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Ежегодник
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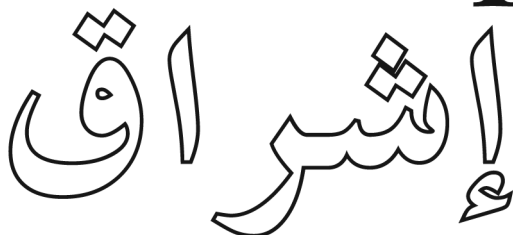
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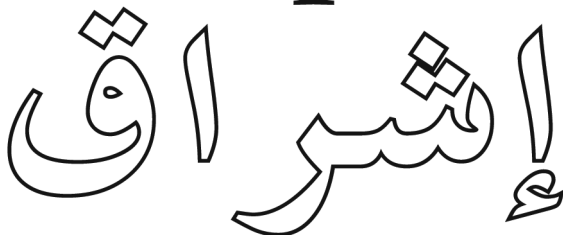
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Для специалистов в области исламской философии и религиоведения.

The seventh issue of the Islamic Philosophy Yearbook “Ishraq” contains more than twenty articles in Russian, English and French, dealing with a wide range of issues current in the Islamic philosophical thought and authored by the leading Russian and foreign experts.

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ОТ ГЛАВНОГО РЕДАКТОРА

Основная тема этого выпуска — иранская философия каджарского и пехлевийского периодов (1794–1979), которой посвящен первый раздел. Из семи статей пять посвящены мыслителям каджарской эры — Мулле Али Нури, Мухаммаду Рида Кумшай, Хадж Мулла Хади Сабзавари, Ага Мударрису Зунузи и Абу ал-Хасану Джилве, а две — ключевым фигурам пехлевийского периода, Мухаммаду Хусейну Табатабаи и Муртазе Мутахари. (Статьи о Мехди Аштийани, Казиме Ассаре и Абу ал-Хасане Рафии Казвини, подготовка которых задержалась по ряду причин, войдут в следующий выпуск.)

Во второй раздел вошли статьи, посвященные этике и философии религии. К нему примыкает третий раздел, посвященный философии языка и философии культуры.

Четвертый раздел посвящен философии истории.

Пятый раздел (самый большой по объему) составили статьи, посвященные различным аспектам и фигурам исламского мистицизма: Ибн Араби и его школе, Наджм ад-Дину Кубра и Фарид ад-Дину Аттару.

* * *

Основной темой следующего, восьмого выпуска станет «Платон и платонизм в шиитской философии».

Материалы первых четырех выпусков ежегодника ныне доступны в электронном виде на сайте Института философии РАН (www.iph.ras.ru/ishraq1.htm). Материалы последующих двух выпусков будут выложены в скором будущем.

* * *

В заключение от имени редколлегии, Института философии РАН, Иранского института философии и Фонда исследований исламской культуры выражаю искреннюю благодарность всем авторам настоящего выпуска за предоставленные ими ценные материалы.

FROM THE EDITOR

The central theme of the seventh issue is the Iranian Philosophy of Qajar and Pahlavi Periods (1794–1979), to which the materials of the first section are devoted. Of seven articles, five deal with the main philosophers of the Qajar era—Mullā ‘Alī Nūrī, Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshā’ī, Ḥājj Mullā Hādī Sabzavārī, Āqā Mudarris Zunūzī and Abū al-Ḥasan Jilwa and two—with the principal figures of the Pahlavi period, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā’ī and Murtaḍā Muṭahharī. Several other figures of the Pahlavi period—such as Mahdī Āshtiyānī, Kāzīm ‘Aṣṣār and Abū al-Ḥasan Rafī’ī Qazwīnī—each deserve to be discussed in a separate article, and we hope to redeem this in the next volume.

The articles dealing with the topics that pertain to Moral Philosophy and Philosophy of Religion form the second section, which is followed by the third section, dealing with the Philosophy of Language and the Philosophy of Culture.

The fourth section is devoted to the Philosophy of History.

The fifth section—the largest in the volume—deals with different aspects of Islamic mysticism, with a particular focus on Ibn ‘Arabi and his school, Najm al-Dīn Kubrā and Farīd al-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār.

* * *

The main theme of the eighth issue will be Plato and Platonism in Twelver Shi’i Thought.

The contents of the first four issues are now available online at the website of the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences. (www.iph.ras.ru/ishraq1.htm). The materials of the more recent issues will be made available online soon.

* * *

In conclusion, on behalf of the editorial board, the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Iranian Institute of Philosophy and the Islamic Culture Research Foundation, I would like to sincerely thank all authors of the current issue for their valuable contributions.

III

ФИЛОСОФИЯ ЯЗЫКА И ФИЛОСОФИЯ КУЛЬТУРЫ

*

PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE AND PHILOSOPHY OF CULTURE

Andrey Smirnov

(*Institute of Philosophy, Russian Academy of Sciences*)

“TO BE” AND ARABIC GRAMMAR: THE CASE OF *KĀNA* AND *WUJIDA*

In his article “Arabic and ‘to be’” published in 1969, and later in his book *Metaphysics in Islamic Philosophy* published in 1982, Fadlou Shehadi claimed that the classical Arabic language, quite apart from any terminological innovations brought about by the need to translate Greek philosophical heritage, that is, the Arabic in its pure post-Qur’ānic form possesses and uses an equivalent of the verb “to be,” namely, the verb *kāna*. Some other linguistic devices, first and foremost the verb *wujida* (and its derivatives), were used as an additional device to perform all the existential and copulative functions of the Greek *to on* and *einai*. The latter (the verb *wujida* in its technical meaning) is the result of the work performed by the Falāsifa, but the first (the verb *kāna* in its ordinary usage), F. Shehadi claimed, is the property of the “natural Arabic.”

My aim in the present article is to check the validity of this claim against the evidence provided by the traditional Arab grammarians. It is amazing how scarcely F. Shehadi uses their texts in his mentioned works, though he is unquestionably well acquainted with that tradition and refers here and there to the basic terminology of that science. The first part of this article will deal in detail with the texts of Arab grammarians concerned with *kāna*. In the second part I will briefly touch upon the verb *wujida* and the notion of *rābiṭa* (“linkage,” copula) in Arabic grammar. In the third part I will compare the evidence of the traditional Arabic grammar with the theses proposed by F. Shehadi. We will see that the texts of Arab grammarians leave no doubt that *kāna* can be in no way

regarded an equivalent of “to be” in *any of its functions*, copulative or existential. This answers negatively, unequivocally and in a clear-cut manner, the question of whether any of the “to be-type” copulative devices are used in “natural Arabic,” but leaves open the question of how, if that is the case, the copulative function is performed in Arabic. If the evidence provided by the Arab grammarians is correct, then *no Arabic phrase may be reduced to the basic formula ‘S is P.’* This is a very serious claim. I will address that question in the conclusion.

Part one: What the Arab grammarians tell us about *kāna*

It is commonplace for the Arab grammarians to use the cliché *kāna wa ikhwātu-hā* “*kāna* and its sisters.” We find it already in al-Khalīl’s *al-Jumal fī al-naḥw* (al-Khalīl 1995, p. 144), and generations of scholars who succeeded the founder of Arabic grammar widely use it in their works. What is meant by “*kāna* and its sisters”?

Arabic verbs do not have an infinitive form strictly equivalent to the English form using the particle “to” (e.g., “to be”). Third person singular past tense verb is used in its stead. To be exact, *kāna* has to be translated “he was,” provided we regard it as an equivalent of the English “to be,” as those who write about the copula in Arabic usually do;¹ e.g., F. Shehadi uses the expression “to-be-type words” to render *kāna wa ikhwātu-hā* (Shehadi 1982, p. 34 and ff.)² and even speaks of “to-be-type devices” for performing the predicative and the existential functions in Arabic (Shehadi 1982, p. 38). Do the texts of Arab grammarians substantiate those claims?

Arab grammarians give different lists of verbs belonging to the “*kāna* and its sisters” type, sometimes finalizing it with an expression *wa mā fī mā ‘nā-hunna* “and what has the same meaning,” which leaves the list open. Ibn Jinnī provides a rather extensive, though not exhaustive, enumeration of the verbs of that group:

¹ F. Shehadi says: “In the Arabic vocabulary there is the verb *kāna*, which may be correctly translated as ‘to be’ and which has some of the linguistic functions of ‘to be’ in some other languages” (Shehadi 1982, p. 1). We shall see soon that the word *kāna* cannot be *correctly* translated as “to be,” and somewhat later I shall dwell in some detail on the manner of F. Shehadi’s interpretation of Arabic grammar.

² *Kāna wa ikhwātu-hā* means “*kāna* and its sisters,” and Arab grammarians *never* say that those verbs belong to the “type” of “to be”: if typology may be reconstructed correctly, then they would be “verbs indicating time only” or “verbs devoid of meaning” type, as we shall soon see, which is far from being the “to be” type. F. Shehadi very easily reads into Arabic language and Arabic grammar his interpretation which completely distorts the facts but suits his intention to find a “to be” in Arabic.

They are: *kāna*, *ṣāra* (he started), *amsā* (the evening came; he was [doing something] in the evening), *aṣbaḥa* (he awakened in the morning; he [was doing something] in the morning), *zalla* (he persisted [doing smth.]), *mā dāma* (as long as it lasts), *mā zāla* (he did not stop [doing smth.]), *mā infakka* (he did not detach himself from [doing smth.]), *mā fati'a* (he did not cease [doing smth.]), *mā bariḥa* (he did not leave [doing smth.]), *laysa* (he [is] not), and also what is derived from them [by conjugation] and what has the same meaning (Ibn Jinnī, p. 36).

Al-Mubarrad mentions together two types of verbs: the “type (*bāb*) of *kāna* and its sisters” and the “type of ‘*alimtu* (‘I came to know, I discovered’) and *zanantu* (‘I supposed’)” (al-Mubarrad, v. 4, p. 317–318), because they “enter upon” (*dākhūla ‘alā*) the subject and predicate of the nominal phrase and govern them in the same way. Ibn al-Sarrāj gives a shorter list of “*kāna* and its sisters” than Ibn Jinnī does, but he mentions *aḍḥā* (“he became, he started [doing smth.]”) omitted by Ibn Jinnī (Ibn al-Sarrāj 1988, p. 80). Al-‘Ukbarī calls *kāna* “mother (*‘umm*) of those verbs” and gives five reasons for that: 1) its wide scope; 2) the “complete *kāna*” (*kāna al-tāmma*) has a meaning of origination (*kawn*), and origination embraces everything; 3) *kāna* points to the past absolutely, and *yakūn* to the [present and] future absolutely, unlike other verbs of that group which point to a specific time, e.g., morning and evening (al-‘Ukbarī refers to *aṣbaḥa* and *amsā* mentioned in Ibn Jinnī’s list); 4) because of its wide usage its *nūn* (the last consonant) is omitted “in their speech” when *kāna* is “deficient” (*nāqiṣa*), so that they say *lam yak* (instead of *lam yakun*); 5) all of its sisters may become its predicate (*khābar*), but *kāna* would not serve as their predicate, e.g., one would say *kāna Zayd aṣbaḥa munṭaliqan* (“Zayd was³ [such that] he set off in the morning”) but it is not good to say *aṣbaḥa Zayd kāna munṭaliqan* (“Zayd in the morning became [such that] he was setting off”) (al-‘Ukbarī 1995, v. 1, p. 165–166).

Al-‘Ukbarī mentions two terms (on pp. 2 and 4), the “complete” (*tāmma*) and the “deficient” (*nāqiṣa*) *kāna*. He refers to what is otherwise called the “real,” or “true” (*ḥaqīqī*), verb and the “verbal” (*lafẓī*) verb. Al-Rummānī defines those two notions in the following way:

Real verb is the one that indicates occurrence of an event (*maṣdar ḥādīth*), and verbal verb is the one the *maṣdar* of which does not indicate an event (*ḥādīth*), like *kāna* and its sisters (al-Rummānī, p. 80).

Maṣdar (lit. “source”) in Arabic indicates the act as such, without indicating the time. E.g., *ḍarb* indicates the act of “beating,” though it does not state at what time the beating took place. This act of “doing” something, or, to put it differently, the act of something “happening,” is what is called *ḥādīth* (lit. “hap-

³ “Was” indicates past tense only, it is devoid of any existential or copulative function.

pening”). Any “real,” or “true,” verb indicates both an event (“happening”) and its time, while a “verbal” verb indicates only time and points at no event. As al-‘Ukbarī puts it,

kāna and its sisters are verbs which were stripped of indicating the event (*hadath*), while indication of time was left for them (al-‘Ukbarī 1995, v. 1, p. 107).

Why are they called “real” (“true”) and “verbal”? Not a trifling question, because the terminology of classical sciences often speaks for itself and is always revealing.

A commonly adopted view of Arab grammarians on what the word (*kalima*) is may be summarized as following. The word is a verblity (*lafẓ*) indicating its meaning (*ma‘nā*). The it of this definition is an assumption of *necessary, regular* and *ambilateral* character of this relation of “indication” (*dalāla*) which binds *lafẓ* to its *ma‘nā* and vice versa. According to this theory, we cannot fail to understand words of a familiar language, which means that when we hear verblity, meanings are necessarily actualized in our souls regardless of our will (in fact, we cannot stop understanding speech in a familiar language even should we wish so). *Lafẓ*, though physically it boils down to sounds pronounced by human mouth, is *not* a “sound.” “Sound” (*ṣawt*) is devoid of indicating a meaning, and *lafẓ* is always connected to it. This connection is regular, so that we always proceed from the same *lafẓ* to the same *ma‘nā*. The connection is ambilateral, for when we want to convey to another human being meanings which are in our soul, we proceed from them to those *alfāẓ* (verblities) which will actualize in the listener’s soul exactly those meanings which we started with.⁴

Since the relation of *lafẓ* to *ma‘nā* and vice versa is not random but regular, the fact of the verblity indicating its proper meaning is called “real-ness” (*ḥaqīqa*), because it is “true” (*ḥaqīqa*): being true and being real are two inseparable meanings of the Arabic *ḥaqīqa*; and such relation is true because it is actu-

⁴ This inherent logic is somewhat blurred in the otherwise excellent account of Arabic language which B. G. Weiss gives in his book on al-Āmidī:

I shall in these pages speak of “the Lughā” rather than of “language,” since the term *lughā* conjured up images in the mind of the medieval Muslims that are somewhat different from those that the term “language” brings to the mind of the average speaker of English. The Lughā was essentially a body of conventionally established correlations between vocal sounds and meanings that remained constant over time (Weiss 2010, p. 113).

B. G. Weiss renders *lafẓ* as “vocal sound” which is perhaps more expected than “verblity” but somewhat misleading in what concerns the inner logic of that term. *Lafẓ* is not a sound that acquired a quality of being vocal; *lafẓ* (“vocal sound” in Weiss’s translation) and *ṣawt* (“sound”) are not related as species and genus. They are two different entities, because the former points to the meaning and the latter does not. The physical semblance between the two, which was not hidden from Arabic philologists, has no bearing on the subject.

alized in one's speech exactly as it was designed (*waqḍ'*) by the Designer of language (*wāḍi' al-luġha*) who initially established those regular relations between *alfāz* (verbalities) and *ma'ānī* (meanings).

Speaking of translation, *ḥaqīqa* is often rendered as “the direct meaning of the word” instead of verbatim “real” or “true,” but such seemingly “smooth” translation distorts the relation between those basic notions of Arabic grammar, because meaning belongs not to the word but to the verballity, while word is a complex structure of verballity-indicating-its-meaning: word is in fact the necessary and regular relation between those two sides, verballity and meaning. The word is “real” (*ḥaqīqī*), or “true” (*ḥaqīqī*), if its verballity indicates its proper meaning, that is, if it is wholesome, not lacking any of its necessary constituents, and if this wholesome state is not disturbed by any external factors. Let me just mention that *lafz/ma'nā* relation of ambilateral indication should be regarded as an exemplification of the *zāhir/bāṭin* relation and its regularities. The *lafz/ma'nā* paradigm became one of the basic paradigms of Arabic Islamic thought, as al-Jābirī pointed out in his ground-breaking “Critique of Arab reason” (see its second volume: al-Jabiri 2009, p. 41ff.).

So, if the verb is “real” it means that its *lafz* (verballity) indicates its *ma'nā* (meaning) completely. Hence the name of the “complete *kāna*”: it refers to the word *kāna* the verballity (*lafz*) of which indicates its meaning completely. For any verb it means that its *lafz* indicates both an event (*ḥadath*, *maṣdar*) and its time. Indication of an event is, so to speak, more important than indication of time, and we might call it for our purpose “the basic meaning” of the verb. Noun (*ism*) points to the meaning too, but it does not point to time, so indication of time is a dividing line between verbs and nouns (and also *hurūf* — particles). One might say that, to be any word, *lafz* should point to a meaning; to be specifically a verb, *lafz* should point to its basic meaning (an event) and additionally to the time of this event. If the complete, or real, verb is stripped of indication of time, it becomes a noun (of course, if we change it morphologically also). And if the complete verb is stripped of indication of its basic meaning, i.e., an event, then only indication of time is left for it and it becomes incomplete, that is, “deficient” (*nāqiṣa*), or “verbal” (*lafzī*). It is called “verbal” in that case to stress that its verballity (*lafz*) stayed intact but the necessary relation of verballity to its meaning was destroyed, so it is no longer a “real,” or “true,” verb. Consequently, “verbal,” “incomplete” verb cannot behave as regular, normal verbs do.

What al-'Ukbarī says in points 2 and 4 above (see his enumeration of reasons why *kāna* is regarded as “the mother” of the verbs of its type) suggests that *kāna* may function as a “real” verb (point 2, “complete *kāna*”), indicating its own meaning (i.e., an event) in addition to its time. It may also be “lacking” (*nāqiṣa*) the indication of event and point to time only; in that case it is called “deficient” (point 4).

Ibn Jinnī tell us more about the proper meaning of *kāna*; that section of his *al-Luma‘ fi al-‘arabiyya* bears a subtitle “The complete *kāna* (*kāna at-tāmma*)”:

Kāna may be indicating an event (*ḥadaṭh*), and then it has no need of object in accusative (*kh̄abar maṣṣūb*). You say: *kāna Zayd*, which means: he came into being (*ḥadaṭha*) and [was] created (*kh̄uliqa*). Or you say: *mudh̄ kuntu ṣadīqu-ka*, which means: I am your friend since I [was] created. The poet said:

Idh̄ā kāna al-ṣhitā‘ fa-adfa‘ūnī
Fa-innā al-ṣhaykh yahdimu-hu al-ṣhitā‘

When winter comes, keep me warm,
 For an old man is ruined by winter

that is to say, when winter happens (*ḥadaṭha*). In the like manner, *amsā Zayd* and *aṣbaḥa ‘Amr* (Ibn Jinnī p. 36–37).

When *kāna* is functioning as a “complete” verb, it is a “real/true” (*ḥaqīqa*) word and indicates its meaning completely, i.e., points both to an event and the time of that event. In that case the meaning of *kāna* (the “event”) is “origination,” “creation,” that is to say, coming into existence after non-existence. Let us note that this is stated with all definiteness: the meaning of *kāna* is becoming and not being. As Sībawayhi pointed out, *qad kāna ‘abdallāh* means *qad kh̄uliqa ‘abdallāh* (“Abdalla *kāna*” means “Abdalla [was] created”), and *qad kāna al-‘amr* means *waqa‘a al-‘amr* (“The case *kāna*” means “the case occurred”) (Sībawayhi, p. 46). Al-Khalīl says in the *Kitāb al-‘ayn: al-kawn al-ḥadaṭh* (the word *kawn* means “occurrence”), explaining that *kawn* is the *maṣḍar* of *kāna* and that people would say: *na ‘ūdhu bi-llāh min al-ḥawr ba‘d al-kawn*, which means: God forbid that it returns after it happened (al-Khalīl, v. 5, p. 410). The two co-founders of the Arabic grammar tradition provide the examples exactly of what F. Shehadi called “natural Arabic before philosophers (=Falāsifa) come on the scene” (Shehadi 1982, p. 3), and this evidence complies fully with the evidence of the post-falsafa tradition: *kāna* means “to become,” “to happen” and not “to be.” Moreover, the lexicon of the Falāsifa did not get rid of this “natural Arabic” meaning of *kāna*. The cliché *‘ālam al-kawn wa-l-fasād* used by the Falāsifa is translated as “world of origination (and not being!) and corruption”: *kawn*, the *maṣḍar* of *kāna* indicating the “event” proper, means “coming into existence,” “entering realm of creation,” “becoming” — it does not indicate “being” or “existing.”

Further on, when *kāna* means “becoming” it functions as a full-fledged verb, and the resulting phrase definitely belongs to verbal type with no copula and no need for copula: in such a phrase there is no way to regard *kāna* as a copula. Using the example of Ibn Jinnī (see the beginning of the above quotation), *kāna Zayd* means verbatim “Zayd became” (so to say, popped up in our world): *kāna* indicates the act (*fi‘l*) for which *Zayd* is the actor (*fā‘il*). According to the basics

of Arabic grammar, this is a complete phrase of verbal type. Being complete it needs nothing additional to complete it: as Arab grammarians say, after pronouncing such a phrase a speaker may fall silent since he completed all the conditions of conveying the meaning of the phrase (*fā'ida*), which is more than a sum of individual meanings (*ma'ānī*) of the constituent words (see al-Khalīl 1995, p. 108, 188; Sībawayhi, v. 2, p. 88, 91).

For our purpose of discussing the “omitted copula” issue we may conclude that when *kāna* is a complete verb indicating the meaning of becoming it can in no way be regarded as a restoration of the copula “to be.” First, the proper meaning of *kāna* is not “he was,” but “he became,” which is totally different from what is meant by the copula expressing being (in fact, it is strictly contradictory to it, expressing just the opposite meaning). Second, when indicating this meaning, *kāna* cannot be regarded as a copula binding nominal subject and predicate, because in that case it is itself always a verbal predicate in a verbal phrase.

This is the absolute proof of impossibility to regard *kāna* as a copula when *kāna* is a “complete” verb. I insist on its absolute character. It means that it is as strict as any mathematical truth is: one cannot change it by any “interpretation” and it allows no exception. It simply brings to an end any discussion of *kāna* as a “to be”-type copula, when *kāna* is regarded as a complete verb with its own meaning.

Now, there is the second modality of *kāna*, when it is “incomplete,” or “verbal.”

I said that the complete, real *kāna* can never be regarded as a copula binding nominal subject and predicate, because it is itself always a verbal predicate in a verbal phrase. Ibn Jinnī refers to it indirectly in the first sentence of the above quotation when he says that a complete *kāna* does not need a *khābar maṣṣūb*. He means a phrase like *kāna Zayd qā'imān*, where *qā'imān*, “standing,” is *khābar maṣṣūb* (object in accusative) of *kāna*. If *kāna* is a complete verb with a meaning “he became,” “he [was] created,” a phrase will do without *qā'imān*, “standing,” and it will read *kāna Zayd*: “Zayd became,” “Zayd [was] created.” *Kāna* needs a *khābar maṣṣūb* only when it is incomplete and cannot do without its object.

It is exactly in the phrases of that type that *kāna* is regarded as a copula between the nominal subject (*Zayd*) and the nominal predicate (*qā'im*, “standing”) by those contemporary scholars who wish to prove that Arabic is no exception from the presumably “general” copula rule and that it possesses all the necessary prerequisites to express being via the copula “to be.” They furnish examples like *kāna Zayd qā'imān* “Zayd was standing” (or, in the present tense, *ya-kūnu Zayd qā'imān* “Zayd is standing”) and say: look, *kāna* functions here exactly as “to be” functions in the corresponding English phrase. According to this line of argument, *kāna* is employed here as a copula expressing the meaning of “to be.” But what is the evidence?

The evidence is twofold. Firstly, it is the seeming correlation between Arabic and English phrases where *kāna* occupies (in an Arabic phrase) exactly the same position as the copula “to be” (in an English phrase) and, accordingly, is translated into English as “to be” or its derivatives. Secondly, it could be the personal speech experience, because at least some of those scholars have Arabic as their mother tongue; otherwise, it could be a reference to speech experience of native Arab speakers.

As for the first, we have seen that when *kāna* does convey a meaning, this meaning is *never* “to be” but always “to become,” and this is proved both by Arabic dictionaries and by usage of Arabic. So if we still wish to prove that *kāna* is a “to be-type”-copula, we should say something like the following: “When *kāna* does not convey a meaning of an ‘event’ (that is, a meaning of something happening, something taking place), then it conveys the meaning of ‘to be’ and functions as a copula.” What the proponents of “*kāna* is a copula” thesis have to say boils down to such a statement.

If confronted with the evidence of Arabic grammar, such a statement is a mere fantasy. Arabic grammar never says this; moreover, it never says anything that could be interpreted that way; and even further, it definitely says something (as we have seen already and will see soon, when we turn back to Arab grammarians) that completely rules out such interpretation. Arabic grammar is absolutely definite and unanimous on that point: if *kāna* has a meaning, that meaning is “to become,” and not “to be,” and, additionally, in that case *kāna* is always a predicate of the verbal phrase, which rules out its interpretation as a nominal phrase copula. And if *kāna* does not have a meaning, it points to time, and to nothing else: we simply cannot say that in this case it conveys the meaning of “to be,” because indication of “to be” is something completely different from indication of time. And to point to time is something completely different from the linkage function presumably performed by *kāna*.

Given that conflict of explanations, we have to choose: either all Arab grammarians are wrong and do not understand how *kāna* really functions in Arabic, or the proponents of the “*kāna* is a ‘to be-type’ copula” thesis take desired for granted and ignore not only theoretical evidence of Arabic grammatical theory, but also the evidence of everyday Arabic usage from which all Arabic grammatical theory is derived and from which Arab grammarians proceeded when they formulated their views on *kāna*. I think it is hardly imaginable to opt for the second.

So what about the second evidence, the usage of *kāna* by native Arab speakers? Let us take a phrase *yakūnu Zayd qā’iman* which is rendered into English as “Zayd is standing.” I am not a native Arab speaker, but I think that any native speaker of that language would agree with an obvious statement that when we want to say simply that Zayd is there and that he is standing, we would say *Zayd qā’im* without *yakūnu* (*yakūnu* is the present-tense form of *kāna*). “Simply” means that we want to convey exactly those two facts *and* a fact of their cou-

pling: first, that Zayd is existent; second, that someone is standing; and third, that the one who is standing is Zayd. Expressing those three facts in English in the above passage of my text required an explicit usage of “is”; saying all this in Arabic does not require it at all, we just say *Zayd qā'im* “Zayd standing”. So, those three facts are expressed in Arabic without any need of *kāna*.

But this proves nothing, the proponents of the “*kāna* is a ‘to be-type’ copula” thesis may say, because the copula *yakūnu* is omitted in Arabic (as it is, by the way, in Russian), but it can be restored, which is proved by the phrase *yakūnu Zayd qā'iman*, which is grammatically correct. That *yakūnu* is usually omitted, proves nothing, they may say, for Arabic tends to omit the copula, like so many other languages do, but we may restore it, as we do it in other languages which omit the copula. In that case we get *yakūnu Zayd qā'iman* which is strictly, verbatim equivalent to the English “Zayd is standing,” so *yakūnu* means “is.”

Let us consider this argument. Let me take Russian as an example of a copula-omitting language. In Russian present-tense phrases like “Zayd [is] standing” we always omit the copula “is.” And it is always possible to restore it and say in Russian verbatim “Zayd *is* standing”: it would be a grammatically correct phrase. But let me note an important thing: such a Russian phrase with the restored copula would *never* be used by a Russian speaker, except when discussing the restoration of copula or imitating an awkward usage of Russian by a foreigner, that is to say, in artificial contexts. In natural Russian speech, a phrase with the restored copula is never used because it is *absolutely* artificial; consequently, it expresses nothing additional to the same phrase with the omitted copula except the artificial character of copula restoration. But the Arabic phrase *yakūnu Zayd qā'iman* “Zayd [is] standing” may be used by an Arab speaker, and it does express something which the same phrase without *yakūnu* (“[is]”) does not express. It is an additional meaning of pointing to the present-future time (present and future tense verbs have the same form in Arabic). That is to say, it is the fourth meaning added to the three meanings of *Zayd qā'im* “Zayd [is] standing” phrase discussed above. This fourth meaning is either an emphatic confirmation of the fact that Zayd is standing right now (and not yesterday, and not sitting)⁵ or regular indication of future time, meaning that Zayd will be standing in future.

So this second argument of the “*kāna* is a copula” thesis proponents also does not prove their point. If we still choose to believe that *kāna* is used as a copula, we will have to disregard all the evidence provided by Arabic grammar and Arabic usage. There are people who, in spite of all evidence, still hold that the Earth is flat. As a belief, this one is not better and not worse than any other, but you cannot launch a spacecraft if you proceed from it.

⁵ Cf. an emphatic English “Zayd *is* standing,” where *is* would be stressed by voice of a speaker or italicized in writing.

Now, what about Arabic grammar? How does it explain phrases in which *kāna* is used as a deficient verb pointing only to time and not to a meaning of an “event” (*ḥadath*)?

We find a comprehensive and at the same time concise answer in al-‘Ukbarī’s *al-Lubāb*:

Chapter “*Kāna* and its sisters.” The bulk [of grammarians] hold that those are verbs because they are conjugated, pronouns and feminine *ta-* may be added to them and they point to a meaning in themselves, that is, to time.

Section. They do not indicate an event and are not confirmed by [their] *maṣḍars* exactly because they (grammarians. — *A. S.*) derived them from *maṣḍars* and then stripped them of their pointing to the event so that they would indicate the time of the [nominal] subject’s [nominal] predicate (*zaman khabar al-mubtada’*), so that they became, together with the [nominal] predicate, as if they were a verb indicating event and time.

As for those Basrians who said that they are particles (*hurūf*), it is acceptable, for they found that they resemble particles in not indicating the event. But they are verbal verbs (*af’āl lafẓiyya*). Otherwise, those [Basrians] could be implying by ‘particles’ a special mode (*tariqa*), for those verbs have a special mode in grammar which is unlike all the other verbs, and because of this ailment (*illa*) they were singled out of all the verbs to enter upon [nominal] subject and [nominal] predicate (al-‘Ukbarī 1995, v. 1, pp. 164–165).

The last words of al-‘Ukbarī are really revealing. *Kāna* and the verbs of its type behave unlike all the other verbs, because they have an “ailment” (*illa*) — a commonplace metaphorical designation of a deviation from the general rule Arab grammarians used. So it is because of this deviation that they “enter upon” *mubtada’* and *khabar*, the nominal subject and the nominal predicate, e.g., upon *Zayd qā’im* “Zayd [is] standing” (there is no “is” in this Arabic phrase, as we remember). It is important to take into consideration the inner logic of this reasoning. It starts with a normal, “healthy” (*ṣahīḥ*) state of a verb, which is a regular, normal and complete indication of its *ma’nā* (meaning) by its *lafẓ* (verbal-ity). For the verb it means that its verbality points both to the event (*ḥadath*) and the time of that event (past, present or future). Such regular, healthy verbs function as predicates in verbal, and not nominal, phrases. For example, *dhahaba Zayd* “Zayd went away” is a verbal phrase constructed of *fā’il* “actor” and *fi’l* “act”: “Zayd” is *fā’il*, actor, and *dhahaba* is a healthy verb indicating the event of going away and its time (past). Being normal, healthy, complete, this verb, like any other normal verb, has no need to “enter upon” the subject and predicate of a different phrase type — a nominal phrase (*jumla ismiyya*) where *mubtada’* (the nominal subject, lit. “the starting [word]”) and *khabar* (the nominal predicate, lit. “message,” “news”) form a complete phrase.

So, from al-‘Ukbarī’s point of view, the fact that *kāna* and verbs of its type are used in nominal phrases is a deviation from regularity which happens due to

the unnatural, unhealthy state of those verbs. The regular state of affairs in Arabic is to construct either of the two types of a phrase, nominal or verbal; neither of them stands in need of anything additional to be a complete, meaning-conveying (*mufīda*) phrase. Both need only two words to become a complete phrase: *mubtada'*—*khabar* for the nominal phrase and *fi'l*—*fā'il* for the verbal one. When *kāna* is taken as a regular verb pointing to the meaning of an event (origination, creation, becoming) and its time, it is used as a predicate (*fi'l*) in verbal phrases like any other verb. And only when it is irregular, deficient and does not point to an event and, consequently, cannot function as a predicate in a verbal phrase (the meaning of the phrase cannot become complete in that case), it would behave unnaturally and insert itself into a nominal phrase — which is, let us note, a complete (*mufīda*, meaning-conveying) phrase without it.

All this boils down to a very simple conclusion: usage of *kāna* in a nominal phrase is considered a deviation from normal, healthy state of affairs, and not a restoration of a complete, normal state. On the contrary, restoration of copula in copula-omitting languages is not regarded a deviation from normal phrase structure but rather a return to the initial, complete state of affairs from which the language in everyday usage deviates. The logic of reasoning in the two cases is in fact opposite. In Arabic, the phrase without *kāna* is complete and normal, it represents the logically complete and correct predication structure producing the full meaning of a phrase; usage of *kāna* has to be justified because it breaks the rule of predication and meaning formation. In Russian, restoration of “to be” copula which is never used in natural speech in present tense is regarded as a return to the initial, logically complete mode of predication, it does not have to be justified because, firstly, it is not used in natural speech, so no justification is needed, and, secondly, if restored in artificial phrase it simply displays the full predication construction which in any way is implied by any Russian phrase which omits the copula. So, in Russian, those are really a copula omitting and restoring operations which leave the logic of predication intact: the predicate is linked to the subject and equated with it with the help of the implied “to be” which may be artificially restored (and in that case it does not affect the logic of predication at all) but which is naturally omitted in Russian speech. In English, it is always displayed; but this has no bearing at all on the logic of predication, which is the same in Russian and English and which employs “to be” as an indispensable link of predicate to its subject. But this is not the case in Arabic. This means that predication in Arabic is arranged differently, and this is the basic reason why it simply does not need a “to be”-like copula which is logically indispensable for Russian, English and other Indo-European languages.

Before we proceed, let me get back to the last quotation and elaborate on some specific points of Arabic grammatical theory mentioned there. The first is “confirmation by *mašdar*.” Saying that “*kāna* and its sisters” “are not confirmed by [their] *mašdars*,” al-'Ukbarī refers to the practice of using *mašdar* (the name

of a process, e.g., “striking”) in accusative (*naṣb*) after the corresponding verb, e.g., *ḍaraba Zaydun ‘Amran ḍarban* “Zayd struck ‘Amr striking” where *ḍarban* “striking” is the *maṣḍar* of the verb *ḍaraba* “he struck.” This way is applicable to any complete verb and is widely employed in Arabic speech; but when *kāna* is used as a deficient verb and is inserted into a nominal phrase, its *maṣḍar kawṇ* cannot be used that way.

The second point concerns “deriving verb from its *maṣḍar*.” Since a word (*kalima*) is a regular reciprocal link of indication between *lafẓ* (verbality) and *ma‘nā* (meaning), derivation (*iṣḥtiqāq*) affects both. Al-‘Ukbarī refers to the Basrian grammarians who held that verbs are derived from *maṣḍars*. *Maṣḍar* indicates only an event, and when a verb is derived from it, a meaning (*ma‘nā*) is added to it and, accordingly, its verbality changes to indicate the augmented meaning. The meaning added to *maṣḍar* in derivation process is indication of time, so that a verb points both to an “event,” as its *maṣḍar* does, and to the time of it. This holds for any verb. But after that, al-‘Ukbarī says, “*kāna* and its sisters” were, unlike all other verbs, deprived of the basic, initial meaning of an event, and only the additional meaning of time indication, added during derivation, was left to those verbs. This deprivation is exactly their “ailment” (*‘illa*) which explains their unusual behavior.

The third point concerns the views of some Basrian grammarians who held that “*kāna* and its sisters” are not verbs but particles (*hurūf*). This point highlights the role of the *lafẓ/ma‘nā* basic paradigm of Arabic grammar, based on the *zāhir/bāṭin* logic, to which I referred earlier. Since the *Kitāb* of Sībawayhi, all the Arabic words are classified as belonging to three (and no more!) categories: nouns, verbs and particles. This classification is generated as a variation of the *lafẓ/ma‘nā* relation. Nouns are words whose *lafẓ* indicates *ma‘nā* “in itself.” Verbs are words whose *lafẓ* indicates both *ma‘nā* “in itself” and time. And particles are words whose *lafẓ* indicates *ma‘nā* “not in itself.” Since deficient verbs were deprived of their indication of meaning of the event, which is exactly the indication of meaning in themselves, and only indication of time, that is, meaning not in themselves (because time is time-of-something-else, and this “something-else” is a meaning of some other verbality) was left to them, they became particles from that point of view. However, this was a point of controversy among grammarians, and only a minority held that view and regarded *kāna* a particle. The majority to which al-‘Ukbarī belonged regarded *kāna* as a verb, and not a particle, and, consequently, had to say that it points to the meaning “in itself” (otherwise it could not be classified as a verb), and since the incomplete *kāna* indicates only time, al-‘Ukbarī says that indication of time is indication of meaning in itself, which is a bit bizarre though inevitable in the context of the *lafẓ/ma‘nā* paradigm.

So, “*kāna* and its sisters” enter upon a nominal phrase because of their “ailment”: this is not a regular behaviour of a regular verb. This “entering upon” a

nominal phrase at the same time fixes this ailment. This is the fourth point. Al-‘Ukbarī says that *kāna* and its sisters “became, together with the [nominal] predicate, as if they were a verb indicating event and time.” He implies that *khābar* (the nominal predicate) indicates meaning in itself, as any noun does. This meaning in itself, fused with indication of time, amounts to the meaning of a regular verb. This boils down to saying that (*kāna* + *khābar* = verb) from the point of view of meaning (*ma’nā*), not from the point of view of verbality (*lafẓ*), of course. It works as if *kāna* compensates its deficiency of meaning and, together with *khābar* (the nominal predicate), restores its complete meaning as a regular verb, thus absorbing the *khābar* of the nominal phrase and turning all the phrase — at least from the point of view of meaning — into a verbal sentence instead of a nominal one.

This could be the reason why Ibn Hishām classifies the phrase with *kāna* (he gives an example of *kāna Zayd qā’iman*) as a verbal one (Ibn Hishām 1979, p. 492). Other grammarians take a different position and seem to leave nominal phrases, with “*kāna* and its sisters” added to them, in the nominal phrase type. Al-Khalīl is still not as definite on that issue, for he enumerates “*kāna* and its sisters” aside the nominal phrase and not as its subsection. In *al-Jumal fī al-naḥw* he mentions 21 reasons for nominal case of nouns, starting with “actor (*fā’il*), passive voice verb (*mā lam yudhkar fā’ilu-hu*), nominal subject (*mubtada’*) and its predicate (*khābar*), the noun (*ism*) of *kāna* and its sisters” (al-Khalīl 1995, p. 143), repeating this classification later with examples (ibid., p. 144). For the later grammarians, it becomes commonplace to speak of “*kāna* and its sisters” as “entering upon” a nominal phrase, not as a separate class. The expression “to enter upon” is usually applied to particles which “enter upon” a phrase (be it nominal or verbal), do not change its type but alter syntactic relations inside that phrase and may link it to other phrases. “*Kāna* and its sisters” behave the same way, entering upon a nominal phrase. Ibn al-Sarrāj says:

[Nominal] subject (*mubtada’*, lit. “the starting [word]”): it is what you set free from the governing nouns, from verbs and particles, and which you had an intention to put as the first for the second, with which you started [the phrase] without a verb, so that the second is its predicate (*khābar*), and none of those two can do without the other. They always have nominal case: the subject because of its subjectivity (*ibtidā’*, lit. “[being] the starting [word]”), and the predicate because of them both, e.g., *Allāh rabbu-nā* (“The God [is] our Lord”) and *Muḥammad nabiyyu-nā* (“Muḥammad [is] our prophet”). The [nominal] subject does not become a complete saying (*kalām tāmm*) without its predicate. It is exposed to that which governs the nouns, like *kāna* and its sisters and the resembling governing [words]” (Ibn al-Sarrāj 1988, v. 1, p. 58).

Kāna and its sisters are mentioned by Ibn al-Sarrāj among all the other governing words that may be inserted into a nominal phrase, which is — let us note

this — a complete phrase (*kalām tāmm*) by itself, by virtue of having its nominal subject and predicate. *Kāna* does not link the predicate to its subject — there is simply nothing in Ibn al-Sarrāj’s words to suggest that. Two and a half centuries later al-Anbārī says the same:

Chapter on [nominal] subject (*mubtada’*). If someone asks: “What is the [nominal] subject (*mubtada’*)?” the answer is: “Any noun set free from verbal (*lafẓiyya*) governors, be they actually mentioned (*lafẓ*) or restored (*taqdīr*).” Saying “verbal” (*lafẓiyya*) we guard ourselves against the governing words being divided into verbal and restored. The verbal [governing words] are like *kāna* and its sisters, *inna* and its sisters, *zanantu* (“I supposed”) and its sisters (al-Anbārī 1995, p. 78).

Here too, we find that *kāna* is mentioned not only with the verbs of its group, but along with the particles per se (“*inna* and its sisters”), as a governing word. No trace of “coupling” function; *kāna* even resembles particles, which makes us recollect what al-‘Ukbarī said about “some Basrians” who held that *kāna* is a particle, and not a verb. Al-Suyūfī provides more details on this issue, saying that al-Zajjāj and al-Mubarrad classified *kāna* as a particle, while Ibn Hishām said that the controversy over *‘asā* and *laysa* is well-known, but over *kāna* it is “strange” (*gharīb*) (al-Suyūfī, v. 1, p. 46).

We can conclude that *kāna*, being a deficient verb, resembles both particles (because it does not indicate meaning of an event, which is “meaning in itself” proper) and verbs (because of its morphology and conjugation, and because indication of time may be considered meaning in itself). Because of its irregularity, *kāna* behaves both as a particle (for it enters upon a nominal phrase, like particles do) and as a verb (it governs the nominal subject and the predicate, turning them into its subject — lit. “name,” *ism* — and object). As al-Anbārī points out,

If someone asks: “Why did it put its subject (*ism*) in the nominal case and its object in the assulative?” the answer is: “Because it was made resemble true verbs (*af‘āl ḥaqīqiyya*), so it put its subject in the nominal case, making it resemble the actor (*fā‘il*), and its object in the accusative, making it resemble the recipient (*maf‘ūl*)” (al-Anbārī 1995, p. 135).

And al-‘Ukbarī adds:

It puts [its subject and object] in the nominal and accusative cases [respectively], because it stands in need of a noun by which it would be supported (*tusnad ilay-hi*), as all the verbs do, and what it is supported by, is made resemble the true actor (*fā‘il ḥaqīqī*) (al-‘Ukbarī 1995, v. 1, p. 166).

So, when deficient *kāna* enters upon a nominal phrase, it starts resembling a true, or complete verb, because its meaning, if added to that of the predicate of a nominal phrase, resembles the meaning of a complete verb (though not a com-

plete *kāna*!), while its “noun” (that is, the nominal subject of the initial phrase) and its object resemble the true actor and recipient. Thus the phrase starts resembling a verbal phrase — from the point of view of meaning; but from the point of view of verbality it rather stays a nominal phrase. And all those subtleties of Arabic grammar in no way imply that *kāna* performs a copulative function. Moreover, they rule it out, because the whole line of arguments proceeds from a clear-cut presumption that a nominal phrase is already complete without *kāna al-nāqiṣa* (deficient *kāna*), that is, the copulative function in an Arabic nominal phrase is performed not by *kāna* or any other explicit “to be-type” copulative device, but otherwise, in a way which precludes such a parallel with Indo-European languages.

Part two:

The case of *wujida* and the term *rābiṭa*

So much for *kāna*. Now, what about *wujūd*, which is usually used in modern Arabic to render “being” and “existence” from European languages, and which was employed in that function already by the Falāsifa, having been used as early as from the time of Mu‘tazila? *Wujūd* is a *maṣḍar*, and the corresponding verb in passive *wujida* is often translated as “was,” “existed.” Could it play the role of a copula?

Wajada (active voice) means “to find,” and *wujida* (passive voice) means “it [was] found”; it is implied that “it” is found by someone else, and even if there is no one to “find” the thing, it is always “found” by God. It is often mentioned in Western scholarship that *wujūd* (“finding”) differs from “being” or “existence” by its semantic properties, so the verb *wujida* may not, strictly speaking, be equated with the copula “to be.”

This is correct, of course, but this is not the decisive argument: semantic properties are not fixed once and for all, they may change, and a word may be filled with new meanings; this is exactly what the Falāsifa did when they started using *wujūd* as an equivalent of Greek “being.” The argument against the *wujida*-as-a-copula hypothesis is totally different.

The verb *wujida* is a complete verb, and, unlike *kāna*, it is always used as a complete verb. This makes things much more easy for us, because in the case of *kāna*, only its usage as a deficient verb could be mistaken for a copula, while in the case of *wujida* there is no deficient usage. As a complete, “true” verb *wujida* always functions as a verbal predicate in verbal phrases, and can never “enter upon” a nominal phrase. Things are very simple: *wujida* is never used in nominal phrases, so it simply cannot be thought to function as a copula — this is completely absurd in the context of Arabic grammar.

Now, what about the term “copula” in Arabic grammar? Is it used by grammarians, and if so, what does that usage reveal?

It will not take us long to answer that question. In modern Arabic, “copula” is rendered as *rābiṭa*, lit. “binding,” “linking.” The same term, *rābiṭa* and (more often in masculine form) *rābiṭ* was used by classical Arab grammarians to denote any syntactic connection, including that between *mubtadaʿ* (the nominal subject) and its *khabar* (the nominal predicate) — that is, exactly the connection which is supposed to be granted by copula “to be” in Indo-European languages. It is stated, as a rule, that no “connection” is needed in that case. E.g., al-Suyūfī writes:

As long as the predicate (*khabar*) is connected to the subject (*mubtadaʿ*) like the attribute is connected to what it is ascribed to, they do not need any particle to connect them (*ḥarf rābiṭ bayna-humā*), just like an act (*fiʿl* = verb) and an actor (*fāʿil* = agent) do not need it (al-Suyūfī, v. 1, p. 403).

It is interesting that al-Suyūfī conceives of a *rābiṭa* as a particle, and not as a verb. This is not at all by chance. Moreover, Arabic grammar rules out a possibility to think of a *rābiṭa* as a verb. Any verb would function as a predicate in a verbal phrase, a verb simply cannot be planted into in a nominal phrase. When *kāna* is inserted into a nominal phrase, it can be done exactly because in those cases it is *not* a regular verb, so that some grammarians considered it a particle — but in those cases *kāna* is never called a *rābiṭa*.

Though, as we see, Arabic grammar possesses the category of a “link” between the subject and the predicate, that is, a copula, and discusses the issue of their linking, *kāna* is never called a *rābiṭa* (copula). The only possibility to insert a *rābiṭa* into a nominal phrase would be not a noun (any noun would itself be either the predicate or the subject) and not a verb, but what is left of the tripartite classification of words in Arabic — a particle. This is why al-Suyūfī speaks of a particle. And even so, *no such particle is needed*, he states definitely.

Once again, a clear-cut statement to settle the “omitted copula” issue: **no “to be-type” copula is omitted or restored in Arabic, because no such copula is needed.** What guarantees a link between the subject and the predicate in Arabic is a completely different “device” — it is the process of *isnād* “supporting,” “leaning (against),” and not a “to be-type”-copula.

Part three: Evidence of Arabic grammar confronted with modern scholarship

Let me conclude this brief investigation. *Kāna* is twofold, both complete and incomplete (deficient). When it is complete, it functions as *fiʿl* (verb) in verbal phrase, and not as a copula. When it is incomplete, it does not point to being; in fact, it does not point to any meaning except the time of some (other) occur-

rence. That alone is enough to deduce that it cannot function as a copula in a nominal phrase, because to be a “to be”-copula the word has to have the meaning of “to be” (it appears quite obvious), while *kāna* does not have this meaning (it has *no* verbal meaning at all when it is deficient). In addition to that, we saw that the deficient *kāna* resembles particles and is inserted into a nominal phrase to indicate the time of the predicate, not to link the predicate to its subject. Moreover, the nominal phrase is complete, that is, its predicate is already linked to its subject, before *kāna* is inserted into such a phrase to indicate its tense.

So, there is nothing to suggest that *kāna* (or, in present tense, *yakūmu*) plays the role of a copula—that is, nothing if we proceed from the logic of the Arabic language as expressed and analyzed by Arab grammarians and confirmed by its usage. The only thing that suggests this idea of a copula is an *a priori* conviction that it *should* be there — a conviction that completely contradicts the reality. This desire to find a “to be-type” copula by all means stems out of presumption that otherwise the Arabic language and Arabic philosophy will turn out to be irretrievably inferior to the Greek language and Greek philosophy, because a language lacking a “to be-type”-copula does not suggest the philosophical idea of being, which is the basis of Greek philosophy and without which no genuine philosophy is possible. This presumption, in its turn, is based on a tacit conviction that philosophy is possible only in the mode discovered by the Greeks and that it can be elaborated only in a substance-based perspective. It is true that for such a worldview the notion of being is really indispensable, and if the world is considered a collection of substances possessing qualities, then you cannot provide a coherent, theoretical, true knowledge of reality unless you base it upon the notion of being, for otherwise no regularity may be discovered. But if the world is viewed and conceptualized as a collection of processes and not substances, then we need a different basic category which would play the same role as the category of being plays in the substance-based perspective and would provide a basis for discovering regularities of such a process-based world. In that case a language lacking the “to be-type”-copula is in no way inferior to the Greek language; on the contrary, Greek may be considered inferior to it because Greek imposes upon our thought the notion of being, while being cannot grasp the nature of processes. Processes do not *exist*, we have to think about them otherwise, and Arabic suggests how exactly. It gives us a hint. So why not elaborate on it instead of a futile attempt at finding an absent “to be-type” copula? Why not say that Arabic Muslim culture developed a kind of philosophy which only it could develop, proceeding from the process-based premises and elaborating them in a process-based perspective, instead of squeezing all of its legacy into a substance-based perspective of Greek thinking? Is it not a somewhat totalitarian premise to think that only a substance-based perspective is the true and genuine philosophic road to the truth of the universe? Processes have always been a stumbling block to Western thinking which tried to reduce them to quali-

ties of a substance and generally did not regard them as a basis in themselves (they have to be grounded in something else). Whitehead and Bergson were among those few who proposed to look at the universe in a different way and to develop a process-based thinking. This process-based perspective is not at all alien to Western thought; rather, it is a sort of neglected option. Actually, no logic-and-meaning perspective is alien to any culture: human universality is grounded in our universal ability to elaborate on any of those perspectives.

This article started with the question: What does Arabic grammar have to say about the verb “to be”? The answer is the following: there is *no* “to be”-verb in Arabic. *Kāna* and *wujida* are the two candidates usually appointed in Western scholarship to fulfill the mission of “to be” in Arabic; and nonetheless often Western scholarship points out that there is no exact equivalent of “to be” in Arabic. The last thesis is absolutely correct, and what the whole tradition of Arabic grammatical science has to say, boils down exactly to that statement.

When *kāna* has a meaning, it means “he originated,” “he became,” but not “he was.” This is what Arab grammarians say specifically on *kāna*; but it also follows from the general theory of verbs that “to be” is ruled out as a meaning for *kāna* (or any other verb). For a verb to have a meaning means to point to an “event” (*ḥadath*), and *ḥadath* always, by definition, implies a change, “a happening,” and not a stable existence.

When *kāna* does not have a meaning (when it is *nāqiṣa* “deficient”), it points to specific time (past, present or future), but not to any “event,” and, of course, not to “being.” Ironically, it is exactly this, deficient, *kāna* that is mistaken for a copula by the proponents of the “*kāna* is a copula” thesis. Just consider it in the light of Arabic grammar: a word with *no meaning* except tense is said to mean “to be”! As for *wujūd*, the *maṣdar* of *wajada*, it means “finding,” “discovering,” and not “being,” and it functions as a regular verb with no possibility to interpret it as a copula save for a wish to take desired for granted.

For this assertion not to stay naked, let me explore in some detail the way in which F. Shehadi, perhaps the most ardent proponent of the “*kāna* is a copula” thesis, deals with the facts of Arabic language and the science of Arabic grammar. It will be interesting to compare his interpretation to the, in fact, unanimous position of Arab grammarians on certain basic points concerning *kāna*.

Firstly, the general attitude. Formulating his goal in the *Metaphysic in Islamic Philosophy*, F. Shehadi writes:

We want to survey the various ways in which the linguistic functions of “to be” are performed in Arabic, and then see what light these shed on the Arabic philosophic equivalents of “being” (Shehadi 1982, p. 2).

Would it not have been somewhat more natural for the researcher to proceed in exactly the opposite way: to ask how Arabic deals with those linguistic functions that are performed in Indo-European languages with the help of “to be,”

rather than implying, by that very question about the “linguistic functions of ‘to be’,” that they necessarily *are* the “to be”-functions? For F. Shehadi, the “linguistic functions of ‘to be’” are something like a Platonic idea, absolute and eternal, and therefore they simply have to be discovered in any language and any thinking which uses that language, that is, on the surface and on the deep structural levels. With the direct bearing on “being,” of course.

This initial attitude makes the esteemed scholar proceed with some very bizarre statements. Thus, he opens the section on *kāna*, which is the first to be presented as a “to be”-equivalent, with an (almost) exclamation:

If there is a verb “to be” in natural Arabic, that is, before philosophers come on the scene, then *kāna* is the one (Shehadi 1982, p. 3).⁶

“Before philosophers come on the scene” means roughly before the ninth century. Some of the Arab grammarians whom I cited above lived before, but most of them after the philosophers (which means here the Falāsifa, Greek-inspired philosophers, not Arabic Islamic philosophers in general) “came on the scene,” and what they say leaves no doubt at all: *kāna* is *not* the equivalent of “to be” in any of the latter’s functions.

But let us see how F. Shehadi proves his thesis which he takes for granted, declaring it as if it were obvious to everyone. (It in fact often appears obvious to the students of Arabic who project onto Arabic the experience of their English, Russian or other Indo-European mother tongues, but this should not be the case of F. Shehadi; the thesis he put forward appears obvious only if we take for granted that there *should* be something in Arabic like “to be” of our mother-tongue. Many people do take this for granted, but a philosopher and researcher should not.) In one passage, F. Shehadi summarises what Arab grammarians say about complete and incomplete *kāna*:

In the natural language *kāna* approaches the abstractness or generality of “to be” and of the participle “being” in two ways. First, *kāna* has the sense of to be, to occur, to exist. This is what grammarians call the complete *kāna*. But it also has the sense of to be such, and this is the incomplete *kāna*. These two uses correspond to the distinction between the existential and the predicative *is*. To be and to be such are two “ways of being,” and insofar as one can speak of the senses of “to be” as ways of being, one is doing more than saying that “to be” is ambiguous. For this reason I speak of the abstractness rather than the ambiguity of *kāna*. This abstractness is consistent with Aristotle’s view of being as analogical (Shehadi 1982, p. 3–4).

⁶ This part of the 1982 book reproduces the 1969 publication (see: Shehadi 1969). However, the words “that is, before philosophers come on the scene” were added in the 1982 publication.

This is really amazing, and it is difficult to believe that facts could be twisted that way to fit into a preset scheme. The complete *kāna*, as we saw in the numerous examples, means “to occur,” “to become,” but *never* “to exist” or “to be”: the last two meanings are not only never mentioned by Arab grammarians, but they are ruled out by the logic of Arabic grammatical reasoning, as I showed it above. “To occur” is the correct meaning if the subject is some event (usually expressed by a *maṣḍar*): in that case *kāna* is explained as *waqa‘a*, lit. “dropped (itself),” which means exactly “occurred” when applied to events; but “to occur” means “to happen,” “to become,” and not “to be.” Thus one correct meaning is coupled by F. Shehadi in the above quotation with the two false ones to create an impression that the complete *kāna* means “to be.” Things are even more bizarre with the incomplete *kāna*, which is explained by F. Shehadi in total disagreement with what Arab grammarians have to say about it. The incomplete *kāna*, as numerous quotations above have shown, has *no* meaning at all (so it simply cannot have “the sense of to be such,” as F. Shehadi claims), it merely indicates time. After that, what about this splendid assertion that *kāna* is “consistent with Aristotle’s view of being” (and F. Shehadi, let me remind, is speaking of *kāna* “in the natural language” of the Arabs and even before Aristotelian philosophers come onto the Arabic scene!)? How do the “two uses” of *kāna*, the complete and incomplete ones, “correspond to the distinction between the existential and the predicative *is*,” if neither of them has the meaning of “to be,” with the former not indicating existence (when Arab grammarians need to point to existence, they use *istiqrār*, *ḥulūl* and not *kāna*: see quotation from Ibn al-Sarrāj below) and the latter never coupling the subject and the predicate?! What is all this reasoning, if it is not taking desired for granted?

And yet, F. Shehadi states in conclusion of his brief sketch of *kāna* in Arabic:

In sum, then, *kāna* has the following functions;

(1) As a “complete” verb it is used to express the existence of some thing or fact. This is a semantical function.

(2) As an “incomplete” verb it can be used to indicate a relation between the subject and the predicate of a nominal sentence. This function can be analysed as copulative, and is similar to the *is* of predication.

(3) It can be used to introduce tense to a nominative sentence. Its function here can still be copulative and predicative.

(4) It can be used as an auxiliary verb to help to make tense more specific. In this function it is not copulative.

(5) It is needed with *qad* for emphasis or de-emphasis. Here it may still be viewed as copulative (Shehadi 1982, p. 8–9).

This “sum” follows from nowhere in the Arab grammarians’ texts and totally contradicts the facts of the Arabic language as analyzed by those scholars. In addition to all the evidence above, it is enough to compare what F. Shehadi is

saying with the statement of Ibn al-Sarrāj about “*kāna* and sisters of *kāna*,” which are:

šāra (he started), *aṣbaḥa* (he [was doing something] in the morning), *amsā* (he [was doing something] in the evening), *zalla* (he persisted [doing smth.]), *aḍḥā* (he became, he started [doing smth.]), *mā dāma* (as long as it lasts), *mā zāla* (he did not stop [doing smth.]), *laysa* (he [is] not) and the like which express time only, and what has the same meaning as those whose verbality (*lafẓ*) is that of verbs and whose conjugation is that of verbs; you say *kāna*, *yakūnu*, *sayakūnu*, *kā'in*. Because of that they (grammarians, or Arabs. — A. S.) assimilated them to verbs. As for the difference between them and the true (*ḥaqīqī*) verb, the true verb indicates meaning and time, e.g.: *ḍaraba* indicates the past time and the “beating” (*ḍarb*) which occurred in it. As for *kāna*, it indicates the past time only, and *yakūnu* indicates the time in which you [are] (*tadullu 'alā mā anta fī-hi min al-zamān*) and which comes [later], so that it indicates time only.

They made it enter upon the starting word (*mubtada'* = the nominal subject) and the predicate (*ḵhabar*), and because of it they put the starting word in the nominative case, likening it to the actor (*fā'il*), and because of it they put the predicate in the accusative, likening it to the recipient. So they say: *kāna 'abdallah 'akḥa-ka* “Abdalla was your brother,” like they said: *ḍaraba 'abdallah 'akḥa-ka* “Abdalla beat your brother.” However, the recipient of *kāna* should anyway be the actor, because the basic [form] (*'aṣl*) here is the starting word and the predicate, just like the predicate of the starting word has to be [equivalent to] the starting word. And if they say: *kāna zayd qā'imān* “Zayd was standing,” the meaning is: *zayd qā'im fī-mā maḍā min al-zamān* “Zayd [is] standing in the time which passed,” and if they say *aṣbaḥa 'abdallah munṭaliqān* “Abdalla became going,” the meaning is: *'atā al-ṣabāḥ wa 'abdallah munṭaliq* “The morning came when Abdalla [is] going” (Ibn al-Sarrāj 1988, v. 1, p. 82).

Here Ibn al-Sarrāj, taking *kāna* and *aṣbaḥa*, unambiguously states that their usage points *only* to time, be it past (*kāna*, *aṣbaḥa*) or present-future (*yakūnu*, *yušbiḥu*), and *to nothing else*. This becomes absolutely evident from his demonstration of the meaning (*ma'nā*) of those expressions with *kāna* and *aṣbaḥa*, and this completely rules out any speculations like “this function can be analyzed as copulative, and is similar to the *is* of predication” (Shehadi 1982, p. 8; and yes, you *can* say this if you (1) completely disregard the view of Arab grammarians and (2) strive to read the logic of Indo-European languages into Arabic grammar). I am saying that what Ibn al-Sarrāj shows rules out any reading of copulative function into the incomplete *kāna* because his examples boil down to “past time of S + P” and “the morning came when S + P” formulas. What stands for “S + P” is the *mubtada'* + *ḵhabar* construction with no “to be-type”-copula in principle, as we have seen above and as even F. Shehadi admits (see Shehadi 1982, p. 19), and he uses “SP” (not “S + P”!) formula to denote nominal *mubtada'* + *ḵhabar* predicative construction without copula. But if “S *kāna* P” (to be

exact, “*kāna* S + P,” because *kāna* comes first, like the verbs usually do) means, as Ibn al-Sarrāj clearly states, “S + P in the past time;” then *kāna* performs absolutely no copulative function.

What F. Shehadi says in the following pages of his book is based on the assumption that Arab grammarians explore exclusively the surface grammar of language, while the logicians deal with the deep structures of thought: the former are language-dependant while the latter are universal, and that universal grammar imposes upon us the notion of being and the “to be” copula as a universal and, ergo, indispensable predication device (see Shehadi 1982, p. 25–27). He makes a hasty move from the true observation that the subject and the predicate *are* linked and, consequently, there is a copulative function *somehow performed*, to the erroneous assumption that (a) this copulative function is performed in a certain universal form in the universal grammar of thought, and (b) it is most closely related to the “to be” copula. Hence his endeavor to read the “to-be-type”-copula into Arabic, to make it comply with the (allegedly) universal grammar of human thought. What I have been saying in my publications is meant to propose that the logic of predication (and this is the core of all logic) is *not* universal and that at least two logics of predication, substance-based and process-based, are theoretically possible and were actually developed by Western and Arab Muslim thinkers. Therefore the surface structures of Arabic do reflect the deep structure of a different, non-“to be”-copula-based, predication logic. Ironically, F. Shehadi mentions more than once *isnād* “leaning,” *musnad* and *musnad ilay-hi*, *mansūb* and *mansūb ilay-hi* — that is, the categories of Arabic grammar which may disclose the deep structures of process-based predication. But instead of dealing with them seriously, F. Shehadi simply dismisses them as irrelevant for the study of “to be”-predication (which they really are).⁷

Does all that imply that Arabic does not suggest the idea of being, or that Arabic philosophy could not express the idea of lasting, stable existence? Not at all; it would be absurd to deduce this and to make the mind totally dependant on language. As early as in Mu‘tazila theories the term *baqā*’ was used (it is traced back to the Qur’ān 16:96, 55:27) to denote lasting existence of substances. Later the Falāsifa used *wujūd* as a technical term in the same sense. Al-Zamakhsharī

⁷ F. Shehadi touches upon the famous dispute of Mattā and al-Sīrāfi from al-Tawhīdī’s *Kitāb al-imtā’ wa al-mu’ānasa*. From his point of view, Mattā expresses the universal logical truth, while al-Sīrāfi is shackled by particular Arabic grammar. But anyone who reads that text impartially can see that this is not at all implied by al-Tawhīdī and that the real meaning of the text is different. The two disputing parties cannot find common ground to start the real dispute from: the argumentation of either seems displaced from the point of view of the opponent. This is the basic point which precludes any decision of the “who wins” question: you cannot win a hockey game before you face your adversary. My explanation is that the difference is difference of logics, process-based for al-Sīrāfi and substance-based for Mattā, and it would be an interesting exercise to demonstrate this, step by step, through deconstruction and construction of arguments in order to uncover that logical basis in either case.

and Ibn Hishām referred to *istiqrār* “stability” when they wanted to express exactly the meaning of “lasting existence.” When they restored the truncated *Zayd fī al-dār* “Zayd in the house” to the two full forms of the nominal and verbal phrases, i.e., *Zayd mustaqirr fī al-dār* “Zayd stable in the house” and *istaqarra fī al-dār Zayd* “Zayd obtained stability in the house,” *istiqrār* “stability” was meant to express exactly the stable state of events, or, we can say, the stable existence of Zayd in the house (see Ibn Hishām 1979, p. 492–493). Moreover, much earlier Ibn al-Sarrāj made a general statement in a passage where he considered the omission of *khabar* in *mubtada’-khabar* phrase:

There is a kind [of *mubtada’-khabar* phrase] where *khabar* (the predicate) is omitted, and *zarf* (an adverbial modifier) is used in its place, being of two types: the *zarf* of time and the *zarf* of place.

As for the *zarf* of location, it is, for example, *zayd khalfa-ka* “Zayd [is] behind you” and *‘amr fī al-dār* “Amr [is] in the house.” What is omitted here is the meaning of stability (*istiqrār*), taking-place (*hulūl*) and what resembles it, as if you said: *zayd mustaqirr khalfa-ka* “Zayd [is] stable behind you” and *‘amr mustaqirr fī al-dār* “Amr [is] stable in the house.” But this omitted [meaning] does not display itself evidently because the *zarf* points to it and they (the Arabs. — A. S.) do not need it in the [language] usage.

As for the *zarf* of time, it is, for example, *al-qitāl yawm al-jum’a* “the battle [is] on Friday” and *al-shukhūš yawm al-khamīs* “the departure [is] on Thursday,” as if you said: *al-qitāl mustaqirr yawm al-jum’a* “the battle [is] stable on Friday” or *al-qitāl waqa’a yawm al-jum’a* “the battle occurred on Friday” and *al-shukhūš wāqi’ yawm al-khamīs* “the departure [is] occurring on Thursday”: you omit the predicate and install the *zarf* in its place (Ibn al-Sarrāj 1988, v. 1, p. 63).⁸

Ibn al-Sarrāj clearly states that when we mean the occurrence of an event or existence of a substance, we imply the meaning of *istiqrār* (stability), *hulūl* (taking-place), *wuqū’* (occurrence), but (1) he does not mention any of the *kāna* and its “sister” verbs, and (2) the phrases with the restored *istiqrār*, *hulūl*, etc. are nominal S + P-phrases, where *istiqrār*, *hulūl*, *wuqū’* are predicates and not copula verbs for the initial phrases, or they are verbs in verbal phrases where no copula is needed or indeed possible, that is, predicates again and not copula verbs for the initial phrases. *Istiqrār*, *hulūl*, *wuqū’* express exactly the idea of existence and occurrence — but they cannot be equated with the predication vehicle.

⁸ Here, as in many of the above quotations, we cannot do without “is” or its equivalents, for the English phrase would not be grammatically correct otherwise. I consistently put “is” (or its equivalents) in brackets [is] to indicate that it is inserted only due to the English language requirements being absent in the Arabic phrase. And I argue that it is, moreover, *impossible* in the Arabic phrase.

Brief conclusions

In his review of F. Shehadi's *Metaphysics in Islamic Philosophy*, N. Calder dropped important remarks pointing to “a very inadequate and subjective methodological level” of discussion over the “suitability of Arabic for expressing Aristotelian philosophy” and warned against an “easy assumption that Arabic has no copula” (Calder 1984). Suhayl Afnan was among those who stressed the absence of copula in Arabic (see Afnan 1964); and he meant the absence of the “to be-type” copula. As we have seen, this last thesis is substantiated by Arab grammarians. As B. Weiss observed in his very important article, “*kāna* and its sisters” in Arabic “are denied a true linking or copulative function” (Weiss 1985, p. 613). And yet N. Calder's observation is true: the subject and the predicate have to be linked somehow in Arabic, and if it is not the “to be-type” copula, then we have to answer the question: what exactly plays the role of the linking device in an Arabic phrase?

Let me stress an important point. In his *Metaphysics*, F. Shehadi, after doing everything possible and impossible in the first chapter to prove that *kāna* in natural Arabic is equivalent to “to be” (which does not agree with the facts of that language, as we have seen), starts the second chapter with a sudden statement which totally contradicts what he had said in the first chapter of his book:

Since the nominal and the verbal sentences [in Arabic] are the only kinds of predicative sentences, and since the predicative sentence is the only abode of copulas, it would seem fair to conclude that the copula has no place in the surface grammar of the Arabic language (Shehadi 1982, p. 19).

By the “surface grammar” F. Shehadi means exactly the grammar of Arabic which “a grammarian writes” (ibid.). So, if he acknowledges what Arab grammarians say, namely, that there is no need for copula in any of the Arabic sentences (if we mean by copula a “to be-type” device), then why, in the first place, did he say all he said in the preceding chapter in total disagreement with his own statement? The only reason for that is that he, as N. Calder observes, does not want to agree with that “simple statement” about the absence of copula. And this is exactly the point at which we have to ask the crucial question: if (1) the copulative function *has to be* performed in Arabic, as in any other language, and if (2) the grammar of Arabic rules out a “to be-type” copula, then *where can we find the seemingly absent copula, or what performs the copulative function?*

In chapter two of his *Metaphysics*, F. Shehadi proceeds to what underlies the surface structure of Arabic, speaking of the universal grammar and logic (which is supposed to be universal as well). Though his position on that issue is not easy to grasp in a word, all in all he tends to opt for a universal, general for different languages predication formula, be it realized in any given language with the help of a separate copula word (and then we have, as F. Shehadi says,

a three-term predication logic) or without it (in which case we have a two-term predicative construction). This is not what matters, F. Shehadi stresses, but the very fact that *there is* a linkage between subject and predicate, so that “the predicate attaches to the subject” (Shehadi 1982, p. 26, 27). And this is why, in his view, it is possible to speak of similarities between Semitic and Indo-European tongues.

This is where I have to agree, and at the same time disagree, with what F. Shehadi says. It is absolutely true that there has to be something that links the predicate to the subject, and that such “something” is present, though different, in both Arabic and Indo-European languages. But it would be, in my mind, too hasty a conclusion to say that the “deep,” or “logical” structures underlying those surface differences are universal and similar. This is what F. Shehadi in fact says, and this is what makes him imply that *kāna* performs a copulative function. (This leads in the end to a very sad distortion of the facts of the Arabic language, twisted to agree with the pre-defined logic of predication.) He simply projects the experience of Aristotelian logic onto the facts of Arabic.

There is another aspect of that question. Aristotelian logic was deduced from the usage of the Greek tongue, but it transcended the surface structures of that language to reach the underlying, deep structures of thought, which are *presumably* universal. But do we have to take this presumption for granted? What if the difference between the Greek and Arabic domains of language-and-logic is the difference of not only surface structures, but also of deep structures? The dependence of Aristotelian metaphysics and logic on the Greek language has been pointed out many times, with much exaggeration sometimes. But this concerns surface structures only. What has not been pointed out in that respect, is the dependence of Aristotelian logic on his substance-based metaphysics. This dependence, or rather correlation between Aristotelian metaphysics and logic, which both may be rightly called substance-based, is an open secret. But what if the deep, metaphysical and logical structures underlying the surface facts of the Arabic language *are not substance-based*? Why should the universalist presumption be correct in that case, and why should we take for granted that the logic expressed by the Arabic language could be only Aristotelian?

I think we should not. It is not possible here to elaborate this answer in a positive way, that is, to show the possibility of a different type of logic and metaphysics developed by Arab thought which managed to stay free from the Greek influence, though it was done in a number of my publications, part of which are in English, while other (and more important) are in Russian. But it is possible to elaborate it negatively, that is, to provide a proof by contradiction. And it is very simple. If F. Shehadi were right and the “to be-type” copula was really implied by the Arabic nominative predicative sentence, then it would have been always possible to restore it without producing any change in the sentence. But, as we have seen, it is *absolutely impossible* to insert *kāna* (or *wujida*,

or any other verb presumably copulative) into a nominal sentence *as a copula*.⁹ There is *no copula restoration procedure* possible in the Arabic phrase. This follows as definitely as “two and two make four” from what all Arab grammarians say. And this simply means that **the copula is never omitted in Arabic**. It is always there; though it is not a “to be-type” device.

So, the assumption that Arabic has no “to be-type” copula is absolutely correct, but it is not at all “simple.” On the contrary. What Arab grammarians say about “*kāna* and its sisters” and about the two types of phrases in Arabic, rules out the possibility to consider *kāna* a copula verb. But this is only one side of the question. The other, more important side of it is that classical Arabic rules out the “S is P” formula as a basic logical expression of the phrase formation. This is a much more important conclusion, and it follows directly from what we discussed above. This has to do not with the surface, but with the deep, logical grammar. Not just the grammar of language, but the grammar of thought.

B. Weiss hints at it, when he stresses that “the concept of nominal sentence does not exist in English grammar” (Weiss 1985, p. 613). The nominal phrase (*jumla ismiyya*) in Arabic is expressed by a simple formula: *mubtada’* + *khābar*, that is “nominal subject” + “nominal predicate,” or “S + P.” *Mubtada’* (lit. “the starting word”) and *khābar* (lit. “message”) are two nouns; but what takes the

⁹ I referred to the usage of *wujida* and its derivatives in an allegedly copulative function in the second part of this paper. F. Shehadi also says that *huwa* “he” performs copulative function in Arabic, but he cannot substantiate this claim by any text of the Arab grammarians (he refers instead to the texts of logicians exposing Aristotelian logic, which is a totally different story), saying simply that it *could be so* (which means taking desired for granted). After exposing the true role of *huwa* in Arabic predicative nominative sentences as a “pronoun of separation” which prevents “the predicate from being mistaken for apposition” (Shehadi 1982, p. 11), he says the following:

This does not prevent its logical function from linking and being copulative. The *huwa* can at once prevent apposition and establish an attribution relation. What it separates and what it combines are the same words. But it separates them under one classification and combines them under another (Ibid., p. 11–12).

This is also a sensitive point, at which an artificial language game in the spirit of Wittgenstein, which the *Falāsifa* actually played when they were confronted with the need to render Greek wisdom into Arabic, may be confused with “natural Arabic” and, consequently, the logic proper to it and underlying its surface structures. This is what happens all the time in F. Shehadi’s *Metaphysics*: the initial starting point for him is Aristotelian logic and presumably universal grammar and metaphysics, and he simply dismisses what does not agree with it as irrelevant, making the Arabic language fit his language game.

We may mention, in addition to what F. Shehadi says, that Ibn Sīnā and later al-Suhrawardī (who follows al-*Shaykh* al-Raʿīs on that point almost verbatim) speak of the “omitted and restored copula” in the same terms, saying that the copula is displayed in Persian but omitted in Arabic, in which case it can be restored as *huwa* “he” (Ibn Sīnā 1960, pp. 285–286; al-Suhrawardī 1952, pp. 25–26). The experience of the Indo-European Persian tongue is here universalized and then projected onto Arabic.

place of the “plus” sign in the above formulas? If it is not a “to be-type” copula, then what is it?

The answer is very simple and open for everyone. It is *isnād* (lit. “leaning-on”), as the Arabic grammar calls it. *Isnād* is a universal linkage device in Arabic, as it binds together the subject and predicate of not only nominal, but also of verbal phrases. This is a well-known fact stated many times by Arab grammarians. If so, then the basic predication formula in Arabic is “S *isnād* P,” and not “S is P.”

I argue that the two predication formulas are basically different and mutually irreducible. This has an important bearing on the core issues of the logic of thought and metaphysics. Those questions, however, as well as a detailed exploration of the *isnād* concept in Arabic grammar, have to be left for future publications.

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Хадж Мухаммад Легенхаусен

Развитие философии религии в Иране и на Западе

Термин «философия религии» часто рассматривается как синоним «новой теологии» или «нового калама» (*калām-и джадīд*). Оба они так или иначе связаны с западными течениями мысли. При этом второй термин подразумевает, что старая теология (*калām*) в известном смысле оказалась неадекватной требованиям современности, ввиду чего прогрессивные интеллектуалы должны разработать новую теологию, превосходящую старую. В новом каламе рассматриваются такие вопросы, как религия и культура, ожидания от религии, новые теории откровения, основанные на западных теориях религиозного опыта, и религиозный плюрализм. В его рамках также имеют место критические дискуссии об исламском законе, исламской философии, хадисоведении и других темах. Как философия религии, так новый калам, в том виде, в котором они существуют в современном Иране, демонстрируют свое знание западной и исламской традиций и пользуются ими обеими, чтобы критиковать и защищать эти традиции и продвигать новые идеи.

Исходя из вышеперечисленных посылок, автор статьи дает краткий обзор основных этапов развития философии религии в Иране и на Западе.

А.В. Смирнов

Слово «быть» в арабской грамматике: роль *kāna* и *вуджид*

На материале традиционной арабской грамматики (ТАГ) подробно разобран вопрос о том, может ли глагол *kāna* расцениваться хотя бы в каком-то смысле как выполняющий функции связки в именных предложениях и выполняет ли он экзистенциальные функции, сравнимые с глаголом «быть» индоевропейских языков. На эти вопросы дан категорический отрицательный ответ. Более того, показано, что предложение классического арабского языка, как оно описано ТАГ, в принципе не может быть сведено к формуле «С есть П». Из этого следует, в частности, что невозможно говорить о «восстановлении “быть”-подобной связки» во фразах арабского языка, как они описаны в ТАГ. При этом арабский, как и любые другие языки, не исключает перекодировки и языковой игры, в которой ему будут навязаны любые правила, в том числе ломающие его естественную структуру. Лишь в такого рода языковых играх структура арабской фразы может рассматриваться как предполагающая «быть»-подобную связку, что фактически было сделано *фалāсифа* при переложении греческого наследия на арабский и что делается современными учеными, защищающими тезис о наличии «быть»-подобной связки в арабском (Ф. Шехад и др.).

В заключении статьи поставлен вопрос о соотношении «поверхностных» (языковых) и «глубинных» (логических) структур и выдвинута гипотеза о том, что не только поверхностные структуры арабского языка, но и глубинная логическая структура предикации, отраженная в этом языке, отличаются от привычных по опыту индоевропейских языков и от логики, развитой в лоне западной традиции. Выдвинута также гипотеза о том, что связочная функция в арабском предложении всегда выполняется тем механизмом, который концептуализирован в ТАГ как *иснād* (букв. «опирание»). Базовая предикационная формула, предполагаемая естественным строем арабского языка, должна записываться как «С *иснād* П», а не «С есть П». Это различие соответствует различию процессуально-ориентированной и субстанциально-ориентированной метафизических традиций соответственно.

Янис Эшотс

Мулла Али Нури как толкователь учения Муллы Садры

Мулла Али Нури (ум. 1246/1831) был ключевым звеном в передаче учения Муллы Садры и важным комментатором его работ. В статье рассматривается один из его немногих самостоятельных трудов — краткий трактат *Басит̄ ал-ḫақīқа ва ваḫдат ал-вуджūd*, посвященный анализу модальностей вещиности и бытия в целом и т.н. «сопряжению озарения» (*ал-идāфа ал-ишрāқиййа*) в частности.

В данном трактате Нури отождествляет вещьность с бытием, а «дыхание Милостивого» (*нафас ар-Раḫмāн*) — с «сопряжением озарения». Автор подробно рассматривает механизм и аргументацию этих отождествлений.

Джад Хатим

Александр как символ сердца у Абд ар-Раззака Кашани

Человеческое сердце, как место явления Бога человеку, согласно Абд ар-Раззаку Кашани (ум. 730/1329), является началом, объединяющим в себе внешнее и внутреннее, благодаря чему оно представляет собой уникальный орган сверхсознания. Исходя из этой посылки (и опираясь на свидетельства таких текстов, как «Шах-наме» Фирдоуси и анонимный «Роман об Александре»), автор статьи подробно анализирует отрывок из коранического комментария Кашани, в котором последний говорит об Александре Македонском, отождествляемом в мусульманской традиции с кораническим Зу-л-Карнайном, как символе мистического сердца, динамической сердцевины человека и места проявления высшего имени Бога.