

Ibn Taymiyya's Criticism of Aristotelian Definition

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Abstract

Aristotle wrote of two "points of definition": one posited in negative and the other in positive terms. The negative formulation argues that concepts can be comprehended only through definition, while the positive point stresses the consequences of definition by focusing on the benefits to the sciences achieved through those "concepts." Ibn Taymiyya criticizes these ideas on the grounds that definition neither necessarily leads to the revelation of the facts and truths of things and their quiddities, nor does it necessarily help in developing the sciences. We notice that his main criticism is directed at specific metaphysical elements of definition, such as genus, species, differences (*differentia*/divisions), quiddity, and universality. He argues that these elements are purely mental and do not necessarily correspond to existence.

Ibn Taymiyya differentiates between metaphysics and the concrete physical world for, in his opinion, not all that comes to mind necessarily corresponds to existing objects in the concrete physical world. Therefore, human knowledge should be established on concrete rules subject to experiment. He therefore refutes the logic of quiddity, which depends upon pure intellect, and calls for an experimental logic devoid of metaphysics.

Introduction

Ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328), considered one of the most prominent scholarly defenders of the tradition and the community (al-Sunna wa al-Jama`ah), crit-

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icized many intellectual doctrines, such as Ash'arism, Greek philosophy, and forms of Sufism that had spread through the Muslim world by his time. His opposition to Greek philosophy was based on his understanding that its principles were incompatible with Islamic beliefs. He specifically opposed Aristotelian logic because it was the basis upon which that philosophy was established. His criticism of logic was not universal or generic, as against being a tool for ordering the mind; rather, it was aimed specifically at the Aristotelian formulation.

Ibn Taymiyya deals with these forms of philosophy and logic in various sections of his numerous books. His *Al-Radd `ala al-Mantiqiyin (Refutation of the Logicians)*¹ specifically critiques Aristotelian logic by refuting the logical basis upon which Aristotelian philosophy is established and provides an alternative logic in its place. He attempts to prove that Aristotle's logic, based as it is upon unchanging metaphysical principles, cannot be a practical tool for dealing with real, changing issues; however, it can deal with issues that are stable in their nature, such as mathematics.

This article seeks to outline Aristotle's definition as well as certain aspects of Ibn Taymiyya's criticism from within Islamic epistemology. Ibn Taymiyya argues specifically against certain Aristotelian terms, such as *genus*, *species*, *difference (differentia)*, *quiddity*, and *universality*, because they are not subject to experiment – they must be accepted as a foundation, but there is no method by which one may test their soundness. He tries to prove the invalidity of these metaphysical foundations in the “real world,” thereby indicating his understanding of the differentiation between the metaphysical (the abstract) and the physical (the concrete) by implication.

Aristotelian Logical Definition

In Aristotle's philosophy, definition is considered the first stage in scientific research, for the beginning of science lies in defining the issues to be addressed. The quintessential purpose of a definition is to obtain accurate, clear, and distinct terms for subsequent discussion. He writes in his *Topics* that: “a correct definition must define a thing through its genus and its *differentiae*, and these belong to the order of things which are absolutely more intelligible than and prior to, the species.”² Thus, his theory defines the function of definition and the distinction of the five universalities: “Seeing that all the higher genera are predicated of the lower. Either, then, it ought to be put into its nearest genus, or else to the higher genus all the *differentiae* ought to be appended whereby the nearest genus is defined.”³

The ultimately single definitive effect of genera and differences (*differentia*) did not cause any inconsistencies in his theory because the genera are not limited; rather, they have a total feature or “universality. Aristotle emphasizes the unity of genera and differences, since the genus is matter and power, just as the *differentia* is form and act. By saying this, he emphasizes the unity of matter and form: he recalls how “the genus and *differentia* are unified and points out that one (genus) is matter and potentiality, and the other (*differentia*) form and actuality, he intended to highlight the issue of unity of matter and form.”⁴

In *Analytica Posteriora*, Aristotle mentions that the function of a definition is to explain – that is, a definition explains what the object is by knowing the middle term. Definition reveals the thing’s essential nature,⁵ and “to know its essential nature is, as we said, the same as to know the cause of a thing’s existence, and the proof of this depends on the fact [that] a thing must have a cause.”⁶ The middle term is identified as the “cause.” “We conclude that in all our inquiries we are asking either whether there is a ‘middle’ or what the ‘middle’ is: for the ‘middle’ here is precisely the cause, and it is the cause that we seek in all our inquiries.”⁷

In his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle tries to combine the two previous thoughts: definition as a “classification function” on the one hand, and as an “explanatory function” on the other. He argues: “Or has ‘definition,’ like ‘what a thing is,’ several meanings? ‘What a thing is’ in one sense means substance, and the ‘this’ in one or another of the predicates, quantity, quality, and the like.”⁸ Here, he aims at an essential definition, which in many issues of scientific research constitutes a scientific problem.

In short, what Aristotle wants us to see is that in many cases a *Ti eoti* question, when scientifically pursued, is in fact a scientific problem, a question seeking an explanation for a ‘concomitance of properties.’ Thus when we ask, ‘What is a bird?’ or ‘what is an elephant?’ we are ultimately asking: ‘What is it that accounts for the familiar total phenomena we find among birds and elephants?’ ‘What is it that accounts for the familiar collection of phenomena we find among human beings?’ Is this the ultimate meaning of ‘What is a human?’⁹

The purpose of the question about “properties” is a recognition of a certain object’s real properties, which express the quiddity of the known object through the thoughts existing in the mind.

The Rules of Definition

Aristotle's rules of definition are set forth in his *Topics*, the central question of which is the discussion on quiddity and its relationship with various substances (prototypes). The definition used here is "quiddical," a definition whereby the very differentiating essence of the *definiendum* is revealed. "The main subject of *Topics* is the orderly and successful conduct of competitive disputes about quiddity and matters relating to quiddity."¹⁰

The Aristotelian definition that most logicians have agreed upon can be summarized as follows: a definition (1) must give the quiddity of that which is to be defined. The *definiens* must be equivalent to the *definiendum* – it must be applicable to everything of which the *definiendum* can be predicated, and applicable to nothing else; (2) must not be circular; it must not, directly or indirectly, contain the subject to be defined; (3) must not be in the negative when it can be in positive terms. A definition must be positive, and not negative, if possible; and (4) should not be expressed in obscure or figurative language.¹¹ In other words, according to Aristotle definition determines the objective quiddity, the genus is that which sets the difference (*differentia*), and the species is where the parts of the definition are an organic unity. The objective of the definition is to reveal the real form that acts within substances.

Definition is thus connected to Aristotle's metaphysics regarding genera, species, and difference and, moreover, investigates an object in an attempt to reach its quiddity. To apply this definition, we might need other terms, yet terms the knowledge of which is presupposed. It is, of course, possible to define these new necessary terms, but each definition is established upon terms that do not require definition – simple terms that have topics that are no more analyzable.

The Effects of Aristotelian Definition on Muslim Philosophers

This construction of definition became directly known to Islamic philosophy upon translating Aristotle's works into Arabic. Muslim philosophers were divided among themselves regarding Greek philosophy in general, and so differed on the concept of Aristotelian definition as well. Al-Farabi (d. 950/51), Ibn Sina (d. 1037), al-Ghazali (d. 1111), and others adopted it, whereas others, among them Ibn Taymiyya, rejected it.

Al-Farabi, for example, speaks of "complete definition": "Since 'complete definition' focuses solely on one thing, it is possible to use it to answer

‘What is it?’, and can be used to indicate its distinction from other things. Definition defines two things of the object: the first, that it defines the universality of the object and its quiddity; the second, that it defines what differentiates it from other things.¹² In other words, to identify what it is not. In a sense, this refers to the positive and negative aspects of definition: what a thing is and what it is not.¹³

Ibn Sina has a slightly different perspective, for he believes that philosophers do not ask for “distinction” in definitions and that even if “distinction” follows naturally or explicitly, it only requires the realization of the object in its quiddity.¹⁴ He therefore distinguishes between definition and description. Definition does not relate to an individual, but to a member of a class. Description, on the other hand, is a statement composed of the genus of a thing and the accidents concomitant to it. Therefore, the description becomes equivalent to the thing.¹⁵

Al-Ghazali states that “definition is a statement that indicates the quiddity of something.”¹⁶ In his *Al-Mustasfa*, al-Ghazali writes: “As for the ‘real definition,’ it cannot be imagined to be more than one definition, because the universalities are confined; if [the definition] does not mention them, it is not considered a ‘real definition’; if other things are mentioned along with the ‘universalities,’ these extras are redundant.”¹⁷

Definition, according to these three philosophers, revolves around the discussion of an object’s quiddity. This attitude complies with Aristotle’s theory and indicates the extent of his influence on Muslim philosophers. Other philosophers, many of whom were also jurists, including Ibn Taymiyya, took a different stance on the relationship drawn by Aristotle between *definition* and *concept* – a relationship upon which many philosophers also elaborated.

A number of philosophers divided knowledge into two types, conceptual (*tasawwur*) and judgmental (*tasdiq*), where concept precedes judgment. This is the acquisition of the object’s image in the mind, which is knowledge devoid of judgment and acquired by definition. Judgment, on the other hand, is knowledge accompanied by judgment and is acquired by analogy or syllogism.¹⁸ Al-Farabi, following Aristotle, wrote that each type of knowledge is either “complete” or “incomplete,”¹⁹ contingent upon the type of definition used – the Greek relationship between “concept” and “real definition.” Here too, we must understand the concept’s various parts before we can comprehend the “complete concept.” To have “incomplete knowledge,” however, is to know the object in question by the accidentals external to its essence.²⁰

According to al-Ghazali, “logicians called the knowledge of words ‘concept’ and the knowledge of declarative relativity in between them ‘judgment.’ They argued that science is either concept or judgment, and some of our scientists have called the former ‘knowledge’ and the latter ‘science.’ We say now that realizations have become restricted to knowledge and science, or to concept and judgment.”²²¹ Ibn Rushd held that “teaching is of two types: conceptual and judgmental, and the methods of judgment existing among people were three: evidence, debate, and oration; the methods of concept are two: either the object itself or its analogues.”²²²

Harry Wolfson writes that “as contrasted with *tasdiq*, *tasawwur* is called the first knowledge. It is said to imply that there is a thing or simple thing and that that simple thing is designated by a term or by a single term, which conveys to the mind the meaning or the essence of that thing, in which meaning, however, there is no truth or falsehood. In contradistinction to this, *tasdiq* is said to be ‘assertion or the denial of something about something.’”²²³

The Muslim philosophers mentioned above clearly consider definition a requisite for reaching a concept, thereby complying, in other words, with Aristotle's formation.

Sources of Ibn Taymiyya's Criticism

Ibn Taymiyya rejects the connection between concept and definition, arguing that the former is not in need of the latter by exposing the use of logical fallacies within the Aristotelian construct, specifically focusing on *petitio principii* (*dawr qabli*) and “relativity.” Some of his counterarguments mirror the writing of Greek Sophists and Sceptics, although there is no historical evidence of direct translation of their writings into Arabic.

Despite the fact that the Sophists' actual writings were not available, Muslim philosophers were familiar with their thought through the writings of Plato and Aristotle. Ibn Rushd, for example, devoted a book to sophistry,²⁴ explaining Aristotle's “On Sophistical Refutations,” wherein he shows errors in its methodology. Similarly, although Muslim writings mention Stoic philosophers,²⁵ we can glean little of the actual philosophy from these writings beyond a few fragmented ideas. Muslim philosophers only knew about the Stoics through Aristotle's interpreters (e.g., Alexander the Aphrodisi and the grammarian Yahya al-Nahawi); by references in Greek medical books, especially those of Galen; and through works such as that of Gaskabis, which Miskawayhi translated into Arabic.²⁶ Josef van Ess emphasizes this: “Of course, there were no Arabic transmissions of any work of

Greek skeptics. There is nothing like – as I would call it – ‘academic’ transmission as I could find it, for instance, with the works of Aristotle or Galen. No one even knew the famous names of the old skeptics.”²⁷

Ibn Taymiyya’s Criticism

Whatever the sources that influenced Ibn Taymiyya, what is of concern here is his criticism itself, which is summarized below.

AGAINST THE NEGATIVE POINT: “THE REQUIRED CONCEPT CANNOT BE ACHIEVED EXCEPT BY DEFINITION.”

1. This is not and cannot be a taken-for-granted (axiom) proposition; like any other proposition, negative or positive, it requires evidence to prove it. Negation of a proposition (here, claiming concepts cannot be achieved but by definition) without evidence implies either a logical fallacy, a *petitio principii*, or a lack of evidence. “If this is a declaration without knowledge, how can such a declaration without knowledge form a basis for the scales of science?”²⁸

2. The logicians’ claim that definition is a statement indicating the *definiendum*’s (defined object) quiddity is refuted outright. If the definition is the statement of the *definiens* (the defining statement), the *definiens* either defines the *definiendum* by a certain definition or defines it without a definition. The first state leads to a circulatory regress (*tasalsul*) of cause and accounts, because each definition needs another definition *ad infinitum*. The second state only underscores the erroneous nature of the logicians’ claim.²⁹ Aristotle’s formulation calls for definition by simple words and phrases, the knowledge of which is presupposed. It also considers the simple words that constitute the definition as incapable of further definition. Ibn Taymiyya argues that this claim is false on the grounds that these simple words require further definition, that the definition may need additional definition, and that it is possible to continue the series of definitions endlessly. “For example, someone who is ignorant of the *definiendum* is unable to define what is unknown to him, while someone who knows an object and then defines it has first apprehended it and only subsequently formulated the definition. Definitions are thus not indispensable for the apprehension of objects.”³⁰ This matter produces a *petitio principii* or circulatory regress that prevents reaching the required definition.

3. Scholars (ulama) in all nations define matters without utilizing logical definitions. “We do not find any of the highest scholars speaking of such definitions, neither the outstanding jurists, nor the scientists of medicine,

mathematics, nor the craftsmen – although each comprehends the vocabulary of his or her knowledge.”³¹ Here, Ibn Taymiyya tries to prove that the sciences do not need logical definition to be practiced, thereby implying that their development has no connection with definition. They can achieve knowledge of the required terms and concepts of knowledge without definition.

4. Stable and acceptable definitions do not exist in the branches of human knowledge. For example, the well-known definition of a “human being” as a “rational animal” has been exposed to severe criticism. Similarly, even the definition of “the Sun” and such entities has been criticized. Grammarians have noted more than twenty definitions for “name” and, likewise, for “analogy.” All of these definitions have been criticized.³² Through such objections, Ibn Taymiyya elaborates on the fact that definitions are constantly changing and are thus unstable in the various sciences, which leads to the conclusion that the development of science does not require Aristotelian definitions. Furthermore, this same instability means that it is impossible to reach true quiddity.

5. The philosophers’ argument that quiddity occurs through a “real definition” consisting of genus and species is rejected, for such a definition is either unavailable or impossible.³³ We find a similar objection to this among the Stoics, who argued that logic does not deal with concepts and universalities. In addition, Chrysippus’ (c. 279-c. 206 BC) theory of definition does not deal with genus, species, or quiddity because of the possibility of violating an unknown essence and of the difficulty in distinguishing the genera and difference (*differentia*) from the general and particular accidentals. The Stoics, therefore, depended on incomplete definition or the description formed from the object’s properties.³⁴

6. Observers cannot understand what definition is unless they understand the words that indicate its meanings. The words indicate the meaning or the subject, in effect, a *petitio principii*, presupposing the validity of meaning. One who has not conceived of the named object, whether “bread,” “water,” “sky,” “earth,” “father,” “or “mother,” will be unable to comprehend even the indication of the word referring to the object. If one has conceived of the named object’s meaning before hearing it, even if one does not know the indication of the word to it, we cannot say that one conceived of it by hearing the utterance of the word. It would have to be said that one did not conceive of the word’s meaning until one had heard and understood it, and that it was impossible for one to understand the word’s meaning until one had conceived of the meaning before that, leading one to believe that he/she understood the concept before the definition was given.³⁵

7. The concept of the *definiens* (defining) does not necessitate communication, for the speaker or proponent may conceive of the meaning of what he/she is saying without using words. Conversely, the listener or receiver can comprehend a meaning without receiving or uttering words. This contradicts the argument that words are only conceivable because of their definition, which is the statement of the *definiens*.³⁶

8. Human beings can conceive of existential objects either through their appearance to the physical senses (e.g., taste, color, and smell) and the objects that bear these properties, or through their instinctive feelings (e.g., hunger, feeding, love, hatred, joy, and sadness). They can conceive of objects either in a concrete or absolute way, and none of these concepts needs definition.³⁷ This objection is quite similar to the ideas of Sextus Empiricus: “If the senses do not understand the external extra-mental things, the intellect will not be able to understand them either. Therefore, we cannot judge the extra-mental and the basic things.”³⁸ Both Ibn Taymiyya and Sextus Empiricus believe that knowledge of things depends on the senses; however, each uses this for a different aim. Ibn Taymiyya argues to refute the need for definition, and Sextus argues to lend doubt to all kinds of knowledge. We find this idea in Fakhr al-Razi’s writings as well. “The human being is able to conceive of only what he realizes through his senses or what he has found in the instinctive self, such as pain and pleasure, or what he has in the spontaneity of the intellect, such as the concept of the universe, singleness or multiplicity, or what of the intellect or imagination conform of such components. Anything else is not conceivable at all.”³⁹

9. It is possible to object to definition through invalidation or opposition. Invalidation can be either co-extensive or co-exclusive; opposition can be by another definition. If one can nullify the definition and offer an alternative definition, one will have discovered that one can conceive of the object without definition.⁴⁰

10. Logicians admit that some concepts are intuitive and will not admit of definition in order to avoid a causal circulatory regress. When a definition is stated (because people realize things differently), some will doubt or negate what is taken for granted by others. Therefore, some concepts are intuitive for some people but not for others. In other words, definitions are relative and unstable, depending on the listeners’ mental/cognitive levels.⁴¹

An examination of Ibn Taymiyya’s critical arguments reveals that he uses the arguments of the Skeptics and the Sophists in an attempt to refute those of the logicians. He shakes logical bases by requesting that all axioms, even

those that cannot realistically be definitively proved or invalidated, be established with proofs – an impossible act. He also brings in the “relativity of knowledge,” saying that knowledge is subjective (relative to the human being) and is not necessarily related to the object it describes.

AGAINST THE POSITIVE POINT: “DEFINITION BENEFITS THE SCIENCES THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTS”

1. Even if we were to accept that “definition is the statement of the *definiens* (the defining statement) and that definition will be taken as given, it becomes a declarative proposition, an argument devoid of evidence: receivers either knew and believed, or did not, in the *definiendum* prior to hearing the definition. If they knew beforehand, they do not gain from hearing the definition; if they did not know, they are obliged to accept it as given, though there is no necessary evidence. Consequently, they know that the informer is not infallible and that they cannot necessarily trust the definition.”⁴² Definition without evidence does not benefit knowledge, due to the possibility of error.⁴³

In this objection, Ibn Taymiyya depends on linguistic arguments, moving from essential logic into a discussion of the language of logic. In its dependence on the informer's statement, which lacks argument and proof, the declarative proposition remains a probable one that is likely to be correct or incorrect; however, it cannot be considered a correct and convincing definition.

2. If “definition were beneficial to the concept of the *definiendum* (the defined), that would occur only after knowledge of the truth of definition. It is at the same time impossible to know the truth of the definition before knowing the definition itself, and knowledge of the truth of definition takes place only after knowing the *definiendum*.”⁴⁴ This, once again, is another causal *petitio principii* and circularity regress.

3. Single concepts cannot be necessary, because the intellect either does or does not feel them. If it does, the concept or its occurrence is prevented, since the occurrence of something that has already occurred is impossible. However, the continuity and repetition of the feeling or its power can be required or repeated. If the intellect does not conceive of them, it is impossible to require the self to feel what it does not feel, because request and intention are preceded by conceiving them.⁴⁵ Ibn Taymiyya establishes this objection on sensory arguments, while Aristotle's logic is founded on a purely mental basis. He tries to turn mental logic into sensual logic, which is subject to the relative changes that characterize the senses and which make it different from a purely mental logic characterized by stable rules.

Criticism of the Components of Definition

Greek philosophers argued that “complete definition” benefits the concept of truth and that this definition consists of the genus and differences (*differentia*), as well as common characterizing essences, excluding external “general” and “specific” accidents.⁴⁶ Quiddities are divided into the *constitutive essential* and the *non-constitutive essential*. The first is realized intuitively, because it is the topic of definition and needs no proof; the second is that which needs proof of its relation to the actual essential. Ibn Taymiyya rejects the comparison between these two essentials, since he does not distinguish between quiddity and existence and deals with both essentials with no distinction. He does, however, distinguish between the “essential,” which includes the meanings of “the essential,” and non-essential external accidentals. He believes that the philosophers’ error stems from these two corrupt origins: the false difference between the quiddity and its existence and between the essential and accidental nature of the quiddity itself.

The Difference between the Quiddity and Its Existence

Ibn Taymiyya rejects the philosophers’ claim that the quiddity has a stable truth other than its own existence – that the absolute facts of species (the quiddities of genera, species, and the other universalities) – exist in substances (prototypes). Instead, he holds that it exists and is stable only in the intellect. What is implicit in the intellect can be broader than that which exists in substances.⁴⁷

He disputes the idea of the existence of abstract quiddity in the extra-mental world, admitting only the existence of essential substances. Since the quiddity follows the question of “What is it?” and the inquirer wishes to depict the answer to the same question within oneself (in the form of an object), the answer must create the concept of the object in the inquirer’s self: this is “mental stability,” whether that uttered thing exists external to the intellect or not. The term quiddity, then, refers to what exists in the “intellect,” and “existence” refers to what exists outside it.⁴⁸ The question of “What is it?” is originally a mental question, and thus its answer depends on mental proofs that do not depend on sense and experience. Therefore, the discussion of quiddities takes place by purely mental tools, while the discussion of the extra-mental world should depend on experiential tools. This approach contradicts Aristotle’s theory, which proposes the existence of quiddity in the existential world. This separation between quiddity and exis-

tence, which is in itself a separation between the metaphysical and the real (physical) world, confirms Ibn Taymiyya's attempts to establish human knowledge on facts that are subject to experiment.

There is also a hierarchy of abstraction when dealing with matters of the intellect: handwritten letters correspond to general and abstract words of language that, in turn, correspond to meanings held in the intellect. But even though each of these three layers deals with, includes, and pervades prototypes external to the intellect, this does not indicate a direct correspondence between them and these external substances.⁴⁹ In other words, quiddities and general meanings can include substances in the extra-mental world; however, this does not imply the inverse: that mental estimates (*muqaddarat dhihniyah*) can be much broader than that which exists in the quiddical substances that supposedly exist independently in the external world.

The difference of opinions between Ibn Taymiyya and the Greek philosophers is quite clear here. He contradicts Plato's statement that there is a correspondence between the existential world and the world of ideals; challenges Aristotle's theory by saying "or exists in this and this," which means the existence of the quiddity in the substances themselves; and disputes the philosophical idea that there is a common universality among the substances in the intellect.

A Comparison between the Essential and the Accidental

Ibn Taymiyya believes that classifying the properties of quiddity into essential (that whereby we must conceive of the quiddity) and accidental (that which is not necessary to conceive of the quiddity) is unreal and invalid. This depends upon the intellect's estimation and, as such, there is always another, more complete concept just above any concept. If by "concept" one means "the absolute feeling" of something, then it is possible to apprehend it without the properties that have been made "essential." It is possible to feel that the human being is neither a "speaking animal" nor a growing sensitive body that moves of its own volition. If by "concept" we mean "complete concept," then describing a "speaking animal" does not require a complete concept of the described object because the *definiendum's* properties are not limited to what is mentioned.⁵⁰ Thus, the distinction between "essential" and "accidental" stems solely from the intellect and does not exist in the extra-mental world. The intellectual estimate does not necessarily correspond to the objects of the extra-mental world. Ibn Taymiyya argues that if *quiddity*

means a “complete concept” of the “stable self” in the extra-mental world, then it is impossible to conceive of it by negating these properties. If *quiddity* means what the “conceiver” conceives of in the intellect, then this again is simply relative and increases or decreases according to the intellect.⁵¹

In the extra-mental world, there is a difference between essential and accidental properties:

It is possible that “human being” comes to mind, though it does not arise that he is “speaking” or is an “animal.” Similarly, the accidental “black” may come to mind as “black” and not as a color, nor as an “accidental” or “a quality for another thing” and so on. If, however, the concept of black were to come to mind together with the concept of “black” as a color or a characteristic, the intellect can only know that it “exists by another thing.” So too if “the sensitive body, growing and moving by its own volition” comes to mind along with “human being,” the intellect must know that a human being is described.⁵²

Therefore, it is impossible to distinguish simultaneously between a quiddity’s essential and an accidental property in the extra-mental world. This shows that the essential and the accidental play the same cognitive role in revealing the truths of things. If it is necessary to distinguish between them, then the accidental property has a more important role to play on the cognitive level than the essential does.

Ibn Taymiyya opposes those philosophers who claim that the concept of the essential precedes the concept of the accidental:

Intuitively, these accidentals are all accidental to the described object, and they may or may not come to mind. The more they come to mind, the more the human being knows the described. But if they do not come to mind, only his knowledge of its properties is less. To say such a thing is outside the “self” and another is inherently inside it is a judgment that has no evidence, either in the extra-mental world, in innate intelligence or instinct.⁵³

He believes that the difference between them should depend on facts from the extra-mental world, and not only on the intellectual estimation.

If one of the two descriptions is essential, while the other is not, the difference between them is attributed to their extra-mental stable reality rather than the intellect. But if the difference between the extra-mental facts does not exist except by variances of intellectual movement, it will not be a truth: quiddity and truth would be estimated in the intellect, not

in the outside world. In this case, if these estimations have no truth beyond the bounds of an individual's intellect, what could they be other than flights of imagination void of any solid holding?⁵⁴

Here, he is giving more weight to the subjectivity and stability of experience than to the changing intellectual estimation, which would, by definition, differ from individual to individual. It might perhaps be possible to consider these two principles, namely, the difference between quiddity and existence and the difference between the essential and the accidental, as a single thought: the first deals with the existential and the second with the cognitive aspect of a theory that does not distinguish between the logical and the existential and considers the "intellectual abstraction" to be a part of existence also.

The unification of essential and accidental properties means that the components of definition are not indicative of the quiddity of things. It is the accidentals that indicate the existence of extra-mental things.

Quiddity for them is an expression of what the word indicates by correspondence, and its internal part is what the word indicates by inclusion. The essential external to it is what it tells through concomitance. The quiddity, its internal part, and its external essentials are referred to the indication of correspondence and inclusion and concomitance. This matter is related to the speaker's intention and goal, and what he indicates by his uttered word does not belong to the facts that exist in themselves. The speakers' concept can be corresponding or non-corresponding. Here, they differentiated between the identical properties by making some of them essential going into the truth, and some accidental, extra-mental and essential to the truth.⁵⁵

Ibn Taymiyya moves from the logical discussion (of quiddity, the essential, and the accidental) to a discussion of the language of logic (correspondence, inclusion, and concomitance), which defines content according to the meanings of words and the speaker's intention, not according to mental necessities. The accidentals of definition become a mere scientific nomenclature, subjecting these accidentals to the scholar's discretion in his/her aim to express the experiences of the objects. This implies that this knowledge is exposed to change at any moment, if a new accidental corresponds more to the habits of the objects.⁵⁶ This approach establishes logic on the experience of human beings according to the data of reality, rather than depending solely on the intellectual rules of logic.

Definition According to Ibn Taymiyya

Ibn Taymiyya claims that the function of definition (*hadd*) is to distinguish the defined (*definiendum*) from other objects. This indicates his acceptance of the nominal definition and his opposition to the Aristotelian definition, which seeks to reveal the quiddity of things, and shows his rejection of the components of definition (*genus* and *differentia*). Ibn Taymiyya attempts to prove that there is no difference between Aristotelian definition and nominal definition, claiming that “the definition gives details of what the name indicates in general; it is impossible to say: the name does not define the name in any way, and it is impossible to say: it defines everything. The definition is the same.”⁵⁷

His rejection of the distinction between logical definition and nominal definition, as well as his claim that they perform the same function, indicate his objection to the arguments of those philosophers who clearly distinguished between the two definitions. For example, Aristotle distinguishes between them by saying:

Since, therefore, to define is to prove either a thing’s essential nature or the meaning of its name we may conclude that definition, if it in no sense proves essential nature, is a set of words signifying precisely what a name signifies. But that is a strange consequence, for both what is not substance and what does not exist at all would be definable.⁵⁸

Thus a definition is given to existing things and cannot be given to non-existing things; however, a name can be given to an existing or non-existing thing. Aristotle also stipulates that a definition should be for the quiddities, but names can be given to non-quiddities. According to Ibn Sina (980-1037):

A thing which is said to belong to it (the definition): is either on account of the name or on account of the essence (*dhat*). That which is on account of the name is a differentiated statement indicating what is understood by the name in use. What is on account of the essence is a differentiated statement [of what is] known of the essence by its quiddity.⁵⁹

A person’s name refers to the person who uses the name, and this indicates the name’s subjectivity, relativity, and difference according to the differences between people. On the other hand, definition depends on quiddity, which is not related to the human being but to the defined object. Since definition deals with the object’s content, not with its image, it depends on stable objective components.

Robinson mentions that the goal of nominal definition is to inform or establish the meaning of a word or a symbol. It is a word-word, according to the image of the statement that one word means the same as the other, while the definition of a word-object is like the image of the statement that one word means a specific thing.⁶⁰ In this way, the nominal definition is a translation of one word by another word, or by an object or a meaning, as a result of which a definition is constructed using situational methods that depend on the people's empirical experiences.

Ibn Taymiyya's criticism of Aristotelian definition is due to its dependence on such metaphysical bases as genus, *differentia*, quiddity, and universality, all of which, in his opinion, do not exist in the external world; rather, they exist only in the intellect and not in visible things: "What is universal and absolute in people's minds exists only in personification, and it is specified, and distinguished in people's eyes."⁶¹ This is his attempt to separate the metaphysical from the tangible, which is subject to experiment. He also seeks to establish the definition upon realistic and objective principles and bases that are subject to examination and experimentation. Therefore, he rejects the Aristotelian functional role of definition, which seeks to reveal the defined object's (*definiendum*) quiddity in an attempt to recognize it.

What is meant by definition is that mere definition arouses the listener to imagine the reality of the *definiendum*, which he does not imagine except by uttering the defining words, as some people – some of the logicians and others – think, but it is a grave error to think that names require knowledge of the *nominatus* by those who hear the utterance.⁶²

Definition and name do not lead to the reality of the *definiendum*, and definition does not help to imagine the *definiendum*.

If it is said: what helps is mere conceptualization of the *nominatus* without judging whether it is this thing or something else, but the conceptualization of a *human being*, they will say: this will be a mere indication of the single utterance to its meaning, and this is the indication of the name to its *nominatum*, as if it were said *the man*. This proves what we have said above that the indication of definition is like the indication of the name. The mere utterance of the name does not entail depicting the *nominatum* to the person who had not conceptualized it without that; the name indicates it and refers to it.⁶³

In this way, we see that the definition is like the name; it does not require that the *definiendum* be conceptualized. Rather, its function is limited to ref-

erence of the *definiendum* and does not go beyond that to reveal the latter's reality. Reference to the object provides the inquirer with some knowledge that enables him/her to distinguish the object referred to from other objects; however, it does not provide him/her with knowledge of the object's quiddity. This stems from Ibn Taymiyya's belief in the impossibility of attaining knowledge of the object's quiddity. He also argues that the development of diverse sciences does not require the definition of quiddity and that science can develop by nominal definition.

Ibn Taymiyya's rejection of the ability of definition to attain the quiddity of the *definiendum* makes definition equal to the functional role of the name. This means that the definition refers only to the object's meaning, as opposed its quiddity. In other words, moving from the definition to the *definiendum* is a sort of moving from the signal to the signified (the indicated) on the symbolic level, but not on the objective, practical one. This approach to the quiddity stems from two of Ibn Taymiyya's ideas: (1) rejection of the distinction between the essential and the accidental attributes and (2) a lack of distinction between the quiddity and existence.

Ibn Taymiyya opposes the philosophers' claim that the quiddity has a stable truth other than its own existence – that is, that the absolute facts of species (the quiddities of genera, species, and the other universalities) exist in substances (prototypes). Instead, he holds that quiddity exists and is stable only in the intellect. What is implicit in the intellect can be broader than that which exists in substances.⁶⁴ He also denies the idea of the existence of abstract quiddity in the extra-mental world, admitting only the existence of essential substances. Since the quiddity follows the question of “What is it?” and the inquirer wishes to depict within himself/herself the object of the answer to this question, the answer must create the concept of the object in the inquirer's self: this is “mental stability,” whether that uttered thing exists external to the intellect or not. The term *quiddity*, then, refers to that which exists in the “intellect,” and “existence” refers to what exists outside it.⁶⁵

The question of “What is it?” is originally a mental question, and the answer depends on mental proofs that do not rely on sense and experience. Therefore, the discussion on quiddities takes place by purely mental tools, while the discussion on the extra-mental world should depend on experimental tools. This approach contradicts Aristotle's theory, which proposes the existence of quiddity in the existential world, for it is considered a purely mental issue that has no connection with individual empirical objects. Furthermore, the non-distinction between the essential and the accidental leads Ibn Taymiyya to refute the components of the definition of quiddity of which

it consists. Consequently, the definition turns into a mere name or a sign/symbol that refers to the name's meaning, not to its reality.

According to Ibn Taymiyya, "the definition alerts us to conceptualize the *definiendum*, as the name does. The intellect might be inattentive to something, and if it hears its name or its definition, it is alerted to the object which was referred to by a name or by a definition and imagines it. The advantage of the definition is of the same kind as that of the name, and this is the correct thing, which is the distinction between the *definiendum* and other things."⁶⁶ The function of a name, which is a sign or a symbol of a certain meaning, is to alert and remind one of this meaning so it can be recollected mentally. Alerting the mind to the meaning does not mean revealing the meaning's reality, but serves only as a mere reference to it.

Ibn Taymiyya distinguishes between two types of definition: verbal (*lafzi*) and descriptive (*wasfi*).

Definition of *differentiae* is made by attributes, and definition of visible objects is made by directions. For example, the definition or limit of the land is made by directions like, from the south it is so and so; from the east it is so and so; and in this way, the land is distinguished by its name only. The definition of the land is needed if we fear an addition or reduction to it; the insertion of all the *definienda* and exclusion of what does not belong to it, as the name indicates, as the definition of *differentia* does.⁶⁷

This means that the philosophical definition that is based on genus and *differentia* does not contradict the definition of land. In both cases, the definition does not reveal the quiddity of a thing, but refers to its position.

The reality of definition in both places is the indication of the *nominatus* only. Naming is a situational linguistic issue, and it is based on the intention of the *nominatus* and its language. Therefore, the jurists say: The definitions of some names are known by their language whereas in the case of others, some are known by their religious law and others by convention. When we want to demonstrate the intention of the speaker, we build this upon the definitions of his speech, and if we want to demonstrate its truth and determination, we need to have evidence of the correctness of his speech. The first case includes demonstration of description of his speech, while the second includes demonstration of judgment of his speech.⁶⁸

It is clear now that subjecting the definition to linguistic interpretation after rejecting its components of quiddity makes the definition relatively

understood, but not stable, for it is changeable and depends on the speaker's intention and the definition of words in the speaker's language, both of which are issues of instability because of the differences among people and among meanings in their languages. This relative definition of definition is meant to exclude the stable metaphysical elements upon which the definition leans, as well as its establishment upon the changing reality that marks the definition as something situational that human beings have laid down by agreement. It is not an objective issue whose quiddity and stable components are defined in the object separate from human beings.

Interestingly, Ibn Taymiyya's interpretation of definition is based on a principle of tangible realization that takes into consideration the logic of similarity and difference. This sort of thinking deals with the object's conception, not with its content. The criterion is not the object's stable content, but such objective established circumstances as language, law, and conventions. In this way, the standard is a conventional one characterized by relative changes so that the definition will fit any changes that science may undergo. The definition of science must necessarily be progressive and provisional, for any extension of knowledge or alteration in current opinion with respect to the subject matter may lead to a more or less extensive change in the particulars included in the science. As its composition would therefore be altered, it may quite possible that a different set of characteristics would be found to be better adapted as *differentiae* for defining its name.⁶⁹

The depiction of the speaker's speech is like the depiction of the names of things once by translation for someone who has conceptualized the *nominatus* though without knowing its name, and once for someone who, knowing its name, has conceptualized the *nominatus*. We point at the *nominatus* according to possibility, either to the object itself or to its equivalent. Therefore, we can say that the definition can be either for the name or the *nominatus*.⁷⁰

This parallel between the meaning of the *definiendum* and the *nominatus* shows that what the definition indicates is the same things as that to which the name refers. It also shows that both the definition and the *definiendum* require a definition, by moving from the definition to the *definiendum* in the case of knowing the former and not knowing the latter. That takes place by reference to the subject itself, or what resembles it. In a case of knowing the *definiendum* without knowing its definition, the defining is done by translation.

The truth is that definition means describing the *definiendum* by what separates it from other things. The attributes help in knowing the described thing by information,

... but *the informer is not like the beholder* and the one who knows the object by its attributes and qualities is not like the one who sees it. If someone already knows the *nominatus*, the name is enough for him and he does not need a definition in this case. He who has not seen the object with his own eyes does not benefit from the definition as much as the one who knows the name. The name tells him about the object that he already knows and has seen with his own eyes. For the one who does not know the individual visible thing itself, the definition can enable him to know only the type but not the individual thing itself, like the one who associates pleasure with drinking wine, whereas the one who has never drunk wine will associate pleasure with eating bread and meat by analogy, and the difference between the two pleasures is known.⁷¹

Ibn Taymiyya believes that information can help one know the described (the named) thing. This knowledge is gained through auditory transfer, which is less reliable or credible than visual transfer. For one who knows the individual thing itself (the object), the benefit of the name is larger than the benefit of the definition, because the name's function is to refer to the previously known object. The function of the definition for the person who does not know the object is to determine the type to which the specific individual object belongs, but not the object itself. If the specific object was previously unknown, then the function of the definition is like the function of the name.

Ibn Taymiyya makes a comparison between the definition and the name. The former leads to knowledge of the type/species, which is complete knowledge, but does not provide help for knowing the specific topic. On the other hand, the latter refers to the individual and the specific topic itself. This shows his interest in knowledge of the specified object, which is the thing that possesses a real existence in concrete reality, because there are no genera and *differentiae* in the concrete world, only objects and persons.

It is quite clear that Ibn Taymiyya attempts to establish a theory of definition based on the senses and experience and to rid the definition of any elements of quiddity that are not subject to tangible experiment. He believes that the goal of definition is to distinguish between the *definiendum* and other things, something that can be achieved if the person depend on his/her concrete experience. This knowledge concerning the individual object becomes more real than any knowledge that depends on the knowledge of the *differentiae*, and not of the individual object itself.

Conclusion

Ibn Taymiyya's criticism of Aristotle's definition and its components corresponds to his general intellectual approach, which endeavors to separate metaphysics from physical reality. He holds that quiddity does not exist in subjective or concrete substances (prototypes) or in the non-material world of ideals (archetypes), but rather is a purely mental matter that is subject to the caprices of intellect. Since the fields of mental estimation are broader than those of physical reality, there can indeed be some correspondence between them; however, this correspondence is wholly unnecessary. That is, not all that the intellect reaches may correspond to entities in the external extra-mental world.

The distinction between the essential and the accidental is also a mental matter that is not necessarily identical with objects in the real world, where it is impossible to distinguish between the essential and the accidental; they are equal in this world. Any non-distinction between essential and accidental properties means that one cannot deal with experimentation and the observation of existent objects, because experimentation and observation have, as their very nature, relative rather than absolute truth.

The consideration of quiddity as a purely mental estimate that may or may not correspond to an object's existence, and the single consideration of the essential and accidental within existential terms, can only lead one to believe that the metaphysical components of definition do not lead to true existential definition. As quiddity itself is unreachable by these components, it is therefore necessary to depend on tools from the existential world regulated by logical guidelines subject to experiment.

Endnotes

1. Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Radd `ala al-Mantiqiyin* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr al-Lubnani, 1993).
2. Aristotle, *Topics*, VI. 4. 141b, 25-30.
3. *Ibid.*, 143a, 20-25.
4. Mary Gill, *Aristotle on Substance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 141.
5. Aristotle, *Analytica Posteriora*, 2, 91a, 1-5.
6. *Ibid.*, 93a, 5-10.
7. *Ibid.*, 90a, 5-10.
8. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 7, 4, 1030a, 20-25.
9. Greg Bayer, "Classification and Explanation in Aristotle's Theory of Definition," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 36, no. 3 (July 1998): 504.

10. Richard Robinson, *Definition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 142.
11. Morris R. Cohen and Ernest Nagel, *An Introduction to Logic and Scientific Method* (London, 1963), 238.
12. Al-Farabi, *Alfaz al-Musta'malah fi al-Mantiq*, ed. and intro. Muhsin Mahdi, 2d ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq, 1986), 78.
13. Kiki Kennedy-Day, *Books of Definition in Islamic Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2003), 36.
14. Ibn Sina, *Al-Najah fi al-Mantiq wa al-Ilahiyat*, ed. Abdul-Rahman 'Umayra (Beirut: Dar al-Jil, 1992), 99.
15. Kennedy-Day, *Books of Definition*, 37.
16. Al-Ghazali, *Mi'yar al-'Ilm fi al-Mantiq*, intro. Ahmad Shams al-Din (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1990), 255.
17. Al-Ghazali, *Al-Mustasfa fi 'Ilm al-'Usul*, ed. Muhammad A. S. Abdul Safi (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1996), 24.
18. Muslim philosophers believed that knowledge is divided into two parts — concept and judgment — and the concept precedes judgment, which is the acquisition of the object's image in the mind. Knowledge is devoid of judgment and is acquired by definition. Judgment, on the other hand, is knowledge accompanied by judgment and is acquired by analogy or syllogism. Othman Amin, however, believes that this difference (*differentia*) is found among the Stoics, who spoke about two parallel terms: *phantasia* and *synkatathesis*. This implies that Stoicism reached the Muslims in a certain way, despite the absence of direct evidence. (See Othman Amin, *Al-Falsafah al-Riwaqiyah* (Stoic Philosophy) (Cairo: 1945), 231. Unlike Amin, I believe that there is some difference in the meanings of these terms: in Stoic philosophy, the meaning of *phantasia* is the impression or presentation that is considered certainty of the existence of things. The correctness of presentation is connected to another epistemological process known as *Synkatathesis* *synkatathesis*, which one may give or withhold at will. Since mature human beings are rational, which means that their impressions are called "rational impressions," their content can be expressed in language. Strictly speaking, it is the proposition associated with it that we are taking to be true when we assent to an impression. See also Edward Craig, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 9: 150. Thus, concept for the Stoics is connected to materialistic things, while concept in Islamic philosophy deals with metaphysical issues.
19. Al-Farabi, *Al-Burhan*, 4: "Series of Logic of al-Farabi," ed. Majid Fakhry (Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq, 1987), 19.
20. Al-Farabi, *Al-Huruf*, ed. Muhsin Mahdi (Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq, 1970), 190.
21. Al-Ghazali, *Al-Mustasfa*, 10.
22. Ibn Rushd, *Fasl al-Maqal*, ed. Mohammad 'Imara (Beirut: 1981), 55.
23. Harry A. Wolfson, *Studies in the History of Philosophy and Religion*, V. I., 22, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 479.

24. Ibn Rushd, *Talkhis al-Safsatah*, ed. Mohammad S. Salim (Cairo: 1973).
25. See al-Farabi, *Al-Thamarat al-Maradiyah fi Ba'd al-Risalah* (Leiden: 1890); al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, VI. 2, ed. Mohammad S. Kilani (Beirut: Dar Sa'b, 1986); Ibn Rushd, *Ma ba'd al-Tabi'ah* (Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq (The Catholic Press), 1967); al-Qifti, *Akhbar al-'Ulama' bi Akhbar al-Hukama'* (Egypt: Matba'at Mohammad Isma'il, 1908).
26. Amin Othman, *Al-Falsafah al-Riwaqiyah* (Cairo: 1945), 228.
27. Josef van Ess, "Skepticism in Islamic Religious Thought," *Al-Abhath Quarterly* 26 (1968).
28. Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Radd 'ala al-Mantiqiyin*, ed. and intro. Rafiq al-'Ajam (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr al-Lubnani, 1993), 1:35. In fact, Muslim philosophers did not use this argument in its negative form; however, it was mentioned in its positive one. For example, Ibn Sina says: "[T]he purpose of definition is knowledge of the term 'quiddity' of something" (Ibn Sina, *Mantiq al-Mashriqiyin*, 40). Al-Baghdadi says that the definition is said in order to think of the term (al-Baghdadi, *Al-Mu'tabar fi al-Hikmah*, 219). Al-Sawi also says that the true definition is the one that contributes to knowledge of the quiddity (al-Sawi, *Al-Basa'ir al-Nusayriyah*, 27). Similarly, al-Razi points out that that definition leads to the complete term (al-Razi, *Lubab al-Isharat*, 2, 3). However, al-Ghazali says that "the faithful demand from definition the quiddity of something, and the analogy of its truth in them, not just for the sake of distinction" (al-Ghazali, *Mi'yar al-'Ilm*, 254).
29. Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Radd 'ala al-Mantiqiyin*, 1:35. See also Ibn Taymiyya, *Naqd al-Mantiq* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1999), 149.
30. Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Radd*, 1:36.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Othman, *Al-Falsafah al-Riwaqiyah* (Cairo: 1945), 10.
35. Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Radd*, 1:37.
36. Ibid., 1:38.
37. Ibid.
38. Sextus Empiricus, *Outline of Pyrrhonism* (1933), 1:59.
39. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, *Muhassil Afkar al-Mutaqaddimin wa al-Muta'akhirin min al-'Ulama' wa al-Hukama' wa al-Mutakallimin*. intro. Samih Dhaghim (Beirut: 1992), 26.
40. Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Radd*, 1:38.
41. Ibid., 1:40.
42. Ibid., 1:56.
43. Ibid., 1:61.
44. Ibid., 1:62.
45. Ibid., 1:81. We find this thought in Fakhr al-Razi's writings: "If the required thing is not conceivable, it is unachievable, because the thing that is not con-

ceived at all is not sought after but if it is conceived of, it is unachievable, because achieving the achieved is impossible. If you say: It is conceived of for one aspect rather than the other. I say: the thing that is conceived of is not the same as the thing that is not conceived of. The first cannot be sought after because it has occurred, while the other cannot be sought after because it is not conceived of absolutely." Al-Razi, *Muhassil Afkar al-Mutaqaddimin*, 25.

46. Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Radd*, 1:83.
47. *Ibid.*, 1:84.
48. *Ibid.*, 1:85.
49. Ibn Taymiyya, *Muwafaqat Sahih al-Manqul fi Sarih al-Ma`qul*, ed. `Abd al-Latif `Abd al-Rahman (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1997), 2:115.
50. Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Radd*, 1:89.
51. *Ibid.*, 1:90.
52. *Ibid.*, 1:89.
53. *Ibid.*, 1:90.
54. *Ibid.*, 1:90.
55. *Ibid.*, 1:90.
56. Abu Ya`rub al-Marzuqi, *Islah al-`Aql* (Beirut: 1996), 289.
57. Ibn Taymiyya, *Muwafaqat Sahih al-Manqul*, 1:115.
58. Aristotle, *Analytica Posteriora*, 2, 92, 25-30.
59. Ibn Sina, *Mantiq al-Mashriqiyyin* (Cairo: 1910), 34.
60. Richard Robinson, *Definition* (Oxford: 1965), 142.
61. Ibn Taymiyya, *Muwafaqat Sahih al-Manqul*, 1:124.
62. *Ibid.*, 2:116.
63. Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Radd*, 1: 58.
64. *Ibid.*, 1:84.
65. *Ibid.*, 1:85.
66. *Ibid.*, 1:63.
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Ibid.*, 1:64
69. Juan C. Sager, *Essays on Definition* (The Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing, 2000), 180.
70. Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Radd*, 1:64.
71. *Ibid.*, 1:66.