian, cannot accept to place the main separation between God and the rest, for the main separation, for Averroes, is between the supralunary and the sublunary world.135 Averroes has a clear conception of Avicenna’s division and of its implications but misunderstands or chooses to misunderstand Avicenna’s formulations. He believes that, when Avicenna talks of the “necessary through another possible through itself”, he means the supralunary existents, as opposed to the possible existents which are not necessary through another: the sublunary existents.136 In the TT, the three-fold division is not stated in an explicit way137 but it is clear that the necessary through another is understood by him as designating the heavens. In the eighth discussion, p. 394, he writes: “And the thing moved by this movement [i.e. the movement which is partly eternal, partly temporal] is what Avicenna calls ‘the existence necessary through another’, and this ‘necessary through another’ must be a body everlastingly moved” and a little further, p. 395: “What led Avicenna to this division was that he believed that the body of the heavens was essentially

134 Šīfa: Ilāhiyyāt, Book I, chap. 7, §14: “As regards the possible existent, from this its specific property has become evident – namely, that it necessarily needs some other thing to render it existing in actuality. Whatever is a possible existent is always, considered in itself, a possible existent; but it may happen that its existence becomes necessary through another. This may either occur to it always, or else its necessary existence through another may not be permanent – occurring, rather, at one time and not another.” The underlining is mine.

135 At first sight, Avicenna and Averroes’ divisions appear to be similar, but both the two-fold and the three-fold divisions correspond to two diametrically opposed conceptions of the universe:

- **Avicenna:** Necessary through itself (uncaused) // Possible through itself (caused)
- **Averroes:** Necessary (i.e. eternal) // Possible (i.e. contingent)

136 Cf. Davidson, Proofs for Eternity, pp. 318–20. In one work, namely his Long Commentary of Physics (VIII, C79), the division is understood slightly differently by Averroes: the incorporeal movers of the spheres are included in the first group with the first principle, and the second group contains only the celestial spheres.

137 In the fourth discussion, pp. 276–7, he understands, in accordance with al-Gazālī, the distinction between what is possible and what is not possible to signify the distinction between what has a cause and what has none, and writes that what has a cause can be divided into what is possible and what is necessary (darāʾī) but it is not clear whether or not Averroes attributes this subdivision and the expressions “truly possible” and “necessary-possible” to Avicenna.
necessary through another, possible by itself”. We find the same idea in the tenth discussion, p. 418:

Avicenna wanted by this division only to conform to the opinion of the philosophers concerning existents, for all philosophers agree that the body of the heavens is necessary [darūrī] through something else.

There is one text where the division of possible existents into those that are necessary through another and those that are possible through another, namely their agent, is stated by Averroes and attributed to Avicenna:

He [Avicenna] believes that every existent, except God, when it is considered in itself is possible and contingent and that these contingent beings are of two kinds: one kind that is contingent in view of its agent, and the other is necessary in view of its agent, possible in view of itself, and that the necessary in all respects is the first agent.\(^\text{138}\)

Let us come back to our text. What we have here is exactly this “erroneous” restitution of Avicenna’s division of beings, exposed here in the most explicit way:

That which is conceived through no cause is called “a necessary existent” and that which is conceived through a cause [min qibaliʿilla] is called “a possible existent”. This latter is then divided, according to Avicenna, into two parts: if its existence is perpetual, he calls it a necessary existent through another, [possible] through itself; and if its existence is not perpetual, it must necessarily be a possible existent through itself and through another.\(^\text{139}\)

It makes no sense for Avicenna to talk of a concrete existent that is possible through another. That an existent is possible through itself means that, when it is considered in itself, independently from its relation to another, it can be thought either to exist or not to exist. When considered in relation to another — its cause —, the existent is either necessary when this other is present, or impossible when it is absent.

All these elements are significant clues in favour of the hypothesis that Averroes is al-Miklātī’s source. However, Averroes and al-Miklātī could also have a common source, either direct — Avicenna himself — or indirect — an Avicennian or anti-Avicennian intermediary. The question of the reception of Avicenna’s works and doctrines in the Andalusian world is very complex and calls for further study. In the present state of knowledge on the matter, such an alternative theory cannot be totally overruled. My intention in what precedes has been to produce some arguments in favour of the first explanation. If we


\(^{139}\) The underlining is mine.
admit – at least as a hypothesis – that Averroes is indeed al-Miklātī’s source, we still need to determine if the work al-Miklātī is reading and copying is the lost treatise.

One first argument in favour of this hypothesis is a negative one: this restitution can be found nowhere in Averroes’ extant works. We find nothing of the sort in the TT where Avicenna’s proof is more alluded to or characterised than exposed and developed at length and for itself. The same can be said of the Epitome on Metaphysics. Moreover, al-Miklātī introduces his presentation of Avicenna’s doctrine with these words: “We shall now present, succinctly [alā āğāz], what Avicenna says”. And, as quoted above, this is what, according to Wolfson’s translation from the Hebrew, al-Lāwī writes about Averroes’ treatise: “In that treatise of his Averroes opens the discussion by reproducing some of Avicenna’s words on this problem”.141 The French translation from the Arabic reads: “Abū al-Walīd commence son opuscule en résumant certains textes d’Abū ‘Alī sur la question”.142 I was not able to check the Hebrew and the Arabic behind the translations “some of Avicenna’s words” and “en résumant” but it is not unlikely that ‘alā āğāz refers to the same idea. Another sign can be seen in a remark made by al-Lāwī: “We do not consider that we can be content here with the usual speculative examination concerning this object of research. It is indeed [commonly] said that if these two existents have necessary existence in common, and yet differ at the same time on another point, [the result] is necessarily composition, which is absurd”.143 For this reason, he gives a different proof of the impossibility of two necessary existents. This “usual speculative examination” is very close to the argumentation attributed to Avicenna by al-Miklātī:

He also posits as part of his proprieties that there cannot exist two of its kind, I mean that there cannot exist two existents each of which is a necessary existent through itself, for duality requires a difference [muğāyara] in at least one meaning, and the fact that they are both necessary existents through themselves requires that they share the meaning of necessary existent, so that there will be in each of them two meanings: one which they share and another by which [they diverge]. But what corresponds to this description is a possible existent by itself, a necessary existent by another.144

140 Averroes evokes Avicenna’s conception of his own proof: “superior to those given by the Ancients”, “based on the essence of the existent” (IV, p. 276; same idea in X, p. 419); he exposes briefly some aspects of Avicenna’s argumentation that he criticises – such as the idea that the existent necessary through another is in itself a possible existent – (VIII, p. 395) and gives his interpretation of the motives that led Avicenna to conceive such a proof (VIII, p. 395; X, p. 418).
141 Wolfson, “Averroes’ lost treatise”, fragment 1, p. 406. The underlining is mine.
142 Vajda, “Un champion de l’avicennisme”, p. 486. The underlining is mine.
143 Idem, p. 492. The translation from the French is mine.
144 The underlining is mine.
Al-Lāwī’s remark might be an allusion to Averroes’ restitution of Avicenna’s proof. But this raises the following question: where does Averroes find such a formulation of the proof? For the proof of the uniqueness of God is not expressed in such a concise way in Avicenna’s works. The closest to our text is its formulation in the Naḡâṭ, although the reference to discourse does not appear in our text:

[... ] If they have one thing in common, and if each of them has in addition to [this thing] its own distinct meaning by which its quiddity is completed and which is part of it [its quiddity], then each one of the two is divisible in discourse [bi-al-gawl]. But it has been said that the necessary existent is not divisible in discourse, thus not even one of the two is a necessary existent.

Other parts of our text also seem to find no strict equivalent in Avicenna’s works though they do not contradict his doctrine. This seems to indicate either that Averroes possessed a text that has since been lost, or, on the contrary, that Averroes did not have the whole of Avicenna’s works and therefore attempted to reconstruct a coherent argumentation from the different – possibly incomplete – texts or accounts he had of Avicenna’s proof, supplying it with arguments when it seemed to lack consistency. What al-Lāwī says – from what can be read in the French translation – gives support to the second hypothesis: Averroes, according to him, summarized Avicenna’s doctrine from various texts. Averroes might have wanted to give a unified and purified version of Avicenna’s proof, regardless of the divergences he might have noticed between his different works, so as to enable him to make a univocal and consistent criticism.

This criticism can also offer an additional sign in favour of the identification of this text with Averroes’ restitution in the treatise On the Prime Mover, for as al-Lāwī notes: this treatise is made up of two parts, the first one is devoted to the criticism of the proof, the second one to the refutation of Avicenna’s motive for this special proof: his belief in the separation between the First Mover and the First Principle. To achieve this refutation, Averroes will show that the first principle – which he identifies with the first mover – is not an efficient cause but a formal and final cause: “In his endeavor to contradict this view and to prove that the First Principle is identical with the First Mover, Averroes starts out by showing that the First Principle is not the efficient cause of anything inferior to it but is its cause only by way of form”. In order to criticise this precise point one would first need to present Avicenna’s doctrine which states

146 Avicenna, al-Naḡâṭ, p. 559.
147 This is the case of the development on the four causes.
149 Wolfson, “Averroes’ lost treatise”, fragment 6, p. 421.
that the Necessary Existent is an efficient cause, as is the case in our
text. Al-Miklātī on the other hand does not deny the causal efficiency
of God – although, according to him, God is a voluntary and not a
necessary agent. For the purpose of his own refutation, al-Miklātī
could have presented Avicenna’s proof independently from the dis-
cussion of the causes. This point is not crucial in al-Miklātī’s criticism,
and he will simply deny that Avicenna is able to demonstrate such
a point: “his assertion that the Necessary Existent through Himself
cannot be a matter nor a form nor an end is false [kalām bāṭil]
because, to deny each of these [eventualities], [Avicenna] confined
himself to allegations devoid of demonstration”.150

About al-Miklātī’s criticism, one final remark can be made. Al-Lāwī
informs us that Averroes addresses two kinds of criticisms: a material
one against the premises of Avicenna’s proof and a formal one which
shows that, even if the premises were admitted, the proof would not
attain its goal for it is not demonstrative.151 In a similar way,
al-Miklātī criticises both the content and the form of Avicenna’s
proof. First he rejects Avicenna’s premises: he denies the validity of
the division of possible existents into existents that are possible
through themselves, necessary through another, and existents that
are possible both through themselves and through another. Indeed,
this division enables Avicenna to reserve temporal adventicity to
the second group of possible existents, the first group being eternal
and therefore perpetually advented, whereas al-Miklātī believes he
has demonstrated that all possible existents are adventice, which
means – for the theologian that he is – that all possible existents
come to existence from non-existence and in time. Then he restates
some of Avicenna’s affirmations and denies that he has produced a
demonstration of them. Finally, in conclusion, he repeats what he
had already concluded a few pages earlier (p. 163): that even if, for
the sake of discussion (ḡadalan), he admitted that Avicenna had suc-
cceeded in establishing an agent necessarily existent through itself,
this would still be incompatible with the philosopher’s affirmation of
the eternity of the world and of some of the existents that constitute
it. Not surprisingly, Averroes and al-Miklātī’s material criticisms
have nothing in common for their aims are opposed. It is nevertheless
interesting to note that Averroes and al-Miklātī are both encumbered
by the group of existents that are said to be “possible through them-
selves, necessary through another” and which correspond – according
to Averroes’ interpretation – to the intermediary group of the eternal
caused existents. But, whereas Averroes rejects the possible nature

150 Quintessence, p. 167.
of these necessary existents, al-Miklātī refuses the necessity – in the sense of eternity – of these possible existents, and shows that as long as they are held to be so, it cannot be proved that God is their producer.

All this put together seems to provide sufficient evidence to justify if not the certainty, at least the high probability of the hypothesis that Averroes’ treatise On the Prime Mover is the source from which al-Miklātī derives this passage.

CONCLUSION

In this article I intended to present al-Miklātī and his work, and I hope that this first and partial presentation is sufficient to convince the reader of the importance and interest of a further study. I have tried to give a first glimpse of the variety and complexity of his relations to Averroes by showing some of the numerous uses he makes of the latter’s works, and in particular of the Tahāfut al-Tahāfut. No direct conclusions can be made from the omnipresence of Averroes who is however not named even once. But it does give some clues as to the reception his work received in the years that immediately followed his death, and offers some keys – if not to how we must understand it – at least to how we must not understand it. In a different way, al-Miklātī gives us direct access to Averroes by revealing parts of a treatise now lost. If my hypothesis is true, al-Miklātī provides us with an important passage of the treatise On the Prime Mover, which is crucial to our understanding of Averroes’ comprehension of Avicenna’s proof and might help to establish exactly what the Andalusian philosopher knew of his Persian predecessor’s doctrine and which texts or parts of texts he must have had at his disposal. All this remains a desideratum.

I also hope to have shown that all of al-Miklātī’s interest does not lie in what he can teach us about Averroes, but that he is worth studying in himself. By the nature and aim of his work, as well as by the method he adopts, al-Miklātī appears to be an heir worthy of al-Gazālī. His mastery of the art of logic enables him to confront philosophers as an equal.

If I have shown some aspects of our theologian’s relation to philosophers, I have not yet tackled his relation to the other mutakallimūn. Indeed, al-Miklātī’s position on various doctrinal points within Ašʿarism remains to be examined. Whether his long and close association with philosophical texts influenced his Ašʿarism is something I intend to investigate in my PhD thesis.

152 What he rejects is the essential possibility that Avicenna attributes to them but he admits that they are possible in their local movement.
APPENDIX: A QUOTATION OF "AVICENNA" IN AL-MIKLÁTÍ’S
QUINTESSENCE, PP. 163–6

 ונحن الآن نورد كلام أبي علي بن سينا، على إيجاز، ونبيين الاعتراض عليه، مستعينين بالله تعالى. قال أبو علي بن سينا:

 الدليل على إثبات الصانع أن كل موجود يتصور أنه موجود [لا بعلا] خارج النفس، فلا يخلو تصوره من أحد أمنين:

 إذا أنتصور أنه موجود لا بعلا، وإما أن تتصور أنه موجود بعلا. ويسمي الذي يتصور وجوده بغير علة: واحب الوجود؛ والذي يتصور وجوده من قبل علة:

 ممكن الوجود. ثم هذا يقسم عند أبي علي بن سينا قسمين:

 فإن كان موجود دائما، سماه واجب الوجود من قبل غيره <ممكنة> من قبل ذاته؛ فإن كان غير دائم الوجود، وجب أن يكون ممكن الوجود من ذاته، ومن غيره.

 قال: وهذا هو الذي يجب أن يتقدمه العدم الزماني وأن تكون له مادة متقدمة عليه بالزمان.

 ثم يضع أن من خاصة ممكن الوجود من ذاته ألا يوجد إلا من غيره، وسواه كان من الغير ممكنة أو واجبًا. ثم يضع أن من خواص واجب الوجود من ذاته أن يكون واحداً بسيطًا، وذلك أنه إن كان من مكانة، وجب أن يكون ممكن الوجود من ذاته، وعجب الوجود لغيره، وقد ادعى واجب الوجود من ذاته. وذلك خلف لا يمكن.

 وكذلك يضع من خواصه ألا يوجد منه أثنا، أعني أنه لا يوجد موجودان كل واحد منهما واجب الوجود بذاته؛ فإن الإثنيينية تقتضي مغايرة في معنى من

1 في المطبوع: ألا.
2 في المطبوع: أن لا.
المعاني. وكون كل واحد منهما واجب الوجود بذاته يقتضي اشتراكا بينهما في معين واجب الوجود.

فيكون في كل منهما معنى: أحدهما يشتركان فيه والثاني يفتقده. وما كان به هذا الصفة فهو ممكن الوجود من ذاته، واجب الوجود من غيره.

قال: فإذا صح هذا، فقول:

إن كل واحد من الأشياء الأربعة أعني: الهيولة، والفاعل، والصورة، والرؤية، وترتقى كل واحد منها إلى سبب أول، أعني أن الأسباب الفاعلة ترتفع إلى فاعل أول عنده، والمادة إلى مادة أولى، والرؤية إلى غاية أولى، والصورة إلى صورة أولى.

ثم يضع أن كل واحد من هذه الأسباب الأول، ما عدا الفاعل ليس يمكن في شيء منها أن يكون واجب الوجود بذاته، بل كل أول منها هو ممكن الوجود من ذاته، واجب من غيره.

وذلك لأن الصورة الأول للحجر الأول، كانت قلت جرم السماء الأول، لما كانت لا تقوم إلا في مادة عنده، والمادة لا توجد إلا مقتزمة مع الصورة كان كل واحد منها، أعني الصورة والمادة، داخلًا في جنس الممكن من ذاته، الواجب من غيره.

وذلك يشبه أن يظهر الأمر في الغاية من قبل أنها صورة لذي غاية وكمال له، فمن ضرورة وجودها، وجود ما قبل الغاية.

وإذا كانت الأشياء كلها، إما مركبات، وإما أسبابا، وكان كل واحد من هذه ممكن الوجود بذاته وإن كان واجبا بغيره، وقد تقرر أن ممكن الوجود بذاته، وإن كان واجبا بغيره، يحتاج في وجوده إلى واجب الوجود من ذاته، وإلا يمرب الأمر.

3 في المطبوع: يعترف.
4 في المطبوع: هذه.
5 في المطبوع: يغير.
إلى غير نهاية، ولما كان هذا ليس يمكن أن يكون مركبا، ولا صورة، ولا مادة ولا غاية؛ فقد بقي أن يكون سبيلا فاعلاً.

وإذا كان ذلك كذلك، فالكل مختصر مبتذع لواجب الوجود، حتى الهيولى بصورة الجسم السماوي، بل الجسم السماوي بأسره.

بمدة انتهى كلام أبي علي بن سينا.

٦ في المطبوع: بأمره.