

## New Light on the Reception of al-Ghazālī's *Doctrines of the Philosophers* (*Maqāṣid al-Falāsifa*)\*

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I

In the preface to his *Maqāṣid al-falāsifa* (*The Doctrines of the Philosophers*),<sup>1</sup> Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) explains that this book is intended to act as a prelude to his more influential work *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* (*The Incoherence of the Philosophers*). Before putting forth his refutation of many of the philosophers' doctrines and arguments in the latter book, he found it imperative, as he indicates, to expound them to the non-specialist reader. This he does in a concise and neutral manner in the *Maqāṣid*, which he divides into three parts, on logic, metaphysics and physics, respectively. The philosophers' metaphysical doctrines, he writes, are mostly erroneous, their logic mostly correct, whereas their physics contain a mixture of truth and falsehood. Truth, as he indicates in the preface, will be sifted from falsehood elsewhere: 'The erroneousness of [those doctrines] that one ought to deem erroneous will be made clear in the *Tahāfut*.'<sup>2</sup> A similar point is made in the concluding statement in the *Maqāṣid*:

This is all that we had intended to report (*nahkī*) concerning [the philosophers'] disciplines of logic, metaphysics and physics, without seeking to sift the good from the bad, or what is true from what is false. After this, we will commence *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*, so that the falsehood of what is false among these views becomes evident.<sup>3</sup>

It is widely accepted nowadays that the philosophical positions presented in the *Maqāṣid* often do not correspond to those criticized in the *Tahāfut*. This, however, will not affect the argument of the present paper.

For the purposes of the present article, we need to underscore two distinct, but closely-related elements in both the preface and concluding statement of the *Maqāṣid*. First (the second sentence in the above concluding statement), al-Ghazālī refers to his criticism of the philosophers in the *Tahāfut*, indicating that that is his ultimate goal. He presents the *Maqāṣid* as being preparatory for that project, since it offers a comprehensive account of the philosophers' doctrines and thought. Second (the first sentence in the above

\* I am grateful to Dr Jules Janssens for commenting on an earlier draft of this paper. Needless to say, I alone am responsible for the arguments and conclusions presented herein.

1. For my translation of al-Ghazālī's title as *The Doctrines of the Philosophers*, as opposed to *The Intentions of the Philosophers* as it is commonly rendered, see the Appendix at the end of this article.

2. Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid al-falāsifa*, ed. M. Ṣ. al-Kurdī, 3 parts in one vol., Cairo, 1936, pt. 1, p. 3. For an English translation of the whole preface, see D. B. Macdonald, 'The Meanings of the Philosophers by al-Ghazzālī', *Isis*, 25, 1936, pp. 9–15 (11).

3. Al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 3, pp. 76–7.

concluding statement), he declares his adoption of a neutral and non-committal stance in the *Maqāṣid*, such that he presents his account of the philosophers' positions without passing judgement thereon. These two elements may seem inseparable: to undertake a scholarly critical project, it makes good sense first to provide a neutral account of what is being criticized. However, the opposite is not as obvious: adopting a neutral stance in presenting the views of an individual thinker or a school of thought does not necessarily have to prepare for a criticism of these views, but could be undertaken for a variety of other reasons.

On the basis of the prefatory and concluding statements, the *Maqāṣid* was widely believed to have been written immediately before the *Tahāfut*, which, according to a note in one manuscript, MS Istanbul, Fatih 2921, was finished in 488/1095.<sup>4</sup> George Hourani dates the *Maqāṣid* to the period between 484/1091–2 and 486/1093–4.<sup>5</sup> This early dating has been contested of late, mainly since it has become clear that the philosophical positions outlined in this book frequently diverge from those tackled in the *Tahāfut*.<sup>6</sup> Jules Janssens argues that the earliest version of the *Maqāṣid* should in fact be dated much earlier than the *Tahāfut*. The book, he concludes, was written by the young al-Ghazālī in his student days, when he 'was probably an adept of the (Avicennan-inspired) philosophy of his time'.<sup>7</sup> The preface and the concluding statement are explained as later additions by al-Ghazālī postdating the *Tahāfut*.<sup>8</sup> Yet another assessment is put forth by Frank Griffel, who has recently suggested that the *Maqāṣid* was written after the *Tahāfut*, in the same late period in which al-Ghazālī wrote his *al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl*, i.e. around 501/1107. He supports this with three pieces of evidence: that 'the *Maqāṣid* refers explicitly to the *Tahāfut*, while the *Tahāfut* refers to many of al-Ghazālī's books but not to the *Maqāṣid*'; that there are resemblances between the motifs and style of the preface of the *Maqāṣid* and the *Munqidh*; and that al-Ghazālī felt that some of his readers were unprepared for the study of the *Tahāfut*, and later might have felt the need to write the *Maqāṣid* as a preparatory text.<sup>9</sup>

4. M. Bouyges, *Essai de chronologie des oeuvres de al-Ghazali (Algazel)*, ed. M. Allard, Beirut, 1959, p. 23; also al-Ghazālī, *Tahāfut al-falāsifa [Algazel Tahāfut al-falāsifa]*, ed. M. Bouyges, Beirut, 1927, p. ix.

5. G. F. Hourani, 'The Chronology of Ghazālī's Writings', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 79, 1959, pp. 225–33 (227); id. 'A Revised Chronology of Ghazālī's Writings', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 104, 1984, pp. 289–302 (292). Cf. 'A. Badawī, *Mu'allafāt al-Ghazālī*, Kuwait, 1977, pp. 53–62.

6. See, for instance, J. Janssens, 'Al-Ghazzālī and His Use of Avicennian Texts', in *Problems in Arabic Philosophy*, ed. M. Maróth, Piliscsaba, 2003, pp. 37–49 (43–5); id. 'Al-Ghazzālī's *Tahāfut*: Is it Really a Rejection of Ibn Sinā's Philosophy?', *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 12, 2001, pp. 1–17.

7. Janssens, 'Al-Ghazzālī and his Use of Avicennian Texts' (n. 6 above), p. 48.

8. A similar view is arrived at by G. Reynolds ('A Philosophical Odyssey: Ghazzālī's *Intentions of the Philosophers*', in *Medieval Philosophy and the Classical Tradition in Islam, Judaism and Christianity*, ed. J. Inglis, London, 2002, pp. 37–50 (45)), who also suggests the possibility that the preface and concluding statement were added by one of al-Ghazālī's disciples. I find this last scenario extremely remote.

9. F. Griffel, 'MS London, British Library Or. 3126: An Unknown Work by al-Ghazālī on Metaphysics and Philosophical Theology', *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 17, 2006, pp. 1–42 (8–10).

In the present article, we will not seek to address the questions of the dating of the *Maqāṣid* and its relation to the *Tahāfut* or to other Ghazālian works, and hence will not pass judgement on any of these three positions, since we are here mainly preoccupied with the reception of the text. Notwithstanding, we need to consider the possibility that the *Maqāṣid* may have been written in stages and that, at an early stage, it may have lacked the preface and concluding statement found in the text as we now know it, and thus contained no suggestions that the ultimate goal of the book was to prepare for the criticism meted out against the philosophers in the *Tahāfut*.

One piece of evidence that is often cited to corroborate this proposition is the fact that the preface and concluding statement are not transmitted in the Latin translation. Janssens argues that 'the absence of the prologue is not necessarily the result of an historical misfortune in the transmission of the text, whether in the Arabic or in the Latin tradition, or of any deliberate omission. It might simply reflect the oldest state of the text.'<sup>10</sup> And Gabriel Reynolds writes:

With the exception of the preface and the conclusion, the *Intentions* reads as a systematic and faithful exposition of philosophy. The preface and conclusion read as somewhat awkward appendices. Could they be the work of a later redactor who sought to set the *Intentions* within the greater context of Ghazzālī's career? Proof of this perhaps lies with the Latin manuscripts, which by and large do not contain these appendices, most likely because the *Intentions* was translated before they were added.<sup>11</sup>

The Latin translation, produced in Toledo in the third quarter of the twelfth century, begins at the beginning of the logical part of the text,<sup>12</sup> hence leaving out the book's preface, and also does not transmit the last sentence appearing in the Arabic text, which refers to the *Tahāfut*. Does the absence of these two parts in the translation suggest that it may reflect an earlier version of the text, and that the Arabic text as we know it preserves a later revision in which the preface and concluding statement were appended to the body of the text? Or were these two parts simply removed shortly before, or during the process of translating the text into Latin? We will return to this question a little further below.

The absence, in the Latin translation, of the preface and concluding statement, and thereby of any references to the author's criticism of the philosophers in another work and of any indications that he was hardly committed to the book's contents, resulted in the book being widely perceived in medieval Europe as a compendium of Avicennan philosophy, straight and simple. Algazel was seen as a philosopher and a faithful follower

10. Janssens, 'Al-Ghazālī's *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifa*. The Latin Translation', in *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. H. Lagerlund, 3 vols, Dordrecht, forthcoming.

11. Reynolds, 'A Philosophical Odyssey' (n. 8 above), pp. 43–4.

12. C. Lohr, 'Logica Algazelis: Introduction and Critical Text', *Traditio*, 21, 1965, pp. 223–90 (239); corresponding to al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 1, p. 4.

of Ibn Sīnā, exhibiting hardly any originality, not to mention any sign of the attitude embodied in the *Tabāfut*.<sup>13</sup> Only one extant Latin manuscript, MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, lat. 16096, contains al-Ghazālī's preface and concluding statement. However, this more complete version dates to the late thirteenth century, and is thus considerably later than the first and prevalent translation, and had minimal impact on the reception of the *Maqāṣid* and the image of its author in medieval Europe.<sup>14</sup>

By contrast, all Arabic manuscript copies of the *Maqāṣid* known so far contain the preface and conclusion which refer to the *Tabāfut*. It would appear that the reception of this Ghazālian book in the medieval Islamic context was inseparably tied to the context of its author's own self-declared project of disputing with the philosophers. This, however, was not the only way in which the book was received in Arabic, as will become clear with a newly-discovered manuscript of the *Maqāṣid*, to be described and discussed next.

## II

MS Dublin, Chester Beatty Library Ar 5328 is catalogued in Arthur Arberry's *Handlist* as a copy of the well-known philosophical text *Ḥikmat al-ʿayn* by Najm al-Dīn al-Kātibī al-Qazwīnī (d. 675/1276–7).<sup>15</sup> This attribution to al-Kātibī is based on two explicit indications in the manuscript of the identity of the text.

The recto of the flyleaf (fol. i) in this codex contains the foregoing title and author's name, written in a modern hand. The recto of the following folio, fol. 1a, is blank, except for a note stating that the volume was owned by a certain Muḥammad ʿAlī ibn al-Shaykh ʿUthmān al-Muṭabbib in Aleppo, apparently a physician, on whom I have found no information. The top margin of fol. 1b also contains the title, *Ḥikmat al-ʿayn*, and the three main parts comprising the text contained in the manuscript: logic, metaphysics and physics. This, however, is in a later hand, which is evidently earlier than, and hence the source of, the title and author's name on the recto of the flyleaf, fol. i. The fact that the parts indicated in the marginal heading on fol. 1b do not correspond to the contents of al-Kātibī's work (which consists of two parts, on metaphysics and physics, respectively)

13. For an overview of the reception of the *Maqāṣid* in medieval Europe, see Janssens, 'Al-Ghazālī's *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifa*. The Latin Translation' (n. 10 above). See also M.-T. D'Alverny, 'Algazel dans l'Occident latin', in M. T. d'Alverny, *La transmission des textes philosophiques et scientifiques au Moyen Âge*, ed. C. Burnett, Aldershot, 1994, VII; T. Hanley, 'St. Thomas' Use of Al-Ghazālī's *Maqāṣid al-falāsifa*', *Medieval Studies*, 44, 1982, pp. 243–71.

14. These parts are published in D. Salman, 'Algazel et les latins', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge*, 10, 1936, pp. 103–27 (125–7).

15. A. J. Arberry, *The Chester Beatty Library: A Handlist of the Arabic Manuscripts*, 8 vols, Dublin, 1964, vol. 7, pp. 101–2. A descriptive catalogue is currently being produced for the Library's collection of Arabic manuscripts and will eventually replace Arberry's handlist, which, though useful, is very brief and generally unreliable. My contribution to this project has given me the opportunity to work with this manuscript and to identify the text contained therein. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chester Beatty Library for permitting me to reproduce images of this manuscript in the present article.

betrays the carelessness with which this heading was added. My guess is that the responsibility for this heading most probably lies with a private or professional seller, who was aware of the difficulty of selling a completely title-less book by an anonymous author. The erroneous title and author's name were simply reproduced by Arberry in his *Handlist*, clearly without an adequate examination of the text, despite the availability of another manuscript containing al-Kātibī's *Ḥikmat al-'ayn* in the Chester Beatty Library collection, MS Ar 3792, fols. 49b–111b, with which the text in MS Ar 5328 could have been compared.

The manuscript does not contain a copyist's colophon or any other clear indications of when, where, by whom, or for whom the copy was produced. On the basis of the style of *naskh* in which the text was copied, I estimate that the manuscript probably originates from sixth/twelfth-century Syria or Iraq. It was clearly produced by a scholar, rather than a professional scribe. Though having access to a complete copy of the manuscript, I have been unable to examine it physically, and thus cannot rule out the possibility of finding further codicological evidence that could allow a different or more accurate dating.

As soon as the text is examined, it becomes evident that the manuscript is not a copy of al-Kātibī's *Ḥikmat al-'ayn*, but in fact a copy of al-Ghazālī's *Maqāṣid al-falāsifa*. However, it is unique among other known Arabic manuscript copies of this book in that, first, it is incomplete at both the beginning and the end, and second, the copy originally bore neither a title nor an author's name.

The text begins on fol. 1b, contrary to custom, without the *basmala*, any praise of God (*ḥamdala*) or of the Prophet, or any preface, but goes straight into a section on logic, starting with its heading:

الفن الأول في دلالة الألفاظ ويتضح المقصود منها بتقسيمات خمسة...<sup>16</sup>

The text thus starts at the beginning of the first section of the logical part of the *Maqāṣid*,<sup>17</sup> and omits both the preface and the introduction of the logical part, which explains what logic is, its benefit and its divisions. The text ends on fol. 105b as follows:<sup>18</sup>

فهذا ما أردنا أن نحكيه عن علومهم المنطقية والإلهية والطبيعية من غير اشتغال بتمييز الغث عن  
السمين والحق عن الباطل

It is immediately striking that the absence of the title, author's name and preface in this copy cannot be due to any folios having gone missing from the beginning of the codex; after all, the copyist started on fol. 1b and left fol. 1a blank. Nor is this omission due to

16. I have added some *hamzas* and dots to the Arabic texts reproduced here.

17. Cf. al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 1, p. 5.

18. Cf. al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 3, pp. 76–7.

حكمة العين الفن الاول المنطقيات الفن الثاني الالفاظ الفن الثالث الجليليات

**الفن الاول** في دلالة الالفاظ وتيض المقصود منها مقسمات خمسة  
 الاول ان دلالة اللفظ على المعنى من ثلاثة اوجه احدها نظريون هـ  
 المطابقة كدلالة لفظ البيت على معناه والاخر بطريق التضمن كدلالة  
 لفظ البيت على الحائط بلخصوص فان لفظ الحائط موضوع للمسمى به  
 على المطابقة وبدل عليه كذلك ولفظ البيت ايضا يدل عليه ولكن  
 يشاركه في وجه الدلالة والثالث بطريق الالتزام كدلالة السقف  
 على الحائط فانه يبين طريق المطابقة والتضمن فلم يكن اختراع اسم ثالث  
 والمستعمل في العلوم المعول على التقيما بطريق المطابقة والتضمن اما  
 الالتزام فلا لان اللوازم ايضا لها لوازم ويتداعي الي امور غير محددة  
 لا يحصل التقا مفرق في شدة تاسه اللفظ ينقسم الي مفرد ومركب  
 اما المفرد فهو الذي لا يراد باجزائه جزا من المعنى كالانسان  
 وانه لا يراد بان ولا بيان معني من اجزا معني الانسان بخلاف  
 قولك غلام زيد وزيد يمشي اذ يراد بالغلام الذي يتجزو من الكلام  
 معني زيد معني واذا قلت عبد الله وكان اسم ملقب كان مفردا  
 لانك لا تقصد به الا ما تقصد بتوكلك زيد وان اردت اللفظ فهو  
 مركب واذا كان كل مسمى بعبد الله عبد الله لا حاله صار هذا اللفظ  
 في حقه كالمشترك تارة يطلق ليعضد التعريف فكون اسما مفردا  
 وتارة يراد للوصف فيكون مركبا **ثالثه** اللفظ ينقسم الي  
 جزوي وكلبي فالجزوي ما يمنع نفس مفهومه من الشركة فيه كتوكل هذا  
 زيد وهذا الفرس ومدن الشجر والكلبي ما لا يمنع نفس تصور مفهومه  
 وقوع الشركة فيه كتوكل الفرس والشجر والانسان فان لم يكن في العالم

الا

Figure 1. The first page of text in MS Dublin, Chester Beatty Library Ar 5328 (fol. 1b).

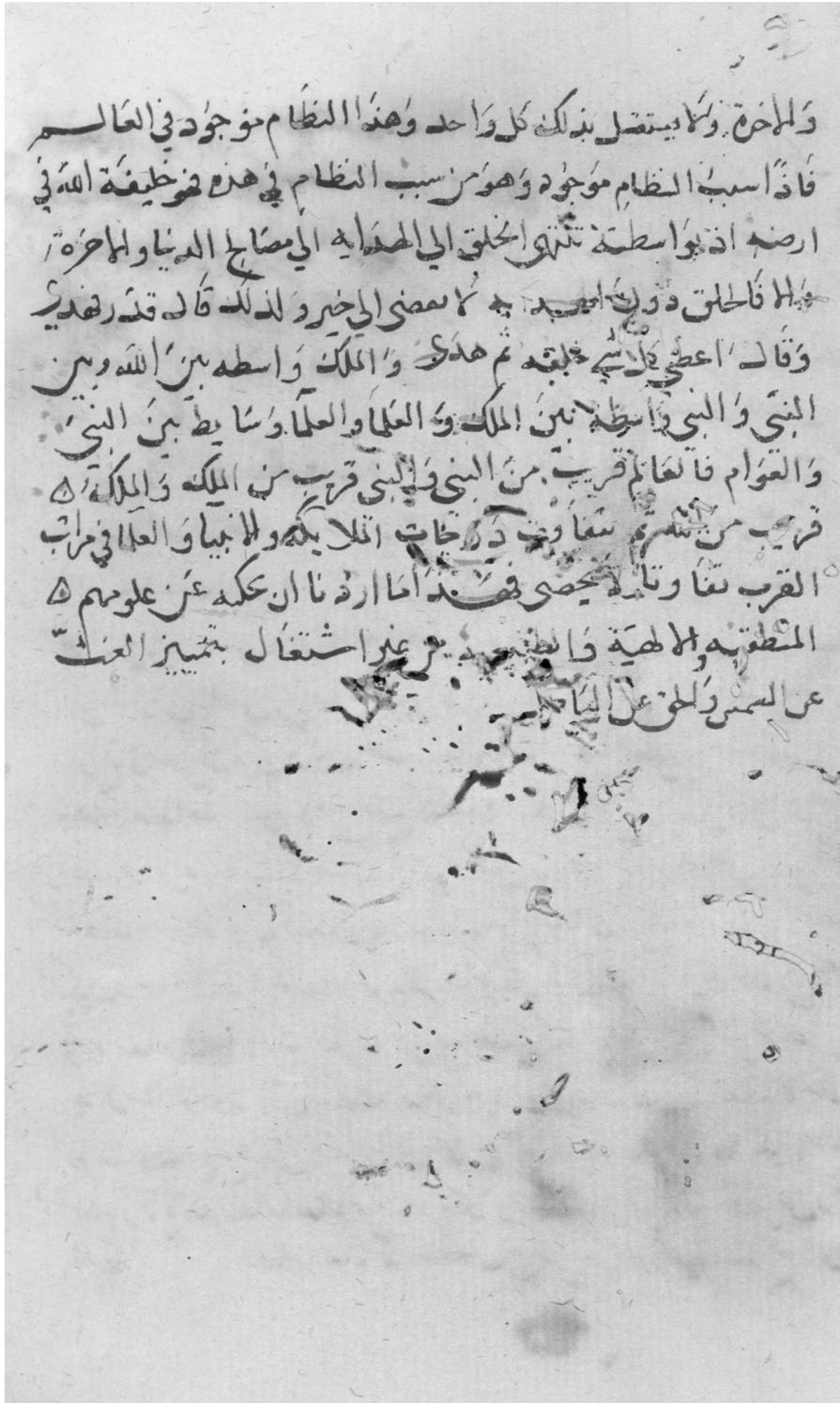


Figure 2. The last page of text in MS Dublin, Chester Beatty Library Ar 5328 (fol. 105b). The folio has been affected by worming.

any folios having gone missing from the beginning of the exemplar, or an ultimate archetype, of this manuscript. For the text begins at a carefully chosen point, namely the beginning of a section; moreover, the absence of the final sentence from the concluding statement leaves no doubt that the omissions cannot be accidental.

So, if not by sheer accident, why then are these parts absent from the beginning and end of this copy of the *Maqāṣid*? Could these omissions, as one would instantly suspect, expose a deliberate trimming at both ends of the text? The responsibility, in this case, would lie squarely with either the copyist or the commissioner of the CBL manuscript, or with the copyist or the commissioner of a possible archetype manuscript. Alternatively, could this copy preserve a primitive version of al-Ghazālī's text, which did not contain the preface and concluding statement in the standard Arabic recension, but which al-Ghazālī later revised mainly (if not solely) by appending these parts to indicate his later critical and non-committal stance towards Avicennan philosophy?

Along the same lines, as has already been mentioned, one may then query the absence of the preface and concluding statement from the Latin translation. Could the preface and concluding statement have been omitted in the process of translating and publishing the text in Latin? If, however, these omissions trace back to the Arabic manuscript source-text of the Latin translation, then two possible scenarios present themselves: first, that the Latin text preserves an earlier version of the *Maqāṣid*, which was later revised by al-Ghazālī; second, that the omissions are the responsibility of a copyist, or the commissioner, of an Arabic manuscript of the text. We should also consider the (rather attractive) possibility that the copy from which the Latin translation was produced may belong to a distinct family of manuscripts of the Arabic *Maqāṣid*, to which the CBL Arabic copy also belongs.

### III

Now, to assess whether the absence of the preface and concluding statement from the CBL copy stems from the author himself, or is the result of a later alteration of the text, we need to take a closer look at the text of the *Maqāṣid*. Without the preface and concluding statement, the *Maqāṣid* will simply be a lucid and well-written compendium of Avicennan philosophy; and indeed it has been shown that the text is essentially a translation of Ibn Sīnā's *Dānishnāme-yi 'Alā'ī*, with adjustments, few important omissions and only minor additions to the source text, some of which based on other Avicennan works.<sup>19</sup> However, it is not true that the stance that finds expression in the preface and concluding statement is echoed nowhere else in the body of the text. The beginning and end of the *Maqāṣid* are in fact not the only manifestly Ghazālīan parts of the book; for there are at least two other, less obvious places that bear a clear resonance with them in

19. J. Janssens, 'Le Dānesh-Nāmeḥ d'Ibn Sīnā: un texte à revoir?', *Bulletin de Philosophie Médiévale*, 28, 1986, pp. 163–77; id., 'Al-Ghazzālī, and His Use of Avicennian Texts' (n. 6 above); M. Alónso, *Algazel – Maqāṣid al-falāsifa o intenciones de los Filósofos*, Barcelona, 1963, pp. xlv–li.

both their language and content. The first appears at the end of the logical part of the work, where al-Ghazālī writes: ‘This is what we had sought to render comprehensible (*tafhīm*) and to report (*ḥikāya*)’.<sup>20</sup> So although al-Ghazālī, as he indicates in the preface of the *Maqāṣid* and in other works, is a firm supporter of logic, his sole objective in this book is merely to offer an account of the philosophers’ logic, and he thus refrains from articulating even the few, generally minor points at which he departs from it. The second place appears immediately afterwards, at the beginning of the metaphysical part, where the author writes:

Know that their [i.e. the philosophers’] custom is to treat physics before [metaphysics]. However, we have preferred to treat the present [subject, i.e. metaphysics] first, because it is more important and controversy within it more widespread, and because it is the ultimate goal (*ghāya*) and endpoint (*maqṣad*) of the [philosophical] disciplines. It is treated after [physics] only because of its obscurity and the difficulty of understanding it before understanding physics. However, we will provide some [brief discussions of] physics intermittently throughout our discussion [of metaphysics], which are necessary to make the meaning (*maqṣūd*) [of the latter] comprehensible. We will comprehensively report the topics of this discipline [viz. metaphysics] (*nastawfi ḥikāyata maqāṣidi ḥādihā l-‘ilm*) in two prefatory discussions and five sections.<sup>21</sup>

These two places lack any reference to the *Tabāfut* or to any intention on al-Ghazālī’s part to criticize the philosophers elsewhere – this being one of the two salient elements of the book’s preface and concluding statement, mentioned above. Nonetheless, these four parts of the *Maqāṣid* (the preface, concluding statement, end of the logical part, and introduction of the metaphysical part) all make explicit the other feature, namely the expression of the author’s non-committal stance vis-à-vis the contents of the book.

The two places in the text, just quoted, show that the author simply seeks to report (*ḥikāya*) and to render comprehensible (*tafhīm*) the topics (*maqāṣid*) discussed by the philosophers. Note that ‘they’, the ‘philosophers’, are constantly spoken of in the third person: an indication that al-Ghazālī neither commits himself to the contents of the work, nor seems to mind portraying himself here as the reporter and expositor. Both places, the end of the logical part and the introduction of the metaphysical part, are present in the CBL copy (fol. 21b). So is the first part of the concluding statement of the text, which gives expression to this same non-committal stance: ‘This is all that we had intended to report (*naḥki*) concerning their disciplines of logic, metaphysics and physics, without seeking to sift the good from the bad, or what is true from what is false’ (fol. 105b).

It would be counter-intuitive to imagine al-Ghazālī alluding, both in the body of his book and at its end, to the purpose of his work and the stance he adopts therein, while

20. Al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 1, p. 65.

21. Al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 2, p. 2. It should be noted that key elements in this passage are drawn from Ibn Sīnā’s *Dānishnāme*, which too deals with metaphysics before physics; cf. Ibn Sīnā, *Dānishnāme-yi ‘Alā’i*, ed. A. Khurāsānī, 2 vols, Tehran, 1936, vol. 1, p. 72.

omitting to make any mention of that at the beginning of the book (or, for that matter, failing to provide a preface of any kind whatsoever). These hints within, and at the end of, the book, at the author's purpose, must be faint echoes of a point made at least as clearly, if not in fact more pronouncedly, in the preface. And the fact that they exhibit marked resonance with certain elements in the preface appearing in the standard Arabic text of the *Maqāṣid* makes it most likely that these elements in the preface were written at the same time as the end of the logical part and the beginning of the metaphysical part of the book. So we can safely conclude that the CBL copy does not represent an earlier, Ghazālian version of the text of the *Maqāṣid*, which lacked a preface, but is rather the result of a later, post-Ghazālian alteration of the text.

Notwithstanding, this does not prove that the missing preface should also make reference to the *Tabāfut*, or that it must have been the same as the preface found in the standard Arabic text. So let us consider the following three possibilities:

- i. that the earliest (and perhaps only) version of the *Maqāṣid* that al-Ghazālī wrote included the references to the *Tabāfut* at its beginning and end, and, at least in that respect, is more or less the same as the text as we now know it;
- ii. that the earliest version that he wrote made clear at the beginning, end and within the text, the author's neutral and non-committal stance, but contained no references to the *Tabāfut*, and that these references in the preface and conclusion were added by al-Ghazālī in a later revision;
- iii. that the earliest version of the book did not contain any indications of the author's neutral and non-committal stance, whether at the beginning, end and within the text, and that these, alongside references to al-Ghazālī's criticism of the philosophers in the *Tabāfut*, were added in a later revision by the author.

Possibility ii, as far as I am aware, has not been considered before; but, as with iii, it presupposes that the book was edited by its author and that its beginning and end underwent considerable changes in the process. The only piece of evidence that, to my knowledge, is cited to lend support to the notion that such an editorial process might have occurred is the fact that the preface and concluding statement are not transmitted in the Latin translation.<sup>22</sup>

22. A previously unknown work by al-Ghazālī, one of his so-called 'books that should be kept hidden from those unworthy of them' (*al-kutub al-maḍnūn bi-hā' alā ghayr ahlihā*), has recently come to light with the publication of a facsimile of a manuscript from a private collection in Iran (published by N. Pourjavady as *Majmū' ah-ye Falsafī-e Marāghab: A Philosophical Anthology from Maraghab*, Tehran, 2002, pp. 2–62). In relation to this, F. Griffel writes that the manuscript 'attributes a version of the *Intentions of the Philosophers* to al-Ghazālī without mentioning that the teachings therein are an uncommitted report' ('Al-Ghazali', *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, first published online on 14 August 2007). However, although drawing heavily and selectively on the *Maqāṣid*, this shorter text is evidently a very different work. It contains major omissions (most obviously, the beginning of the text corresponds to *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 2, p. 59) and additions in both structure and content. Furthermore, the title, preface and objectives of the text are all at variance with those of the *Maqāṣid*. It is, therefore, a completely other and, in all likelihood, later work, which on no account could be treated as a version of *The Doctrines of the Philosophers*.

This evidence is inadmissible. For the Latin translation, too, contains the concluding statement appearing at the end of the logical part and the introduction of the metaphysical part, both of which, as we saw, are intimately tied, in style and content, to elements in the preface and concluding statement as found in the standard Arabic text.<sup>23</sup> On their own, however, these two places in the body of the text could hardly have raised any suspicions and implied that the author might not have been entirely committed to its contents. So it appears that rather than preserving an earlier, Ghazālian version of the *Maqāṣid*, the Latin version too indeed exhibits evidence of a later alteration of the text.

It follows that the thesis that al-Ghazālī first wrote the *Maqāṣid* and then edited it to connect it to the *Tabāfut* cannot be supported by any textual evidence from within the book itself, nor, to my knowledge, has it been substantiated by a robust argument of any sort. Propositions ii and iii above appear highly conjectural.

#### IV

Although both the CBL copy and the Latin translation lack the preface and part of the concluding statement, the two versions are not related. The two texts, first of all, do not share the same starting point: the Latin translation contains the introduction to the logical part of the book (containing a discussion of what logic is, its benefit and its divisions), but this introduction is absent in the CBL copy, which begins at the first section of the logical part. This discrepancy, alongside a major textual defect from which only the CBL copy suffers,<sup>24</sup> excludes the possibility that this manuscript could be a source for the Latin translation.

Moreover, the two versions of the text end at two different points. The CBL copy ends thus: 'This is all that we had intended to report concerning their disciplines of logic, metaphysics and physics, without seeking to sift the good from the bad, or what is true from what is false'. Part of this statement, namely 'without seeking to sift the good from the bad, or what is true from what is false', is missing in the Latin translation.<sup>25</sup> It follows that the Latin translation cannot represent an earlier, amended Arabic version, which underwent a later amendment represented by the CBL copy. The two texts, therefore, must be the outcomes of two independent amendments made to the *Maqāṣid* by two different individuals or parties.

This brings us to why the beginning and end of the *Maqāṣid* are absent from the Latin translation and the CBL copy. Why were they removed? The obvious explanation is that these parts sit uncomfortably with the body of the work: they are the only properly Ghazālian parts of the book; the rest is Avicennan. For the author

23. Lohr, 'Logica Algazelis' (n. 12 above), p. 288; and *Algazel's Metaphysics. A Mediaeval Translation*, ed. J. Muckle, Toronto, 1933, p. 1. The latter source only contains an edition of the metaphysical and physical parts of the book.

24. The bottom half of fol. 3b in the manuscript has been left blank, and a rather lengthy portion of the original text (corresponding to 14.18–19.14 of part 1 of al-Kurdi's edition) is here missing.

25. *Algazel's Metaphysics* (n. 23 above), p. 197.

declares that though the book seeks to set out the philosophers' positions in a neutral manner, its ultimate purpose is to criticize these philosophers and to refute many of their positions. The preface and concluding statement thereby contextualize the work squarely within al-Ghazālī's wider intellectual project. The reader, whether medieval or contemporary, cannot help but constantly be mindful of both the author's lack of commitment to the book's contents and the spectre of the *Tabāfut* looming in the background. For a non-Ghazālian Avicennist, this would have been an irritating and distracting feature of the text, which undermined, and detracted from, its potentially useful philosophical content.

The reception of the *Maqāṣid* has to be considered in the context of the reception of al-Ghazālī's broader theological 'project', in which the book served a relatively peripheral role. This project was met with both opposition and competition. The opposition came from those *falāsifa* who resisted the increasing interaction between *falsafa* and *kalām* from the sixth/twelfth century onwards. And it is most likely a member (or possibly a group) from this trend who was responsible for producing the CBL copy and for the removal of the offending Ghazālian parts at the beginning and end of the text. Even the title and author's name had to be removed to decontextualize this Ghazālian work completely and to use it simply as a compendium of Avicennan philosophy. This had to be done at the expense of leaving the text anonymous: not a major sacrifice considering that the copy appears to have been produced by a scholar for his own private use.

The introduction of the logical part, though essentially Avicennan, appears to have been removed for the same reason. For to illustrate some general logical points, al-Ghazālī allows himself here to use, as particular examples, the three doctrines that, for the rejection of which, he accuses the philosophers of unbelief at the end of the *Tabāfut*. These are the temporal generation of the world, the bodily resurrection of human beings, and the doctrine that acts of obedience will be rewarded in the afterlife, and acts of disobedience punished, which presupposes that God knows particulars.<sup>26</sup> None of these Ghazālian examples, which unmistakably recall the stern verdict made in the *Tabāfut*, have a place in a proper Avicennan text.

The removal of the preface and concluding statement in the Latin translation can similarly be explained as an attempt, again, to decontextualize the book. By contrast to the CBL copy, the author's name was kept primarily because medieval European readers were so oblivious to who Algazel really was, and secondarily because of the extreme difficulty of publishing an anonymous work. The fact that the author's name was preserved indicates that the missing parts were removed in the process of translating and publishing the book, and were not already absent from the Arabic manuscript from which

26. Al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 1, pp. 4–5; cf. *Tabāfut* (n. 4 above), p. 376–7. Incidentally, the connection that these examples betoken between the *Tabāfut* and the introduction of the logical part of the *Maqāṣid* has not, to my knowledge, been considered in discussions of the dating of the latter work. This connection seems to provide further evidence that the *Maqāṣid* was indeed written later than the *Tabāfut*.

the translation was made. For it would be quite senseless for anyone seeking to decontextualize the Arabic text to remove only the beginning and end of the text while keeping al-Ghazālī's name as the author. The introduction of the logical part, with its veiled hints at the verdict of unbelief made against the philosophers in the *Tahāfut*, was also kept, since the Latin reader was unaware of the latter text, and thus, unlike the medieval Arabic reader, would not have discerned these insinuations.

As for the competition to al-Ghazālī's project, this came from later philosophical Ash'arism, initiated most definitively by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210). The deliberately fragmented and multilayered nature of al-Ghazālī's thought made it unwieldy, relatively inaccessible and hard to encompass and imitate. He himself avoided popularising his thought in its totality, and divulged some aspects thereof in works that, he advised, should only be read by the adept few. These works survive in relatively few manuscripts. None of al-Ghazālī's widely-read books offered a rounded systematic summary of his theological and philosophical thought. His major work dealing with philosophical matters, the *Tahāfut*, seeks to refute various aspects of the philosophers' thought, and at the end declares them unbelievers, but does not offer a positive alternative. The *Tahāfut* 'tactical module' of al-Ghazālī's project seems to meet success during the sixth/twelfth century, when some lesser-known thinkers, most importantly Sharaf al-Dīn al-Mas'ūdī and Ibn Ghaylān al-Balkhī, attempt to take it forward.<sup>27</sup> However, the Ghazālian style of philosophical theology became outdated towards the end of this century, as a much more systematic, accessible and confident tradition of Ash'arī philosophical theology emerged. Unlike al-Ghazālī, al-Rāzī never instructs that any parts of his thought or any of his works should remain hidden from the majority, and on the whole shows no qualms about expressing his indebtedness to *al-Shaykh al-Ra'īs* and the *Falāsifa* in general.

From the sixth/twelfth century onwards, the works of Ibn Sīnā started to be taught in Ash'arī circles and *madrāsas*,<sup>28</sup> and Ash'arī works became highly philosophical. Despite the fact that al-Ghazālī himself had an influence on the wave of greater Ash'arī openness towards Ibn Sīnā,<sup>29</sup> there was no longer a need for the *Maqāṣid* as such. So while the Latin and Hebrew translations met with great success, the Arabic version appears to have had a very modest circulation, as can be evidenced from the extreme rarity of the references it receives in later sources, the relatively small number of extant manuscripts, and the less important, though not inconsequential, fact that it has never been commented on. Apart from those found in biographical and bibliographic works, references to the work are

27. A. Shihadeh, 'From al-Ghazālī to al-Rāzī: 6th/12th Century Developments in Muslim Philosophical Theology', *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 15, 2005, pp. 141–79 (148 ff.). See also A. Shihadeh, 'Ibn Ghaylān al-Balkhī's Criticism of the *Materia Medica* of Avicenna's *Canon of Medicine*: An Episode of Post-Ghazālian Proto-Neo-Ash'arism', forthcoming.

28. See G. Endress, 'Reading Avicenna in the Madrasa: Intellectual Genealogies and Chains of Transmission of Philosophy and the Sciences in the Islamic East', *Arabic Theology, Arabic Philosophy. From the Many to the One: Essays in Celebration of Richard M. Frank*, ed. J. Montgomery, Leuven, 2006, pp. 371–422.

29. Shihadeh, 'From al-Ghazālī to al-Rāzī' (n. 27 above), p. 149.

extremely scarce and, on the whole, of little import: for instance, Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198) and Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), critics of both Ibn Sīnā and al-Ghazālī, refer to the work in a very cursory manner, recognising it as a compendium representative of Avicennan philosophy.<sup>30</sup> Yet, as the CBL copy and the Latin translation show, some felt that the *Maqāṣid* could still be put to use, but only if thoroughly decontextualized.

APPENDIX: THE INTENTIONS OF THE PHILOSOPHERS OR THE DOCTRINES OF THE PHILOSOPHERS?

It has been customary to render the title *Maqāṣid al-falāsifa* as *The Intentions of the Philosophers* or sometimes *The Meanings of the Philosophers*, *The Aims of the Philosophers* or *The Goals of the Philosophers*. This contemporary convention agrees with the medieval Latin translation of the title provided in the late thirteenth-century MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, lat. 16096, the only Latin manuscript in which the preface is transmitted, namely *De philosophorum intentionibus*.<sup>31</sup> This rendering, in turn, has a precedent in the introduction to the metaphysical part of the book in the earlier, late twelfth-century Latin translation, where *maqāṣid hādihā l-‘ilm* is rendered as ‘intencionibus huius divine sciencie’.<sup>32</sup> Notwithstanding, the latter translation of the book is entitled *Summa theoricæ philosophiæ*, which has always been perceived by contemporary historians as a convenient alternative replacing the original Arabic title, deliberately introduced by the translators in line with the decontextualising omissions they made at the beginning and end of the text. Lohr, for instance, describes *De philosophorum intentionibus* as ‘the true title’.<sup>33</sup> As I hope will become clear in what follows, *Summa theoricæ philosophiæ* is in fact a much more faithful translation.

The word *maqāṣid*, as for instance in al-Ghazālī’s title, is the plural of *maqṣad* (the noun of place), not *maqṣūd* (the passive participle), the plural of which should be *maqāṣīd*. The word *maqṣūd* can mean ‘intention’ or the ‘intended meaning’ of something said or written, but is subtly different from the word *ma‘nā*. The latter should be attributed to the text (e.g. *ma‘nā l-kalām*), whereas *maqṣūd* can be attributed to either the text or the author (e.g. *maqṣūd al-faylasūf* = ‘what the philosopher intends, or means’). Al-Ghazālī himself uses this word in the introduction to the metaphysical parts of the book: ‘[W]e will provide some [brief discussions of] physics intermittently throughout our discussion [of metaphysics], which are necessary to make the meaning (*maqṣūd*) [of the latter] comprehensible.’<sup>34</sup>

30. Ibn Rushd, *Tahāfut al-tahāfut* [*Averroës Tahāfut at-Tahāfut*], ed. M. Bouyges, Beirut, 1930, p. 391; and Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Radd ‘alā l-mantiqiyyīn*, ed. Ṣ. al-Kutubī, Bombay, 1949, p. 336.

31. Salman, ‘Algazel et les latins’ (n. 14 above), p. 125.

32. *Algazel’s Metaphysics* (n. 23 above), p. 1; cf. al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 2, p. 2; I provide a translation of the Arabic text above, p. 85.

33. Lohr, ‘Logica Algazelis’ (n. 12 above), p. 229.

34. Al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 2, p. 2.

Now let us turn to *maqṣad*. Commenting on the title of al-Ghazālī's work, Duncan Macdonald writes:

The word 'meanings' in its title is used much in the same way as in the title of Charles Kingsley's pamphlet, 'What, then, does Dr. Newman mean?' This is what the philosophers 'meant'. A *maqṣad* is what is intended or meant. *Maqṣad al-kalām* is 'the intended sense of the saying'. The word is thus a synonym of *ma'nā* in the sense 'meaning' or 'idea'.<sup>35</sup>

This effectively equates *maqṣad* with *maqṣūd*. Yet, in contrast to the latter, the former generally does not have an interpretive connotation, but rather means 'goal', 'destination' or 'objective'. So, though *maqṣad al-kalām* means 'the objective (hence 'meaning') of speech', *maqṣad*, on its own, does not normally mean 'meaning' or 'intention'. *Maqṣad al-faylasūf* will not mean 'the intention of the philosopher', or 'what the philosopher means'.

The word, in fact, has an almost technical sense in theology and other disciplines. *Maqṣad*, in these contexts, normally means 'topic', i.e. a subdivision within a discipline, which serves to address one or more of that discipline's objectives. It is, therefore, more or less the same as *mabḥath* and *maṭlab*. There are countless examples of the expression being used in this sense, including in book titles and section headings; e.g. al-Ghazālī's own book *al-Maqṣad al-asnā fi sharḥ asmā' Allāh al-ḥusnā*, al-Taftāzānī's (d. 791/1389) work *Maqāṣid al-ṭālibīn*, and the use of *maqṣad* in section headings in al-Ījī's (d. 756/1355) *Mawāqif*. In the introduction to his work on the theory of jurisprudence, *al-Mustaṣfā*, al-Ghazālī writes that the book covers all the topics of that discipline (*jamī' maqāṣid hādihā l-'ilm*).<sup>36</sup>

The expression *maqṣad* is sometimes used in a narrower, but clearly related sense, namely 'doctrine' or 'thesis', which is a theologian's endpoint, or conclusion, arrived at within a given topic. This usage appears, for instance, in the distinction that Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī (d. 631/1233) makes between the doctrine that the proving of which is sought (*maqṣad*) and the routes through which the doctrine is proved (*maslak*, pl. *masālik*).<sup>37</sup>

It is in these senses, 'topic', 'doctrine' or 'thesis', that al-Ghazālī uses *maqṣad* and *maqāṣid* in *The Doctrines of the Philosophers*, including in the title. In the preface, he describes his work as containing a 'report of [the philosophers'] doctrines (*maqāṣid*) in their disciplines, namely logic, physics and metaphysics'.<sup>38</sup> And in the introduction to the metaphysical part, he writes that he will provide a report of all the topics (*maqāṣid*) of this discipline.<sup>39</sup> Rather than writing an 'introduction' or a 'companion' to the

35. Macdonald, 'The Meanings of the Philosophers by al-Ghazālī' (n. 2 above), p. 9.

36. Al-Ghazālī, *Al-Mustaṣfā min 'ilm al-uṣūl*, ed. Ḥ. b. Z. Ḥāfiẓ, 4 vols, Medina, AH 1413, vol. 1, p. 6.

37. For example, Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī, *Abkār al-afkār fi uṣūl al-dīn*, ed. A. M. al-Mahdī, 5 vols, Cairo, 2002, vol. 2, pp. 235 ff.

38. Al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 1, p. 2.

39. Al-Ghazālī, *Maqāṣid* (n. 2 above), pt. 2, p. 2.

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philosophers' works, which explains them and makes them more accessible, and which may potentially invite the readers to read these other philosophical works, as may be suggested in the title *The Intentions of the Philosophers*, al-Ghazālī only provides a very digestible summary of the topics the philosophers investigate and of their doctrines. With *Summa theoricæ philosophiæ*, the twelfth-century translators of the *Maqāṣid* were right on the mark.