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“LAM YAZAL” AS A FORMAL TERM in Muslim Theological Discourse

by

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In his *Wāṣil Ibn ‘Aṭā’ als Prediger und Theologe* (Leiden, 1988) H. Daiber makes a philological comment on one sentence of Wāṣil’s sermon consideration of which raises several questions that are of some interest for the usage of two verbs in the formal lexicon of Muslim theology. The sentence, of which ‘God’ is the implied subject, reads “*kāna awwalan lam yazul wa-bāqiyān lā yazūlu*” (87v, 19) and is translated “Er ist zuerst und stets, fortdauernd und unaufhörlich”. The translation here is plausibly accurate. In the commentary on the text (p. 41, K 35), however, we are told that *lā yazūlu* is a “variant for the preceding *lam yazal*”, albeit one that is “rarely attested in later Islamic theology.” Exactly what is meant by this remark is not altogether clear. He fails to cite any example of such a “variant”, however, and the suggestion is, moreover, philologically and linguistically problematic. Prima facie, the *lm yzl* of the manuscript is to be vowelled *lam yazul* given the *l’ yzwl* of the ensuing phrase and there is nothing to suggest the contrary. *Mā zāla, lā yazālu*, moreover, is not employed by itself as a predicate or adjectival phrase according to the canons of good literary usage (e.g., Sibawayh 1, p. 21 and al-Mubarrad 3, pp. 97ff. *et alibi*). We have, then, several questions: (1) the meanings of *zāla, yazūlu, zawālan* and *mā zāla, lā yazālu* and (2) their use as formal terms in theological texts and particularly that of *lam yazal*. Following a brief look at the use and meanings of *zāla, yazūlu* we shall give special attention to the grammatical usage of *mā zāla, lā yazālu* in ordinary literary Arabic and to both the grammar and logic of the formulations in which *lam yazal* is employed as a formal expression by the theologians. Several of the theological

texts in which *lam yazal* is employed are of sufficient interest to require detailed examination.

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‘*Zāla, yazūlu, zawālan*’ is a normal (“complete”) verb meaning “to depart, to leave, to go away” (cf., e.g., *Tāj al-lughā, Maqāyīs*, and *Lisān al-‘arab*, s.v.) and is defined as equivalent to ‘to move’ (‘*az-zawāl*’ = ‘*al-ḥarakah*’ and ‘*at-taṣarruf*’: *Munṣif* 2, p. 22). Accordingly it is sometimes used by the theologians to define ‘*al-ḥarakah, al-taḥarruk*’ (movement, to be in motion)¹. Though semantically related to ‘*zāla, yazūlu, zawālan*’, the morphologically stative ‘*zāla, ziltu, yazālu*’ is held by a number of authorities to be formed not on a root *ZWL* but rather on *ZYL*². It is never used without the negative (*Sharḥ al-Kitāb* 1, fol. 134v) and, like ‘*kāna, yakūnu*’, is described by the grammarians of the Basrian tradition as an “incomplete verb” (*fi‘lun nāqis*) or an “adverbial verb” (*fi‘lu ‘ibārah*). That is to say, whereas ‘*zāla, yazūlu, zawālan*’ can stand alone as the predicate of a subject noun, ‘*mā zāla, lā yazālu*’ requires both a subject (nominative) and a predicate (accusative) if the sentence is to be complete and for this reason is described by some as being not a verb (*fi‘l*) in the proper sense of the term, but rather a kind of particle (*ḥarf*) that has the morphology of a verb³. Some may take exception to this description of the verb as a particle, but the conception is certainly not inappropriate. Moreover, unlike some of the other verbs that are similarly employed, ‘*mā zāla, lā yazālu*’ does not occur in ordinary classical Arabic, as a normal, “complete” verb, either with or without the negative. And, significantly, it has no *maṣdar* or *nomen actionis*. That is to say, in its normal and proper use ‘*mā zāla*’ cannot be analytically transformed into a phrase of the form ‘*mā waqa‘a minhu z...*’, as ‘*mā qāma*’ (did not arise) may be analysed as ‘*mā waqa‘a minhu qiyāmun*’ (an arising did not take place on his part)⁴. It is true that ‘*mā bariḥa, lā yabraḥu*’ occurs sometimes as equivalent to ‘*mā zāla, lā yazālu*’ (e.g., *Q* 20,91) and the latter, as the more common expression, may be used to define it in this use⁵, but it remains that ‘*bariḥa, yabraḥu*’, unlike ‘*zāla, yazālu*’, occurs commonly and most often as a “complete verb” meaning to depart, leave, quit (= ‘*zāla, yazūlu*’, e.g., ‘*bariḥa makānahū*’ = ‘*zāla ‘an makānihī*’: *Tāj al-lughā* and *Lisān al-‘arab*, s.v.). Thus, for example, in *The Theology of Aristotle*, “*fa-dhālika l-jawharu sākinun fī l-‘ālamī l-‘aqliyyi thābitun fīhi dā‘imun lā yazūlu ‘anhū wa-lā yasluku ilā mawḍi‘in ākhar*” (dwells in the intelligible world... neither departing from it nor entering into any other place)⁶. The two verbs occur together in Abū Yazīd al-Biṣṭāmī’s statement, “*lā yazālu l-‘abdu ‘arifan mā dāma jāhīlan fa-idhā zāla ‘an jāhlihī zālat*

ma'rifatuhū" (the servant continues to know so long as he remains unknowing, but when he leaves his unknowing his knowing departs: p. 118, 9f.)

Contextually, *'zāla, yazūlu'* frequently has the sense "to go away altogether." Thus we read, for example,

*fā-lā tab'adan 'inna l-maniyyata mau'idun
wa-kullu mri'in yawman bihi l-hālu zā'ilū'*

i.e., "...shall one day carry him clean away". It often has thus the sense "to vanish completely" and sometimes, then, by implication that of "to perish, cease to exist" and is so used occasionally in the language of the theologians. For example, "...*fā-waṣafa d-dunyā min ḥaythu annahā kānat dāra zawālin wa-ntiqālin bi-kawnihā 'araḍan...*" (...and he described this world, in that it is a place of passing away and of transit, as an accident)⁸. So too of an accident which is supplanted by its contrary, it is said that since it can neither remain where it is nor be transferred to another subject, then it must be the case "that it simply vanishes and no longer exists" (*an yakūna zā'ilan muntafiyan*)⁹. The verb may accordingly be contextually juxtaposed to *'ḥaṣala, yaḥṣulu, ḥuṣūlan'* (to come to be, become actual, have actuality) as its contrary (e.g., *Mughnī* 6/1, p. 123, 14f.). Al-Jubbā'ī says that he employs a given formulation "*ḥattā yazūla l-ihām*" (in order that there be no ambiguity: *Maqālāt*, p. 507, 7). Thus one speaks of something's happening or not happening "in the absence of impediments" (*wal-mawānī'u zā'ilah* and *idhā zālati l-mawānī'*: *Mughnī* 9, pp. 134, 15 and 136, 20). Again, "*fa-in ḥakamū bi-qidamihā staḥāla zawāluhā fa-inna l-qadīma lā yu'damu ttifāqan*" (if they hold that [the impediments to its activity] are eternal, then it is impossible that they cease to exist, for the eternal is never non-existent, as is universally recognised: *Shāmīl*, p. 235, 7f.). Thus it may have the sense of "not to be the case", as, for example, where 'Abd al-Jabbār, discussing the agent's awareness and intent as conditions of the ethical qualification of his act as good or bad, says, "...*wa-faqdu l-'ilmi qad yu'aththiru fī zawāli dhālika*" (...and the lack of cognitive awareness sometimes has the effect that this is not the case: *Mughnī* 8, p. 15, 10f.). The *'zawāl'* here is equivalent to *'al-intifā'*, which in the formal lexicon of the Basrian Mu'tazila is used of the absence, non-actuality, non-presence of anything, not to *'al-'adam'*, which they employ only of the non-existence of beings that are held to be entities in the strict sense. So also Abū Ishāq al-Isfarā'īnī speaks in §IV, 42 of his *ʿAqīdah* of "the proof that no argument exists against God concerning what He does" (*al-dalīlu 'alā zawāli l-i'tirāḍi 'alā llāhi...*), i.e., there exists no ground on which the rightness of His action can be challenged. Similarly in a grammatical context Ibn as-Sarrāj says (*Uṣūl* I, p. 77, 6f.) that when the verb is passive its object "is nominative simply because the agent is not there (*zāla l-fā'il*) [i.e., is not expressed] and [the

object] takes its place". Ziyād (d. 57/676) is quoted (*Bayān* 2, p. 62, 9f.) as saying, "wa-lam tasma'ū mā a'adda llāhu mina th-thawābi l-karīmi li-abli ṭ-ṭā'ati... fī zamāni s-sarmadi l-ladhī lā yazūl" (...in time eternal that will not end). Daiber's understanding of the verb in his rendering of "kāna awwalan lam yazul wa-bāqīyan lā yazūlu" is thus basically correct, as in the literary context of Wāṣil's sermon, the sentence will mean something like "has been from the beginning, ever there and shall remain, forever present".

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With 'mā zāla, lā yazālu' the matter is quite different and rather more complex. It is commonly said in European grammars and dictionaries of Arabic to be equivalent to 'has not ceased, does not/will not cease'. In English 'does not cease' most often stands as an element in a verbal phrase in which it has a complement (or comment), explicit or implicit, and to this extent is analogous to 'mā zāla'. How it may be grammatically analogous to 'mā zāla', however, is not immediately clear. The latter, as we noted, is classed by the Arab grammarians in their formal analysis of its use in ordinary language, as one of a number of verbs that are employed as syncategorematic expressions that may be added to a simple predicative sentence (*tadkhulu 'alayhi*) in order to qualify the statement temporally. Semantically it has thus the sense of an adverb, 'constantly/always', though marked also for time, past or present/future. In English if we say 'S was perpetually P' or 'S is forever P', the adverb may be heard as a qualifier of the copula, 'was' or 'is'. It expresses, that is, a feature or aspect of how P is true of S. The copula, e.g., English 'is' or Greek 'ἐστίν', is not properly an element of P and may not itself alone properly serve as a predicate (as a "complete verb", to use the expression of the Arab grammarians). It neither names nor describes, but expresses rather the joining-in-separation that is the articulation of a meaning concerning something, the linking of what is meant to that of which it is meant¹⁰. Contextually the copula may stand in lieu of and point to an implied predicate, but it is not itself a predicate. 'Is' as formally and properly speaking a complete predicate is a creation of philosophic reflection and belongs to the language of metaphysical discourse. The Arabic predicational sentence {SP}, in its most basic form, has no copula, no linguistic sign whose sole or primary function is to link subject and predicate as such or to indicate the predicate. In its most basic form it consists simply of a noun subject and a nominal or adjectival predicate without any temporal specification other than that which may be indicated by the context, e.g., 'Zaydun akhūka' (Zayd [is/was] your brother) or 'Amrun munṭaliqun' ('Amr [is/was] leaving). That is to say, the bond or link between the subject and predicate of the basic sen-

tence to which 'kāna' or 'mā zāla' is added, e.g., 'Zaydun mutakallimun' (Zayd is speaking/speaks), is present only intentionally; it is intended and recognised, is implicit in the words that make up the sentence, complete or incomplete (indicated often, for example, by the definition of the subject and the indefiniteness of the predicate) and is understood, but is not expressed¹¹. The terms of the predicational sentence (the "nominal sentence" in the terminology of the grammarians) may be emphasised as such (as subject and predicate) and so marked, for example, by 'inna... la-...' or 'ammā... fa-...', but the language has no element whose occurrence is normally to be expected in ordinary predicational sentences with the role of the copula. (That some form of 'kāna, yakūnu' is required in certain subordinate clauses is a different matter). The discussion by the Arab grammarians concerning the grammatical syntax of subject and predicate in the simple predicational sentence and their analysis of the use of verbs such as 'kāna' and 'mā zāla' is interesting precisely because they knew no copula and it is therefore assumed neither thematically nor non-thematically¹². It is of interest for our present considerations, moreover, because (a) they described what they heard as they heard it and were remarkably insightful in their description and analysis of the language and (b), especially for our present context, because it was their rules and analyses that the theologians, the usage and lexicon of whose texts we are concerned with, regularly followed in the formulation and analysis of their thought.

To return to our original question, the 'mā zāla', as its use in ordinary classical Arabic is explained by the grammarians, might be described as a kind of copulative qualifier, since it requires both a subject noun and a predicate (*ismun wa-khabar*) and determines their inflection and so functions to qualify the intended linkage or joining of the subject and predicate as distinct terms. Preceding, thus, it qualifies the proposition as such, by position as well as by its grammatical function. Although grammatically a kind of qualifier that is added to the basic proposition, it is by no means semantically neutral or empty. The traditional analysis is logically precise. The basic proposition is of the form $x(Fx)$, as we noted earlier, and 'lam yazal', like 'kāna', is introduced to indicate the time at which or within which the predicate is asserted to be true of the subject. This is the traditional analysis and from a logical standpoint it is significant¹³. Since it qualifies the proposition, it is not itself properly to be understood as a predicate. It expresses, that is, how the referent of the subject presents itself to the speaker (or how he wishes to portray it) as being such as described by the predicate. If 'mā zāla, lā yazālu' were employed grammatically as a "complete verb" — a predicate properly speaking — then what follows it would not be the predicate of the sentence, but merely the complement of the primary predicate term (a "circumstantial element" — *ḥāl* — in the termi-

nology of the Arab grammarians), such as *‘nā’iman* in *‘Zaydun fī d-dāri nā’iman*’ (Zayd is in the house, asleep) as distinguished from *‘nā’imun* in *‘Zaydun fī d-dāri nā’imun*’ (Zayd is sleeping, in the house). The sentence remains a complete and meaningful sentence and the primary assertion remains intact when the complement to the predicate is omitted, but if the predicate is omitted there is no sentence any more¹⁴.

The “incompleteness” of *‘mā zāla’*, that in its normal use it is not a predicate but functions rather as a kind of adverbial copula — is clear in a sentence such as:

waqaftu ‘alā rab’in li-Mayyata nāqatī
*fa-mā ziltu abki ‘indahū wa-ukhātibuh*¹⁵

i.e., “...and I wept *continuously* there as I spoke to it” or in

alā yā slamī yā dāra Mayyin ‘alā l-balā
*wa-lā zāla munhallan bi-jar’ā’iki l-qaṭrū*¹⁶

i.e., “...*may* the rain *ever* fall copiously on your barren soil.”

And so too one finds the verb used with the rare and probably archaic negative in the verses of Ṭāriq b. Uthāl,

mā’in yazālu bi-Baghdādīn yuzāhimunā
‘alā l-barādhīni amthālu l-barādhīni
ā’tāhumu llāhu aqdāran wa-manzilatan
*mina l-mulūki bi-lā ‘aqlin wa-lā dīn*¹⁷

(In Baghdad we are *constantly* beset by the likes of jades mounted on jades...).

Sometimes there may be an elipsis of the predicate, but it is always to be understood; e.g., “...*qāla ṣum mina sh-shabri thalāthata ayyām; qāla uṭīqu akthara min dhālika fā-mā zāla ḥattā qāla ṣum yawman wa-aftir...*”¹⁸, which we should translate ‘...and he₁ *went on* until he₂ said...’, where ‘saying the same thing’ is understood as the implied complement of ‘went on’. So also, for example, in another verse of Dhū r-Rumma,

idhā qultu aslū ‘anki yā Mayyu lam yazal
*maḥallun li-dā’ī min diyārīki nākisū*¹⁹.

One might well, and appropriately, render this “...one of the places you have camped is always there to renew my malady,” but the seemingly neutral ‘there’ of the English sentence supplies, in fact, the unexpressed predicate of the Arabic verse (“...one of the places you have encamped which renews my malady is always”). One understands the line immediately, and if asked would supply something like *‘qablī*’ (before me) or its equivalent as the implied predicate; thus “ever <in my path lies> one of the places...”.

By the middle of the third/ninth century *'lam yazal'* with a term referring to God as the subject is commonly used by the theologians as a formal expression meaning "eternally/from eternity..." and with it *'lā yazālu'* in the sense "eternally/unto eternity", as in the statement of Abū Sa'īd ad-Dārimī (d. 282/895), "*inna llāha lam yazal 'āliman bi-khalqihim wa-a'mālihīm qabla an yakhlūqahum wa-lā yazālu bihim 'āliman...*" (God knows their being created and their actions from eternity before He created them and knows them for eternity to come)²⁰. It is employed, e.g., by al-Nazzām (d. ca. 230/835), Ibn Kullāb (d. 240/854), Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), and 'Abbād b. Sulaymān (d. 250/864) and by the philosopher, al-Kindī (d. 257/870)²¹.

The formal sense of the expression has its origin in that of ordinary literary Arabic where *'lam yazal'* sometimes means "had/has always been...", as where al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) writes to 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz saying, "*fa-ka'annaka bid-dunyā lam takun wa-ka'annaka bil-ākhirati lam tazal'*" (it is as if you had never been in this world and as if you had always been in the next: *Bayān* 2, 70, 10f. = 3, pp. 138f.). Similarly, Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī says concerning several songs which he claimed to have heard but once, "*idbā hiya rāsikhatun fī ṣadrī ka'annahā lam tazal'*" (to my surprise they were thoroughly fixed in my mind, as if they had always been there)²². No predicate is expressed for *'lam yazal'* here in the Arabic sentence, since it is the same as that of the principal statement and so is unambiguously implied. The same use is found in the *Theology of Aristotle* (p.140, 15), where we read "*fa-in kāna fī'lu l-fā'ili l-awwali ḥasanan fa'innahu lam yazal ḥasanan li'annahu...*" (... , then it has forever been beautiful, because...)²³. It is uncertain, however, whether the expression has become already a full fledged technical term where 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 101/720) speaks of the ignorance of those who think that God's knowledge came to be after creation (*inna l-'ilma kāna ba'da l-khalq*) and says, "*bal lam yazali llāhu waḥdahu bi-kulli shay'in shahīdan*" (van Ess, *Anfänge*, p. 46, 8).

The formal sense of the expression is clearly presented in al-Ash'arī's account of al-Jubbā'ī's (d. 303/915) usage of *'dā'im*' (*Maqālāt*, p. 529, 7ff.) where he cites him as saying that in describing God one does not use *'dā'imun lā yafnī'* as a predicate with *'lam yazal'* but rather with the future, *'lā yazālu'*, but does allow *'lam yazal dā'iman lā ilā awwalin lahū'* (has existed continuously from eternity without any beginning) as a predicate of God and also *'lam yazal dā'ima l-wujūd'*. The formal structure of the latter predicate should be noted: though this is perhaps the more common way of expressing predicates of this sort, its basic or primary structure and meaning is expressed in the form *'lam yazal dā'iman wujūduhu'* (cf., e.g., Sībawayh 1, pp. 99f., al-Mubarrad 4, p. 158, *Uṣūl* 1, p. 132, and *Sharḥ al-Kitāb*, foll. 159r and 159v.) the sense, thus, is "from eternity his existence perdures". Grammatically, however, *'dā'iman'* describes (is predicated of) *'wujūduhu'* and the whole phrase is the predicate of *'lam*

yazal. Howbeit the grammarians understand ‘*mā zāla*’ to be a syncategorematic particle, formally a part neither of the subject nor the predicate, for the theologians it is a distinct element of the predicate and, as we shall see, many of them will consequently not hesitate to employ ‘*lam yazal*’ alone as a complete predicate or as a distinct and separate element in a compound predicate. Al-Jubbā’ī was very interested in language and in the precise meaning and extension of expressions employed as formal predicates and insisted, as did also his son, Abū Hāshim, on grammatical correctness, including the use of ‘*lam yazal*’ always with a predicate²⁴. It is nonetheless true that for them too it is understood semantically as a distinct formal element of the predicate, i.e., as a formal qualifier of the term which stands grammatically as its predicate. The theologians cast virtually all formal statements about God in such a way that ‘*lam yazal*’ (or ‘*lā yazālu*’) stands grammatically as an element of the predicate. That is, the word which designates God as the principal subject of the sentence stands first as *mubtada*’ or *ismu inna* and ‘*lam yazal*’ introduces the predicate which is said of God (*mā wuṣīfa bihī*). This may be masked to a certain extent, since in the texts the formal statement is almost inevitably introduced by ‘we/they say’ or the like, which requires a following ‘*inna*’ or ‘*anna*’ and therefore an initial noun for the statement of the formal proposition, but the intention is clear enough. That is to say, ‘*Allāh*’ is to be understood as *ismu inna*, ‘*inna*’ being inceptive, not equivalent to ‘that’. We have now to examine a number of examples that illustrate the theologians’ use of ‘*lam yazal*’ and its derivatives.

In a dialogue composed by Ibn Ḥanbal as one between his followers and those of Jahm b. Ṣafwān, for example, a part of the exchange runs as follows²⁵:

1. We [i.e., the Ḥanbalites] say ‘from eternity God speaks when He wills’ (*inna llāha lam yazal mutakalliman idhā shā’a*); we do not say ‘He was but did not speak until He created [his] speaking’ nor do we say ‘He did not know until He had created a cognition and knew’ nor do we say ‘He was and had no power until He had created Himself a power’ nor do we say ‘he was but had no light until He created Himself a light...’ (*innahū kāna wa-lā yatakallamu ḥattā khalaqa l-kalāma wa-lā naqūlu innahu kāna lā ya’lamu ḥattā khalaqa ‘ilman fa-’alima wa-lā naqūlu innahu qad kāna wa-lā qudrata lahū ḥattā khalaqa li-nafsihi qudratan wa-lā naqūlu innahū qad kāna wa-lā nūra lahu ḥattā khalaqa li-nafsihi nūran...*)²⁶.
2. When we described [how we understand] these attributes, the followers of Jahm said, “If you people assert that ‘God together with His light’ and ‘God together with His power’ (*anna llāha wa-nūrabu wa-llāha wa-qudratahū*) and ‘God together with His majesty’, then you have taken the position of the Christians

when they assert that 'God from eternity together with His light' and '[God] from eternity together with His power' (*anna llāha lam yazal wa-nūrahū wa-lam yazal wa-qudratahu*)²⁷.

3. We reply: we do not say 'God from eternity together with His power' and 'God from eternity together with His light' rather we say 'He exists from eternity in His power and His light' (*lam yazal bi-qudratihi wa-nūrihi*); no when is posited nor is any how posited.

The issue here is what is asserted and implied in predicating attributes of God that do not, according to Ibn Ḥanbal at least, refer either explicitly or implicitly to the existence or coming to be of any created entity. Like his opponents, Ibn Ḥanbal holds that the affirmation of such predicates implies the actuality of a referent: there must be something that qualifies or is related to the primary subject (to God here) and which in the examples given is properly speaking described as a speaking, a cognition, power, light, etc. The question, therefore, concerns specifically the status of these attributes (the implied referents of the descriptive terms predicated of God), sc., their relation to God's essence (his "self": *nafsubu*) and to the temporal coming to be of created beings. Characteristically, Ibn Ḥanbal will not offer a theoretical analysis of the terms and the issues, but rather insists only that neither does his understanding of the terms entail nor do his formulations imply what the followers of Jahm claim to conclude from them. In the first section here he insists on the antecedence of these attributes to any act of creation on God's part; he gives first a formulation concerning God's "speaking" employing '*lam yazal*' in the usual way with '*mutakalliman*' as predicate and then spells out what he intends with this and several other eternal attributes of God. The introduction of 'when he wills' in the formula concerning God's speaking is curious, to say the least. What exactly he means to say or to imply is quite unclear, as we have no adequate context within which to interpret it, but that a time or temporal moment (a "when") is not implied is made explicit in the final assertion of the third section²⁸. In explaining how he understands the implication of the '*lam yazal*' in his dogmatic formulation Ibn Ḥanbal thus in (1) explicitly denies any temporal relationship of priority and posteriority between God and His speaking, God and His knowledge, God and His power, etc., as he presents a series of statements in which such a temporal relationship is asserted for each predicate and denies each in turn. Time is identified (associated with) created beings and their comings to be — with the world — and not with God's being.

In response, the Jahmite opponent (2) begins by presenting a series of compound subjects of which the first is God and the second refers to one of what the Ḥanbalites consider His eternal attributes, but without offering any predicate for them. Since,

however, the Ḥanbalite will allow no predicate that implies a temporal beginning or contingency to be said of any of the attributes mentioned, the Jahmite draws the conclusion that if '[God's] power' and '[God's] light' share a common predicate with 'God', then the Ḥanbalites must allow that this predicate is to be qualified by 'lam yazal', and this, he states, is to assert a Christian thesis, viz., that there are beings, other than God, e.g., His light and His power, whose being is coeternal with that of God and which must therefore, according to their analysis, be unoriginated and underived and so, identical to that of God²⁹. When, then, he adds the 'lam yazal', 'Allāh' is formally retained as the logical subject of the primary proposition, while the two are joined in the predicate term as a compound "second subject": 'it is the case with God that from eternity He along with His power are...'. This formulation might be construed as chosen especially to reflect the polemical intent of the objection, since it could be read as implying "associates" (*shurakā*) of a sort, but the form more likely was chosen as the easier, i.e., most usual and less awkward, mode of expression. 'Wa-qudratahu' and 'wa-nūrahū' are most easily read as phrases with *al-wāwu l-mā'iyah* (thus, "along with", "together with"). One might, however, read 'wa-qudratuhu' and 'wa-nurūhu', taking 'power' and 'light' as second subjects coördinated to the pronominal prefix of 'lam yazal', though some grammarians consider this to be poor, even if allowable, usage (e.g., Sibawayh 1, p. 150 and *Uṣūl* 1, p. 210). On the other hand, one could read the 'lam yazal' of the phrases "*inna llāha lam yazal wa-qudratahu*", etc., in (2) and (3) as a "complete verb" and so render "God together with His power exists from eternity" (or alternatively, with 'wa-qudratuhu', "God exists from eternity and His power too"). This would suit the sense of the argument well enough and would, in fact, make the point even more explicitly. Given, however, the initial presentation of isolated subjects (*inna llāha wa-nūrahū*, etc.) prior to the introduction of 'lam yazal' in (2), it would seem more plausible that the formal predicates are still omitted after its introduction. Finally, one might wish to read the phrases 'wa-qudratahu' and 'wa-nūrahū' as predicates for 'lam yazal', but this would seem most unlikely as phrases with *al-wāwu al-mā'iyah* are employed together with a verb or some other kind of predicate (cf., e.g., *Uṣūl* 1, pp. 209ff. and Ibn Ya'ish 2, pp. 48f.).

In reply (3), Ibn Ḥanbal refuses to make these nouns subjects along side 'God' for a predication qualified by 'lam yazal'. Being is not said univocally of God and of His attributes, wherefore 'God' and a noun referring to one of His attributes may not properly be conjoined as subject of one and the same predicate. One does not say 'God from eternity together with His power', but rather 'God exists from eternity in His power', etc³⁰. Ibn Ḥanbal closes by saying that no reference is implied to any moment of the time of the created universe nor are the terms 'power' and 'light' to be

taken as synonymous with any sense they may have when said of creatures³¹. Though Ibn Ḥanbal's distaste for formally theoretical theology (*kalām*) is notorious, the present passage is nonetheless characteristic of the formal precision of his thinking.

We find a somewhat analogous discussion cited from ʿAbbād b. Sulaymān, a contemporary of Ibn Ḥanbal, in al-Ashʿarī's *Maqālāt* (pp. 495ff.) in which ʿ*lam yazal* is clearly employed as a complete predicate. Just as 'is' becomes a formally complete predicate and a subject of theoretical inquiry in metaphysical discourse, so ʿ*lam yazal* becomes a formally complete predicate in Muslim theology. Here, as in the passage of Ibn Ḥanbal's *Radd*, the question is that of which predicates may be said to be eternally true of God and which not. "ʿAbbād said that from eternity God knows and has power and lives (*inna llāha lam yazal ʿāliman qādiran ḥayyan*) and that from eternity He knows particular objects ... and from eternity knows beings and atoms and accidents and [human] actions" (*lam yazal ʿāliman bi-ashyāʾa wa-jawāhira wa-aʿrādin wa-afʿāl*)³². He denied, however, that from eternity God knows created beings as such (*lam yazal ʿāliman bil-makhlūqāti wa-bil-ajsāmi wa-bil-muʿallafāt*). Here (p. 495, 9ff.) ʿ*lam yazal* is used normally, with a predicate. In what follows (p. 497, 4-9), however, the expression is isolated and treated as a distinct and formally complete predicate.

He said, "The past eternal is eternal *a parte ante* in the strict lexical sense, because (1.1) whatever is eternal *a parte ante* is past-eternal and (1.2) the past-eternal is eternal *a parte ante*. Of the Creator, however, one does not say (2) 'knows and has the power to act' in the strict lexical sense, since this would imply that there is none who knows and has power except Him'. Neither would he say (3.1) 'from eternity the Creator hears and sees' nor (3.2) 'the one who hears and who sees is eternal *a parte ante*', though he would say (4.1) 'God, Who hears and sees, is eternal *a parte ante*' and (4.2) 'God hears and sees and is eternal *a parte ante*'".

In contrast to the text of Ibn Ḥanbal, the question here is not that of how being is said of God's essential attributes as such, but rather of the temporal relationships that may be implied in the affirmation of predicates which assert the reality of God's being and of His essential attributes. In order to show exactly what distinctions ʿAbbād made and to illustrate how he formulated them, al-Ashʿarī presents six propositions:

- 1.1 *mā lam yazal qadīmun*
- 1.2 *al-qadīmu lam yazal*
2. *al-bāriʿu ʿālimun qādirun*
- 3.1 *inna llāha lam yazal samīʿan baṣīran*
- 3.2 *lam yazali s-samīʿu l-baṣīru*
- 4.1 *inna llāha s-samīʿa l-baṣīra lam yazal*
- 4.2 *inna llāha samīʿun baṣīrun lam yazal*

(1.1) and (1.2) are presented in order to fix the formal meaning of *‘lam yazal’*; (1.2) is the converse of (1.1) and since both propositions are true, *‘qadīm’* and *‘lam yazal’* are synonymous (cf. also p. 183, 14f.)³³; the latter is clearly a complete predicate: “when said of God *‘innahu lam yazal’* is identical in meaning with *‘innahu qadīm’* (p. 180, 6f. = p. 517, 12)”. In the formal lexicon of theology, moreover, they are used properly and exclusively of God’s essence³⁴ and so are employed univocally. This is what he means by *‘fi haqīqati l-qiyās’* (in the strict lexical sense). The phrase is interesting, as it may indicate that *‘Abbād* does not consider the expression as used in this formal meaning to be one that was coined as an element of a formal language (*iṣṭilāḥ*), even if, in his usage, it does sometimes violate the usual canons of grammar.

(2) is also true of God, but *‘‘ālimun qādir’* but is not said univocally of God and of human beings. In its strict lexical sense (*fi haqīqati l-qiyās*) is said of men. Were *‘knows and has the power to act’* said most strictly and properly of the creator, it could not be said of human agents. *‘Lam yazal ‘āliman qādiran’* is correctly and uniquely predicated of God (p. 495, 9f.), however, since it contains the qualification, *‘lam yazal’* and is therefore uniquely true of God³⁵. The use here of *‘al-bāri’* (= *‘al-khāliq’*; cf. p. 539, 10) as the subject term in (2) may be significant, but the matter is not clear. *‘Al-bāri’* is one of the expressions most commonly employed by the theologians to designate God as the subject of a proposition. Here, however, where the context concerns the temporal implication of predicates said of God and how certain expressions are validly used and correctly to be understood, its use stands in conspicuous contrast to that of *‘Allāh’* in (3)-(4). Nouns and nominal phrases employed as the subject of simple predications are understood by the grammarians simply as designators of their referents. They are not, that is to say, held formally to assert a description of the referent³⁶. As we shall see in our examination of (3.2) and (4.1), however, *‘Abbād* does take the primary subject term to be descriptive of the referent as described by the predicate. Accordingly, therefore, even though he would, for obvious reasons, disallow *‘Allāhu ‘ālimun qādirun fi haqīqati l-qiyās’*, the use of *‘al-bāri’* instead of *‘Allāh’* in (2) would seem to be intentional. Since, that is, *‘al-bāri’*, when used as a predicate of God, implies the actual existence of the world, *‘knows and has the power to act’* in (2) is asserted as true within the temporal framework of the existence of created knowers and agents (and it is for this reason that *‘lam yazal’* is not introduced). Even within this framework *‘‘ālimun qādir’* is not said univocally of God.

‘Abbād is especially concerned about the conceptual distinctness of his terms and the logical exactness of his formulations. He holds that God’s being transcends time absolutely: “He will not say *‘the Creator is temporally prior to beings’* (*qabla l-ashyā’*) nor will he say *‘He is the first of beings’* (*huwa awwalu l-ashyā’*) nor will he

say ‘beings came to be after Him’ (*inna l-ashyā’a kānat ba’dahū*)” (p. 496, 12f.)³⁷. Accordingly it is true to say ‘from eternity God knows the intelligible objects of his knowledge’ (*al-ma’lūmāt*) and also to say ‘from eternity He knows creation’ (*al-khalq*), i.e., He knows the act of creating that is His to do³⁸. It is not true, however, according to ‘Abbād’s analysis (p. 459, 11f.; cp. p. 159, 2ff.), to say ‘from eternity God knows created beings and bodies and composite entities’ (*inna llāha lam yazal ‘āliman bil-makhlūqāti wal-ajsāmi wal-mu’allaqāt*), since ‘*makhlūqāt*’ implies the present actuality of things that have been created, wherefore there would be an inconsistency in the predicate; and so too with ‘bodies’ and other ‘composite beings’. That is, to qualify the relation between the subject, ‘He’ (referring to God) and the predicate ‘knows [actually] created beings’ by ‘*lam yazal*’ is to make a self-contradictory statement (cf., e.g., p. 159, 9ff.). So also, it is true to say ‘in His eternity God knows the classes of primary entities’ (*al-ajnās*), i.e., the possibles as kinds or classes of things instances of which might or will eventually come to exist³⁹ but not that from eternity He knows particular created entities in the actual present of their contingencies. ‘Abbād says, thus, that God knows beings and atoms and accidents and colors as such — i.e., as classes — but will not say that He knows bodies, since bodies do not constitute a class of primary entities but are actual composite instances of particular atoms and accidents (pp. 158f. and 495f.).

Accordingly, then, ‘*‘ālimun qādir*’, qualified by ‘*lam yazal*’, is true of God, since ‘from eternity knows and has the power to act’ does not alone and of itself imply that there exists or has existed any temporally contingent entity or event which is the object either of the knowledge or of the power of the agent of whom the predicate is affirmed. This is not the case, however, with ‘hears and sees’. Of (3) and (4), then, ‘Abbād says that (3.1) and (3.2) are false while (4.1) and (4.2) are true. He has already stated that as a descriptive predicate, ‘*qadīm*’ is synonymous with ‘*lam yazal*’ and both are said properly and univocally of God. (3.1), however, asserts that ‘hears and sees’ is eternally true of God, but this must be false, since in order for ‘hears and sees’ to be true of a subject there must exist something audible that is actually heard and something visible that is actually seen⁴⁰. Contingent entities, however, cannot have existed from eternity.

With (3.2) we have formally an altogether different situation. The sentence is not a simple predication of the basic form — a noun subject with its predicate following (*mubtada’* and *khabar / ism* and *ḥadīth*) — but a “verbal sentence” in which the ‘*lam yazal*’ is a “complete verb” standing as the predicate. The analytic transform of this sentence is ‘*al-ladhī lam yazal huwa s-samī’u l-baṣīr*’: it is he who hears and sees who exists from eternity⁴¹. For ‘Abbād, ‘*as-samī’u l-baṣīr*’ describes the subject as it is the subject of the particular predicate and he therefore takes the sentence to imply that

from eternity God hears and sees and consequently to imply that audible and visible entities must have existed from eternity, which is false.

The intentional differences implied in the sentence forms becomes apparent when we look at (4.1) where *'lam yazal'* is employed again as a "complete verb" but this time standing alone as the predicate of an initially positioned nominal subject. Here *'as-samī' u l-baṣīr'*, because it is in apposition to *'Allāh'*, is a secondary element of the subject term and so is not formally descriptive of the subject as described by the predicate. Accordingly, *'Abbād* holds (4.1) to be true: it is the case with God, Who [presently] hears and [presently] sees, that He has existed from eternity.

In (4.2), finally, the *'lam yazal'* is again used as a "complete verb", here standing as one of three distinct predicate terms: it is true of God that He [now] hears and [now] sees and that He exists from eternity. Since *'lam yazal'* does not qualify the subject as described by the other two predicate terms, 'hears' and 'sees', the proposition is both consistent and coherent with the facts according to *'Abbād's* analysis.

We have also to look at a curious set of statements that al-Ash'arī reports of aṣ-Ṣāliḥī (a contemporary of al-Khayyāṭ who died ca. 300/913) concerning the relationship of God's eternal knowledge to created entities as such and as belonging to and constituting classes of beings that come to be at given moments within the temporal framework of the world. Specifically they address the question of how one speaks of the temporal relationships that may be implied when 'knows' is said of God with respect to the being and the characteristics of temporally created entities and, concomitantly, how they are described as objects of God's eternal knowledge. The statements reported appear somewhat bizarre and even confusing, at least on first reading. They are very interesting, however, in that they manifest a keen sense of a problem — of a crucial aspect of the general question of the relation of the eternal to the temporal — that came soon to be neglected by Muslim theologians as it was covered over by scholastic formulations which were directed primarily to other facets of the broader question⁴².

Aṣ-Ṣāliḥī, it seems, allowed no positive predicates of what is not actually existent and none therefore of temporally contingent beings save as and when they actually exist. He held that other than what actually exists there is no object of cognition and so would not describe things that are non-existent, possible beings as objects of cognition (*yaqūlu lā ma'lūma illā mawjūdun wa-lā yusammī l-ma'dūmāti ma'lūmāt : Maqālāt*, p. 158, 13f; cp. 501, 11f.). Similarly, "he did not predicate 'is an object of the power to act' (*maqḍūr*) of anything that has not actually come to be" (*lā yusammī mā lam yakun maqḍūran*: p. 158, 14; cp. 501, 12), but "did assert that it is an existent object of the power to act at the moment it comes to be" (*kāna yuthbituhu maqḍū-*

ran maujūdan fī ḥālī kawnihī: p. 502, 4f.). Thus also "he said that beings (*al-ashyā'*) are beings only when they actually exist and he would not term them 'beings' when they do not exist" (p. 158, 14f. and cp. p. 501, 12). Al-Ash'arī quotes him then as making a set of statements concerning God's being as related to the temporally contingent objects of His knowledge and His power, sentences which display for us once again the care for logical precision and consistency that is characteristic of the *mutakallimūn*. Dividing the several sentences presented by al-Ash'arī as they state distinct propositions and ordering them in two topical groups, we read

- 1.1 *inna llāha lam yazal 'āliman bil-ashyā'i fī awqātihā*
(From eternity God knows beings in their times: p. 158, 11f.).
- 1.2 *inna llāha lam yazal ya'lamu maujūdan fī waqti kadhā*
(from eternity God knows any given existent in the given time: p. 501, 10).
- 1.3 *inna l-bāri'a lam yazal 'āliman bi-mā'lūmātin wa-ajsāmin mu'allafātin wa-makhlūqātin fī awqātihā*
(the Creator knows from eternity objects of cognition and bodies and created beings in their times: p. 501, 9f.)
- 1.4 *inna llāha lam yazal 'āliman bil-ajsāmi fī awqātihā wa-bil-makhlūqāti fī awqātihā*
(from eternity God knows bodies in their times and created beings in their times: p. 158, 12f.; cp. p. 501, 9f.).
- 2.1 *inna llāha lam yazal 'āliman anna l-ashyā'a sa-takūnu fī awqātihā*
(from eternity God knows that beings shall come to be in their times: p. 158, 12).
- 2.2 *inna llāha lam yazal 'āliman bi-an idhā kāna waqtu kadhā fal-makhlūqu makhlūqun fihī*
(from eternity God knows that when a particular moment occurs the creature is created in it: p. 501, 10f.).

One recalls here Sibawayh's definition of '*shay'*' (I, p. 7: *kullu mā ukhbira 'anhū*) as extended by al-Zajjāj (d. 311/923): *kullu mā'lūmin huwa shay'* (*Mā yanṣarif wa-mā lā yanṣarif*, p. 3)⁴³. Within the context, thus, the series of statements cited by al-Ash'arī should be read as analyses of the Koranic '*bi-kulli shay'in 'alīm*' under the assumption (a) that when predicated of God 'knows' is to be qualified by '*lam yazal*' even though it is also true (b) that only the actually existent is an object of cognition (*ma'lūm*) and that accordingly '*shay'*' can be predicated only of something that is an object of cognition⁴⁴.

(1.1) is a general statement of the matter, which is recast, specified and nuanced by the addition of (1.2). The same basic proposition is restated then in (1.3) and (1.4)

with explicit note of the members of the principal subclasses of beings as they actually exist. Since 'knows' is predicated of God as from eternity and such names of classes are positive descriptions of their members, the qualification 'in their times' (i.e., as at the times they actually exist) has to be added in each case in order for the proposition to be consistent with aṣ-Ṣāliḥī's understanding of how such terms may be predicated of their subjects.

Again as in the previous examples, (2.1) and (2.2) are variant formulations of the same basic thesis. Unlike the first four, however, in these two the object of 'knows' in 'knows from eternity' is not the name of a class or subclass or of the members of a class but a proposition which contains the required temporal specification: that S is P at T. As contrasted to the previous four sentences, these two are intended to describe God's eternal knowledge of the being of contingent entities as they occur within a temporal sequence. (2.2) is formulated so that T is given as the condition of the truth of P as a description of S: God knows from eternity that at moment T it will be the case that x comes to be (is created). In (2.1) 'al-ashyā' is presented with a future predicate (*sa-takūnu*) and might therefore appear to be inconsistent with the thesis that the non-existent is not an object of cognition and the principle that 'being' (*shay'*) is not predicated of the possible. The future 'will come to be' is, however, qualified by 'in their times' and therefore is consistent with (1.1)-(1.4).

Finally, then, we have an unusual statement according to which aṣ-Ṣāliḥī said "*inna l-bāri'a lam yazal qablu l-ashyā'*" with the nominative /u/ as the vowel of the /l/ of *qabl-* and would not say "*lam yazal qabla l-ashyā'*" with 'qabla' accusative, "because 'qabla', said as accusative, would be a time-in which expression (*ẓarf*)" (*Maqālāt*, p. 520, 3-5; cp. p. 196, 14f.). The distinction here between annexed 'qabla' (accusative) as a time-in which expression and 'qablu...' (nominative) as the name of a time is set forth explicitly in al-Mubarrad's discussion of such words (*al-Muqtaḍab* 3, p. 102 and 4, pp. 341f.)⁴⁵. What aṣ-Ṣāliḥī refuses to affirm is thus the sentence 'from eternity God has existed before beings', in which 'before beings' designates the time in which God is asserted to have existed from eternity. (That, in contrast to 'qablu l-ashyā'', 'qabla l-ashyā'' here requires the sense of the simple past for 'lam yazal' — 'existed', not 'has existed' — is evident enough.). If, however, 'qablu l-ashyā'' is to be read as a nominal phrase in the nominative case, then it cannot be read as the predicate of 'lam yazal'. We shall have, then, to hear 'lam yazal' as a distinct predicate term and 'qablu l-ashyā'' as the second element in a compound predicate: "God exists from eternity and is the before of beings". What is asserted, therefore, is (a) that it is true of God that He has existed from eternity and (b) that given the actual existence of any contingent entity, it is true that God was before it. What he appears to mean is that the eternal before is not an indefinitely extended time but simply the

absolute anteriority of God's existence. The temporal reference of 'was before' is the present as defined by the actual existence of the contingent being in question, whether the world or any particular being within the world. Thus formulated the sentence asserts the eternal pre-existence of God with respect to contingent beings without suggesting either that the latter are subject to any positive description prior to the temporal actuality of their existence or that there is any "before" prior to the existence of the temporal order of creation other than the absolute Before which is God. Neither explicitly nor implicitly, in effect, does he suggest that any contingent being has any mode of being whatsoever prior to the moment it actually comes to exist. This interpretation seems fully consistent with what is stated in (1.1)-(1.4). (2.1) and (2.2), however, present a difficulty in this regard in that they seem to suggest, the former by its strong future (*sa-takūnu*) and the latter by its temporal antecedent, an interval of time prior to the coming to be of contingent entities. If, on the other hand, we take (1.1)-(1.4) as more concise and more precise presentations of what is intended in (2.1) and (2.2), the apparent difficulty may be resolved. In any case, aṣ-Ṣāliḥī's attempts to deal with the primary issue are exemplary.

There is also a question, due in large part to the incompleteness of these reports, regarding aṣ-Ṣāliḥī's conception of what is possible with respect to God's action. If, strictly speaking, only what is (what is in its being as it is or what is to be as it is to be) is an object of God's knowledge (*ma'lūm*) and only what comes to be in its coming to be is an object of God's power (*maqdūr*), then how can it be said that He knows and has the power to create other than what He did and does create or that He knows, for example, the possible actions that human agents choose not to perform? A major part of the problem would seem likely to lie in the restricted sense of 'maqdūr'. As we have seen, however, he asserts, in effect, that from eternity God knows (*'ālim, ya'lam*) what is to be and is further reported to have asserted that while the power to act (*al-quḍrah*) is, at the moment of the occurrence of the act, only a power to perform the act, prior to the act it is a power both to act and to refrain from acting (cf. *Maqālāt*, pp. 231, 4f. and 233, 1ff.) and accordingly speaks of God's having the power (*yaqdiru 'alā*) to enlarge the scope of men's power of acting in such a way that they could bring about events that are presently beyond their power (*ibid.*, pp. 655, 377, and 502, 12ff.)⁴⁶. The source of the difficulty, thus, is simply that the sources do not tell us how he described the potential act in its relation to the power by which it will or may be brought to actuality. And similarly with the relation of created beings and events in their relation to God's eternally prior knowledge.

Albeit anomalous in ordinary literary usage and illegitimate according to the grammarians, the use of *'lam yazal* alone as a predicate or an adjectival term is by no

means uncommon in formal theological contexts. Several examples we have seen already. Thus we find it as a complete verb in ad-Dārimī: "... *inna asmā'a llāhi lam tazal kamā lam yazali llāh*" (God's names have existed from eternity just as God has existed from eternity)⁴⁷ and in Ibn Khuzayma: *inna llāha l-qadīma lam yazal wal-khalqu muḥdathun marbūb*" (God, the eternal has existed from eternity while men are temporally created and are the subjects of a master)⁴⁸. And so too in al-Kindī's *First Philosophy*, for example (p. 119, 6-8), 'lam yazal' occurs both in its normal use and as a "complete verb" in the sentence "*in kāna l-jirmu lam yazal sākinan thumma taḥarraka... fa-qadi staḥāla jirmu l-kulli l-ladhī lam yazal mina s-sukūni bil-fi'li ilā l-ḥarakati bil-fi'li wal-ladhī lam yazal lā yastahīlu...*" (if the sphere is at rest from eternity and subsequently moves..., then the sphere of the whole, which exists from eternity, has undergone an alteration from rest in act to movement in act; but what exists from eternity does not undergo alteration). In one place (*ibid.*, p. 120, 4f.) he uses it as a predicate of 'kāna': "*fa-jirmu l-kulli lā yumkinu an yakūna lam yazal*" (it is impossible that the sphere of the whole be existent from eternity), though here the 'an yakūna' is required because of the 'lā yumkinu'.

'Lam yazal' occurs together with 'zāla, yazūlu, zawālan' in Abū Yazīd al-Biṣṭāmī's statement (p. 75, 14f.), "...*idh huwa lā yazūlu thumma lā yazūlu idh huwa mā'a man lam yazal wa-lā yazāl*" (...since he will not move [away from where he is], nay, will not move, since he is with the One Who has been from eternity and shall be unto eternity).

This use of 'lam yazal' is strictly technical. It originates in a formal analysis of sentences in which the divine names are predicated of God. Since 'lam yazal', when it occurs, occurs as a distinct semantic element, it can be isolated as a distinct term and analysed conceptually as a predicate. So understood it is a descriptive term, morphologically and syntactically a verb and in the usage of many — ultimately most — is semantically equivalent to 'qadīm'. For its usage, however, some difficulties were inevitable, for 'mā zāla, lā yazālu' has, in ordinary language, no *maṣdar* or verbal noun. In some places the nominal phrase 'mā lam yazal' serves easily for the lacking *maṣdar* as in 'fīmā lam yazal' (e.g., *Luma'*, p. 19, 4 and *Uṣ*, p. 80, 21ff.), but not in all places. Nor is there any adjectival form either, since 'ghayru zā'il' would be hopelessly ambivalent. Dropping the negative, then, they formed a noun, not for 'mā zāla, lā yazālu', but for the formal expression 'lam yazal', sc., 'al-azal': eternity *a parte ante*⁴⁹. Thus al-Mutawallī alleges (p. 31, 20) that the Mu'tazila say "*laysa li-llāhi fī l-azali smun wa-lā ṣifah*" (God has no name in past eternity and no attribute either)⁵⁰ and al-Māturīdī asserts (*Ta'wīlāt* 1, p. 19, *ult.*) "*huwa rabbu kulli shay'in fī l-azal*" (in past eternity He is the Lord of every being). So also al-Ash'arī speaks of denying action or an attribute of God "*fī azalihī*" (in His eternity *a parte ante*)⁵¹. As

'*lam yazal*' is contrasted to '*lā yazālu*', '*fi l-azal*' occurs commonly as the contrary of '*fīmā lā yazāl*'⁵² and of '*al-abad*', when the latter is employed as a noun for eternity *a parte post* (e.g., *Latā'if* 6, p. 228, 4). The noun '*azal*' can be used in the accusative adverbally, as in "*lā yu'qalu wujūdu l-ajsāmi law quddira wujūduhā azalan illā 'alā...*" (... if one posited that they exist from eternity...: al-Isfarā'īnī, Fr. #14, p.146)⁵³.

As opposed to a simple noun meaning eternity *a parte ante*, there occurs also a formal *maṣdar*, viz. '*al-azaliyyah*', meaning to be eternal *a parte ante*. We read thus, "...*li-anna li-ḥudūthi l-khalqī ḥaddan wa-waqtan wa-laysa li-azaliyyati llāhi ḥaddun wa-lā waqtun; lam yazal wa-lā yazālu wa-kadhālika asmā'uhu lam tazal wa-lā tazāl*" (... because the coming to be of creation has a limit and a time, while God's having existed from eternity has neither any limit nor any time; He has existed from eternity and shall exist unto eternity and so also His names have existed from eternity and shall exist unto eternity)⁵⁴. So too, al-Junayd is quoted as speaking of God's being "unique in His being first and His being eternal" (*fardun fi awwalīyyatihī wa-azaliyyatihī*: *Hilya* 10, 256, 12; cp. *Risālah* 1, p. 49, 2) and we read in *Ghunyah*, fol. 33r, 6, "*dhātun ... lā tatanāhi fi wujūduhā li-wujūbi azaliyyatihā*" (... because of the necessity of its having existed eternally).

Though the verbal form '*lam yazal*' may serve easily enough in a descriptive position in some places, as when al-Isfarā'īnī speaks of "*kalāmun lam yazal wa-lā yazāl*" (a speaking that has existed from eternity and shall exist for eternity: *Aqīdah*, p. 134, 1), there are others where its use would be awkward at best. Consequently, from the noun '*al-azal*' an adjective, '*azalī*' was formed which could also be used substantively⁵⁵. Defining the eternal and the contingent al-Juwaynī says, "*al-azaliyyu mā lā auwala lahū*" (the eternal *a parte ante* is what has no beginning: *Shāmil*, p. 208, 12) and "*al-ḥādithu huwa l-muta'akbkhīru 'ani l-azalī*" (the temporally contingent is what is temporally posterior to the eternal *a parte ante*: *ibid.*, p. 261, 11). Thus, in an argument for the non-eternity of the world, al-Isfarā'īnī says (pp. 136f.) "*ayyu wasfin minhā idhā kāna azaliyyan fa-lahu mūjibun azaliyyun wa-lā yaṣiḥḥu 'adamu l-azaliyyi...*" (each of these descriptions, since it is eternal *a parte ante*, must have a cause which is eternal *a parte ante* and the non-existence of what is eternal *a parte ante* is not possible...). Similarly in al-Kindī's *First Philosophy*?, we find, cast in the work's characteristically barbaric Arabic (p. 113, 2), "*al-azaliyyu huwa lā qiwāmuhu min gayrihi fal-azaliyyu lā 'illata lahū...*" (that which has existed from eternity does not have its subsistence from another, wherefore that which has existed from eternity has no cause).

As formal terms in theology, both '*lam yazal*' and '*qadīm*' originate in ordinary language. This original usage is reflected in al-Ash'arī's statement that according to

some authorities the meaning of *'qadīm'* when said of God is "*annahu lam yazal kā'inan lā ilā awwalin wa-annahu l-mutaqaddimu li-jamī'i l-muḥdathāti lā ilā ghāyah*" (that He has always existed from no beginning and that He precedes all contingent entities infinitely), where *'lā ilā awwal'* is introduced in order to make the formal meaning of *'lam yazal kā'inan'* unambiguously clear and the *'lā ilā ghāyah'* then to do the same for *'mutaqaddimu li-jamī'i l-muḥdathāt'*⁵⁶. As a formal term, however, *'lam yazal'*, taken together with its derivatives, *'al-azal'* and *'azalī'*, is heard as an univalent item belonging to a formal language, while *'qadīm'* tended more readily to evoke the connotations of its use in ordinary speech and so maintained a certain degree of equivocity⁵⁷. Thus, "the extension of *'al-azal'* is narrower than that of *'al-qidam'*, since it is not said of created beings as is *'al-qidam'* (*Ibārāt*, p. 53, #48)". Accordingly "the Muslims' assertion 'nothing is *qadīm* save God alone' is valid only when one means nothing exists that is eternal *a parte ante* save for God alone" (*lā mawjūda lam yazal illā llāh: Muḡhnī* 5, p. 235, 4). For Mu'ammār (d. 215/830), *'qadīm'* retains its meaning of "ancient", wherefore he holds that it was not true of God until there existed some created beings with respect to which He is said to be ancient (i.e., older)⁵⁸. Others, however, make different distinctions on other grounds. Ibn Kullāb predicates *'qadīm'* of God's essence but, because of the way he analyses the ontological implications of the term, will not predicate it of His essential attributes (cf., e.g., *Shāmil*, pp. 139f.)⁵⁹. Accordingly, using *'qadīm'* and *'lam yazal'* with its own predicate as distinct terms of a compound predicate, he says, "*innahu qadīmūn lam yazal bi-asmā'ihī wa-ṣifātihī*" (He is eternal and has existed from eternity in His names and His attributes: *Maqālāt*, p. 169, 9f.) or, to put it another way, nothing is properly said to be *qadīm* save God alone, wherefore in order to say that His essential attributes are eternal, one uses the word *'azalī'* (*SU*5, p. 183, 7). Thus, describing the more common usage, al-Baghdādī says, "*ajma'ū 'alā anna hādhibi ṣ-ṣifāti s-sab'a azaliyyatun wa-sammauhā qadīmah*" ([the followers of our doctrine] are agreed that these seven attributes are eternal and they call them *'qadīm'*: *Uṣūl*, p. 90, 11)".

While the phrase *'lam yazal'* with its predicate in the citation of *Maqālāt*, p. 169 above is plainly a second, asyndetically coördinated predicate following *'qadīm'*, we frequently find *'lam yazal'* used alone as the qualifier of a predicate or descriptive term. In "*lā yajūzu an yuqāla innahu mutakallimūn lam yazal wa-lā kalāma mawjudūn lam yazal*" (one may not say 'He speaks from eternity' nor is there any speaking that is existent from eternity), for example, it is used as a qualifier of the predicate terms *'mutakallim'* and *'mawjūd'*⁶⁰; and similarly in "*huwa l-mawjūdu lam yazal wa-hādhibi ṣ-ṣifatu yastabiqquhā bi-dhātihī*" (*al-I'tiqād*, p. 39), where *'al-mawjūd'* is to be analysed as *'al-ladhī huwa mawjūd'* so that *'mawjūd'* is formally a predicate: "He is the being that exists eternally and this attribute belongs to him

essentially"⁶¹. According to the traditional grammatical analysis 'lam yazal' in these phrases qualifies the predicate formally as a "circumstantial" (*ḥāl*) element, governed by the verbal force of the participles. The circumstantial character of the construction is conspicuous where we read in *the Theology of Aristotle*, "in kānat ṣifatu l-insāni hiya l-murakkabu min nafsin nātiqatin wa-jismīn, lam yumkin an yakūna lahu shabahu hādhibi ṣ-ṣifati lam yazal" (if the proper description of man is 'that which is compounded of a rational soul and a body', then he cannot have had the concrete reality of this description from eternity)⁶². And so also we find in the sometimes outlandish Arabic of al-Kindī "wal-ladhī huwa laysa lam yazal mubda'" (whatever is such that it is not eternal *a parte ante* is created: *al-falsafah al-ūlā*, p. 162, 5). The use of the expression as a circumstantial (*ḥāl*) qualifier makes it unambiguously clear that albeit morphologically preterite, the expression is normally understood by the mutakallimūn as a present, "to be/have been from eternity". The change of syntactical function in these examples is considerable. Where the role of 'lam yazal' in ordinary literary Arabic is that of a copulative verb requiring an accusative predicate, in expressions such as 'mutakallimun lam yazal' and 'mawjūdun lam yazal' it has become subordinated to the primary predicate term and accordingly stands itself in an accusative position so that if it is removed from (1) 'innahu mutakallimun lam yazal', where it is a *ḥāl* element, the primary sentence remains ('he speaks/is speaking'), whereas if it is removed from (2) 'innahu lam yazal mutakalliman', what remains is meaningless; *fasada l-kalām* to use Sibawayh's language.

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1. E.g., al-Jubbā'ī, cited in *Maqālat*, p. 355, 12f., and al-Mutawallī, p. 15, 16f.
2. E.g., *Munšif* 2, p. 21, *Qāmūs*, s.v., and Ibn Ya'īsh 7, p. 108.
3. Cf., e.g., al-Mubarrad 3, pp. 33 and 189, *Mūjaz*, p. 30, and Ibn Ya'īsh, 7, p. 106. (The semantic base of the noun 'fi'l' plays a secondary role in some of the discussion of this matter, but is by no means the foundation of the formal conception of the nature and function of these "particles".) The specific sense of the designation 'fi'lu 'ibārah', by which verbs of this class are sometimes described, is that the verb presents a semantically significant element within the sentence in that it qualifies the predicate for time but does not, like a proper or normal verb, "signify both an event and a time" (*ḥadathun wa-zamān*); cf., e.g., *Uṣūl* 1, p. 82.
4. For the analytic transform, cf., e.g. Sibawayh 1, p. 15, 3f., al-Mubarrad 3, p. 116, 7f., *Uṣūl* 1, pp. 190 and 192 and see our "Meanings as spoken of in many ways", *le Muséon* 94 (1981), pp. 281f.
5. Cf., e.g., *Maqāyīs* and *Dīwān al-adab*, s.v., *Munšif* 2, p. 22 and Ibn as-Sikkīt, *Iṣlāḥ al-mantiq*, pp. 388 and 434. 'Bariḥa, yabraḥu' may occasionally occur in this sense without the negative, but it is always to be understood; cf. al-Farrā' 2, p. 154 (*ad Q* 18, 60) and the verse cited in *Maqāyīs* 2, p. 238.
6. *Theology*, p. 18, 16f.; cf., e.g., also *ibid.*, p. 26, 5f. and note the equivalent use of 'bariḥa, yabraḥu' in "lam yabraḥ makānahu" (has never left its place: *ibid.*, p. 20, 2) and "lā tabraḥu min al-'ālamī l-'aqlī" (shall never depart from the intelligible world: *ibid.*, p. 145, 10).
7. An-Nābigha al-Dhubayānī, *Dīwān*, ed. M. A. Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1977), no. 22, line 22, p. 120.
8. *Shāmīl*, p. 166. This is paraphrased in Escorial, MS Arab #1610, fol. 12r, 21 by "...li-qillati baqā'ihā wa-qurbi zawāliḥā" (...because it lasts but little and is close to its end).
9. Abū Rashīd al-Nisābūrī, *Ziyādāt*, p. 169.
10. R. Sokolowsky (*Presence and Absence, a Philosophical Investigation of Language and Being* [Bloomington/London, 1978], pp. 103ff.) suggests that the 'is' may be looked at as naming what he calls "the predicational crease."
11. The basic form of the sentence is understood to be 'Zaydun min amrihi kadhā wa-kadhā' (Zayd is [such that] such-and-so is the case with him) (cf., e.g., al-Mubarrad 3, p. 97), so that what bonds the subject to the predicate is a pronoun ("the second subject") that occurs in the predicate and refers to the subject term. In the simple form of the sentence, the pronoun is not expressed, but is understood; i.e., 'Zaydun mutakallimun' is understood as 'Zaydun <huwa> mutakallimun' (cf., e.g., *Uṣūl* 1, p. 62). According to the Arab grammarians the predicational sentence has thus the form x(Fx).
12. According to the analysis of al-Khalīl (cited in Sibawayh 1, p. 394), which is followed consistently by the Basrians, the so-called "pronoun of separation", i.e., the third person pronoun which is used to separate and so to distinguish the subject from the predicate when both are definite, has a function analogous to that of a copula, but this occurrence is a special and restricted case and so is not considered an integral feature of the predicational sentence; cf., e.g., Sibawayh, *loc. cit.* and al-Mubarrad 4, pp. 103f.
13. Cf., e.g., al-Mubarrad 3, pp. 97f. and 113f. where the addition of "verbal particles" to indicate modality is also presented alongside the introduction of the temporal 'kāna', &c. Thus 'zanantu Zaydan min amrihi kadhā wa-kadhā' = ∅ x(Fx). Though grammatically different, 'yajūzu an yakūna Zaydun min amrihi kadhā wa-kadhā' (or alternatively 'yajūzu kawnu Zaydin...') gives the same form. That 'zanantu' in this case is considered a particle employed to

- modalise the proposition 'Zayd is such that thus-and-so is the case with him' and not a verb predicated of a first person subject, cf., e.g., al-Mubarrad 3, p. 189 and *Uṣūl* 1, pp. 180f.
14. Cf., e.g., Sibawayh 1, p. 261 and al-Mubarrad 4, pp. 300f. and 307f.; a circumstantial element is thus *laḡhu*. The Basrian analysis here is plainly correct from a formal standpoint.
 15. Dhū l-Rumma, *Dīwān*, no. 5, 1 ed. M. Tabbīlī, Cairo 1384/1964, p. 52.
 16. *Ibid.*, no. 29, 1 (p. 290).
 17. Cited in *Bayān* 1, p. 227 and Tha'lab, *Majālis*, ed. A. M. Hārūn, 1 (Cairo, 1969), p. 149. The grammarians understand the negative particle here as a compound in which the 'in' is pleonastic (*laḡhu*); cf., e.g., Sibawayh 1, p. 475 and al-Mubarrad 1, p. 51.
 18. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, al-sawm*, no. 58.
 19. Dhū r-Rumma, no. 41, 7 (p. 403).
 20. Ad-Dārimī, *Radd 'alā l-Jahmiyyah*, p. 60, 5f. 'Lam yazal' is always "eternally [*a parte ante*]"; the perfect, *mā zāla*, though employed in ordinary usage and in principle equivalent, is not found as a formal expression in the language of the theologians. The use of 'lā yazālu' as a formal expression for future "is/shall be eternally" may be secondary to that of 'lam yazal' as a qualifier of predicates involving God's essential attributes.
 21. E.g., *Maqālāt*, pp. 486, 11, 495, 9-11, 546, 3; concerning Ibn Ḥanbal, 'Abbād, and al-Kindī see below. Daiber says (*op. cit.*, K33, pp. 40f.) that 'lam yazal' is a Mu'tazilite expression and for the earliest use cites the phrase 'lam yazal mutakalliman' (absurdly attributed to Jahm b. Ṣafwān), which he renders "Gott redet beständig". Such an understanding of the phrase is altogether incorrect as was noted by van Ess in *Der Islam* 58 (1981), pp. 298f.
 22. Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *K. al-Aḡḡānī* 5 (Beyrouth, 1956), p. 213. It is interesting to note in our present context, that in ordinary usage 'qadīm' may appear in a somewhat analogous use, as where it is said of Abū Ṭālib Aḡmad al-Mushkānī "ṣaḥība Aḡmada (b. Ḥanbal) qadīman ḡattā māta" (he was a disciple of Aḡmad's from the earliest period until his death): *Ṭabaqāt al-ḡanābila* 1, p. 39 (#13). Concerning 'qadīm' as a predicate of God, see below.
 23. Cf. the context (= *Enneads*, VI 7, 3). G. Lewis' translation of the phrase, "...then it is always beautiful" (*Plotini opera*, ed. P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer 2, Paris/Brussels, 1959, p. 441) appears to miss the sense of the expression, perhaps because he has omitted the phrase "and became beautiful" (*wa-kāna ḡasanan*: p. 140, 14) in the immediately preceding context. Lewis' translation of the *Theology* is generally poor and should not be used without checking the Arabic text; see also below, n. 62. For the use of 'lam yazal' as a formal term for 'eternal/from eternity' in the *Theology*, see below.
 24. Cf. *Mughnī* 5, pp. 219f., cited by D. Gimaret, *Les Noms divins en Islam* (Paris, 1988), p. 170.
 25. *Radd*, p. 132 (= the text published in *Darulfünūn İlahiyat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 5-6, 1927, pp. 322f.). One cannot assume that the use of 'lam yazal' here by Ibn Ḥanbal reflects without distortion the formal use of the expression by Jahm a century earlier. It does, in any case, represent the usage of the contemporary debates with the followers of Jahm (and of those who for Ibn Ḥanbal counted as "Jahmiyya").
 26. We have here followed the text of 'Umayra's edition. The 1927 text reads: *bal naqūlu lam yazal mutakalliman idhā shā'a wa-lā naqūlu innahu kāna wa-lā yatakallamu ḡattā khalāqa wa-lā naqūlu innahu qad kāna wa-lā ya'lamu ḡattā khalāqa wa-lā naqūlu innahu kāna lā qudrata <lahu> ḡattā khalāqa li-nafsihi qudratan wa-lā naqūlu innahu qad kāna wa-lā nūra lahu ḡattā khalāqa li-nafsihi nūran...* It may well be that this represents a better form of the text, i.e., that in the text published by 'Umayra original ellipses have been filled in. We have, however, here preferred the reading of the 1927 text in reading *qudratan* for *al-qudrata* following *li-nafsihi*. Note the use of 'kāna' as a "complete verb" here in the sense of 'be' or 'exist'.
 27. In the first sentence here we have followed the reading of the 1927 text: *lammā waṣafnā ḡadhibi ṣ-ṣifāt* rather than that of 'Umayra (*lammā waṣafnā llāha bi-ḡadhibi ṣ-ṣifāt*); for "they

assert" (*za'amū*), the 1927 text has *za'amtum*. Concerning the incomplete sentences, see below.

28. In the earlier Ḥanbalite dogmatic formulations do not include this note but say simply "the Koran is God's speaking and is not created" (*laysa bi-makhlūq*); cf., e.g., *Ṭabaqāt* 1, pp. 29 (where also "*lam yazal mutakalliman*"), 242, 342, and 2, p. 53.
29. The term consistently employed to describe God's power, etc., in the reports of Jahm's teaching is '*muhdath*'. If the doctrine of Jahm derives from that of the Neoplatonists as seems plausible (cf. our "the Neo-Platonism of Jahm Ibn Ṣafwān," *le Muséon* 78 (1965), pp. 395ff. and J. van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra* 2, Berlin 1992, pp. 493ff.), then it may have been the case that for him there are beings other than God whose being is eternal (e.g., His knowledge: δ νοῦς) though nonetheless derived or generated from His being. In this case '*muhdath*' will not necessarily have the meaning "[temporally] contingent/created" as it does in *kalām* texts, but rather will mean simply "produced/generated". This seems unlikely, however, as it is not reported or suggested in any of the sources. Regarding the Jahmite's phrasing here in (2) one might ask if perhaps 'majesty' (*al-azamah*), included also in (1) following "light", is omitted and only 'power' and 'light' retained for polemical reasons because they are employed in NT and in Christian usage as descriptions of Jesus. It may also be noted that the dogmatic formulations of the earlier Ḥanbalites never employ a compound subject of the sort proposed by the Jahmite in this passage.
30. With the "*lam yazal bi-qudratihī wa-nūrihī*" here, cp. the formulation "*huwa qadīmun bi-ilmihī wa-qudratihī*" (*Maqālāt*, p. 584, 10f., citing Ibn Kullāb) and "*qadīmun bi-ṣifatihī*" (*ibid.*, p. 172, 3), where '*qadīmun*' is used as equivalent to '*lam yazal*'. I am indebted to Prof. van Ess for these references.
31. Regarding the sense and formal meaning of expression 'no *kayf* is posited', see the remarks in our "Elements in the Development of the Teaching of al-Ash'arī", *le Muséon* 104 (1991), pp. 154ff. and in "The Science of Kalam," *Arabic Science and Philosophy* 2 (1992), pp. 24f. Note that the formula 'eternal in His attributes and His names' is also employed by Ibn Kullāb (e.g., *Maqālāt*, p. 169, 9f.).
32. One might be at first inclined to take '*ashyā'a*', '*jawāhira*', etc., as simple indefinites and so understand 'from eternity knows some beings and some atoms...'. It is obvious, however, that this is not the intention, but rather the particulars of the classes named. Essentially the same formulation occurs in the parallel report on p. 495 using the definite article.
33. This is how he phrases it. One might raise a question, however, as to whether, in saying "*al-qadīmu lam yazal fī haqīqati l-qiyās*" here, he means by '*qiyās*' a lexical rule or a rule of inference. The former would appear to be the more likely, since he would have already to know or to stipulate as a matter of his own formal lexicon that the two expressions are synonymous in order to assert that both (1.1) and (1.2) are true. Strictly speaking, that is, the two propositions can only present or display the already assumed synonymy of the two, not demonstrate it. That he means a lexical rule would seem to be confirmed by the use of the expression in his explanation of (2) and it is for this reason that I have rendered it as I have. Concerning the equivalence of the '*lam yazal*' and '*qadīm*', cf. the citation of Ibn Kullāb in n. 30 above.
34. 'God's essence' is our phrase, used for clarity in the context. 'Abbād refused to employ either '*naṣ Allāh*' or '*dhāt Allāh*', evidently because of the implication of division and multiplicity (cf. p. 496, 7); '*wujūd Allāh*' does not occur in the reports.
35. The omission of the conjunction here makes it clear that he is speaking of a single, compound predicate, not of a two part predicate of which one term may be true while the other is false, as would be the case had he said '*ālīmun wa-qādirun*'. That one know and have the power to act is considered by most Mu'tazilite authorities to be the condition of intentional actions and so the primary characteristic of a voluntary agent insofar as he is morally responsible for his actions.

36. The subject term simply designates for the hearer something which he is presumed already to know or to be acquainted with and to be able to identify from the expression employed and concerning which the predicate is expected to convey some information; cf., e.g. Sibawayh I p. 22, al-Mubarrad 4, p. 126, and *Uṣūl* 1, pp. 59f. Thus it may be required that one add an adjective to the noun of the subject if by itself the noun would be ambivalent, (e.g., 'my elder brother'), but the 'elder' is not formally predicated of my brother, but is included merely for specification. Truth and falsity belong properly to the predicate (cf., e.g., *ibid.*, p. 62 and al-Mubarrad 3, p. 98).
37. In its common use in ordinary language 'shay' is basically vague, equivalent to English 'thing'. That in the formal use of the theologians and others it is equivalent to 'being' (τὸ ὄν) would, however, seem to be clear, particularly if one consider the contrasting uses of 'al-amr, al-umūr', which, unlike 'shay', is employed to refer to things that are not held to be entities properly speaking, e.g., to *lutf* ([God's] gracious assistance: *Mughnī* II, p. 258, 8f.) or the material organization of a living body (*ibid.* 6/1, p. 54, 9f., where read *al-binyah* for 'lnbh) and even to non-existence (*al-'adam* : *Ziyādāt*, p. 300, 18f.). It is very commonly employed in contexts where the nature and status of the referent have yet to be established (e.g., *ibid.*, pp. 403f.). Obviously this is not to assume that 'shay' (being) is synonymous with 'mawjūd' ([actually] existent); that was a matter of dispute.
38. It is clear that 'al-khalq' here cannot be taken to mean 'mankind', since man (*al-insān*) is a composite body.
39. He says, for example, "inna l-ashyā'a ashayā'u qabla kawnihā wa-inna l-jawāhira jawāhiru qabla kawnihā..." (p. 495, 12ff.).
40. 'Abbād denied that 'samī'un baṣīr' is equivalent to "ālimun bil-masmū'āti wal-mubṣarāt" ('knows the audible and the visible'): p. 498, 3f.
41. For the analysis, cf., e.g., al-Mubarrad 3, pp. 114-18 and 127f. and *Uṣūl* 1, p. 75 *et alibi*.
42. The importance of the question of the temporal significance of predicating knowledge and power of God amongst sunni theologians may likely have been tied to the currency of disputes with earlier shi'ite authorities such as Zurāra b. A'yan and Shayṭān at-Ṭāq (cf. van Ess, *op. cit.* 1 [Berlin, 1991], pp. 321f. and 241f.) only to fade when these debates lost their urgency within the schools.
43. The definition of Sibawayh is also followed by al-Jubbā'ī (*mā yumkinu 'an yudhkara w-yukhbbara 'anhū* : *Maqālāt*, p. 161); he, however, does not restrict the sense of 'shay' to the actually existent but holds that contingent possibles, since they are known by God and subject to some positive predicates, are properly speaking said to be 'ashyā'; i.e., they have being as possibles. The Ash'arites, by contrast, hold that God knows individual possibles but refuse to describe what does not actually exist as a 'shay'. On the various definitions of the word see, e.g., *Shāmīl*, pp. 124ff. and Gimaret, *Noms*, pp. 142ff.
44. Al-Mubarrad (4, p. 280) says that 'shay' is the most universal of nouns and Sibawayh is reported (*Tāj al-'arūs*, s.v.) to have said that it is the most universal of universals (*a'amm al-'amm*). For aṣ-Ṣālihi, however, its universality must be qualified, for just as 'knows', 'has the power to act', and 'lives' are not said univocally of God and of men (*Maqālāt*, p. 168, 3ff.), so also 'shay' is not said univocally of God and creatures. As He is unique in being eternal (*qadīm*), God, is "a being unlike beings" (*shay'un lā kal-ashyā'* : *Maqālāt*, p. 519, 3) and analogously is "a knower unlike knowers", etc. (*ibid.* and pp. 168, 3ff., 501, 13ff., and 503, 1ff.). The arguments about predicating 'shay' of God may have originated with the teaching of Jahm who, following Neo-Platonic sources, denied that God is a being (see *le Muséon* 78, 1965, pp. 398ff. and van Ess, *op. cit.*, p. 489). The formula 'shay'un lā kal-ashyā'' was employed by Hishām b. al-Ḥakam (cf. *ibid.* 1, p. 360) as well as by some of the Jahmiyya (cf., e.g., *Radd*, p. 105). Though denounced by Ibn Ḥanbal as self-contradictory (*ibid.*), it is nevertheless used by some later Ḥanbalites, e.g., Abū Muḥammad at-Tamīmī (d. 488/1095); *Ṭabaqāt* 2, p. 265.

45. It is obvious that 'qablu', since it is here annexed (*muḍāf*) to 'al-ashyā', cannot be taken as an adverb and must, therefore, be nominative. [For the occurrence and character of 'qablu', 'ba'du', etc., as non-declensional forms employed adverbially (= 'previously', 'afterwards, &c.'), see, e.g., *ibid.* 3, pp. 174f., Sibawayh 2, p. 44, az-Zajjāj, p. 87 and al-Farrā' 2, p. 319 (*ad Q* 30.4).]
46. At p. 502, 4f. he is reported to have asserted that at the moment of its occurrence the act is an actually existent object of the power to act (*maqdūrun mawjūd*). What formulations he may have employed to describe the potential act in its relation to the agent's power, however, we are not told.
47. *Ar-radd 'alā Bishr al-Marīsī*, p. 8, 9; cp. also *ibid.*, p. 9, 11 & *alibi*.
48. *K. at-Tawhīd*, p. 28, 21, cited by Gimaret, *Les Noms divins*, p. 170. Note that instead of 'al-qadīma' one could read here 'al-qadīmu' and so "...is the Eternal and has existed from eternity...". Likewise, one could read 'al-khalqa' (thus a second subject with *inna*) and so render "and men are..." rather than "while men are...".
49. The formation may well have been on an analogy with 'al-abad' and 'al-amad', though the lexicographers have another explanation for the occurrence of *hamz* in place of the /y/; see *Tāj al-lughah* and *Maqāyīs*, s. 'ZL'; the former cites al-Azharī, but there is no discussion of the word in his *Tahdhīb*. On this see also n. 55 below.
50. He draws this conclusion since, according to the teaching of the Basrian Mu'tazila, God's speaking is the material articulation of words, spoken or written, and therefore is "created" so that he can have no name (a word) prior to creation.
51. *Luma'*, p. 19, 9-11. Note that in line 8 here one should read *fi'lan* with the manuscript against the editor's emendation.
52. E.g., *Shāmīl*, pp. 188, 3f., 208, 9f., and 234, 17f. 'Fī lā yazāl', without 'mā', occurs in al-Shīrāzī's *Ishārah*, p. 20, 6 and 7, in *Ghunyah*, fol. 20v, 3, and is frequent in Rāzī's *al-Arba'in*, e.g., p. 25, 4f. (*yaṣīḥhu minhu ijādu l-'ālamī fī lā yazāl*) and also pp. 87, 15, and 128, 6f., 141, 11, 182, 15 and 16, and at p. 184, 15, where it is opposed to 'fi l-azal'; at p. 184, 17f., however, one reads "*mina l-azali ilā l-abad*". The frequency of the phrase's occurrence would seem plainly to preclude its being a scribal error.
53. Cf. also, e.g., *Ghunya*, foll. 20v, 2ff. and 98r, 17. The word occurs in the plural in *Laṭā'if* 1, p. 238, 3: "*fa-shahīda fī āzālihi bi-qawlihi wa-kalāmīhi ...*". The plural of both words is found in "*tawahhada fī āzālihi bi-waṣfi jabarūtihi wa-tafarrada fī ābādihi bi-na'ti malakūtihi fa-azaluhu abaduhu wa-abaduhu azaluhū*" (*ibid.* 6, p. 221, *ad Q* 76, *basmalah*). 'Abadan' continues, nonetheless, to be used in the sense of 'always', as in "*inna llāba qadīmun azaliyyun abadan kāna wa-abadan yakūn*" (*Ishārah*, p. 19, 18) and "*lā yuqālu innahu abadan kāna khālīqan rāziqan... bal yuqālu abadan kāna qādiran 'alā...*" (*ibid.*, p. 20, 8ff.).
54. Ad-Dārimī, *Radd 'alā Bishr*, p. 9, 15f. That such forms in '-iyyah' are in fact *maṣḍars*, cf., e.g., *Idāh*, pp. 58f. and al-Farrā' 3, p. 137. For the use of such forms, cp., e.g., al-Qushayrī's comment on Iblīs' statement "*ana khayrun minhu*" (*Q* 7,12), where he says (*Laṭā'if* 2, p. 217, 1) "*iddā'a l-khayriyyah*" (he claimed to be better). In formal contexts that do not depend upon the translation tradition such forms are to be understood as *maṣḍars*, not as mere abstracts; thus 'al-ismiyyah' is "to be a noun" and 'al-fi'liyyah', to be a verb (e.g., *Idāh*, p. 52, 3-5); and so also in the technical language of the theologians, 'fi'liyyah' (derived from the noun 'fi'lun', as distinct from 'fa'l', the *maṣḍar* of 'fa'ala, yaf'alu'), is commonly used in the sense of being/to be an action (e.g., *Mughnī* 7, pp. 26 and 45 and 8, p. 267, 6ff. (with the phrasing of which cp. *ibid.* p. 150, 5f. and 21f.). And so also one finds 'al-insāniyyah' in the sense 'to be human' in al-Māturīdī (*Ta'wilāt* 1, pp. 184f.) and in al-Fārābī's *K. al-Hurūf*, p. 80 *et alibi*.
55. The lexicographers take 'al-azal' to be equivalent to 'al-qidam' (cf., e.g., *Tāj al-lughah* and *Maqāyīs*, s.v.), though they understand the relative adjective 'azālī' to be primary, and formed

- by analogy with the substitution of *hamza* for the 'ya-' prefix of the verb and the simple noun 'al-azal' to be taken from it. That it is not fully and properly equivalent to 'al-qidam', since the latter is a true *maṣdar*, at least in the usage of the theologians, would however seem clear from the difference of its use from that of 'al-azaliyyah' in the examples we have cited.
56. *Maqālāt*, p. 180, 4f.; for the second half of this definition, cf. *Mughnī* 8, p. 99, lines 5 and 12. Note that al-Jubbā'ī, who is very particular about his usage, here employs 'kāna, yakūnu' as a complete verb 'to be, exist' in using 'kā'inan' as a predicate of 'lam yazal'; as we noted earlier, however, he disallows the use of 'lam yazal' alone and by itself as a "complete verb". It is clear from this set of citations that these authors are not concerned with the problem of temporality that preoccupied aṣ-Ṣālihi.
 57. For the semantics of 'qadīm' see, e.g., *al-Mughnī* 5, pp. 233ff. In defining the basic sense of 'al-qidam' Ibn Fāris says (*Maqāyīs*, s.v.) "and they say 'al-qidam' is the contrary of 'al-hudūth'". In this he would seem plainly to reflect the understanding of the Basrian theologians, for he says that the basic meaning of the root ḤDṬh is "kawnu sh-shay'i lam yakun" (the coming to be of something that was not: *ibid.* 2, p. 36; note that here 'shay', though having the prefixed al-, is implicitly indefinite and so may be qualified by the indefinite 'lam yazal').
 58. *Maqālāt*, p. 180, 13f. = p. 518, 2f. Al-Baghdādī (*Farq*, p. 155, 9f.), characteristically confuses the intention of the distinction, saying, "lā yajūzu an yuqāla fīhi innahū qadīmun ma'a wasfīhi iyyāhu bi-annahū azalī"!.
 59. He analyses 'qadīm' as referring to and asserting a property or attribute, viz., *al-qidam*, belonging to that of which it is predicated, while God's life, knowledge, power, etc., are themselves attributes whose being eternal derives from His being eternal; cf. also *Maqālāt*, p. 180.
 60. *Al-Mughnī* II, p. 20, 7; 'mawjūdun lam yazal' is fairly common; e.g., *ibid.* pp. 19, 19 and 435, 14 & alibi.
 61. For this analysis of the participle preceded by *al-*, cf., e.g., al-Mubarrad 3, pp. 89 and 127, *Uṣūl* 2, pp. 26f., and ar-Rummānī, p. 67.
 62. P. 142, 15f.; reading *lam yumkin* for the *lam yakun* of the published text. G. Lewis misinterprets the syntactical function of 'lam yazal', rendering "...cannot possibly be everlasting" (p. 445). The corresponding sentence of Plotinus reads ἀλλ' εἰ τὸ ἐκ ψυχῆς λογικῆς καὶ σώματος ὁ λόγος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, πῶς ἂν εἴη ὑπόστασις ἀίδιος; (VI 7, 14, 12ff.). Conceivably the translator meant 'lam yazal' to be heard simply as 'eternally' (rendering Syriac 'mōtōmāyā?'), but the 'a parte ante' remains an inalienable part of the Arabic expression's normal intension. Lewis' translation also has 'quality' instead of 'quiddity' for *māhiyyah* in the following sentence.