

Negotiating Aristotelian-Avicennan Natural Philosophy in the Early Ottoman Madrasa

A Defense of Hylomorphism in Ḥocazāde's Gloss on Hidāyat al-ḥikma

Efe Murat Balıkcıoğlu | ORCID: 0000-0002-2895-7731

Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage,
Ca' Foscari University, Venice, Italy

Associate, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University,
Cambridge, MA, USA

efemurat.balikcioglu@unive.it; ebalikcioglu@fas.harvard.edu

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Abstract

As the most widely circulated early Ottoman gloss on Aristotelian-Avicennan natural philosophy, Ḥocazāde's paratext on Mullāzāde's commentary on Abhari's *Hidāyat al-ḥikma* illuminates the reception and defense of hylomorphism in postclassical madrasas. Working largely within an Avicennan framework, this previously unedited and unstudied text clarifies and reformulates key doctrines to address rival theological objections and misconceptions about hylomorphic composition. Read alongside Ḥocazāde's *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*, where hylomorphism remains compatible with divine creation, the gloss affirms it as both constitutive of natural philosophy's subject matter and indispensable to metaphysical inquiry. The coexistence of hylomorphism with theologians' atomism in other madrasa handbooks points to the disciplinary compartmentalization of rival doctrines within Ottoman curricula.

Keywords

Ḥocazāde – Aristotelian natural philosophy – Avicennism – hylomorphism – postclassical madrasas

1 Introduction

Athīr al-Dīn al-Abharī's (d. 663/1265?) *Hidāyat al-ḥikma* is a concise introduction to Avicennan philosophy and one of the most widely copied and studied works of natural philosophy in postclassical Islam, serving as a foundational text in the Ottoman madrasa curriculum, particularly at the elementary level.¹ Alongside Abharī's disciple Najm al-Dīn al-Kātibī al-Qazwīnī's (d. 675/1276) *Hikmat al-'ayn* it was one of the two principal manuals through which Aristotelian-Avicennan natural philosophy was transmitted within the Ottoman world. The *Hidāya* is notable for preserving the Avicennan hierarchy of the sciences (logic, natural philosophy, and metaphysics) while, in content, arguably modeling itself on his *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbihāt*.² In doing so, it maintains the pedagogical precedence of natural philosophy over metaphysics, in contrast to the postclassical tendency in *kalām* works to begin with metaphysical discussions and conclude with natural philosophy.³

Like many handbooks of the period, Abharī's *Hidāya* was rarely studied in isolation; it was situated within a canonized commentary tradition that had developed largely outside the Ottoman lands over the course of the preceding century. Such commentaries served not merely to elucidate the concise *urtext*, but also to expand, reinterpret, and at times revise it in light of shifting scientific paradigms and intellectual concerns. Consequently, when an Ottoman scholar composed a gloss on a particular commentary, he typically engaged not directly with Abharī's terse original, but with the new scientific and philosophical recontextualizations advanced by earlier commentators and contemporaries.

Alongside that of Ibn Mubārakshāh al-Bukhārī (d. circa 734/1334), one of the two most widely studied and glossed commentaries on natural philosophy in Ottoman scholarly circles was Mullāzāde al-Kharziyānī's (d. 809/1407)

1 The author himself directs readers to his more comprehensive philosophical summa, the *Zubda al-asrār*, for fuller elaboration. See Athīr al-Dīn al-Abharī, *Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Turkmānī (Beirut: Dār al-rayāḥīn, 2019), 110; Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf al-ẓunūn 'an asāmi l-kutub wa-l-funūn*, ed. Şerefettin Yaltkaya and Kilisli Rifat Bilge, vol. 1 (Istanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1941), 647.

2 Jon McGinnis, "Pointers, Guides, Founts and Gifts: The Reception of Avicennan Physics in the East," *Oriens* 41.3–4 (2013): 433–56.

3 For the post-Rāzian trend toward a metaphysics-first ordering, typically beginning with a discussion of *al-umūr al-'amma* (general ontological matters) followed by natural philosophy, see Heidrun Eichner "Dissolving the Unity of Metaphysics: From Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī to Mullā Şadrā al-Shīrāzī," *Medioevo* 32 (2007): 142–44; 166–70; eadem., "The Post-Avicennan Philosophical Tradition and Islamic Orthodoxy: Philosophical and Theological *Summae* in Context" (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle, 2009).

expansive commentary on the *Hidāya*. Probably born in the small town of Kharziyān, in present-day Kazakhstan, Mullāzāde traveled from Samarqand to Baghdad in pursuit of a scholarly career, eventually settling in Cairo via Aleppo during the reign of the Mamlūk sultan Barqūq (r. 784–801/1382–99).⁴ Over the course of his career, he rose to the position of rector (*nāẓir*) of the Shaykhūniyya hospice (*khānqāh*) in 798/1396, a post he held until his removal on account of dementia.⁵ He likely completed his commentary on the *Hidāya* before moving to Cairo. Founded in 756/1355–56, the Shaykhūniyya, renowned for both its prestige and relative scholarly autonomy,⁶ functioned as a major conduit for transregional intellectual exchange between Mamlūk Egypt and Ottoman Rūm.⁷ The institution attracted numerous Ottoman scholars, exemplifying a significant “brain drain” from Anatolia to Cairo.⁸ Both its rectors and much of its student body maintained strong Anatolian connections, making the Shaykhūniyya not only a formative center in the emergence of the Ottoman learned tradition, but also a crucial source for scholarly works later incorporated into advanced Ottoman curricula, including Mullāzāde’s commentary itself.

The most substantial early Ottoman gloss on the *Hidāya* is that of Ḥocazāde Muşliḥuddīn Muşṭafā (d. 893/1488), which is confined to the section on natural

4 The real identity of the commentator Mullāzāde has long been debated and was often confused by later biobibliographers, including Kātib Ḥelebi, with Mullāzāde al-Khiṭā’ī. Khaled El-Rouayheb has recently published a scrupulous study of Mullāzāde’s identification by tracing Mamlūk historical sources and the dates of extant glosses on his highly popular *Hidāya*, see El-Rouayheb, “Two Fourteenth-Century Islamic Philosophers: Ibn Mubārakshāh al-Bukhārī and Mullāzāde al-Kharziyānī,” *Oriens* 48.3–4 (2020): 345–66.

5 Ibid., 358–61.

6 By the fifteenth century, jurist-scholars in the Mamlūk world had become a self-consciously professional class that upheld the autonomy of the scholar within a well-entrenched academic guild. The endowment network supporting this autonomy enabled scholars to focus on their academic output and intellectual pursuits, relatively insulated from external political pressures. See Carl F. Petry, “Scholastic Stasis in Medieval Islam Reconsidered: Mamluk Patronage in Cairo,” *Poetics Today* 14.2 (1993): 325–30.

7 Functioning as both a Sufi lodge and a cultural-academic center, the madrasa hosted scholars from three major Islamic legal schools, with a particular emphasis on the Ḥanafī school as stipulated in its endowment charter. See idem., “Educational Institutions as Depicted in the Biographical Literature of Mamluk Cairo: The Debate over Prestige and Venue,” *Medieval Prosopography* 23.1 (2002): 113–14; for the endowment charter (*waqfiyya*), the institution’s distinguished scholars, and its curriculum in the religious sciences, see Daisuke Igarashi, “The Private Property and *Awqāf* of the Circassian Mamluk Sultans: The Case of Barqūq,” *Orient* 43 (2008): 167–96, esp. 190; Zaynab Aḥmad ‘Alī Abū ‘Alī, “Al-Khāniqāh al-Shaykhūniyya 756–923 H/1355–1517 CE,” *Majalla qitā’ al-dirāsāt al-insāniyya* 24 (2019): 287–376.

8 For the Anatolian population, Carl F. Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 156; for the case of Ibn ‘Arab of Bursa, ibid., 71.

philosophy and does not extend to the logical or metaphysical portions of the text. The work is distinguished by its sustained effort to define the subject matter and disciplinary boundaries of natural philosophy and to establish the proper procedures of philosophical inquiry in addressing foundational questions concerning hylomorphism, corporeal and celestial bodies, motion, time, and related topics. Roughly one-third of the gloss is devoted to the subject matter and classification of the philosophical sciences, with particular attention to the demarcation of natural philosophy; another third examines hylomorphism, while the remaining portion addresses a range of other problems in natural philosophy. The disproportionate attention devoted to hylomorphism underscores its centrality to Ḥocazāde's conception of natural philosophy and suggests that it ranked among the most extensively debated questions in contemporary madrasa scholarship.

Previously unedited and unstudied, Ḥocazāde's gloss on Mullāzāde's commentary survives in at least seventy-nine manuscripts preserved in various libraries, a figure that, for purposes of illustrative comparison, places it among the more widely circulated philosophical works of the early Ottoman madrasa tradition.⁹ It is likely that the gloss was completed in the late 1450s, during Ḥocazāde's tenure as the chief military judge (*kāḍīʿasker*) in Edirne in 862/1457–58, or shortly after his departure.¹⁰ Among the dated manuscripts,

9 Among the twenty-five dated manuscripts, the earliest is MS Haraççioğlu 1211, preserved in Bursa's İnebey Library and dated 864/1459–60. It is followed by Süleymaniye Library, MS Antalya Tekelioğlu 764 (875/1469–70), and two further manuscripts dated 876/1470–71: Manisa Library, MS Manisa İl Halk 1680, and Milli Kütüphane, MS Ankara Adnan Ötügen İl Halk 06 HK 586.

10 The oldest extant manuscript MS Haraççioğlu 1211 from 864/1459–60 contains, on folio 65a, a colophon recording the date of completion: "These folios were completed with the aid of God, the Creator and Originator, through the hand of His weak and needy servant, who inclines toward the true faith and is ever in need of His mercy, and through whom His Prophet is renowned: Muṣṭafā ibn Yūsuf ibn Sa'īd (may God forgive him and his parents) known as Ḥocazāde. And [may God forgive] whomever supplicates for them both. This was in the blessed month of Sha'bān, ten days after [the completion of] Ramaḍān, in the year 864 of the Hijra, in the town of Edirne, at the madrasa of our master al-Ṭūsī, during a period when instruction was suspended (*ta'ṭīl*).” After serving as the sultan's tutor at Mehmed 11's palace, Ḥocazāde was appointed chief military judge of Edirne in 862/1457–58, reportedly at the behest of Grand Vizier Maḥmūd Paşa, who sought to remove him from the sultan's immediate circle. A few years later, he was reassigned to the Sultāniyya madrasa in Bursa, his *alma mater*. See İsmā'il Belig, *Güldeste-i riyāz* (Bursa: Hüdāvendigār Maṭba'ası, 1287/1870–71), 268. The scribe was probably a student of 'Alā' al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 887/1482), as suggested by the inscription indicating that the work was copied at Ṭūsī's madrasa. Biobibliographical sources report that Mehmed 11 appointed Ṭūsī to the madrasa established by the Sultan's father, Murād 11, at Edirne's Üç Şerefeli Mosque, with a stipend of ten aspers per day. See Ḥoca Sa'deddīn, *Tāci'ū't-tevārīḥ*, vol. 2

almost all copies were produced between 864/1459–60 and 976/1565, indicating that the gloss remained in active study well into the mid-to-late sixteenth century.¹¹ The English translation of Mullāzāde's commentary used throughout this study is based on an unpublished Arabic edition,¹² while my analysis of Ḥocazāde's gloss relies primarily on Süleymaniye Library, MS Yozgat 719 (fols. 3b–12a), which appears to represent a relatively clean copy of the text.

As one of the few surviving Ottoman glosses on Aristotelian-Avicennan natural philosophy from the fifteenth century,¹³ Ḥocazāde's paratext offers a rare

(Istanbul: Tab'hāne-i 'Āmire, 1279/1864), 455; Mustafa Bilge, *İlk Osmanlı Medreseleri* (Istanbul: İstanbul Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1984), 153–56.

11 See the database of Turkey's Directorate of Manuscripts, available at the portal: <<https://portal.yek.gov.tr/>>. The extant copies, all of which begin with the same incipit, *li-mā kānat al-ḥikma*, vary considerably in length, suggesting that not all preserve the complete work. Some likely transmit only those lemmata deemed of particular interest by individual readers or copyists. Such selectivity reflects both the “reading mind” of the early modern scholar and broader patterns of paratextual knowledge production. See Mario Meliàdò, “The Reading Mind: Practices of Annotation and the Historiography of Medieval Philosophy,” lecture, Universität Hamburg, January 14, 2026 (retrieved June 20, 2026 via <https://lecturezgo.uni-hamburg.de/l2go/-/get/v/72838>). For a recent study on the role of annotation practices and gloss traditions in shaping the transmission and historiography of medieval philosophy, see idem., ed., *Thinking in the Margins: Marginalia in Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2026).

12 The unpublished edition is based on three manuscripts housed in the Süleymaniye Library: MS Ayasofya 2437 (dated 811/1408–9), MS Ayasofya 2438 (dated 787/1385–86), and MS Şehzade Mehmed 70 (dated 944/1537–38). See Yormaz, “Mevlânâzāde'nin Hidâyetü'l-Hikme Şerhi Tahkik ve Tahlil” (PhD diss., Marmara University, 2010).

13 According to Kâtib Çelebi, several other Ottoman scholars of the period likewise composed glosses on Mullāzāde's commentary, among them Qāḍizāda Şalāḥaddīn (d. ca. 835/1431), Hızır Şāh al-Menteşevî (d. 853/1450), İlyās al-Rūmî (d. 929/1523), Mollā Şalāḥaddīn (d. ?), the teacher of Sultan Bāyezid II, Muhyiddīn 'Alī al-Fanārî (d. 929/1523), Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Mughlawî al-Wafā'î (d. 940/1533), as well as Kamāl al-Dīn Mas'ūd al-Rūmî (d. 905/1500). See Kâtib Çelebi, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2: 2029–30. The Anatolian scholar Hızır Şāh al-Menteşevî, who studied in Cairo for fifteen years before settling in Bursa, reportedly wrote a gloss that does not appear to survive. See El-Rouayheb, “Two Fourteenth-Century,” 361. Of the glosses listed by Kâtib Çelebi, only those of Mollā Şalāḥaddīn and Kamāl al-Dīn Mas'ūd al-Rūmî are presently known to be extant, each surviving in several manuscripts held in Turkish collections. On the latter, see Yasin Apaydın, “Timurlu Dönemi Herat'ında Bir Müderris: Mesud Şirvânî'nin (ö. 905/1500) Entelektüel Biyografisine Doğru,” *İslam Tetkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi* 13,2 (2023): 508. In addition, Qāḍizāde-i Rūmî (d. after 844/1440) might have produced a commentary limited to the logic section. See Müstakim Arıcı, “Gelenek Oluşturan Bir Felsefe Klasığı Olarak Hikmetü'l-'Ayn ve Etkileri,” in *Uluslararası 13. Yüzyılda Felsefe Sempozyumu*, ed. M. Enes Kala and Murat Demirkol (Ankara: Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, 2014), 332–49, esp. 334–35. The text attributed to Qāḍizāde was recently edited: Qāḍizāde al-Rūmî, *Sharḥ Mantiq al-Hidāya: al-qism al-awwal min Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Turkumānî (Beirut: Dār al-rayāḥin, 2019).

perspective on the reception and pedagogical organization of hylomorphism within the madrasa curriculum. This article argues that the gloss moves well beyond the conventional concerns of marginal exegesis and constitutes a major early Ottoman pedagogical intervention in natural philosophy, illuminating the scholarly culture, institutional practices, and intellectual lineages through which Avicennan knowledge was transmitted in the Ottoman madrasa. In defending the unity of matter and form, Hıcazâde responds both to scholarly objections circulating among madrasa scholars and to pedagogical difficulties arising in the classroom. The argument proceeds through an examination of his sustained treatment of hylomorphism. The first half reconstructs the intellectual background of these debates, while the second analyzes Hıcazâde's intervention in them. A final section considers hylomorphism elsewhere in his corpus, including the *Tahâfut al-falâsifa*, before turning to its broader implications for fifteenth-century madrasa education. The coexistence of hylomorphic and atomist models in the period's major handbooks suggests that Aristotelian-Avicennan natural philosophy continued to be studied, taught, and defended despite its tensions with creationist theological commitments, reflecting a significant degree of disciplinary compartmentalization in Ottoman intellectual life.

2 Hylomorphism in Avicenna and Abhari: Philosophical Background and Context

Hylomorphism, a foundational doctrine of Aristotelian natural philosophy later incorporated into the Arabic philosophical tradition, posits that all physical entities are composed of two inseparable principles: matter and form. In classical Arabic philosophy, hylomorphism is closely tied to Avicenna's conception of nature, which is defined only after establishing matter and form as the two *per se* principles of natural constitution and change. Within this framework, Avicenna defines the subject matter of natural philosophy in *al-Samâ' al-ṭabī'ī*, the opening section of the *Physics* of the *Shifā'*, as "the sensible body insofar as it is subject to change" (*al-jism al-maḥsūs min jiha mā huwa wāqī' fi l-taghayyur*).¹⁴ This definition is inseparable from hylomorphism,

14 For the whole discussion, see the section 1.1.1 in Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Ṭabī'īyyāt 1*, *al-Samā' al-ṭabī'ī*, ed. Sa'īd Zayd and Ibrāhīm Madkūr (Cairo: Hay'a al-miṣriyya 'al-amma li-l-kitāb, 1983), 7–13. For the English translation: "Since you have learned that each science has a subject matter, the subject matter of [physics] is 'the sensible body insofar as it is subject to change.' What is investigated about it is the necessary accidents belonging to [the body

for the investigation of changeable bodies requires an account of the intrinsic principles, matter and form, through which natural bodies persist and undergo change, as well as of the essential attributes and concomitants that follow from their composite nature and capacity to change.¹⁵ The philosopher's task is therefore to determine what pertains essentially to the sensible body by analyzing these foundational principles. Avicenna further develops the hylo-morphic scheme across the ensuing chapters of the book, most notably in the definition of nature¹⁶ and in the treatments of matter and form in relation to nature, power, and the principle of motion.¹⁷

Although hylomorphism is a recurrent theme throughout Avicenna's corpus, its treatment in the *Ishārāt* proved particularly influential in the postclassical traditions. As Jon McGinnis has demonstrated, Abhari's *Hidāya* follows the *Ishārāt* closely in both organization and content, often reproducing Avicenna's arguments in a condensed and pedagogically streamlined form.¹⁸ Such dependence is facilitated by the nature of the book itself: a remarkably laconic and aphoristic text that combines demonstrative argumentation with *ishārāt*

subject to change] as such, that is, the accidents that are termed essential, and also the concomitants that attach to [the body] inasmuch as it is, whether forms, accidents, or derivatives of the two, as you have come to understand. Now, natural things are these bodies considered from this respect and whatever is accidental to them insofar as they are such [...].” See Ibn Sīnā, *The Physics of the Healing: Book I and II*, trans. Jon McGinnis, vol. 1 (Salt Lake City: Brigham Young University, 2009), 3–4. The same formulation is reiterated at the opening of *Metaphysics* 1.2; see *The Metaphysics of The Healing*, trans. Michael E. Marmura (Salt Lake City: Brigham Young University, 2005), 7.

15 As for Avicenna's notion of nature in relation to hylomorphism, see Catherine Peters, “Ibn Sīnā on Nature as Matter and Form: An Exposition of the Physics of *the Healing*, 1,6 and 1,9,” *Journal of Islamic Philosophy* 13 (2022): 50–82; eadem., “A Thomistic Defense of Nature in Avicenna's *Physics*,” *European Journal for the Study of Thomas Aquinas* 39 (2021): 43–60. For the Aristotelian context: Patrick Suppes, “Aristotle's Concept of Matter and Its Relation to Modern Concepts of Matter,” *Synthese* 28.1 (1974): 27–50; Ignacio Yarza, “Prime Matter,” trans. Joseph T. Papa, in *New Catholic Encyclopedia Supplement 2012–13: Ethics and Philosophy*, vol. 3 (Detroit: GALE, 2013), 1260–62; Andreas Lammer, “Defining Nature: From Aristotle to Philoponus to Avicenna,” in *Aristotle and the Arabic Tradition*, ed. Ahmed Alwishah and Josh Hayes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 121–42.

16 Ibn Sīnā, *The Physics*, 1:37–39.

17 Ibid., 40–44; 45–49.

18 McGinnis notes only a few differences between the two works. The *Hidāya* gives greater attention to simples (points, lines, and planes) and natural place, separates the treatment of nature and soul, adds a brief discussion of motion and rest alongside Avicenna's analysis of inclination (*mayl*), and includes sections on time and the celestial spheres. These modifications represent shifts in emphasis rather than substantive departures from the structure or content of the *Ishārāt* (McGinnis, “Pointers,” 442–44).

(“indications”), brief formulations intended to direct the advanced reader toward further inquiry and reflection.¹⁹

In the opening chapter of the *Physics* of the *Ishārāt*, Avicenna, and following him, Abharī, begins not by introducing hylomorphism directly but by refuting rival theories of bodily constitution advanced by the theologians. The discussion proceeds through a critique of competing accounts of discrete and continuous magnitude, examining whether bodies can be composed of finite indivisible units or of infinitely many joined parts,²⁰ an arrangement which appears to have no clear parallel in the Aristotelian textual tradition.²¹ Avicenna then endorses the infinite divisibility of bodies in the imagination,²² extending the same principle to motion and time²³ – a discussion moved elsewhere in Abharī. The argument subsequently turns to the constituents of bodily composition and the proof of prime matter. Central to this demonstration is the distinction between that which is continuous in itself and that which is receptive to continuity and discontinuity: the former denotes “corporeal form,” while the latter denotes the underlying substrate, subsequently identified as “prime matter,”²⁴ endowed with the capacity for conjunction and separation. By grounding corporeality in continuity²⁵ and, in turn, the unity of bodily extension, the text establishes the aforementioned two intrinsic principles of body, while introducing a third principle, the “species form,”²⁶ to account for specification. Although matter and corporeal form are shown to be mutually concomitant (*talāzum*), their conjunction does not entail an actual duality, since they do not constitute a plurality in the quiddity of the body itself.²⁷

According to Avicenna’s hylomorphic doctrine, every natural body is then constituted by three primary principles: prime matter (*hayūlā*), corporeal form

19 “These are indications (*ishārāt*) toward fundamental principles and admonitions (*tanbīhāt*) concerning general topics.” See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. Suleymān Dunyā, vol. 2 (Cairo: Dār al-ma’ārif, 1992, 3rd ed.), 147; Dimitri Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 346–48.

20 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt*, 2:159–63; al-Abharī, *Hidāya*, 115.

21 McGinnis, “Pointers,” 435. For a summary of Avicenna’s arguments against atomism in *al-Samā’ al-ṭabī’ī* (111.3–5), see Paul Lettinck, “Ibn Sīnā on Atomism: Translation of Ibn Sīnā’s *Kitāb al-Shifā’, al-Ṭabī’īyyāt 1, al-Samā’ al-Ṭabī’ī*, Third Treatise, Chapters 3–5,” *Al-Shajarah* 4.1 (1988): 1–29.

22 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt*, 2:159–66.

23 *Ibid.*, 2:167.

24 *Ibid.*, 2:183; al-Abharī, *Hidāya*, 118–22.

25 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt*, 2:174–177; al-Abharī, *Hidāya*, 124–27.

26 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt*, 2:181; al-Abharī, *Hidāya*, 118–22.

27 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt*, 2:180–82; al-Abharī, *Hidāya*, 129–30.

(*ṣūra jismiyya*), and species form (*ṣūra naw'īyya*).²⁸ Prime matter, considered in itself, is wholly devoid of actuality, extension, and positive determination. Corporeality is imparted to it by the corporeal form, which actualizes matter as an extended body and serves as the proximate cause of bodily existence. Through its conjunction with corporeal form, prime matter becomes an “absolute body” (*jism muṭlaq*), an indeterminate tridimensional extension not yet specified by any particular natural kind. Species forms subsequently determine this corporeal substrate into particular species (*anwā'*). Natural bodies thus exhibit a hierarchy of formal determinations, ranging from the most general, such as corporeality and animality, to the specific features that define individual species, such as horseness or daffodilness.²⁹

The inquiry proceeds in a distinctive order. Having established the infinite divisibility of magnitude, Avicenna and Abharī identify continuity as the defining feature of corporeality and, from it, derive the existence of prime matter. Although body exists actually as a continuous magnitude, it also possesses the capacity to receive both continuity and discontinuity. Continuity exists in actuality, whereas discontinuity is realized only through division; conversely, divided parts retain the potentiality to become continuous once again. Since the same body successively receives these contrary states, continuity and discontinuity cannot constitute its underlying reality. There must therefore be a substrate that persists through their alternation while remaining distinct from both. This enduring recipient is precisely what the argument seeks to establish, namely prime matter. Body is thus composed of prime matter, which underlies change as pure potentiality through its receptivity to conjunction and disjunction, and corporeal form, which actualizes it as a continuous three-dimensional magnitude.³⁰

The analysis of continuity therefore grounds the demonstration of prime matter and corporeal form, which in turn prepares the way for the treatment of species form and its concomitant properties. Having established the

28 Avicenna's hylomorphic theory posits a plurality of substantial forms within natural bodies. See Andreas Lammer, “A Lively Debate on Matter and Body before (and after?) Avicenna – Part One,” *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 69 (2023): 101.

29 Ibid., 103.

30 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt*, 2:168–74. For Avicenna's conceptions of continuity, corporeality, and prime matter, as well as Rāzī's defense and reformulation of these doctrines in his commentary on the *Ishārāt*, see Ayman Shihadeh, “Al-Rāzī's Commentary on Avicenna's *Pointers and Reminders*,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Philosophy*, ed. Khaled El-Rouayheb and Sabine Schmidtke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 312–14; idem., “Avicenna's Corporeal Form and Proof of Prime Matter in Twelfth-Century Critical Philosophy: Abū l-Barakāt, al-Mas'ūdī and al-Rāzī,” *Oriens* 42 (2014): 366–67; 375–77.

inseparable conjunction of these principles in natural bodies, both Avicenna and Abharī proceed to examine the causes of their union, their necessary mutual concomitance, and the priority of form over matter within the composite.³¹

In addition to his treatment of matter and form in natural philosophy, Abharī further revisits them in the metaphysics section of the *Hidāya* under the category of substance. Following the standard Avicennan division of existents into substance and accident,³² he distinguishes five kinds of substance: prime matter, form, body, soul, and intellect. This classification rests on a criterion of ontological dependence: substance is that which does not exist in a subject, whereas accident necessarily does.³³ Abharī further distinguishes hylomorphic inherence from accidental inherence: where substratum and dweller mutually require one another as concomitants, they are matter and form; where only the dweller depends on the substratum, they are accident and subject. Whereas natural philosophy establishes matter and form as the principles of corporeal constitution and change, metaphysics in the *Hidāya* investigates their ontological status alongside body, soul, and intellect within a comprehensive account of substance.³⁴

3 Hylomorphism and Atomism as Competing Traditions in the Ottoman Madrasa Curriculum

As an alternative to Peripatetic hylomorphism, traditional *kalām* atomism³⁵ adopts an atomistic ontology according to which all natural bodies are

31 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt*, 2:207–39; among these discussions, only the treatment of the concomitance of form and matter appears in al-Abharī, *Hidāya*, 129–30.

32 Substance is contrasted with the nine accidental categories (*maqūlāt*). While the distinction itself predates Avicenna, he reformulated it as a discrete logical taxonomy. The scheme is already attested in the fourth-century Latin paraphrase of the *Categories* attributed to Themistius and may have reached Avicenna through the Baghdad gloss tradition (Paul Thom, “The division of the categories according to Avicenna,” in *Aristotle and the Arabic Tradition*, 36).

33 For the ontologization of logical categories in Avicenna, see Amos Bertolacci, “The ‘Ontologization’ of Logic: Metaphysical Themes in Avicenna’s Reworking of the *Organon*,” in *Methods and Methodologies: Aristotelian Logic East and West*, 500–1500, ed. Margaret Cameron and John Marenbon (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 25–51.

34 Yet although all five are classified as substances insofar as they do not exist in a subject, substance is not a genuine genus common to them, since some are simple and others composite. See al-Abharī, *Hidāya*, 206–7.

35 Islamic atomism has attracted sustained scholarly attention and generated a substantial body of secondary literature. Among the most influential studies are Shlomo Pines, *Beiträge zur islamischen Atomenlehre* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1936); Harry Austryn

composed of indivisible, homogeneous substances (*jawāhir fardiyya*) that differ only through their spatial arrangement and the accidents (*a'rād*) inhering in them. Even when aggregated, atoms remain numerically distinct and never constitute a genuinely continuous whole. The atom is both physically and conceptually indivisible and represents the smallest space-occupying (*mutaḥayyiz*) unit from which bodies are composed. Although extended, the atom is not itself a body but rather the minimal constituent of body, a position challenged by Avicenna's doctrine of continuity and his contention that bodies are divisible without limit, both physically and conceptually.³⁶

Early theologians resisted hylomorphism because it undermined the atom-accident ontology that undergirded key doctrines concerning divine creation, providence, and resurrection.³⁷ *Kalām* thus posits finite atoms whose accidents are continually recreated, rendering the world dependent upon God at every occasion.³⁸ Within this framework, temporal origination follows from the dependence of atomic aggregates on an external agent for both motion and rest; divine omniscience and omnipotence extend to every determinate

Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalām* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976); Carmela Baffioni, *Atomismo e antiatomismo nel pensiero islamico* (Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1982); Alnoor Dhanani, *The Physical Theory of Kalām: Atoms, Space, and Void in Basrian Mu'tazili Cosmology* (Leiden: Brill, 1994); Richard M. Frank, "Bodies and Atoms: The Ash'arite Analysis," in *Islamic Theology and Philosophy: Studies in Honor of George F. Hourani*, ed. Michael E. Marmura (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 39–53; Josef van Ess, "60 Years after: Shlomo Pines's *Beiträge* and the State of Research," *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 14.2 (2004): 287–92; Abdelhamid I. Sabra, "Kalām Atomism as an Alternative Philosophy to Hellenizing *Falsafa*," in *Arabic Theology, Arabic Philosophy: From the Many to the One*, ed. James E. Montgomery (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 199–272.

- 36 Jon McGinnis, "A Continuation of Atomism: Shahrastānī on the Atom and Continuity," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 57.4 (2019): 597–99.
- 37 Earlier philosophers also struggled to navigate Aristotle's matter-form framework in explaining "coming to be," since many assumed that genuine generation would require creation *ex nihilo*. For Aristotle, however, generation *ex nihilo* is impossible, because every process of change necessarily presupposes something that persists from the original state throughout the transformation. See Sean Kelsey, "Hylomorphism in Aristotle's *Physics*," *Ancient Philosophy* 30 (2010): 108.
- 38 Atomism was substantially reconfigured in light of theological commitments to divine omnipotence, temporal creation (*hudūth*), and occasionalism, according to which all events occur solely through God's immediate will (*irāda*). For the affinity of atomism to occasionalism: Alnoor Dhanani, "Atomism in Islamic Thought," *Encyclopaedia of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Non-Western Cultures* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2016), 798.

part of creation;³⁹ and bodily resurrection becomes intelligible as the reassembly of individually known atomic units.⁴⁰

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210), traditionally identified as Abharī's teacher,⁴¹ stands out as one of the most important theologians to have produced foundational analytical discussions of the arguments and counterarguments surrounding atomism and hylomorphism. Across his career, he developed shifting approaches and preferences, resulting in different sets of books on the definition and composition of natural bodies with variety of positions that he supported.⁴² In all of his theological books, he sought to demonstrate the

39 The connection remains in need of further substantiation; see Josef van Ess, "Book Review: Alnoor Dhanani. *The Physical Theory of Kalām*," *Isis* 87.1 (1996): 156.

40 The most crucial doctrinal wedge for the early theologians is the issue of void: hylomorphism, tied to continuity, effectively entails a *plenum* and thus the philosophers' denial of vacuum, whereas the theologians, whose atomism often demands interstitial discontinuity, affirmed the reality of the void as an existent, rendering motion, discontinuity, and recombination metaphysically tractable; see Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Zarkān, *Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī wa-ārā'uhu al-kalāmīyya wa-l-falsafīyya* (Cairo: Dār al-fikr, 1963), 420–21. Also see Peter Adamson, "Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī on Void," in *Islamic Philosophy from the 12th to the 14th Century*, ed. Abdelkader Al Ghouz (Bonn: Bonn University Press, 2018), 307–24; Jon McGinnis, "Avoiding the Void: Avicenna on the Impossibility of Circular Motion in a Void," in *Classical Arabic Philosophy: Sources and Reception*, ed. Peter Adamson (London: The Warburg Institute, 2007), 74–89.

41 It is doubtful that Abharī had a direct intellectual lineage to Rāzī; the association may simply be apocryphal; see Frank Griffel, "Faḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī," in *Philosophy in the Islamic World*, vol. 2.1: *11th–12th Centuries: Central and Eastern Regions*, ed. Ulrich Rudolph and Peter Adamson (Leiden: Brill, 2023), 624.

42 In works written under a stronger philosophical influence, such as the *Mabāḥith* and *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, Rāzī embraced Avicenna's critique of atomism and instead defended hylomorphism. For a detailed analysis of Rāzī's successive defense and reformulation of Avicennan hylomorphism in response to Sharaf al-Dīn al-Mas'ūdī's (d. 582/1186) objections to its proof in his commentary on the *Ishārāt*, see Ayman Shihadeh, "Avicenna's Corporeal Form"; idem., *Doubts on Avicenna: A Study and Edition of Sharaf al-Dīn al-Mas'ūdī's Commentary on the Ishārāt* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 156–68. In the *Mulakhkhaṣ* and *Nihāyat al-'uqūl*, he raised objections to both doctrines and suspended judgment (*tawaqquf*). By contrast, in his later *kalām* works, including the *Arba'īn*, *Ma'ālīm*, *al-Maṭālib al-ʿāliya*, and *al-Taḥṣīr al-kabīr*, he defended the atomist doctrine of actually finite indivisible particles; see al-Zarkān, *Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī*, 424–26; Alnoor Dhanani, "Atomism," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, THREE, ed. Kate Fleet et al., (retrieved June 27, 2026 via https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_24249); Griffel, "Faḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī," 622. For a synoptic overview of his critique of hylomorphism and defense of atomism in the *Maṭālib*, see Adi Setia, "Atomism Versus Hylomorphism in the *Kalām* of al-Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī: A Preliminary Survey of the *Maṭālib al-ʿĀliyyah*," *Islam and Science* 4.2 (2006): 113–40. Yet later reports portray Rāzī as ultimately inclined toward *tawaqquf*, a position echoed by Sa'd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī (d. 792/1390), who notes that the arguments both for and against atomism are evenly balanced. See al-Zarkān, *Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī*, 424.

weakness of the philosophers' refutations of atomism, especially their reliance on various unsubstantiated arguments.⁴³

Rāzī's legacy extended beyond doctrine to the very organization of theologico-philosophical summae. By introducing *al-umūr al-ʿamma*, "general [ontological] matters," broadly comparable to the Latin *transcendentalia*, as a distinct heading for preliminary metaphysical discussions, he helped establish a new structural framework shared by metaphysics and *kalām*, within which natural philosophy was relegated to a later and often more concise stage of inquiry. Within this structure, hylomorphism was often displaced from its traditional location in physics. In the *Ḥikmat al-ʿayn* of Qazwīnī, a disciple of Rāzī, the doctrine is treated primarily within the metaphysical discussion of substance and accident, reflecting Rāzī's metaphysics-first restructuring. As a result, many of the questions Abharī treats under natural philosophy reappear in a metaphysical context, whereas their treatment in physics is largely confined to the refutation of atomism.⁴⁴ What began as a metaphysical innovation in the post-Avicennan tradition thus became a foundational feature of postclassical *kalām*. This tendency to relocate the discussion of hylomorphism exclusively to metaphysics was subsequently incorporated into the compendia that formed the core of the Ottoman madrasa curriculum, most notably ʿAḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī's (d. 756/1355) *al-Mawāqif fī ʿilm al-kalām*.

Ījī's *Mawāqif* was undoubtedly the most influential text of postclassical Sunni *kalām*, studied across a vast geographical area extending from the Balkans to North India.⁴⁵ It was also the single most popular handbook at early Ottoman madrasas studied through the commentary of al-Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī

43 For instance, he critically examined such issues as the problem of contact (*tamāyuz*) – namely, whether three indivisible atoms can simultaneously touch one another – the constitution of three-dimensional bodies out of indivisible parts, the possibility of fragmentation in a supposedly simple body, the thesis that actual existents are composed of actuality and potentiality, and the claim that time and motion are infinitely divisible, all in an effort to undermine the philosophical foundations of hylomorphism; see Osman Demir, "Fahreddin er-Râzî'de Cevher-i Ferd ve Heyûlâ-Sûret Teorileri," in *İslâm Düşüncesinin Dönüşüm Çağında Fahreddin er-Râzî*, ed. Ömer Türker and Osman Demir (Istanbul: İSAM, 2013), 536–46. His case for atomism largely rests on rejecting the continuum (*kamm muttaşıl*): like the theologians, he holds that time, space, and motion are each composed of discrete, non-continuous units (quantitative *minima*), not an actual continuum. See al-Zarkān, *Fakhr al-Dīn al-Râzî*, 426.

44 Al-Qazwīnī, *Ḥikmat al-ʿayn*, ed. Salih Aydın and Ali Durusoy (Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu), 118–23; 182–91; Müstakim Arıcı, *Fahreddin Râzî Sonrası Metafizik Düşünce: Kâtibî Örneği* (Istanbul: Klasik, 2015), 148–56.

45 Francis Robinson, "Ottomans-Safavids-Mughals: Shared Knowledge and Connective Systems," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 8 (1997): 155; 177; 183–84.

(d. 816/1413). Ījī's unstated aim was to present the overarching theories and specific doctrines of the rival explanatory systems of *falsafa* and *kalām*, while in most cases inclining toward the principal theses of Ash'arī theology.⁴⁶ Its structure closely follows that of Qāḍī al-Bayḍāwī's *Ṭawālī' al-anwār* (d. 685/1286), while also incorporating Rāzī's later *kalām* critiques of the philosophers' hylo-morphism together with his defense of atomism.⁴⁷

Ījī's discussion of the composition of bodies appears in the Fourth Position (*Mawqif*), under the section on substances. There he summarizes the principal definitions of substance advanced by both the philosophers and the theologians. Summarizing the former's position, he explains that a substance (*jawhar*), if it inheres in a substrate, is form; if it serves as the substrate in which form inheres, it is matter; and if it consists of both together, it is body. By contrast, according to the traditional *kalām* position, a space-occupying entity is a body if it is divisible, whereas if it is incapable of further division, it is the indivisible atom.⁴⁸ He then presents the principal arguments in support of traditional *kalām* atomism and concludes by expressing satisfaction with the responses offered to the objections raised against it;⁴⁹ nevertheless, the overall tenor of the discussion suggests a preference for the Ash'arī position.⁵⁰

Jurjānī's commentary on Ījī's Ash'arī handbook functions primarily as a comprehensive reference work, cataloguing the arguments, objections, and

46 Alnoor Dhanani, "Al-Mawāqif fi 'ilm al-Kalām by 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 756/1355) and Its Commentaries," in *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Philosophy*, ed. Khaled El-Rouayheb and Sabine Schmidtke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 375–76.

47 Including *al-Arba'īn fi uṣūl al-dīn*, *al-Muḥaṣṣal*, and *al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyya*. See Alnoor Dhanani, "The Impact of Ibn Sīnā's Critique of Atomism on Subsequent *Kalām* Discussions of Atomism," *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 25.1 (2015): 91–104.

48 See the full passage: "The philosophers hold that substance, if it inheres [in a substrate], is form, or if it is the substrate in which the form inheres, then it is prime matter, or if it is a combination of them both, then it is body [...] This position is based on the denial of atomism [...] the theologians hold that substance is nothing but that which is space-occupying (*mutaḥayyiz*), as mentioned previously. If the space-occupying object is capable of division, then it is body but if it is incapable of further division, then it is the atom (*jawhar fard*)." See 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī, *al-Mawāqif fi 'ilm al-kalām* (Beirut: 'Ālam al-kutub), 182; al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, ed. Maḥmūd 'Amr al-Dīnyāfī, vol. 6 (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 2012), 285–88; translated in Dhanani, "Al-Mawāqif," 385. After outlining these competing positions, Ījī proceeds to discuss two additional theories found in the literature: the view attributed to the early theologian Ibrāhīm al-Nazzām (d. c.230/845), according to which bodies are composed of actually existing but infinite parts, and the view attributed to Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153), according to which bodies are composed of potentially divisible yet finite parts.

49 Al-Ījī, *al-Mawāqif*, 189. Also Osman Demir, "İcā Kelāmında Fizik," in *İslām İlim ve Düşünce Geleceğinde Aduduđdin el-İcā*, ed. Eşref Altaş (Istanbul: İSAM, 2017), 339–89.

50 Dhanani, "Al-Mawāqif," 387.

rejoinders inherited from the earlier tradition. It offers an extensive treatment of the competing proofs for hylomorphism and atomism without decisively endorsing either position. As Alnoor Dhanani has noted, Jurjānī effectively places a question mark over Ījī's apparent preference for atomism when, after presenting the arguments and responses, he remarks: "However, you should judge for yourself the validity of the answers that have been mentioned."⁵¹ This statement suggests a degree of agnosticism regarding the constitution of bodies and a reluctance to commit unequivocally to atomism (or to hylomorphism). Ultimately, however, Jurjānī maintains that the central theological imperative is the preservation of divine freedom and the rejection of the necessitarian implications of emanationist cosmology. Extending a tendency already present in Ījī, he thus reframes the dispute between hylomorphism and atomism as secondary to the metaphysical requirement that God remain a free chooser (*al-Mukhtār*).⁵²

4 Mullāzāde and Ḥocazāde on Hylomorphism in the *Hidāya*: Outline and Summary

Abhari's *Hidāya* is an exceptionally dense and concise work, with most chapters spanning scarcely more than a folio. It was conceived and studied primarily as a précis of Avicennan natural philosophy and metaphysics,⁵³ designed for students to memorize and thereby acquire the conceptual foundations necessary for engaging broader theologico-philosophical questions. The very brevity of

51 Al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, 7:21; Dhanani, "Al-Mawāqif," 387.

52 Regardless of the terminology employed to describe the constitution of the bodies, the First Principle (*al-mabda'*) must ultimately be understood as a free-choosing agent. See al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, 7:169. In his refutations, Ījī, as Demir suggests, challenges the philosophers' arguments for the existence of prime matter by denying the necessity of ontological potentiality, generation and corruption, condensation, and rarefaction. More fundamentally, however, Jurjānī further maintains that no necessary relation can be established between matter and form without presupposing a freely willing Creator. See Demir, "İcā Kelâmında Fizik," 361–63.

53 The *Hidāya* comprises three sections: logic, natural philosophy, and metaphysics. Because logic was often conceived in the postclassical period as a universal instrument (*ālā*) rather than as a branch of theoretical philosophy, commentators frequently omitted this section. Students and scholars instead commonly relied on Abhari's *Īsāghūjī* and on Qutb al-Dīn al-Rāzī's commentaries on Qazwīnī's *Shamsīyya* and Sirāj al-Dīn al-Urmawī's *Maṭālī'*; see Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Relational Syllogisms and the History of Arabic Logic*, 900–1900 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 66.

the *Hidāya*, however, often generated confusion among fellow students⁵⁴ and scholars⁵⁵ alike, creating a pressing need for detailed commentaries capable of clarifying, correcting, and, most importantly, verifying⁵⁶ both Abharī's formulations and Avicenna's underlying doctrines through rigorous analysis.

Moreover, a number of Avicennan positions had become subject to widespread criticism and misunderstanding. It was precisely this pedagogical and intellectual need that Mullāzāde's extensive commentary sought to address. Several times longer than the base text itself, the commentary fills a crucial lacuna by supplying definitions, demonstrations, clarifications, and amendments. Hocaazāde's gloss on Mullāzāde performs yet another layer of intervention. Nearly a century after the composition of the commentary, significant questions, misconceptions, and rival interpretations of atomism still circulated within the scholarly milieu. The continued popularity of works such as Jurjānī's *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* ensured the enduring influence of theological critiques, reflecting broader disciplinary tensions within early Ottoman madrasas.

In the second half of this study, I first outline the principal topics discussed in Mullāzāde and Hocaazāde on the basis of Abharī's *Hidāya*, while providing concise summaries of their major arguments covered. I then turn to four major themes and scholarly contributions within this previously unstudied gloss. As the genre of the gloss itself suggests, Hocaazāde generally follows both his commentator and the broader Avicennan scholarly lineage, frequently clarifying their positions while also rectifying, strengthening, simplifying, and further developing them. At the same time, he repeatedly highlights points of contention and misconceptions associated with the theologians. Although

54 See Lemma 19 below, where Hocaazāde explicitly refers to students and to the confusion (*daghdagha*) arising in the classroom.

55 See the preface expanded by Hocaazāde: "Athīr al-Dīn al-Abharī, may God elevate his station in the sanctified precincts, and lodge him among the verifying scholars (*muḥaqqiqūn*) in their encounter with human [essence] as [this commentary was] ignited from the ink of my humble pen. With feet still veiled from mastery in the cloak of mere technique, at the request of a noble group of my most cherished brethren, they were gathered for discussion and had not yet found a commentary to unveil the veils from its rare aspects and clarify its demanding topics through the pathways of verification (*masālik al-taḥqīq*). This compilation is thus not composed from any sense of sufficiency but rather to respond to their request. It befits my station only to follow what they have agreed upon and established by consensus." See Hocaazāde, *Hāshiya 'alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Süleymaniye Library, ms Yozgat 791), 1b.

56 For the notion of verification in the case of Hocaazāde, see Efe Murat Balıkcıoğlu, *Verifying the Truth on Their Own Terms: Ottoman Philosophical Culture and the Court Debate Between Mollā Zeyrek and Hocaazāde Muşliḥuddīn* (Venice: Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 2023), 5–7.

Ḥocazāde largely operates within the commentator's framework, in certain discussions he moves decisively beyond it. Here is a brief outline of the topics covered in hylomorphism:

- Hylomorphism as the Quiddity of Natural Philosophy's Subject Matter
- Refutation of Atomism and the Indivisible Part (*al-Juz' alladhī lā yatajazza'*)
- Threefold Composition of Body: Prime Matter, Corporeal Form, and Species Form
- Continuity (*ittiṣāl*) as the Principle of Corporeality
- Corporeality (*jismiyya*) and the Unity of Body
- Proof of Prime Matter
- Corporeal Form between Dependence (*iftiqār*) and Self-Sufficiency (*istighnā'*)
- Receptivity of Form to Discontinuity (*infīṣāl*)
- Body as Genus (*jins*) and Corporeal Form as Species-Forming Quiddity (*māhiyya naw'yya*)
- Mutual Concomitance (*talāzum*) of Matter and Form

In the first lemmata, Mullāzāde and Ḥocazāde seek to demonstrate that matter and form are fundamental principles of natural philosophy, since their affirmation secures the verification of the quiddity of its subject matter. Both paratexts thereby grounds the subject matter as the indispensable epistemic basis of all science, securing for natural philosophy both a coherent point of departure and pedagogical autonomy within the framework of *ḥikma* (Avicennan philosophy). Ḥocazāde's discussion of the pedagogical autonomy of hylomorphism further suggests that there existed an active debate within the madrasa classroom over whether hylomorphism properly belonged to natural philosophy at all, or whether it should instead be treated under metaphysics, given that many of its central questions could arguably be subsumed within metaphysical inquiry. This context also helps explain his defense of Abharī's decision, following Avicenna's *Ishārāt*, to begin with a refutation of atomism before proceeding to establish prime matter and its relation to form through an analysis of continuity, corporeality, and the mutual concomitance of matter and form in the composition of natural bodies.

The proof for the unity of matter and form as the constitutive principle of bodies is first introduced negatively in Avicenna and Abharī through the refutation of atomism, by demonstrating what corporeal substance cannot be. The indivisible unit is defined by theologians as a hypothetical substance possessing spatial position yet absolutely indivisible – not physically, imaginatively,

or even rationally divisible either. Following Abharī, both paratexts introduce the notion of continuity of matter and form without an actual essential break in order to argue that bodies are indefinitely divisible and therefore cannot be composed of atomic indivisibles.⁵⁷ This discussion is followed by a clarification of the most controversial aspect of Avicennan hylomorphism: the claim that every body is composed not of two (matter and form) but, more precisely, of three substances (prime matter, corporeal form, species form). The proof of this formulation is further employed to establish the existence of an underlying substrate, namely, prime matter.

The principal aim of this section, however, is to demonstrate the existence of prime matter by grounding the proof in the continuity and potential divisibility of body. The ensuing discussions seek to establish the existence of prime matter as the necessary substratum underlying corporeal composition. Mullāzāde begins by positing these three ontological constituents. Prime matter functions as the receptive substrate (*qābil*) that possesses the capacity to receive both continuity and discontinuity. Corporeal form, closely associated with the continuity of body, confers corporeality and is apprehended through sense perception, whereas species form accounts for the specific determination and differentiation of individual bodies, to which matter likewise remains receptive.⁵⁸

From continuity, the paratextual discussions proceed to corporeality, which grounds the notion of corporeal form and, in turn, provides the basis for establishing species form, the other two principal components of the hylomorphic scheme. A further key question, discussed below, concerns how matter and form can constitute a unity if they are in some sense separable. Here both scholars redefine the notion of discontinuity, arguing that the distinction between matter and form exists only conceptually (*bi l-ʿtibār*). By “discontinuity,” Mullāzāde and Ḥocazāde mean only that the two principles can be distinguished in thought within a continuously divisible body, not that either subsists independently of the other. In the final lemmata, the paratexts culminate in the ultimate demonstrations for the complementary existence of matter and form against atomist claims, arguing for the mutual concomitance (*talāzum*) between the two principles.

57 Yormaz, “Mevlânâzâde’nin,” 86–87; Ḥocazāde, *Hāshiya*, 6b–7a (Lemmata 21–22).

58 The proof proceeds from the continuity and potential divisibility of bodies. Since bodies cannot be composed either of actually existing parts *ad infinitum* or of indivisible units, their divisibility must remain potential rather than actual. This, in turn, requires the existence of an underlying substratum capable of receiving division and corporeal form, namely, prime matter. See Yormaz, “Mevlânâzâde’nin,” 88–89; Ḥocazāde, *Hāshiya*, 8a–8b (Lemmata 31–32).

The gloss advances four contributions. First, it establishes hylomorphism as the foundational principle of natural bodies and therefore as indispensable to understanding the quiddity of natural philosophy's subject matter. Moreover, it offers a sustained defense of the autonomy of natural philosophy vis-à-vis metaphysics and explains why the study of physics is both necessary and pedagogically prior to metaphysics. In doing so, and by explicitly invoking Aristotle, it provides both an epistemological and an ontological justification for the place of natural philosophy within the madrasa curriculum. Ḥocazāde's framework here tends to furnish an ontological foundation for the commentator's epistemic claims. Second, the gloss revisits the proof of prime matter in the course of responding to atomist objections concerning continuity and the divisibility of bodies. Judging Mullāzāde's formulation of the philosophers' demonstration to be insufficiently rigorous, Ḥocazāde recasts the relation between corporeal form and continuity in terms of the logical distinction between a *lāzīm* and a *malzūm*. By doing so, he argues that the relation between continuity and corporeal form is one of concomitance rather than one concerning their respective substrates (*maḥalliya*), thereby exposing the illicit inference from a relation of logical implication to one of ontological inherence. In this way, he strengthens the demonstration by identifying and eliminating what he regards as a weakness in Mullāzāde's presentation, while preserving the conclusion that prime matter underlies corporeal form. Third, closely connected to the foregoing discussion of the proof of prime matter, Ḥocazāde engages directly with a series of theological objections that recur throughout the postclassical literature, especially Jurjānī's contention that the tripartite constitution of natural bodies compromises their unity by reducing the distinction between matter and form to a merely conceptual discontinuity. Against this, the glossator clarifies the Peripatetic account of corporeal form and continuity by distinguishing between the substantial and accidental senses of the latter term, thereby addressing the mistaken view that corporeal form, rather than prime matter, serves as the receptive subject of continuity and discontinuity. Fourth, he responds to Rāzī's criticism that body, as a substance, cannot function as a genus, nor corporeal form as a species-constituting differentia, conceding certain weaknesses in Avicenna's formulation while maintaining that Rāzī's alternative remains untenable. Together, these discussions constitute Ḥocazāde's sustained defense and verification of hylomorphism and, more broadly, of the Avicennan framework.

The discussion now turns to an analysis of these key aspects of Ḥocazāde's gloss, which shed light on the broader epistemological and institutional debates surrounding the scientific legitimacy of hylomorphism. In each case, I first present the relevant passage from the commentary and then analyze

Ḥocazāde's corresponding enumerated lemmata, situating their principal arguments within their broader intellectual context.

4.1 *Matter and Form as the Principles of Natural Philosophy: on the Pedagogical Priority of Physics over Metaphysics*

I [Mullāzāde] say: It is incumbent upon the student of every science (*‘ilm*, *scientia*) to form a conception (*taṣawwur*) of its subject matter before undertaking its study, **because such [conception] is one of the conceptual principles (*mabādī’ taṣawwuriyya*) of the science.** To conceive the subject in some general respect suffices for the beginner, but true insight is only perfected when its full conception is completed by grasping the truth (*ḥaqīqa*) in its entirety. **Therefore, the author intends to verify (*yuhāqqiq*) the quiddity of the body (*māhiyyat al-jism*),** which is the subject matter of this science, by clarifying its composition from prime matter and form. However, since **that this sought [issue] depends upon the refutation of the indivisible part (*al-juz’ alladhī lā yatajazza’*),** he has prefaced the discussion with this chapter in order to invalidate it, saying: Section on the Refutation of the Indivisible Part.⁵⁹

Mullāzāde opens his treatment of natural philosophy with a methodological discussion defining the discipline's principles, subject matter, and scope. Like all scientific inquiry, the study of nature must begin with an account of its proper principles (*mabādī’, archai*).⁶⁰ Accordingly, every seeker of science must begin with at least a preliminary conception of a science's subject matter in order to investigate and ultimately verify it through the clarification of its conceptual principles. This reflects Avicenna's epistemological and pedagogical reordering of the Aristotelian account of scientific inquiry: one must first establish the existence of the subject matter, then inquire into its quiddity, and only thereafter demonstrate its *per se* accidents (*‘awāriḍ dhātīyya*).⁶¹ This initial conceptual grasp thus serves as the necessary first step toward attaining genuine epistemic knowledge. For Mullāzāde, however, genuine understanding requires more than a preliminary conception; it demands grasping the subject in its true epistemic reality (*ḥaqīqa*). In the case of natural philosophy,

59 Yormaz, "Mevlânâzâde'nin," 84–85. The phrases in bold correspond to Lemmata 18–20 in Ḥocazāde's gloss.

60 Ibid., 80–82.

61 Riccardo Strobino, "What if that (is) why? Avicenna's taxonomy of scientific inquiries," in *Aristotle and the Arabic Tradition*, 55.

this entails establishing the quiddity of natural bodies through their composition from matter and form, since only then can their essential accidents be properly investigated. The following lemmata from Ḥocazāde's gloss respond to Mullāzāde's commentary:

(Lemma 18) His statement: “[...] because such [conception of the subject matter] is one of the conceptual principles (*mabādī’ taṣawwuriyya*) of the science [...]” etc.

I say: It has been objected that [to say] something is among the questions (*masā’il*) of the science, even if that occurs at the outset of study or afterwards, and not [its being] conceptualized (*mutaṣawwar*) before beginning. The answer is that the statement is based on the position that science (*‘ilm*) is defined as assent (*taṣdiq*) to the questions of science. And for the prohibited [thing] to be among the conceptual principles entails that it must be conceptualized before one begins assenting to the propositions [of the science]. For one cannot begin a process, such as walking, without already being engaged in a part of it: it is said, “So-and-so began walking” (*shara’a fī l-mashī*) if he has walked some walk. [...]

We reply: The conception of the subject matter (*taṣawwur al-mawḍū’*) of the science is a principle in relation to *all* of the assents that constitute its parts. For the subject matters of [scientific] questions are either its species (*anwā’*), or its essential accidents, or the accidents of its species and the species of their accidents. The full conception of these [subject matters] can only be completed through conceiving them [in relation to] the subject matter of science. Hence, it is a principle with respect to all of them. But the more appropriate way to express the justification is to say: because it is among the conceptual principles of science *in general*, that is, in relation to *all* of its parts.

(Lemma 19) His statement: “Therefore, the author intends to verify (*yuḥaqqiq*) the quiddity of the body (*māhiyyat al-jism*) [...]” etc.

I say: Since the investigations of matter and form are among the discussions of metaphysics (*al-ilāhiyyāt*), and the refutation of the theory of the indivisible particle (*al-juz’ alladhī lā yatajazza’*), which does not admit abstraction (*tajarrud*), belongs to natural philosophy (*al-ṭabī’iyyāt*), a critic might say: Why has the author conflated metaphysical inquiries with natural ones?

The author alludes to the answer that there is no way to proceed in metaphysics without beginning with the natural sciences, because they are the principles of metaphysics, just as the first teacher [Aristotle]

claimed. The subject matter of natural philosophy is the natural body (*jism ṭabīʿī*); it is therefore necessary to establish its quiddity, composed of matter and form, so that the student may complete their comprehension of it. Therefore, its components and states must be clarified.

And since the investigation of the proof of matter and form is suspended upon the invalidation of the theory of the indivisible particle, which does not admit abstraction, this invalidation becomes a conceptual prerequisite.

If, during instruction, it was said simply that body is “that which is composed of matter and form,” and the explanation were deferred to metaphysics, it would only produce confusion (*daghdagha*) in the student.

It has also been objected that what is demonstrated in the investigation of matter and form is that the indivisible part is impossible (*juzʿ ghayr mutajazzī mamnūʿ*); this would imply that body is *not* composed of indivisible parts. Meanwhile, what is demonstrated in the inquiry into matter and form is that matter and form are two existents (*mawjūdān*); this would imply that body is composed of them. If attention is paid only to what is demonstrated (*mā yubrayh ʿalayhi*), then the first belongs to metaphysics. But if attention is given to matter and form themselves, then the discussion belongs partly to natural philosophy and partly to metaphysics.

The correct answer is: Indivisible particles, being impossible in their view, allow no inquiry into their states as an existent. Hence, what is meant by saying that body is not composed of them is an inquiry into the states of the natural body, and so it belongs to natural philosophy (*al-ʿilm al-ṭabīʿī*). As for matter and form, they are considered to be two existents according to them [the philosophers], so there is no need to resort to interpretation (*taʿwīl*) in their investigation, nor to reduce their inquiry to the inquiry of body. Moreover, to prove that body is truly composed of them is equivalent to proving that they are existent within body. This amounts to establishing the parts of the subject matter of the science. Yet neither the subject matter of a science nor its parts are established within that science itself, because the subject matter is that for which essential attributes (*aʿrāḍ dhātīyya*) are sought. And as long as the existence of a thing has not been known, it is impossible to investigate whether some attribute belongs to it. Therefore, the existence of the subject matter, and likewise of its constituent parts, must be established prior to the science itself.

(Lemma 20) His statement: “[...] that this sought [issue] [...]” etc.

I say: It should not be said that the conception (*taṣawwur*) of the subject matter, which is among the conceptual principles of the science, depends on the refutation of the indivisible part, which itself is not among the questions (*masā’il*). For that would result in circularity (*dawr*).

We reply: This is not the case. For the status of being a conceptual principle applies in one respect (*bi-wajh*), whereas the refutation of the indivisible part is necessary only for attaining a complete conception of its reality. (*taṣawwur bi-tamām al-ḥaqīqa*). So, there is no circularity.⁶²

Following the commentator, Ḥocazāde begins his discussion by defining the seeker of knowledge, setting out the preparatory steps required before engaging in any science. This does not mean that every student is obliged to master all sciences in actuality; rather, the very designation of student (*ṭālib*) rests on the principle of seeking, that is, the continual pursuit of knowledge. This implies a natural orientation toward the pursuit of *epistēmē* in its totality, and as such, the student must begin by forming a preliminary conception of a science’s subject matter before aspiring to assent. This initial conceptual grasp constitutes one of the conceptual principles (*mabādī’ taṣawwuriyya*) of the science, and serves as the necessary first step toward attaining its full reality.⁶³

Ḥocazāde further develops the commentator’s logical argument by incorporating assent (*taṣdīq*) into its epistemological framework. Scientific inquiry conventionally begins with conception (*taṣawwur*, literally “forming a representation”) and proceeds to assent (*taṣdīq*, literally “deeming to be true”); their proper conjunction generates knowledge within a science.⁶⁴ Lemma 18 main-

62 Ḥocazāde, *Hāshiya*, 6a–7a (Lemmata 18–20).

63 For Avicenna, there is a close relationship between essences and conceptualization (*taṣawwur*), the latter constituting one of the two principal components of scientific knowledge (*‘ilm*) and being fundamentally concerned with the acquisition and mastery of concepts. See the section 1.3 in Ibn Sinā, *Kitāb al-Shifā’*, *al-Mantiq*, *al-Madkhal*, ed. Ibrāhīm Madkūr, Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Khuḍayrī, Aḥmad Fu’ād al-Ahwānī, and Georges Chehata Anawati (Cairo: Wizārat al-ma’ārif al-‘umūmiyya, 1952), 16–20; Silvia Di Vincenzo, *The Healing, Logic: Isagoge: A New Edition, English Translation and Commentary of the Kitāb al-Madkhal of Avicenna’s Kitāb al-Shifā’* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), 30–35 (Arabic-English text); Jon McGinnis, “Making Abstraction Less Abstract: The Logical, Psychological, and Metaphysical Dimensions of Avicenna’s Theory of Abstraction,” *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 80 (2006): 170.

64 Peter Adamson, Fedor Benevich, and Dustin Klinger, eds., “Conception and Assent,” in *The Heirs of Avicenna: Philosophy in the Islamic East, 12th–13th Centuries, Logic and Epistemology* (Leiden: Brill, 2025), 8.

tains that conception does not belong to the questions (*masā'il*) of a science proper, but rather to its subject matter, and must therefore precede any act of scientific investigation. More specifically, the conception of a thing (e.g., the natural body as hylomorphic) necessarily precedes any discussion concerning its assents or states and accidents. Since “science” consists in assent to those propositions, anything counted among the conceptual principles must already be conceived before assent becomes possible, just as one cannot be said to have “begun walking” without first taking a step. Hence, the conception of a science’s subject matter constitutes a general, science-wide conceptual principle governing all its parts and must precede every assent within that science.

Lemma 19 is devoted to defining the proper boundaries of natural philosophy vis-à-vis metaphysics and defending the inclusion of matter and form within physics against the view that they belong exclusively to metaphysical inquiry. On this basis, Ḥocazāde develops two complementary arguments. First, he appeals to the classical ordering of Aristotle’s works; second, he advances a pedagogical argument concerning the proper progression of knowledge. In doing so, he anticipates a common objection of his time, one that may have been raised by both students and theologian colleagues: why should matter and form be studied in natural philosophy if they are also treated in metaphysics?

First, although matter and form belong among the substances discussed in metaphysics, their investigation properly begins within natural philosophy, since the very quiddity of the natural body depends upon them. Natural philosophy therefore treats the foundational principles upon which metaphysical inquiry is built, following the order established by the “First Teacher,” Aristotle. It serves not merely as an ancillary discipline, but as the necessary pedagogical prerequisite and epistemological foundation for the study of metaphysical inquiry. The study of metaphysical realities, especially the immutable divine essence, must proceed from the investigation of mutable and perceptible beings, namely natural bodies and the world of particulars.⁶⁵ Only by first

65 What Ḥocazāde means by natural philosophy furnishing the principles of metaphysics is that first philosophy presupposes and proceeds through second philosophy: knowledge of the unchanging is attained by first investigating natural things, whose source of motion and stability lies within themselves. One thus moves from sensible particulars and what is “better known to us” toward causes and what is “better known by nature.” Aristotle’s scientific order follows this progression, beginning with physics before advancing to metaphysics. As Aristotle states, “physics, too, is a kind of wisdom, though not the primary one” (*Metaphysics* Γ 3 1005b1–2). See Williams Wians, “Colloquium 4: Aristotle’s Discovery of First Philosophy,” *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium of Ancient Philosophy* 38.1 (2024): 146–47. A shorthand note preserved on the opening folios of the

understanding “beings subject to change”⁶⁶ in the context of natural philosophy can the student gradually ascend to the comprehension of immaterial and immutable realities, culminating in the study of God in metaphysics.

Second, the lemma notes that if, in teaching, one were simply to define body as “that which is composed of matter and form” while postponing the proof to metaphysics, this would risk generating confusion (*daghdagha*) in the classroom, since the inference, as well as the technical Avicennan vocabulary, would remain unsubstantiated within the framework of natural philosophy. For instance, Peripatetic philosophy distinguishes between prime matter (*hayūlā*) and matter (*mādda*). In technical usage, the latter denotes prime matter in conjunction with corporeal form (*ṣūra jismiyya*), a composite that, through its species form (*ṣūra naw‘iyya*), is disposed to receive accidents.⁶⁷ Ḥocazāde’s use of *mādda* and *ṣūra* here may therefore be deliberately generic, anticipating a gradual initiation of students into a more technical and nuanced jargon in the subsequent sections: first *prime matter*, then *corporeal form*, and finally *species form*. Without such clarification pedagogically, simply asserting that the body is composed of matter and form would cause epistemic ambiguity for the learner. Thus, natural philosophy should be perceived as a fundamental prestep for the study of metaphysics, in which such technical vocabulary is clarified and qualified beforehand.

Where, then, should hylomorphism be situated if it is foundational to both natural philosophy and metaphysics? Following Avicenna’s principle that a subject matter may belong to more than one science, hylomorphism may properly fall within either discipline depending on the aspect (*wajh*) under

Vienna manuscript of Mullāzāde’s commentary comments on the author’s pedagogical choice, attesting to the scholarly interest surrounding this issue: “Natural philosophy (*al-ṭabī‘ī*) is placed before metaphysics (*al-ilāhī*) because the former investigates sensible things (*maḥsūsāt*), whereas the latter investigates intelligibles (*ma‘qūlāt*), and sense perception precedes intellect. In some books, however, metaphysics is placed before natural philosophy, on the grounds that natural philosophy investigates composites and material things (*al-murakkabāt wa-l-mawādd*), whereas metaphysics investigates separate immaterial entities and abstract things (*mujarradāt*).” See Mullāzāde, *Sharḥ ‘alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Wien Nationalbibliothek, Sammlung von Handschriften und alten Drucken (HAN-MAG), Cod. Mixt. 1301), 2b.

66 Aristotle’s analysis of the principle of change thus becomes, at the same time, an analysis of the matter-form composition of substance; see Jiyuan Yu, *The Structure of Being in Aristotle’s Metaphysics* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2003), 54.

67 For the distinction between *hayūlā* and *mādda*, the latter denoting *hayūlā* together with corporeal form, see Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī (d. 587/1191), in his critique of Peripatetic philosophy, *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* 1.3.3.3; see Tianyi Zhang, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Nature of Suhrawardī’s Illuminationism: Light in the Cave* (Leiden: Brill, 2023), 176–77.

consideration.⁶⁸ The opening discussion of natural philosophy in the *Hidāya* is devoted not to a positive exposition of hylomorphism but to the refutation of atomism, a pedagogical choice inherited from Avicenna's *Ishārāt*. To justify the primary place of this discussion within natural philosophy, the lemma distinguishes between two modes of inquiry: Considered solely with respect to the demonstration that indivisible particles are impossible, the question belongs to metaphysics. Considered with respect to the affirmation of matter and form as real existents, however, it pertains to both natural philosophy and metaphysics. Since indivisible particles have no real existence and therefore cannot be investigated in terms of their properties and states, the refutation of atomism serves as a preliminary step toward the investigation of the natural body and thus properly belongs to natural philosophy. Put differently, atomism must first be refuted within physics so that the hylomorphic principles derived from that refutation can serve as secure foundations for subsequent metaphysical inquiry.

The disciplinary location of hylomorphism thus depends on the aspect under consideration: insofar as matter and form constitute a natural body, they belong to natural philosophy; insofar as they are investigated *qua* existents, they belong to metaphysics. Yet this rationale was not conceded by later Ottoman scholars, including Taşköprizâde Ahmed (d. 968/1561), whose father had studied Hıcazâde's gloss in his youth from the scholar himself.⁶⁹ In a treatise on the subject matter of metaphysics and theology, Taşköprizâde adopts a markedly different position, arguing that the question of corporeal constitution – whether body is composed of matter and form or of indivisible substances – belongs exclusively to metaphysics rather than natural philosophy.⁷⁰

As noted above, a salient feature of Avicenna's and Abhari's treatment of hylomorphism is its indirect presentation through the prior refutation of its

68 Following Avicenna's formulation in *al-Burhân* 11.7 that a subject matter may belong to multiple sciences either absolutely and conditionally, or through different aspects, matter and form may rightly be addressed in both disciplines, each from its own perspective. See Ibn Sînâ, *al-Shifâ'*, *al-Manţiq*, *al-Burhân*, ed. İbrahim Madkûr and Aḥmad 'Afîfî (Cairo: al-Maṭba'a al-amîriyya, 1956), 162–68.

69 His father had studied under both Hıcazâde and his favored student Mollâ Bahâ' al-Dîn at the *Şaḥn-ı şemân* madrasa complex. Taşköprizâde himself, in turn, studied Hıcazâde's gloss in his youth through his father who was then teaching at the Hüseynîye madrasa in Amasya. See Taşköprizâde Ahmed, *al-Shaqā'iq al-nu'māniyya fî 'ulamā' al-dawla al-'uthmāniyya*, ed. Ahmed Subhi Furat (Istanbul: İÜ Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1985), 555.

70 Taşköprülüzâde Ahmed Efendi, *İlimlerde Konu, İlke ve Meseleler: Felsefe ve Kelamda Konu Tartışmaları*: El-Livâü'l-merfû' fî hall-i mebahisi'l-mevzû', ed./trans. Eşref Altaş (Istanbul: İLEM, 2022), 113.

atomist rival. This negative procedure reflects not only the prominence and broad acceptance of atomism in contemporary *kalām* but also a pedagogical strategy of rendering hylomorphism persuasive through the elimination of its principal alternative. Yet it also exposes the argument to charges of circularity. Yet this approach also invited criticism from theologians due to the possibility of circularity. To address this, Lemma 20 further responds to a possible objection that defining matter as part of the subject matter of natural philosophy would generate a circular dependency, since conceiving matter would first require refuting the indivisible particle, while that very refutation would itself depend upon such a conception. Ḥocazāde resolves this by distinguishing between a preliminary conception of the subject matter, sufficient for its role as a conceptual principle (*mabda' taṣawwūrī*), and a complete conception of its ontological reality (*taṣawwur bi-tamām al-ḥaqīqa*), which indeed requires the refutation of the indivisible particle and belongs to a later stage of inquiry. No circularity (*dawr*) therefore arises, since the initial conception needed for the science does not depend upon the conclusion ultimately established.

In sum, Mullāzāde's lemma is concerned with the epistemological grounding of scientific inquiry and with the manner in which the seeker of knowledge begins the investigation of a science. To this end, he invokes the logical notion of conception (*taṣawwur*), while Ḥocazāde supplements the discussion by introducing assent (*taṣdīq*) and thereby situating it within a more explicit logical terminology. In Aristotelian terms, the essence or quiddity of a thing is what is signified by its definition, and the corresponding epistemological commitment concerns the role of essences in definition and demonstration. In the Avicennan tradition, however, logical terminology extends beyond the order of thought and language to reflect an ontological order of dependence between a thing's essential constituents and its concomitant attributes. By transposing the classification of predicables from the order of thought and language to the order of being, Avicenna laid the groundwork for the ontologization of logic, whereby Aristotelian logical categories (*maqūlāt*) acquired metaphysical significance in postclassical Islam.⁷¹ Within this framework, Mullāzāde advances an epistemological claim concerning the conditions under which scientific inquiry begins, whereas Ḥocazāde, through the relationship between

71 For early Arabic philosophers such as Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī (d. 339/951), Aristotle's *Categories* served primarily as a logical introduction to concepts rather than as an ontology of substances. In Avicenna, by contrast, logical categories and predicables acquired an ontological significance; see Silvia Di Vincenzo, "Aristotle's Categories in the Arabic Tradition," in *Works of Philosophy and Their Reception: Aristotle's Categories*, ed. Riccardo Chiaradonna (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2024); Bertolacci, "The 'Ontologization' of Logic."

conception and assent, develops a corresponding argument for the ontological priority of natural philosophy, since the substances investigated by metaphysics, most notably matter and form, must first be pedagogically apprehended as the constitutive principles of natural bodies before they can be investigated as substances in metaphysics.

4.2 *From Receptivity to Concomitance: Ḥocazāde's Reformulation of the Proof of Prime Matter through Corporeal Continuity*

We say: What is meant by “fragmentation” (*infikāk*) is not simply the “absence of continuity” (*‘adam al-ittiṣāl*), for non-being does not require a receptacle (*qābil*). Rather, its meaning is the *removal of one connection* from the body and the occurrence of *two other connections* thereafter. Thus, the receptive of discontinuity is that which receives a *single connection* beforehand and *two connections* afterwards, such that its receptivity to discontinuity (*qabūl al-infiṣāl*) is its receptivity to *one connection* in one instance and *two connections* in another instance. Therefore, the thing that we have affirmed to exist in the body (distinct from both the form and the quantity (*miqdār*)) is that which serves as the *substrate* (*maḥall*) for connection, which itself requires the corporeal form (*ṣūra jismiyya*). Hence, that which serves as **the substrate for the corporeal form is prime matter**, for nothing is meant by *hayūlā* other than a substance which is the substrate of the corporeal form.⁷²

Safeguarding hylomorphism against atomist criticism, Mullāzāde proceeds by analyzing the conceptual structure of bodily fragmentation through the philosophers’ argument from continuity (*ittiṣāl*), formulated as follows: If one were to pursue an analysis of parts that are indivisible in actuality, this would entail that the body is composed of an actual infinite number of parts terminating in physical indivisibles, an untenable conclusion. Alternatively, if one accepts that the body consists of divisible parts that are not yet divided, the body remains a composite entity. From this, it follows that at least one fragmented body must be genuinely continuous.

This continuous body, insofar as it is divisible, must contain a principle receptive to imposed fragmentation (*infikāk*), which in turn also serves as part of the proof for prime matter. Since division cannot occur in a subject that

⁷² Yormaz, “Mevlânâzāde’nin,” 89. The phrase in bold corresponds to Lemma 38 in Ḥocazāde’s gloss.

is not receptive to it, there must be something in the body that can receive such a mode of discontinuity (*infīṣāl*). Three candidates may be considered: (i) actual quantity (*miqdār*); (ii) the extended substantial form of quantity (i.e., the immediately intuited three-dimensional extension); or (iii) something ontologically distinct from both.⁷³ The first two possibilities are rejected, since both form and quantity are essentially conjoined with the subject. Were either to be separated, they would paradoxically have to remain present in the very act of disjunction, resulting in the simultaneous coexistence of continuity and discontinuity within the same body, an impossibility.

Instead, genuine discontinuity entails a transformation in the state of continuity, specifically, the transition from a single, continuous connection to two discrete ones. Such a transformation necessarily presupposes an underlying substrate capable of bearing both states of continuity: initially one, and subsequently two. This capacity for differential reception discloses the existence of a substrate within the body that is ontologically distinct from both form and quantity, a bearer of connection and disconnection alike. The conclusion, therefore, is that the principle receptive to underlying continuity must be something other than form or quantity: namely, prime matter (*hayūlā*),⁷⁴ the underlying, non-quantified substrate whose pure receptivity sustains corporeal form and grounds the continuity presupposed by change. The continuity between matter and form does not entail the theologians' notion of complete separability or actual divisibility; rather, the two admit only mental distinction, remaining continuously conjoined and mutually complementary throughout the process: corporeal form preserves the body's overall continuity, whereas prime matter preserves its receptivity to continuity and discontinuity. Ḥocazāde addresses Mullāzāde's discussion in the following lemma:

(Lemma 38) His statement: "[...] the substrate for the corporeal form is *prime matter* [...]" etc.

73 See also Mullāzāde's passage in the following section.

74 The proof of prime matter from the receptivity of continuity and discontinuity was likewise adopted by Ḥocazāde's contemporary Mollā Luṭfī (d. 900/1495) in his *Futūhāt*. Since a continuous body is capable of receiving both continuity and discontinuity, Luṭfī argues that these states must inhere in an underlying substrate distinct from either of them, thereby establishing the existence of prime matter. He also rejects the Platonic doctrine of independently subsisting forms on the grounds that it renders prime matter superfluous; see Ömer Mahir Alper and Yasin Apaydın, eds., *Molla Luṭfī ve Futūhāt'ı* (Ankara: Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi, 2021), 127. For the discussion in Mullāzāde, see Yormaz, "Mevlânâzāde'nin," 94–95.

I say: It has been objected that this inference is far-fetched, for it does not follow from a thing's being the substrate (*maḥall*) of a concomitant (*lāzim*) that it is also the substrate of that of which entails the concomitant (*malzūm*); otherwise, it would follow that a thing is the substrate of itself.

Know that when the commentator understood “continuity” (*ittiṣāl*) according to its apparent meaning, namely, as the attribute of a continuous thing (*waṣf al-muttaṣil*), he was compelled to employ this premise, and the objection was consequently raised against him. The philosophers, however, intended by “continuity” the intelligible form conceived in itself (*al-ṣūra al-mutaʿqqala fī naḥsihā*), and thus their intended conclusion may be established without recourse to this premise.

The upshot of their position in this context, that is, in the proof of prime matter (*hayūlā*), is as follows: We affirm the existence of an individual substance extended in spatial dimensions (*jawhar fard mumtadd fī l-jihāt*), and this is self-evident (*badīhī*), being judged by the intellect with the assistance of sense perception. Such an extended substance cannot be composed of indivisible parts, nor of things which are equivalent to indivisibles, namely, things indivisible in one or two dimensions. Rather, either it has no parts whatsoever, or its parts are themselves connected bodies (*aḥsām muttaṣila*) in their very essence, or terminate in such bodies.

What has thus been established for us is a body continuous by virtue of its own essence. It is precisely this continuous body upon which discontinuity and fragmentation supervene (*fa-huwa l-muttaṣil yaṭraʿu ʿalayhi l-infiṣāl wa-l-inḥikāk*). When discontinuity supervenes upon it, the substance that is continuous in itself no longer remains numerically identical (*bi-ʿaynihi*); rather, it ceases to exist, and two other continuous bodies come into being. If there were nothing in the body besides this continuous entity, then the division of a body would amount either to its complete annihilation or to the coming-to-be of the two resulting bodies from pure non-existence. But this is necessarily impossible.

There must therefore be something fixed and abiding through both continuity and discontinuity (*amr thābit ʿalā taqdīr al-ittiṣāl wa-l-infiṣāl*), which is neither continuous nor separated in itself, but rather follows that substance which is continuous in itself. It is one through its unity (*waḥda*), many through its multiplicity (*kathra*), continuous through its continuity, and fragmented through its discontinuity. Since this thing is one when associated with the one continuous body and many when associated with the many divided bodies, the one continuous body and

the many divided bodies belong to it only through a particular mode of specification (*al-muttaṣil al-wāḥid wa-l-mutaʿaddid mukhtaṣṣan bihi ikhtiṣāṣan*). Thus, it serves as the substrate of the one continuous body in the state of continuity and of the many divided bodies in the state of discontinuity.

Accordingly, it must certainly be a substance (*jawharan qaṭʿan*). This substance, which serves as the substrate of the body that is continuous in itself, is what is called prime matter (*hayūlā*).⁷⁵

Judging Mullāzāde's inference to be insufficiently compelling, Ḥocazāde reformulates and strengthens the proof for the existence of prime matter by recasting the relation between continuity (*ittiṣāl*) and corporeal form (*ṣūra jismiyya*) in terms of the logical distinction between a concomitant (*lāzim*; "implicate," in Tony Street's terminology) and that which entails it (*malzūm*; "implicant"). So, Ḥocazāde writes: "[...] it does not follow from a thing's being the substrate of a concomitant that it is also the substrate of that which entails the concomitant; otherwise, it would follow that a thing is the substrate of itself." His concern is that the substrate of a concomitant need not thereby be the substrate of that which entails it, rendering the original inference vulnerable to objection. In other words, the disputed premise assumes that whatever serves as the substrate of a *lāzim* must also serve as the substrate of its *malzūm*, an assumption Ḥocazāde rejects as exposing a potentially weak inference (*tafrīʿ baʿd*). Thus, rather than replacing the relation of substrate (*maḥallīyya*) with that of *lāzim* and *malzūm*, he uses the latter to expose the illegitimacy of inferring the former through a substrate. Continuity, he argues, is an inseparable concomitant of corporeal form, but this relation of necessary implication or inseparability does not license any inference concerning the relation between their respective substrates.⁷⁶

More fundamentally, the *lāzim-malzūm* relation concerns conceptual entailment (*iltizām*): the concept or quiddity of corporeal form necessarily implies that of continuity, although continuity is not constitutive of corporeal form itself. A *lāzim* may necessarily belong to a quiddity without constituting it: the standard logical example is that the equality of a triangle's angles to two

75 Ḥocazāde, *Hāshiya*, 9b (Lemma 38).

76 For the standard logical treatment of *lāzim* and *malzūm* in the post-Avicennan tradition, compare al-Kātibī, *al-Risāla al-Shamsiyya*, §22, as discussed by Tony Street, *Najm al-Dīn al-Kātibī's al-Risāla al-Shamsiyya* (New York: NYU Press, 2024), 121–22. The discussion distinguishes relations of an implicate-implicant (*luzūm-malzūm*) or inseparability from relations of ontological inherence in a substrate, thereby illuminating the logical basis of Ḥocazāde's criticism of Mullāzāde's inference.

right angles is a necessary concomitant of triangularity, although it is not part of the triangle's essence. Likewise, from the fact that continuity necessarily belongs to corporeal form, nothing follows, merely by virtue of this implication, about whether the substrate receiving continuity must also receive corporeal form. Ḥocazāde's criticism is precisely that Mullāzāde's formulation moves too quickly from a relation between concepts to one between actually inhering properties and their respective substrates. The *lāzim-malzūm* relation concerns the necessary belonging of one meaning to another, whereas *maḥallīyya* concerns the ontological relation between an item and the subject in which it inheres. The two relations cannot simply be substituted for one another. Accordingly, it does not follow that whatever serves as the substrate of continuity must also serve as the substrate of corporeal form. Such an inference, Ḥocazāde observes, would absurdly entail that a thing is the substrate of itself.

The philosophers argue that the intellect, assisted by sense perception, immediately apprehends the existence of a spatially extended substance, which cannot self-evidently be composed of indivisibles or their equivalents. Avicenna closely identifies the philosophers' conception of continuity with corporeality and defines in terms of the capacity to receive the three dimensions.⁷⁷ Continuity does not belong to matter itself, which remains a purely receptive principle associated with potentiality and capable of receiving contrary states such as continuity and discontinuity; rather, it belongs to corporeal form, which actualizes matter as an extended and divisible body.⁷⁸

77 Receptivity does not appear to pose a difficulty for Mullāzāde or Ḥocazāde. Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, however, objects that it introduces a circularity, since receptivity cannot be included in the definition of body without presupposing the body itself. His claim that Avicenna's account amounts to a description (*rasm*) rather than a true definition (*ḥadd*) turns on a question raised in the *Mulakhkhaṣ*: what is the recipient of the dimensions whose inherence constitutes corporeality? It cannot be form, since form actualizes and therefore cannot simultaneously be receptive (*qābil*) and active (*fā'il*); nor can it be matter, since matter cannot receive dimensions prior to form. See the discussion in Eşref Altaş, "Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's Epistle on *al-Hayūlā wa al-Şūrah*: A Study and Editio Princeps," *Nazarīyat* 1.1 (2014): 75–76.

78 True corporeity consists in the form of continuity that receives the three dimensions, continuity being understood as absolute divisibility rather than determinate magnitude (Ibn Sīnā, *The Physics*, 1:27–30). While Avicenna was influenced by Simplicius (d. c.480–540) in identifying corporeality with continuity, he departs from him by treating continuity not as a merely material feature but as corporeal form itself; see Abraham Stone, "Simplicius and Avicenna on the Essential Corporeity of Material Substance," in *Aspects of Avicenna*, ed. Robert Wisnovsky (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2001), 102.

Ḥocazāde then contends that the commentator exposes himself to criticism by treating continuity merely as a property (*waṣf*) of a continuous body rather than as its true essential definition and then basing his inference upon that premise. Earlier philosophers, by contrast, understood continuity not as a merely descriptive notion but as an intellectually apprehended form (*ṣūra mutaʿaqqala*). From this vantage, Ḥocazāde reconstructs the commentator's proof for prime matter with ontological rigor: the intellect, aided by sense perception, immediately affirms the existence of an extended substance (*jawhar mumtadd fī l-jihāt*), which cannot be composed of indivisible parts, or of entities equivalent to indivisibles, namely things indivisible in one or more dimensions, since such composition yields incoherence, nor can it lack parts altogether, as this would contradict its evident spatial extension. The conclusion is that body must be continuous in itself by virtue of its corporeal form; for if body were nothing but a connected substance, then division would entail its annihilation and the generation of two new bodies *ex nihilo*, an absurdity.

Rather, the parts of an extended substance must either themselves be continuous bodies defined by virtue of their own essences (*aṣṣām muttaṣila fī ḥadd dhātihā*) or terminate in entities that are continuous in themselves. Accordingly, what is demonstrably present is a body that is connected in its own quiddity, and upon which continuity and discontinuity may subsequently supervene. When discontinuity supervenes upon it, the continuous substance no longer remains numerically identical (*bi-ʾaynihi*). In its place, two new continuous bodies emerge.⁷⁹ Were there nothing beyond this connected substance, the act of discontinuity would result in the complete annihilation (*ʿadam*) of the original body and the spontaneous creation of two others, which is again a metaphysical absurdity (*ḍarūrī l-istiḥāla*).

From this impossibility, Ḥocazāde infers the existence of something that persists through both continuity and discontinuity. This entity, namely prime matter, is one when associated with a single continuous body and many when associated with a plurality of divided bodies; neither unity nor multiplicity therefore belongs to it essentially, but only through a particular mode of specification. The subject that persists through division cannot itself be either

79 Rāzī also reformulates the proof by grounding it in the concept of unity rather than continuity. Since determinate corporeity is inseparable from the unity of a body, division entails the disappearance of one corporeity and the emergence of others. Because corporeity, unlike determinate continuity, is independent of magnitude and thus non-accidental, division involves the corruption of an original corporeal form and the generation of new ones. Avicenna's account therefore implies that bodily division may produce multiple corporeal forms even apart from qualitative change. See Shihadeh, "Avicenna's Corporeal Form," 387–89.

continuous or divided in its essence, but must be a distinct substance underlying both states and enduring through their succession. Prime matter thus serves as the abiding substrate of corporeal existence, while unity and multiplicity arise only through its relation to different corporeal configurations. By recasting the commentator's proof in terms of concomitance and clarifying the philosophers' conception of continuity, Ḥocazāde reinforces the Peripatetic doctrine of an enduring prime matter underlying bodily composition and division, thereby avoiding the theologians' possible account of generation and corruption as a succession of annihilation and recreation.

4.3 *Is Form Receptive to Discontinuity? Refuting Jurjānī's Theory of Accidental Continuity*

Once prime matter is established in a body that is capable of discontinuity, it is thereby established in all bodies. This is because the magnitudinal nature (*ṭabīʿa miqdāriyya*), that is, the reality defined as magnitude (*al-ḥaqīqa al-mufasssara ilā l-miqdār*), which is necessarily concomitant, is the corporeal form (*ṣūra jismiyya*) common to all bodies. This form is either, in itself, independent of a substrate or it is not, but rather dependent upon it by virtue of its essence (*muftaqira ilayhi bi-ḥasabi dhātihā*). For, if we abstract from everything extraneous to its essence and separate it from what differs from it, then if it is possible for it to exist without a substrate, it is self-sufficient by virtue of essence (*ghaniyya bi-ḥasabi l-dhāt*); otherwise, it would be dependent by virtue of essence.

The first alternative, its being essentially independent of a substrate, is impossible. For in that case it would be impossible for it to inhere in a substrate, since that which is essentially independent of something cannot inhere in it. Inherence (*ḥulūl*), in the sense explained above, entails [ontological] need or dependence (*iftiqār*); **therefore, if something essentially independent of another were to inhere in it, its essence's necessary implication (*muqtaḍāhā*) would fail, and that is impossible.** It thus becomes necessary to accept the second alternative, namely that it is essentially dependent upon a substrate (*maḥall*). Now, whatever is essentially dependent upon a substrate cannot exist except while inhering in it; otherwise, it would not be essentially dependent upon it. Therefore, wherever the nature of quantity exists, it must inhere in a substrate, which is prime matter. Hence, all bodies are composed of prime matter and form, which is what was to be demonstrated.

An objection was raised to this proof, namely that it involves a *petitio principii* (*muṣādara ʿalā l-maṭlūb*). For the intended conclusion of

this proof is to establish the existence of prime matter in the body. Yet among the premises of the proof is the judgment that the form receptive to discontinuity (*qabūl al-infisāl*); but to judge that it is receptive to discontinuity presupposes its existence – for that which does not exist cannot be receptive to anything. And its existence is said to depend on the existence of prime matter, since it inheres in prime matter, and the existence of that which inheres without the existence of the substrate is impossible. It would therefore follow that the existence of prime matter is established by the existence of the form, and the existence of the form by the existence of prime matter, thus yielding a *petitio principii*.

The reply is that what is meant by “form” here is the continuity (*ittiṣāl*) that we have already established in the course of demonstrating the existence of the continuous body (*jism muttaṣil*). Its existence, as thus established by independent proof, is not contingent upon the existence of prime matter; thus, the alleged *petitio principii* does not follow. This is the strongest possible formulation of this objection and its reply.⁸⁰

The present passage builds directly on the discussion in the previous section. There, Mullāzāde generalizes the proof of prime matter from divisible bodies to bodies susceptible to discontinuity, particularly in response to theological objections concerning the coexistence of inseparable principles (matter and form) within a single quiddity. He argues that continuity and the continuous body ultimately point to corporeality, thereby shifting the discussion to the relation between prime matter and corporeal form, conceived in terms of inherence (*ḥulūl*) and mutual dependence (*iftiqār*). Yet even if this is granted, the question remains how the relation between matter and corporeality is to be qualified. To establish prime matter as a substrate distinct from form, Mullāzāde reframes the issue through the notions of inherence and susceptibility to discontinuity, grounding the continuity of natural bodies in an underlying material principle.

Here is a short summary of his discussion: In the first paragraph above, Mullāzāde argues that once prime matter is demonstrated in any divisible body, it must be affirmed in *all* bodies, since all bodies share the same corporeal form, namely continuous magnitude. He then establishes a dilemma: corporeal form is either essentially independent of a substrate or essentially dependent upon one. Then in the second, Mullāzāde rejects the first alternative by arguing that whatever is essentially independent of a substrate cannot inhere in one.

80 Yormaz, “Mevlânâzāde’nin,” 93–94. The phrase in bold corresponds to Lemma 45 in Hocażāde’s gloss.

Since corporeal form necessarily inheres in a substrate and inherence entails ontological dependence, corporeal form must be essentially dependent upon a substrate. Otherwise, if something essentially independent of another were nevertheless to inhere in it, the necessary implication of its essence (*muqtaḍā al-dhāt*) would fail. Mullāzāde will formulate this requirement in a subsequent section through the Avicennan notion of *talāzum*, or necessary concomitance: corporeal form necessarily accompanies and depends upon a substrate, namely prime matter. Consequently, every body is composed of matter and form.

Mullāzāde then raises a major objection to the proof, namely that it involves a *petitio principii*. The argument assumes the existence of corporeal form in order to establish prime matter, yet the existence of form itself appears to depend upon matter and serves as the precondition for the capacity of discontinuity. The proof thus seems circular, establishing matter through form and form through matter.

Mullāzāde rejects this charge by clarifying that the “form” presupposed by the proof is what the philosophers define as “continuity” (*ittiṣāl*), whose existence has already been independently established in the preceding demonstration of the continuous body. Because continuity is known prior to the proof for prime matter, the charge of circularity fails and the demonstration remains valid. What is at stake is not complete discontinuity, but the conceptual divisibility of what remains continuously conjoined. The clarification enables Mullāzāde to universalize the hylomorphic framework beyond merely divisible bodies to corporeal beings as such. In doing so, he secures the ontological necessity of prime matter as the substrate of corporeal form while preempting the logical objection that would otherwise undermine the proof’s independence, thereby neutralizing possible atomist objections to the Avicennan account of continuity and potential divisibility. In response to Mullāzāde’s passage, Ḥocazāde writes:

(Lemma 45) His statement: “[...] therefore, if something essentially independent of another were to inhere in it, its essence’s necessary implication (*muqtaḍāhā*) would fail, and that is impossible [...]” etc.

It has been said in reply that by “form” here is meant “discontinuity.” The clarification of this reply, as some eminent figures [al-Jurjānī]⁸¹ have stated, is as follows: The existence of a substance extended in three dimensions is self-evident, and it has been established by the preceding

81 For the passage, see al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, 7:40–41.

proof that there is no discontinuity in its extension; rather, it is continuous in itself, and “continuity” is predicated of it in an emphatic sense.

We therefore say: This continuity is subject to a kind of continuity [that is accidental]; but this cannot be identical with the substantial continuity (*ittiṣāl jawharī*). This is what is meant here by “form.” As for considering this substantial extension (*imtidād jawharī*) as inhering in matter and then calling this “form” in that respect, this is not intended or taken into account in the present context. Therefore, there is no circularity.⁸²

Ḥocazāde strengthens Mullāzāde’s response to the charge of circularity by clarifying the notion of form and criticizing a passage in Jurjānī that blurs the distinction between substantial and accidental continuity, thereby mischaracterizing the Peripatetic position. He argues that the “form” presupposed by the proof is not substantial extension insofar as it inheres in prime matter, whose existence is precisely what the proof seeks to establish, but rather continuity itself, already demonstrated through an independent proof of the continuous body. By distinguishing continuity as an independently established feature of the continuous body from corporeal form as a principle inhering in matter, he preserves the demonstrative integrity of the proof and blocks the charge that prime matter is being presupposed in its own demonstration.

In the philosophers’ framework, conceptualization of natural body presupposes matter which, in itself, is unextended, yet becomes an “absolute body” (*jism muṭlaq*) upon conjunction with corporeal form, the principle that endows it with indeterminate extension.⁸³ In other words, the “absolute body” possesses three-dimensionality only in an indeterminate sense: by virtue of corporeal form, it has length, breadth, and depth universally, without yet possessing determinate dimensions.⁸⁴ Later theological critics, like Jurjānī, however, did not understand three-dimensionality in this indeterminate sense when defining natural bodies as three-dimensionally extended substances. Instead, they reduced matter and form to non-essential principles that receive continuity only accidentally. Ḥocazāde maintains that Mullāzāde’s account does not fully dispel the theologians’ charge that the demonstrations of prime matter and corporeal form are circular. For the philosophers, continuity belongs essentially to corporeal form, while the capacity to receive

82 Ḥocazāde, *Hāshīya*, 10b–11a (Lemma 45).

83 Lammer, “A Lively Debate,” 102.

84 Ibid.

continuity and discontinuity belongs to prime matter.⁸⁵ He therefore criticizes what he takes to be Jurjānī's conflation of these distinct principles, arguing that Jurjānī treats form either as extension insofar as it inheres in matter or as an accidental mode of continuity, thereby departing from the Peripatetic understanding of corporeality.

Jurjānī's *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* raises a well-known objection to the philosophers' account of hylomorphic unity by identifying form with substantial extension itself. In a passage in this commentary, he primarily questions how form can constitute a single continuum if continuity, by its very nature, is receptive to discontinuity, since such receptivity appears to presuppose two distinct substances: a recipient and that by which continuity is conferred.⁸⁶ Jurjānī there associates form with discontinuity, distinguishing the so-called "continuous form" (*ṣūra ittiṣālīyya*), that is, the extended substance grounding the body's connectedness, from the body's immediate necessary givenness as a corporeal existent. Although this immediate apprehension still requires demonstrative clarification, Jurjānī argues that positing prime matter as the substratum of continuity would entail two substances, one receptive and the other imparting continuity – despite the philosophers' explicit denial that these constitute an actual duality (*ithnayniyya bi-l-fi'l*).⁸⁷ Such duality, he contends, follows only from the philosophers' own premises, rendering the disagreement a merely verbal (*lafẓī*) dispute devoid of substantive philosophical significance.⁸⁸ The

85 Avicenna distinguishes between two aspects of corporeality: being continuous in actuality and being receptive to continuity and discontinuity. The former pertains to corporeal form, while the latter pertains to the underlying substrate. Since a body is actually continuous yet potentially capable of conjunction and separation, these features must belong to distinct principles. Actual continuity belongs to corporeal form, whereas receptivity to continuity and discontinuity belongs to the substrate that underlies the generation and corruption of continuity. See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt*, 2:172–73; 2:182–83; also discussed in Shihadeh, "Avicenna's Corporeal Form," 376–78.

86 Another objection by Jurjānī, not addressed here, is the following: if extension (*imtidad*) is itself material, how can body be composed of both matter and form? See al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, 7:46.

87 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt*, 2:180–81.

88 "There is no doubt that the continuous form, i.e. the substance extended in directions, which establishes that the part is connected in itself, is not its reality but rather the body in the immediate view is necessarily existent. This [immediate view] requires proof through argument. [For] the matter characterized by this continuity [of the extended substance], if one admits its existence, then [there arises the problem that] there must be two substances, one receptive and the other imparting. If one concedes both, then the dispute becomes merely verbal (*lafẓī*). But you know that this only follows if one admits the claim of that opponent." See *ibid.*, 40.

underlying difficulty concerns how two ontologically distinct principles can nonetheless constitute a genuine unity.

As a possible response, Ḥocazāde would argue that matter and form are not separate in actuality but continuously conjoined in corporeal composition, even though they remain conceptually distinguishable only by mental consideration (*bi-l-i'tibār*). Once continuity in its universal sense is understood, as the philosophers maintain, as a substantial feature of body rather than an accidental one, the proof of prime matter neither collapses into circularity nor commits a *petitio principii*. Form should therefore not be defined through discontinuity but through its necessary conjunction with prime matter, while division and separation are treated merely as accidental determinations of the underlying substratum that characterizes corporeal being.

A contemporary Ottoman theologian, Ḥasan Çelebi (d. 891/1486), renowned for his gloss on *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* and for his scholarly rivalry with Ḥocazāde,⁸⁹ clarifies Jurjānī's position by arguing that the Avicennan claim that continuity constitutes either a form or an essential constituent of body is mistaken. In rejecting hylomorphic composition, he argues that continuity should be understood neither as an independent form nor as a substance, but rather as an "accidental" feature of extension. Consequently, positing both continuity and matter as distinct substances constitutive of body generates a contradiction and renders the dispute superfluous.⁹⁰ In a later lemma, Ḥasan Çelebi likewise treats the philosophers' hylomorphic designations as arbitrary, arising from preponderance without a determining cause rather than from necessity.⁹¹

In subsequent sections of *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Jurjānī will press the argument further by questioning how philosophers can maintain that matter and form, if together constituting a continuous body, could ever be receptive to discontinuity.⁹² Such a claim, he argues, would compromise the unity of the body and entail a conjunction of contraries, since continuity, as he understands it, is intrinsic to the body, and discontinuity would therefore also have to be intrinsic to it.⁹³ Mullāzāde, however, had already clarified in his commentary

89 Bahkçioğlu, *Verifying the Truth*, 127.

90 al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, 7:40.

91 Ibid., 7:45.

92 Ibid., 7:46.

93 Ibid., 7:41. In a later lemma, Ḥasan Çelebi shifts the register by clarifying the philosophers' position and correcting Jurjānī: unity belongs primarily to quantity and only accidentally to the "continuous substance," thereby blocking the inference that division entails the disruption of the whole body. He interprets this "hard question" as a general counterproof by absurd consequence. He argues that the philosophers' position is valid in the case of mathematical bodies, but fails to apply to natural bodies. See *ibid.*

that discontinuity in this context is accidental rather than substantial and therefore does not belong to the essence of the body itself. Ḥocazāde likewise contests Jurjānī's objection, arguing that it rests on a mischaracterization of the Peripatetic position. For the philosophers, continuity belongs substantially to corporeal form, whereas discontinuity is merely an accidental determination supervening upon an underlying continuity that is ontologically distinct from it and therefore poses no threat to the unity of corporeal composition.

4.4 *The Debate over Body as Genus and Corporeal Form as Specific Quiddity: a Refutation of Rāzī*

We reply: As for the objection, its invalidity is evident. First, because the author of the proof did not assert that the form is receptive (*qābil*) to discontinuity (*infiṣāl*); rather, he introduced this judgment hypothetically (*‘alā sabīl al-farq*) in order to refute it. Thus, the proposition that the form is receptive of discontinuity is not one of the premises of the demonstration; rather, the premise consists in the refutation of this proposition after assuming it for the sake of argument.

Second, because his statement “the judgment that the form is receptive to discontinuity” is claimed to depend upon the existence of the form. If by this it is meant that the judgment depends on the actual existence of the form in reality, we do not concede that; this dependency would only follow if the judgment were in fact correct, which we deny.

And if what is meant instead is that the judgment depends on the form's existence in the belief (*i'tiqād*) of the one making the judgment, that we concede. However, to claim that belief in the existence of the form depends on belief in the existence of prime matter – if by this it is meant that the belief depends on the actual existence of matter, we deny it, since belief may not correspond to reality. And if it is meant that belief in the form depends on belief in the matter, that too is false – for one may believe in the existence of form without believing in the existence of matter, as is the case with Plato's position.

As for the reply [offered by the original author of the objection], its weakness is evident from what we have already established, namely, that the corporeal form is the continuous substance (*jawhar muttaṣil*) apprehended in the body at first glance, and not the mere continuity. And as for the objection that is based on a request for clarification concerning “quantity,” whether it refers to continuity or something else, and the corresponding reply, it is of little use, since the author's intended meaning is sufficiently clear based on what we have already explained.

The Imām [Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī] objected to this proof on other grounds, stating that it would only be valid **if it were established, namely that the corporeal form is a species-forming quiddity (*māhiyya naw'īyya*)**, which has not been proven. It is possible that the form in bodies receptive to discontinuity differs in species from the form in bodies that are not, and thus the dependence of the former on matter would not entail the dependence of the latter. The reply is that the corporeal form is the initially perceived continuity of the body, and **there is no doubt that it is a species-forming quiddity**, since it does not vary according to differentiae (*fuṣūl*), but only in respect to extrinsic attributes, such as being celestial, elemental, and so on, none of which pertain to the reality of this connective identity (*al-ḥaqīqa tilka l-huwiyya al-ittiṣālīyya*). And even if the corporeal forms in different bodies were, in fact, distinct in reality from this connective identity, that shared continuity would still be a concomitant (*lāzīm*) of all of them. Thus, the dependence of this shared continuity, which all bodies necessarily possess, on prime matter entails the presence of matter in all bodies. This is what was to be proven.⁹⁴

After establishing prime matter as the underlying substrate of bodies, Mullāzāde turns to a series of objections raised against the proof in the postclassical theological literature. His response hinges on a distinction between hypothetical supposition, belief, and ontological dependence, thereby rejecting the charge that the demonstration of prime matter rests on a circular dependence upon form. Continuing the debate over whether form is receptive to discontinuity, he then presents an objection attributed to Rāzī against the philosophers' claim that corporeal form is a continuous substance inhering in prime matter. The objection maintains that the proof would be valid only if corporeal form were first shown to constitute a species-forming quiddity (*māhiyya naw'īyya*), a thesis that the philosophers have not demonstrated. Without such proof, it remains possible that the form in severable bodies differs essentially from that in inseverable ones; consequently, the dependence of the former upon matter would not entail the same for the latter, and one could not conclude that all bodies require prime matter.⁹⁵

94 Yormaz, "Mevlânâzâde'nin," 93–95. The phrases in bold correspond to Lemmata 49–50 in Hocaazâde's gloss.

95 Rāzī's objection and Mullāzāde's response are recorded in a brief marginal note on the second folio of the Vienna manuscript, attesting to the significance of the discussion. See Mullāzāde, *Sharḥ*, 2b.

Mullāzāde replies that corporeal form is nothing other than the body's "continuity" as immediately apprehended, namely continuity insofar as it inheres in the body itself rather than subsisting separately from it. This continuity constitutes a universal species-forming quiddity common to all bodies, differing only through accidental attributes such as celestial or elemental constitution rather than through essential differentiae (*fuṣūl*). Thus, even if corporeal forms differ in essence, continuity remains a concomitant (*lāzim*) shared by all bodies. Since this common feature requires a substrate, its universality suffices to establish prime matter as the necessary substratum of every body. In this way, Mullāzāde counters Rāzī's objection by grounding corporeal form in the universal continuity of body while preserving the necessary relation between corporeality and prime matter. The relevant lemmata from Ḥocazāde's gloss read as follows:

(Lemma 49) His statement: "If it were established, namely that the corporeal form is a species-forming nature (*ṭabīʿa nawʿiyya*) [...]"⁹⁶ etc.

I say: Genus is something that, according to them, does not enter into existence except after being specified by a differentia that determines it. In this way, genus and differentia are united with respect to extramental reality in both origination and existence. The genus-forming nature (*ṭabīʿa jinsiyya*) in the external world thus consists of distinct realities according to their branching differentiae; it is therefore possible for them to differ in their concomitants when considered in judgment. This is in contrast to the species-forming nature, for it is an actualized nature, and it is inconceivable that its concomitants should differ.

(Lemma 50) His statement: "There is no doubt that it is its species-forming quiddity [...]" etc.

I say: This is an objection on the basis that it is necessary for it to be its species-forming quiddity. Yet there is no way to establish this. For the genus-forming nature, absolutely considered, is something that, according to them, cannot exist except by becoming specified through the differentiae that precede it. Once it is specified, extraneous attributes attach to it. Why, then, do you claim that this is not the case here?⁹⁷

96 Instead of "species-forming quiddity," Ḥocazāde's text occasionally employs the expression "species-forming nature," apparently using the two terms interchangeably.

97 Ḥocazāde, *Hāshiya*, 11b (Lemmata 49–50).

4.4.1 Rāzī on Substance, Body, and Hylomorphic Composition

In the *Burhān*, Avicenna distinguishes between body *qua* matter and body *qua* genus, the latter encompassing everything included in the concept signified by the term “body.”⁹⁸ Ḥocazāde’s lemmata engage a major objection, attributed to Rāzī, against this conception. One important formulation of this objection appears in Rāzī’s philosophical summa, *al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyya*. Rāzī raises two principal objections to Avicenna’s definition of body, only the second being referenced above: first, that it omits reference to matter despite affirming the body’s composition from matter and form; and second, that it treats body as a species of substance without acknowledging any coordinate division (*qasīm*) or whether it functions as a true genus predicated of species.

In the *Mabāḥith*, Rāzī argues that substance cannot function as a genus for the categories subsumed under it, but is rather predicated of them as a concomitant.⁹⁹ Rāzī further puts forth five concise objections undercut treating substance as a real genus and thereby corporeal form being a species: (i) Defining substance as “what exists not in a subject” is equivocal: “non-in-subject” either lies in another non-subject – yielding impossible mutual inclusion – or not, so it cannot ground a single generic notion. (ii) Since “substance” is predicated of the Necessary Existent, taking it as a genus would make the Necessary Existent a composite of genus and differentia. (iii) Genus requires differentia for definition, while differentia itself presupposes a genus; making “substance” the genus triggers a vicious explanatory circle. (iv) If substance were a genus, its states would accrue from its subordinate essences rather than from “substantiality” as such, contrary to how the term is actually predicated. (v) The supposed “universals of bodies” do not form a unified generic kind: corporeality (*jismiyya*) is effectively identical with substantiality (save for immaterial bodies, whose essences are diverse), so the unity required of a true genus is lacking.¹⁰⁰

98 Here, *body as genus* denotes the totality of the essential constituents predicated of what is composed of corporeality, rather than merely that which possesses three-dimensional extension. It therefore encompasses all species of body, such as animate and inanimate, sentient and insentient, rational and irrational, although these determinations are mutually exclusive in any individual body. See the section 1.10 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Burhān*, 50; Jon McGinnis, “Logic and Science: The Role of Genus and Difference in Avicenna’s Logic, Science and Natural Philosophy,” *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 18 (2007): 175–76.

99 al-Rāzī, *al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyya fī ‘ilm al-ilāhiyyāt wa-l-ṭabī‘iyyāt*, ed. Mu‘taṣim-Billāh al-Baghdādī, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-‘arabī, 1990), 244.

100 Ibid., 1:245–46.

Hence, for Rāzī, substance can never be a real genus (*bi-l-ḥaqīqa*) in the strict Avicennan sense; and in every case, substance cannot be predicated as a genus of that which falls under it. At most, by attending to highly general concomitants (e.g., “existence not in a subject,” “existence in itself”), one may speak of substance as genus only in a loose analogical sense, not as a genuine predicable genus. This is because it is not predicated univocally of all its inferiors, and its predication of the Necessary Existent would entail an impossible composition. At most, this “substance” qualifies as a *jins bi-l-iʿtibār*, that is, a genus only by mental consideration of highly general concomitants such as “not being in a subject.”¹⁰¹

Bilal Ibrahim has recently argued that Rāzī’s reformulation of natural philosophy rests on a systematic critique of Aristotelian essentialism and its claim that real definitions provide cognitive access to the essences of things. Since essences are epistemologically inaccessible, definitions can capture only phenomenal and nominal features rather than noumenal realities. Consequently, categories should be understood as nominal universals that describe observable phenomena, not as essential kinds corresponding to independently knowable realities.¹⁰² In this respect, Rāzī maintains that Avicenna conflates noumenal entities with phenomenal ones, thereby attributing essential content to what can only be known through their effects and concomitants.¹⁰³ The essence of body is therefore unknowable and can only be defined through its observable attributes rather than its constitutive principles.

Two points are relevant here. First, Rāzī maintains that substance cannot be predicated of body as a genus, rendering Avicenna’s real definition of body logically problematic. Whereas Avicenna treats substance as the genus of body, Rāzī rejects this move on logical grounds.¹⁰⁴ The underlying issue concerns whether genera are predicated of their inferiors as essential

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 1:247.

¹⁰² For Rāzī’s phenomenalist logical programme, see Bilal Ibrahim, “Faḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Ibn al-Hayṭam and Aristotelian Science: Essentialism versus Phenomenalism in Post-Classical Islamic Thought,” *Oriens* 41 (2013): 397–99.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 413. As Rāzī remarks: “Certainly the sensible body is a composite of genus and differentia in one respect and of matter and form in another. But since we do not grasp the essences of those constitutive parts, we define body through its effects and concomitant attributes.” See al-Rāzī, *al-Mabāḥith*, 2:15; cited in Ibrahim, “Faḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī,” 412–13.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 411–14. Rāzī explicitly connects his rejection of substance as a genus to the case of body; see also *al-Mabāḥith*, 1:276. His alternative account treats the phenomenal body as the substrate upon which the attributes of unity and multiplicity occur, thereby explaining continuity and divisibility without recourse to hylomorphic constituents.

constituents (*dhātīyyāt*) or merely as concomitant attributes (*lawāzim*).¹⁰⁵ Second, Rāzī proposes an alternative account that takes the phenomenal body itself as the substrate (*mawrid*) of unity and multiplicity. On this view, continuity and divisibility are explained not through the internal constituents of matter and form, but through phenomenal properties manifested in bodies themselves.

Another reference to this issue appears in a treatise by Rāzī on prime matter and form, edited by Eşref Altaş and preserved in Iran's Library of the National Advisory Council (MS 3933).¹⁰⁶ One of the foundational discussions centers on whether body can be treated as a genus under substance. Resonating the discussion above, the treatise argues that if body were a genus, it would require a correlative and a differentia; yet prime matter and form, being simple, cannot serve this role, nor can the separate intellects. Consequently, body cannot properly be considered a genus but only a species of substance. Moreover, for Rāzī, to posit body as a species with a differentia would imply that all qualities and powers are themselves composites, which contradicts the principle of simplicity. Hence, body came to be defined instead as "a substance possessing three dimensions," a formulation that aligns with the theologians' position. In this definition, substance refers not to prime matter, excluded on account of its simplicity, but to the composite itself, predicated of body as such. Substance is therefore constitutive of body, while its attribution to matter is merely equivocal and not essential.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ In a similar vein, the Ottoman scholar 'Alī Qushjī maintains that, on the Aristotelian view, genera must function as essential constituents of the quiddities falling under them rather than as external concomitants (*lawāzim*), precisely the point challenged by Rāzī's critique. Rāzī, by contrast, advances an alternative account that treats the phenomenal body itself as the substrate (*mawrid*) of unity and multiplicity. See Ibrahim, "Faḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī," 425.

¹⁰⁶ Written around 596/1200, toward the end of Rāzī's life and about twenty years after his commentary on the *Ishārāt*, the work is arguably the first treatise dedicated to hylomorphism in postclassical Islamic scholarship. Rāzī's treatise on hylomorphism is preserved in a manuscript alongside another on atomism. As Altaş suggests, many of its arguments can be traced to Rāzī's own *Sharḥ 'Uyūn al-ḥikma* in both wording and structure, while his revisions to the proofs for hylomorphism expose certain weaknesses, particularly in the precision, clarity, and coherence of their underlying definitions. See Eşref Altaş, "Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's Epistle," 62; 65–67; 71; 76–77.

¹⁰⁷ See for instance: "This pertains to the definition of natural body. For he says that it is 'a substance with three dimensions.' Here he mentions substance itself, not substance as one of its parts, that is, not prime matter, for he does not take matter into account in his definition. From this definition, it might be understood that body is a substance with three dimensions, and one might wonder whether corporeality subsists in prime matter or whether dimensionality itself subsists independently as a substance possessing

In this treatise, consistent with his approach in the *Mabāḥith*, Rāzī questions whether substance, taken as a genus, possesses any species other than body. Matter, form, and separate intellects, though often classified as species of substance, are simple entities and therefore lack differentia; they cannot, as a result, function as parallel dividers (sing. *qasīm*) alongside body. If body itself were taken as a species of substance, the problem would then arise of identifying the differentia by which it is separated from other supposed species. On this basis, Rāzī concludes that substance, just as accident is not the genus of the nine accidental categories, is not genuinely predicated as a genus of the substances subsumed under it. If the body had a genus, then it would have a correlative; yet substance is not a correlative of body, for it is not itself a body and has no genus.¹⁰⁸

According to Rāzī's critical assessment, then, there is no necessity to regard body as composed of genus and differentia, nor any demonstrative proof that it is constituted by matter and form. Rather, body should be understood as

dimensions. Yet one must remember that in this definition, only form is treated, not prime matter. For what is meant by substance in this definition is what is predicated of the composite body as such. It is not said that 'body is prime matter,' for the substance mentioned in the definition of natural body is not matter, nor does it refer to it. Substance predicated of body is not predicated of prime matter. If someone were to say otherwise, then it would be predicated of both equivocally, but not as a genus in relation to body, for it is not so in relation to matter. Thus, substance is constitutive (*maqawwim*) of body, but only equivocally said of matter, and not truly predicated of matter at all. If it were applied to matter, it would be merely a case of homonymy. Thus, if it is employed in the definition of body, it does not in any way signify matter." For the Arabic text, see Altaş, "Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's Epistle," 91.

- 108 **"He says:** This is correct; however, when one asserts that 'the body has a genus,' it is necessary to know that genus is a species under substance. And if one claims that 'body has a genus,' then it must also have a differentia. He denied that prime matter could be its correlative, on account of its simplicity, and likewise the form is simple, as are the separate intellects. Moreover, there are substances other than separate intellects and other than certain sensibles that are termed material forms, different from prime matter and the composite. Thus, we are left with body alone as a species of substance. **He also said:** If body were a species, then it would require a differentia, and this would entail that the differentia, as it is part of a definition, would likewise be part of its essence, and that qualities and powers would all be composites, since they, too, would have genera and differentiae. But this is not the case. For such a strong composition, which according to the doctrine contradicts simplicity, concerns the essence, while the differentia is not a form and the genus is not prime matter. **And it may be said:** We do not grant that body has a genus. For if body had a genus, then it would have a correlative, yet we only recognize substance as its correlate, and substance is not a correlative of body, for substance is not itself a body and has no genus. Thus, body has no genus." See *ibid*.

a simple substance, known only through its concomitants and effects rather than through an analysis of its essence.¹⁰⁹

4.4.2 Ḥocazāde on the Ontological Status of Corporeal Form

The debate for Ḥocazāde here turns specifically on whether corporeal form functions at the level of genus, thereby allowing diversity in its concomitants, or at the level of species, where such variation would be impossible. In addressing the claim that corporeal form must be a species-forming quiddity (*māhiyya naw'īyya*), Ḥocazāde's Lemma 49 notes that, according to the Peripatetic framework, genus has no extramental instantiation apart from its actualization through a determining differentia (*faṣl*). In reality, genus and differentia are coextensive in both ontological constitution and existence. Accordingly, the genus-forming nature (*ṭabī'a jinsiyya*), insofar as it exists extramentally, is always realized through diverse determinations, and its concomitants may therefore vary. By contrast, the species-forming nature (*ṭabī'a naw'īyya*) is already determinate and fully actualized, which precludes variation in its essential concomitants. Ḥocazāde invokes this distinction in order to contest that corporeal form can be treated as a genus-like nature whose properties remain open to further specification or which requires further differentiation for its actualization. Rather, corporeal form must be understood as a determinate and self-subsistent species-forming quiddity, whose essential concomitants follow necessarily from what it is.

In Lemma 50, Ḥocazāde presents a further objection that reopens the issue by questioning whether corporeal form has in fact been demonstrated to be a species-forming quiddity. Drawing on the Peripatetic account of genus and differentia, the objection argues that any nature may acquire additional attributes once specified by differentiating features and thus challenges the claim that corporeal form possesses a fixed and unique species-forming quiddity. The force of the objection lies in undermining the very premise on which the previous reply depended, namely that corporeal form should be treated as a fully actualized species rather than as a more indeterminate genus-like nature.

A refutation of Rāzī's point also appears in another work by Abharī called the *Kashf al-ḥaqā'iq*,¹¹⁰ a work that was known and circulated among scholars

109 Moreover, treating substance as the genus of body introduces further difficulties into the definition of natural bodies. See *ibid.*, 91–93.

110 Without directly rejecting Rāzī's inference but rather seeking to circumvent it, Abharī's *Kashf* also maintains that even if differentiae are substances, they do not automatically fall under the genus "substance," since "substance" is not predicated of differentiae in the same way a genus is predicated of its species. In this way, Abharī preserves the coherence of substantial quiddities while avoiding Rāzī's regress and contradiction. For the passage:

of the period.¹¹¹ In response to the assertion that corporeal form is “without doubt” the specific quiddity of body (and thereby making body a genus, which poses a problem in the eyes of the theologians), Abhari objected that this claim lacked demonstration. The genus-forming nature, in the philosophers’ sense, cannot exist without specification by prior differentiae; once so specified, it is accompanied by extraneous properties. If the corporeal form is a genus in this way, its actualization will necessarily entail the attachment of such non-essential attributes. The burden of proof rests on demonstrating that corporeal form does not undergo this process and instead exists as a determinate species-forming quiddity from the outset.

A possible reply to Rāzī’s objection is also found in Shams al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī’s (d. 749/1349) commentary on Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī’s (d. 672/1274) *Tajrīd al-i’tiqād*, a theological handbook widely used in the Ottoman madrasa, where he offers a middle path to justify the Avicennan position that corporeal form constitutes a species-forming quiddity. The passage enumerates several reasons why substance cannot be taken as a genus. One of Iṣfahānī’s recurring objections resembles the stance developed by Mullāzāde and Ḥocazāde: for corporeal form to qualify as a specific quiddity, and thereby make body a genus, the very sense in which substance is said to be a genus requires clarification. What is meant, Iṣfahānī’s objection explains, is not that substance is *a genus in an absolute sense*, but that it is *a genus only with respect to species*, not with respect to differentiae. In this way, Rāzī’s critique is softened: the genushood of substance is understood not as intrinsic or universal, but as relative and limited to its relation to species, thereby approximating Rāzī’s earlier point that substance may at most be called a “genus by way of mental conception” (*bi-l-i’tibār*).

“We reply: We do not concede that, if the differentiae are substances, they must therefore fall under the genus ‘substance.’ That consequence follows only if substance were predicated of differentia in the same way that a genus is predicated of its species; and that is precisely what is not granted.” See al-Abhari, *Kashf al-ḥaqā’iq fī taḥrīr al-daqa’iq*, ed. Hüseyin Sarıoğlu (Istanbul: Çantay, 2001), 310.

- 111 Abhari’s *Kashf*, which seems like one of his better-known books after the *Hidāya*, was included under two separate categories (Islamic and philosophical sciences) in Aṭūfī’s listing of Bāyezīd II’s royal library. This dual classification reflects the text’s fusion of Avicennan philosophy and theology. Dimitri Gutas, “Philosophical Manuscripts. Two Alternative Philosophies,” in *Treasures of Knowledge: An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/3–1503/4)*, ed. Gülru Necipoğlu, Cemal Kafadar, and Cornell Fleischer, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 909; 911; 914. For a copy of the *Kashf* with Bāyezīd II’s seal, see Zeynep Atbaş, “Preliminary List of Manuscripts Stamped with Bāyezīd II’s Seal in the Topkapı Palace Museum Library,” *ibid.*, 965.

Nevertheless, after surveying the various arguments, Iṣfahānī ultimately concludes that he has reached no definitive judgment on the matter.¹¹²

In sum, the dispute concerns the ontological status of corporeal form and, more fundamentally, whether body is to be understood through a hylomorphic analysis of genus, differentia, matter, and form, or as a simple substance known only through its concomitants. Whereas Rāzī rejects the Avicennan genus-differentia framework and denies that substance functions as a true genus, thereby undermining the demonstrative basis of hylomorphism, Ḥocazāde preserves the Peripatetic account by insisting on the distinction between genus-forming and species-forming natures. His response seeks to show that corporeal form is not a genus-like substrate awaiting further specification but a determinate species-forming nature whose essential concomitants follow necessarily from its actuality. In doing so, he acknowledges the force of Rāzī's challenge while defending the hylomorphic conception of body against its reduction to a simple substance defined solely through its concomitants.¹¹³

5 Hylomorphic Creationism in Ḥocazāde's *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*

Apart from an independent treatise on cause and effect, in which Ḥocazāde explicitly affirms the validity of hylomorphism, declaring that any denial of its existence amounts to stubborn denial (*mukābara*),¹¹⁴ the only other work in which he engages the philosophers' doctrine of hylomorphism is his celebrated adjudication of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī's (d. 505/1111) *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*.

In the specific context of hylomorphism in Ḥocazāde's *Tahāfut*, the first metaphysical discussion on the weaknesses of the philosophers' proof for the world's pre-eternity includes an extended treatment of hylomorphic composition and the demonstration of prime matter. There, the fourth proof invokes

112 "Objection. The intended meaning of the claim 'substance is a genus' is that substance is a genus for the species, not for the differentiae; thus it would be a genus with respect to species, and merely an accidental concomitant with respect to differentiae, without contradiction. [...] As for whether substance is a genus or not, I have no settled judgment." See al-Iṣfahānī, *Tasdiq al-qawā'id*, ed. Khāled bin Ḥammād al-'Adwānī, vol. 1 (Kuwait: Dār al-ḥiyā', 2012), 548.

113 For Rāzī's reducing species form into an accident, see also Abdelhamid I. Sabra, "Science and Philosophy in Medieval Islamic Theology: The Evidence of the Fourteenth Century," *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften* 9 (1994): 33.

114 "I say: Fair judgment requires acknowledging that each of matter and form is a part of the composite. Denying this is stubborn denial, and any attempt to specify otherwise is inadmissible." See Ḥocazāde, *Risāla fi l-'Ilā wa-l-ma'lūl* (Süleymaniye Library, MS Esad Efendi n61), 98b.

prime matter, eternally emanated by the Active Intellect, as a foundational principle of the philosophers' cosmological model. In presenting this argument, Ḥocazāde closely reproduces the hylomorphic framework, echoing the language of his gloss on the *Hidāya*, while clarifying the claim that every body is composed of three principles and explaining the relation of prime matter to corporeal and species forms.¹¹⁵ He ultimately judges the proof weak and inconclusive, however, not because he rejects prime matter as such, but because he rejects its grounding in the emanationist cosmology of the philosophers.¹¹⁶ In the passage, prime matter remains conceivable only if recast within a theological framework, namely as something created by a free-choosing divine agent rather than as an eternal substrate emanating from the Giver of Forms (*wāhib al-ṣuwar*), i.e., the divine effluence from the supranatural *dator formarum*.¹¹⁷ Hylomorphism thus becomes acceptable insofar as it is subordinated to divine omnipotence and volition: once the Active Intellect is replaced by God's freely choosing will, the doctrine may be retained. In this way, Ḥocazāde effectively *kalāmizes* the philosophers' notion of the First Principle (*al-mabda' al-awwal*), recasting it within a theological framework centered on divine agency.¹¹⁸

In later chapters of the *Physics* of the *Ishārāt*, Avicenna also identifies the cause that ensures the subsistence of matter and form in one another as an external principle, that is, the Giver of Forms or the Active Intellect, an initial principle central to Arabic philosophical thought and underwriting the emanationist claim of the world's pre-eternity.¹¹⁹ This feature seems to be left

115 Ḥocazāde, *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*, ed. Luay Ḥātem Ya'qūb (Dār al-risāla al-'ālamīyya, 2018), 89–90.

116 Ibid., 125.

117 The Giver of Forms constitutes a central element of Avicenna's emanationist cosmology, known to the Latin West principally through Books VIII and IX of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'*. In this account, the separate intellects and their corresponding celestial spheres proceed by eternal emanation from the First Cause, the Necessary Existent, understood as an eternal efficient cause. The lowest of these separate intellects, the Active Intellect, is the source from which the substantial forms of the sublunary world emanate and is therefore designated the "Giver of Forms." Although this doctrine exerted a lasting influence on Latin philosophy, its reception tended to emphasize its epistemological function in human cognition, whereas in Avicenna it primarily serves an ontological and cosmological role as the source of sublunary substantial forms. See Dag Nikolaus Hasse, "Avicenna's Giver of Forms in Latin Philosophy, Especially in the Works of Albertus Magnus," in *The Arabic, Hebrew and Latin Reception of Avicenna's Metaphysics*, 225.

118 Ḥocazāde, *Tahāfut*, 123–25.

119 See Chapter 19: "[...] but rather, it must be due to some other external cause, whereby each one of them subsists together with or by means of the other." See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt*, 2:214–18, esp. 217–18. Also see Ibn Sīnā, *The Physics*, 1:54–65. As for the role of the Giver of Forms: Jon McGinnis, "Avicenna's Natural Philosophy," in *Interpreting Avicenna*, ed. Peter

deliberately uncommented in the later *Hidāya* textual tradition. It is striking that neither Mullāzāde nor Ḥocazāde mentions the central Neoplatonic doctrine of the Giver of Forms in their discussions of hylomorphism, whether to distance themselves from the doctrine of the world's pre-eternity or simply to avoid associating hylomorphism with such a metaphysical framework, thereby leaving it unopposed to the *ex nihilo* creationism of the *kalām* tradition. Though Abhari's original text is clearly eternalist,¹²⁰ this strategic ambiguity in paratexts may partly explain the *Hidāya*'s widespread adoption in the Ottoman madrasa setting, where theological compatibility, at least on the surface, could often be a prerequisite for curricular inclusion.

Another explanation for Ḥocazāde's open endorsement of hylomorphism is that the doctrine was not counted among the doctrines marking the boundary of unbelief (*kufʿ*), since, as Ghazālī famously stated in the *Tahāfut*, only three views fall into it: the pre-eternity of the world, God's knowledge of particulars, and the denial of bodily resurrection. Alnoor Dhanani, in his study of references to atomism in Ghazālī's works, argues that he frequently overlooks or summarily dismisses arguments in favor of the discrete cellular conception of space associated with traditional *kalām* atomism, regarding them as weak from the standpoint of geometrical demonstration. At most, therefore, Ghazālī may be described as a "lukewarm atomist."¹²¹ On this basis, an agnostic or noncommittal stance on hylomorphism could be readily maintained.¹²² It is thus telling that the introduction to Ḥocazāde's *Tahāfut* characterizes the philosophers' doctrines in metaphysics as generating the gravest conflicts with theology, while their doctrines in natural philosophy cause comparatively minor tensions, without incurring charges of apostasy.¹²³ I suggest that Ḥocazāde's endorsement of hylomorphism in this book is consistent with his broader acknowledgment and defense of the doctrine elsewhere. Indeed, Ḥocazāde's position extends beyond mere agnosticism or methodological indifference. He

Adamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 90; Kara Richardson, "Avicenna and Aquinas on Form and Generation," in *The Arabic, Hebrew and Latin Reception of Avicenna's Metaphysics*, ed. Dag Nikolaus Hasse and Amos Bertolacci (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 259–72.

120 Andreas Lammer, "Eternity and Origination on the Works of Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī and Athīr al-Dīn al-Abhari: Two Discussions from the Seventh/Thirteenth Century," *The Muslim World* 107.3 (2017): 462; 477–78.

121 Dhanani, "The Impact," 87–89.

122 Due to the lack of conclusive proofs for the competing cosmologies of philosophers and theologians, Ghazālī, Frank Griffel argues, remained agnostic regarding the doctrine of secondary causation; see Frank Griffel, *Al-Ghazālī's Philosophical Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 278; 285.

123 Ḥocazāde, *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*, 53.

appears firmly committed to the explanatory adequacy of Avicennan hylomorphism, provided that it is severed from emanationist metaphysics and does not entail the pre-eternity of the world at the expense of divine will.

6 Conclusion: Ḥocazāde's Defense and Compartmentalization of Hylomorphism

As one of the few surviving fifteenth-century Ottoman texts devoted to Avicennan natural philosophy, Ḥocazāde's gloss offers a valuable window onto the reception of Avicennism in the early Ottoman madrasa. It reveals how scholars appropriated, contested, and reformulated Avicennan doctrines while illuminating broader processes of disciplinary formation. Far from a cursory annotation on Mullāzāde's commentary, the gloss constitutes a sustained critical engagement with both text and tradition, revising, strengthening, and defending key philosophical doctrines (especially hylomorphism) against postclassical theological criticism.

Among its most significant contributions, the gloss offers a defense of hylomorphism by affirming its pedagogical necessity and by preserving the priority of natural philosophy as an epistemic and ontological foundation of metaphysical inquiry. The priority accorded to natural philosophy is epistemic because it furnishes the conceptual and demonstrative foundations required for the higher sciences, and ontological because hylomorphism constitutes the very quiddity of corporeal beings, the proper subject matter of natural philosophy, while the necessary concomitance of continuity and corporeal form expresses an essential feature of that hylomorphic constitution. The study of natural philosophy is thus indispensable not merely as a pedagogical prerequisite, but because mastering its principles is necessary both for sound demonstration and for the ascent to metaphysics. At the same time, Ḥocazāde strengthens Mullāzāde's Avicennan commitments at points where the latter leaves arguments underdeveloped, particularly by clarifying the Aristotelian-Avicennan vocabulary of continuity, corporeality, and the receptivity of prime matter to continuity and discontinuity. He further seeks to demonstrate the validity of the proof for prime matter against theological objections and misconceptions. In addition, he reiterates Avicenna's arguments in light of criticisms advanced by Jurjānī and Rāzī, addressing disputes over the substantial and accidental senses of continuity, the status of body as a genus, and the relation between corporeal form and species-forming quiddity. The gloss thus emerges as a significant Ottoman intervention in the ongoing negotiation between Avicennan philosophy and postclassical theology. At once an exegetical guide to and a

pedagogical defense of natural philosophy, and of hylomorphism in particular, it reveals both the fault lines of the tradition and the interpretive strategies developed to preserve it, while equipping students and colleagues to navigate the conceptual subtleties, contested doctrines, and unresolved problems of the Avicennan commentarial tradition.

Ottoman scholarship was far from monolithic, and scholars differed considerably regarding the extent to which philosophy should be studied and incorporated into the madrasa curriculum. Hocaşade formed part of a narrow circle of madrasa professors who affirmed the truth of certain Avicennan doctrines; accordingly, his enthusiastic and insistent endorsement of hylomorphism should be understood within the context of the emerging sociotype of the “verifier” (*muḥaqqiq*), as praised by later Ottoman literati such as Kātib Çelebi.¹²⁴ At the same time, other contemporary figures, such as ‘Alī Qūshjī (d. 879/1474), pursued anti-Aristotelian projects driven by a distinct intellectual agenda: to free astronomy from the *idées fixes* of Aristotelian natural philosophy¹²⁵ while challenging key elements of the hylomorphic account of nature.¹²⁶ These competing trajectories are particularly striking given that hylomorphism had dominated both the Latin and Islamic intellectual traditions for centuries. Whereas its decline in early modern Europe accompanied the erosion of Aristotelianism and the rise of corpuscular and mechanistic explanations of nature, Ottoman scholars such as Qūshjī had arguably already begun to explore alternatives to Aristotelian physics from within the post-Avicennan tradition itself.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Kātib Çelebi, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 1:680.

¹²⁵ This intellectual shift within Islamic astronomy opened the way for an alternative physics independent of Aristotelian constraints, thereby making possible new accounts of celestial motion beyond the traditional framework of natural philosophy. See F. Jamil Ragep, “Freeing Astronomy from Philosophy: An Aspect of Islamic Influence on Science,” *Osiris* 16 (2001): 49–71; idem., “Copernicus and His Islamic Predecessors: Some Historical Remarks,” *History of Science* 45 (2007): 65–81; idem., “‘Alī Qūshjī and Regiomontanus: Eccentric Transformations and Copernican Revolutions,” *Journal for the History of Astronomy* 36.4 (2005): 359–71.

¹²⁶ Qūshjī contested the hylomorphist framework in favor of Suhrawardī’s notion of “pure extension,” thereby introducing a mathematical foundation to physics independent of Aristotelian philosophical constraints. He defines the quiddity of a natural body as a discontinuous extension, while its figure and appearance are continuous. See ‘Alī Qūshjī, *Sharḥ Tajrīd al-‘aqā’id* (Tehran, 1269/1890), 236; discussed in İhsan Fazlıoğlu, “İlm-i menâzır,” in *TDVİA*, vol. 22 (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2000), 132; for the extended version: “Osmanlılarda Optik” (retrieved May 12, 2026 via <https://fazlioglu.blogspot.com/2018/07/prof-dr-ih-san-fazlioglu-osmanlilar-da-optik.html>).

¹²⁷ Nicola Polloni and Sylvain Roudaut, “Hylomorphism into Pieces? Introductory Remarks,” in *Hylomorphism into Pieces: Elements, Atoms, and Corpuscles in Natural Philosophy and*

The Ottoman curriculum in philosophical theology was subsequently consolidated through influential textbooks such as the *Mawāqif* (Ījī/Jurjānī) and the *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* (Ṭūsī/Işfahānī/Jurjānī), both of which became standard works of postclassical *kalām*. In works constructed within this framework, debates about hylomorphism were typically treated under metaphysics, specifically in the sections on substance and the subdivisions of body. The apparent tension with *kalām* manuals that affirm atomism, aligned with *creatio ex nihilo* and anti-eternalist commitments, does not signal curricular incoherence so much as Ottoman disciplinary compartmentalization: Avicennan physics could be taught as a constrained, explanatory natural-philosophical model, with Neoplatonic elements such as the Giver of Forms/Active Intellect, emanationism, and pre-eternity bracketed.

How, then, could the same madrasa environment accommodate both works defending Avicennan hylomorphism and theological manuals that criticized, modified, or rejected Avicennan doctrines? That is, what can be said about the unity of the sciences and teaching curriculum in postclassical institutions, in a context where two opposing structures and conceptualizations of natural bodies prevail? If one seeks a contemporary analogy, think less of institutional contradiction and more of deliberate pluralism, akin to modern universities where Islamic theology may question Darwin's evolutionary theory while biology teaches it, that is, competing frameworks co-taught for distinct purposes to cultivate dialectical competence rather than to enforce a single ontology. Such compartmentalization between theology and the natural sciences was not unique to the premodern madrasa but remains visible in universities in the Middle East and elsewhere.¹²⁸

Although controversial, seemingly in tension with core theological commitments to God's will and direct creation *ex nihilo*, it was not regarded by the theologians as their principal adversary even in popular madrasa handbooks of

Medicine, 1400–1600, ed. Nicola Polloni and Sylvain Roudaut (Cham: Springer, 2024), 1–27; Christoph Lüthy, John Murdoch, and William Newman, eds., *Late Medieval and Early Modern Corpuscular Matter Theories* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); Christoph Grellard and Aurélien Robert, eds., *Atomism in Late Medieval Philosophy and Theology* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

128 Cf. Marwa Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic, 1860–1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), which demonstrates that the reception of Darwin in the modern Arab world cannot be reduced to a simple conflict between evolutionary science and religious thought. Rather, evolutionary theory generated a range of theological and philosophical appropriations, accommodations, and critiques, illustrating how multiple explanatory frameworks could coexist within a single intellectual and educational landscape without collapsing into a single ontology. For the Anglophone contexts of post-Darwinist conflict, see William B. Drees, *Religion, Science and Naturalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 63–74.

Sunnī creed.¹²⁹ This is because, for postclassical *kalām*, so long as God's divine transcendence (*taqdīs*) was upheld,¹³⁰ both hylomorphism and atomism could function as legitimate explanatory models: whether or not true in themselves, each served to demonstrate His necessary existence and pre-eternity, and both were especially compatible with the notion of a freely choosing God. Neither was considered incompatible with the divine attributes, enabling theological manuals such as Jurjānī's *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* to treat hylomorphism with a largely agnostic neutrality or a noncommittal stance.¹³¹

Yet the toleration of hylomorphism did not eliminate broader anxieties surrounding the study of Avicennan philosophy. Because Avicennism remained associated with doctrines such as the eternity of the world, scholars continued to confront doubts about its legitimacy and pedagogical value. One way of reading Ḥocazāde's defense therefore is as a pedagogical attempt to justify the place of an Avicennan scientific discipline within the madrasa curriculum in the face of concerns likely voiced by students and colleagues alike. Such

129 A comparable assessment appears in Muşliḥuddīn Muşṭafā Kaṣṭalānī's (d. 901/1496) celebrated gloss on Taftāzānī's *Sharḥ al-Aqā'id*, a standard madrasa text studied well into the twentieth century. A contemporary of Ḥocazāde, Kaṣṭalānī was among the few scholars whom the latter is reported to have openly respected during his lifetime (Ḥoca Sa'deddīn, *Tācū't-tevārīḥ*, 2:482). Although situated within an Ash'arī atomist framework, neither Taftāzānī nor Kaṣṭalānī categorically rejects Aristotelian hylomorphism; rather, both identify weaknesses in the proofs advanced for hylomorphism – especially those resting on the doctrine of an eternal prime matter, with its implications for the pre-eternity of the world and Avicenna's denial of bodily resurrection – as well as in the proofs for atomism, concluding that neither explanatory model is without difficulty. Taftāzānī further notes that Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī ultimately suspended judgment on the matter, whereas Kaṣṭalānī appears to favor avoiding the philosophers' account when necessary: "[...] Although one may answer these arguments [for the eternality of prime matter] in another way, the author indicates that such responses are insufficient by themselves. Rather, one must appeal to additional premises accepted among the theologians." See the reprint of the lithograph edition in al-Kaṣṭalānī, *Ḥāshiyat al-Kaṣṭallī 'alā Sharḥ al-Aqā'id* (Istanbul: Çelik Cilt Matbaası, 1966), 52. For the later reception of this discussion of the eternity of prime matter in *Hidāya* paratexts and Ottoman Turkish translations, see Cem Türköz, "The Making of an Ottoman Tradition of Natural Philosophy ca. 1500–1800" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2026), 283–86.

130 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī redefines *muḥdath* as "that whose non-existence precedes its existence," thereby aligning the philosophers' notion of the pre-eternal (*qadīm*) with the theologians' emphasis on temporal origination. He further links this synthesizing move to Rāzī's treatment of the conversion of proofs (*in'ikās al-adilla*), where their role as direct foundations of firm belief is downplayed (Osman Demir, "Fahreddin er-Rāzī'de Cevher-i Ferd," 542). Also see Muammer İskenderoğlu, *Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and Thomas Aquinas on the Question of the Eternity of the World* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 119–22.

131 al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, 7:169.

concerns were sufficiently widespread that they found explicit expression in other commentarial engagements with the *Hidāya*.

A notable example is the work of Mollā Şalāḥaddīn, a former tutor of Sultan Bāyezīd II (r. 886/1481–918/1512). Composed while teaching Abharī's text, his gloss on the *Hidāya* became a highly regarded reference among students and circulated throughout the Ottoman scholarly milieu.¹³² Significantly, Şalāḥaddīn opens his work by addressing whether adherence to certain philosophical doctrines, including the pre-eternity of the world, the impossibility of cosmic rupture and recomposition, and the eventual cessation of punishment in paradise and hell, entails a rejection of faith. While acknowledging that philosophers may affirm such views, he argues that they do not expel one from Islam unless accompanied by an explicit denial of the Prophet or rejection of his transmitted message. Drawing on Ṭūsī's *Sharḥ al-Muḥaṣṣal*, which notes that some Muslims, including Avicenna and his followers, upheld the eternity of the world, Şalāḥaddīn invokes the principle articulated in the *Mawāqif* that unbelief (*kufṛ*) arises from conscious assent, not from the mere entailment of a heretical conclusion.¹³³

While Şalāḥaddīn deemed it necessary to insert such a defense, Ḥocazāde does not include comparable disclaimers. By extending discussions beyond those found in the base text through excursuses, exegetical clarifications, and aporetic reflections, commentaries and glosses enable us to trace the reception and transformation of doctrines within particular intellectual contexts. Seen in this light, the apparent discrepancy in Ḥocazāde's corpus, that is, affirming hylomorphism in his materials on the eternalist Abharī's *Hidāya*

132 He was also renowned for his gloss on Taftāzānī's *Sharḥ al-'Aqā'id*. See Ḥoca Sa'deddīn, *Tācū't-tevārīḥ*, 2:501; *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1146. Several copies of Şalāḥaddīn's gloss are preserved in Turkish manuscript libraries, the two earliest recorded copies being MS Diyarbakır İl Halk 758, dated in the catalogue to 866/1461–62, and MS Beyazıt 3984, dated to 867/1462–63.

133 **If you say:** It will be seen later that the commentator supports the pre-eternity (*qidam*) of the world and denies the possibility of cosmic rupture (*khirq*) or recomposition (*ilti'ām*), and affirms the existence of spiritual paradise and hell (*al-janna wa-l-nār al-rūḥāniyya*) and the eventual end of their punishment. If he adopts this as doctrine (*madhhab*), you may claim he exits Islam. **I reply:** Even if that is conceded, it would not expel him from the Islamic community (*milal islāmīyya*) so long as he does not deny the Prophet (peace be upon him), and he does not do so in what the Prophet has conveyed. In his *Sharḥ al-Muḥaṣṣal* under the division of bodies (*aqsām al-aqsām*), he says: 'Among the Muslims are those who believe in the eternity of the world, like Abū 'Alī [Ibn Sīnā] and his followers.' The basis for declaring someone an unbeliever (*kāfir*) is not entailment of unbelief (*luẓūm al-kufṛ*) but affirmation of it, as stated explicitly in *al-Mawāqif*." See Mollā Şalāḥaddīn, *Ḥāshiya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāya al-ḥikma* (Bursa İnebey Library, MS Hüseyin Çelebi 1018), 132a.

while rejecting the pre-eternity of prime matter in the *Tahāfūt*, reflects not inconsistency but differences of genre, audience, and disciplinary orientation. His conclusions shift according to whether a question is framed within *ḥikma* or *kalām*. As a “creationist Avicennan,” Ḥocazāde remained committed to the pedagogical value of Avicennan natural philosophy while rejecting its emanationist metaphysics. His gloss thus reveals how early Ottoman scholars preserved Avicennan natural philosophy by mounting an epistemic and ontological defense of hylomorphism as an indispensable principle of philosophical inquiry, showing that its continued place in the fifteenth-century Ottoman madrasa depended not on the absence of theological criticism but on its careful confinement to the domain of natural philosophy, whose pedagogical priority over metaphysics remained intact.

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