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Several Senses of Being Starting from Metaphysics $\Delta 7$

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List of contributions

A faithful betrayal? Traces of Plato in Avicenna's notion of truth by Hernán Guerrero Troncoso (Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu, Poland – Universidad Gabriela Mistral, Chile).....	7
Ibn Rušd's commentary on Aristotle's <i>Metaphysics</i> $\Delta 7$ with a focus on being true by mostafa najafi (Universität Luzern).....	39
Sic est. (Propositional) truth as being in Aquinas: sources and influences by Giovanni Ventimiglia (Universität Luzern).....	69
La nozione di accidente tra <i>ens secundum accidens</i> e <i>secundum se</i> . Lecture medievali di <i>Metaph.</i> V.7 (c. 1240-1290) by Marta Borgo (Universität Luzern – Commission Léonine, Paris).....	105
A nominalist account of the senses of being. William of Ockham on being <i>per accidens</i> and being <i>per se</i> by Davide Falessi (Universität Luzern – École Pratique des Hautes Études/PSL).....	143
John Buridan on the <i>ens per se</i> (In <i>Metaph.</i> V 7: MS Darmstadt, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, 516) by Iacopo Costa (PSL, CNRS, LEM, UMR 8584, Aubervilliers – Universität Luzern – Commission Léonine, Paris).....	177
Varia	
Non-conceptual pattern, manner or procedure? by Mahyar Moradi (Independent Researcher).....	203

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Ibn Rušd's commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Δ7 with a focus on being true

Abstract: This paper examines Ibn Rušd's interpretation of the Aristotelian notion of being true (*mawǧūd šādiq*) in his Long Commentary on *Metaphysics* Δ7. It takes as its point of departure the Arabic translation by Uṣṭāṭ, which introduces a twofold framework of being per accidens and being per se, subordinating being true to being per accidens and explaining it through a distinction between one-place and two-place cases. Ibn Rušd, drawing on al-Fārābī, further systematizes this reconfiguration by reducing the senses of being to being per se and being true, and correlating them epistemically: being true governs dialectical discourse, while being per se underpins demonstrative reasoning, especially in metaphysics. The paper concludes by reconstructing Ibn Rušd's critique of Ibn Sīnā, whom he accuses of conflating propositional and ontological senses of being. This confusion, according to Ibn Rušd, stems from a misreading of *mawǧūd*—both semantically and morphologically—which leads Ibn Sīnā to treat being as an accidental addition to essence. Against this view, Ibn Rušd insists on the inseparability of essence and being, grounded in the logic of predication.

Keywords: Senses of Being, Being True, Aristotle, Ibn Rušd (Averroes), Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), al-Fārābī

Among the major works of Arabic philosophy that shaped the course of medieval metaphysical thought in the Latin West, two stand out for their depth, complexity, and enduring influence:¹ Ibn Sīnā's *Ilāhiyyāt* ([*Science of*] *Divine Things*) of the *Kitāb al-Šifā'* (*Book of the Cure*) and Ibn Rušd's

¹ Acknowledgements: This study was carried out as part of the SNSF-funded project *Senses of Being: The Medieval Reception of Aristotle's Doctrine Starting from Metaphysics V.7 (1017a7–b9)* (Grant ID: 20074). I would like to express my deep gratitude to Marta Borgo, with whom I had the privilege of discussing the ideas developed in this paper over the course of many enriching conversations. I am also particularly grateful to Amos Bertolacci for his constructive feedback, which contributed significantly to improving the clarity and substance of the argument. Any remaining errors are, of course, my own.

SYNTHESIS

Tafsīr mā ba'd al-ṭabī'a (Long Commentary on [Aristotle's] *Metaphysics*).² While Ibn Sīnā's systematic elaboration of metaphysics as a science of being qua being provided scholastic thinkers with a foundational conceptual framework, it was Ibn Rušd's close engagement with the Aristotelian text—mediated through its Arabic translation and the tradition of late antique commentary—that ensured a direct transmission of Aristotelian metaphysics into the Latin tradition.³ His *Long*

² See Hasse (2020) and Di Giovanni (2014). See also Bertolacci (2009a), who considers Albertus Magnus as representing a new phase of the assimilation of Arabic metaphysics in the Latin tradition. In this phase, Ibn Rušd and Ibn Sīnā come to play equally important yet distinct roles, in distinction to the preceding phase in the Latin medieval tradition, where Ibn Rušd was regarded as the primary, almost exclusive, authority in metaphysics. For a comprehensive overview of Ibn Rušd's philosophy, see the section dedicated to him in *Philosophie in der islamischen Welt*, edited by Ulrich Rudolph (Endress et al. 2025). For an analysis of the Latin reception of *Metaphysics* Δ7 through Averroes' commentary with a particular attention to the role played by the mediation of the Arabic translation, see Borgo forthcoming.

³ As is well known, Ibn Rušd authored three distinct commentaries on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, traditionally referred to as the *Short Commentary* or the *Epitome* (*al-Ġawāmi'*), the *Middle Commentary* or the *Paraphrase* (*Talḥiṣ*), and the *Long Commentary* (*Tafsīr*). These commentaries differ significantly in their scope, method, chronology, and history of transmission. The *Short Commentary*, an abridged summary composed around 1161 and later revised—most notably around 1180 and again in the early 1190s—is extant in its original Arabic. It was translated into Hebrew in the first half of the thirteenth century and subsequently into Latin in the sixteenth century via the Hebrew version. The *Middle Commentary*, composed in Córdoba in 1174 and revised between ca. 1192–1194 and 1198, survives in full only in Hebrew translations, by Zerahya Ḥen (1284) and Qalonymos ben Qalonymos (1317), which were edited by Mauro Zonta (2011). A partial Latin version by Elijah b. Mošeh del Medigo (d. 1493) also exists. Long considered lost in Arabic, the text was rediscovered in a partial Arabic manuscript by Maroun Aouad in the Qarawiyyīn Library in Fās in 1997 (Ibn Rušd 2023). Notably, the *Middle Commentary* includes commentaries on Books K, M, and N, which are not covered in the *Long Commentary*. The *Long Commentary* (*Tafsīr mā ba'd al-ṭabī'a*), composed most likely between 1192 and 1194, survives in Arabic and was translated into Latin in the thirteenth century, and into Hebrew in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. For further details, see Endress et al. 2025; Ibn Rušd 2023, chap. 1; Ben Ahmed and Pasnau 2025; Bertolacci 2009b; Zonta 2011,

Commentary provided medieval Latin philosophers not only with direct access to Aristotle's text, but also with a sustained and philosophically rigorous interpretation that rearticulated central metaphysical concepts through the Arabic philosophical lexicon. The present paper focuses on one such concept—*being true* (*mawǧūd ṣādiq*)—as treated by Ibn Rušd in his *Long Commentary* on *Metaphysics* Δ7, tracing how his engagement with the Arabic translation and the broader logic of predication leads to a nuanced rethinking of Aristotelian ontology on this issue.

I. Introduction

According to Ibn Rušd, Aristotle, in *Metaphysics* Δ7 (1017a31–35), divides what he calls 'being true' (*mawǧūd ṣādiq*) into simple and composite cases:

T1: He [i.e., Aristotle, in the Arabic] wants [to say] here⁴ by *huwiyya* what signifies truth, either absolutely or compositionally [...], in the composite proposition like our saying 'Zayd is musical' or 'Zayd is not

chap. 3; Halper 2013, and 2025, chap. 5. These three commentaries, through their Latin and Hebrew translations, exerted a profound influence on metaphysical thought in both traditions. While some scholars interpret the progression from *Short* to *Long Commentary* as reflecting Ibn Rušd's increasing Aristotelianism (Druart 1994, 193–197), others argue that the differences reflect an intentional pedagogical strategy, calibrated to the needs of readers at various stages of philosophical training (Halper 2025, and for various positions concerning the chronology, Zonta 2011, 6–7). Halper suggests that the *Short Commentary* was aimed at beginners, the *Middle Commentary* at intermediate students, and the *Long Commentary* at advanced readers interested in engaging directly with Uṣṭāṭ's Arabic translation and reconstructing Averroes's interpretation from its phrasing. Halper also contends that this is not only the pedagogically intended order but likely also the chronological sequence in which the commentaries were composed (2025, 92).

⁴ Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Δ7 (1017a32–33) in Arabic, contained in Ibn Rušd 1938–1942, 555.10–12. See Appendix 1, II.

SYNTHESIS

musical', and concerning the absolute object of inquiry, like our saying 'whether Zayd is or is not'.⁵

This 'being true' is introduced after Aristotle discusses being *per accidens* (1017a8–22) and being *per se* (1017a22–30), and precedes being in potentiality or actuality (1017a35–b9).⁶

In a previous study co-authored with Marta Borgo and Davide Falessi, I examined the ninth-century Arabic translation of this passage by Uṣṭāṭ (Eustathius), the version that underlies Ibn Ruṣḍ's commentary. I argued that the Arabic translation reconfigures Aristotle's structure by syntactically and conceptually integrating the final two senses—being true and being in potentiality / actuality—into the framework of being *per accidens* and being *per se*, respectively. This is achieved through the use of conjunctions (*wa-*, *wa-ayḍan*) and shifts between singular and plural forms of the main term (*huwiyya[t]* vs. *huwiyyāt*), subtly recasting Aristotle's fourfold division into a more compressed twofold schema.⁷

This conceptual reconfiguration—where the fourfold Aristotelian division of the senses of being is restructured along a different axis—finds a partial and nuanced echo in Ibn Ruṣḍ's own metaphysical commentary. As Menn thoroughly explains, Ibn Ruṣḍ, strongly influenced by al-Fārābī's *Kitāb al-ḥurūf*, does not merely reproduce Aristotle's taxonomy of being.

⁵ Ibn Ruṣḍ 1938–1942, 560.5–8;

يريد بالهويّة هاهنا ما يدلّ على الصدق إما مطلقاً وإما مركباً [...] أما في القضية المركبة مثل قولنا زيد هو موسيقوس أو زيد ليس بموسيقوس وفي المطلوب المطلق مثل قولنا هل زيد هو أم ليس هو.

⁶ Extant in the Arabic translation of Uṣṭāṭ respectively in Ibn Ruṣḍ 1938–1942, 552.3–u. (being *per accidens*), 555.1–8 (being *per se*) and 555.13–556.3 (being in potentiality or actuality, up to 1017b6).

⁷ Borgo et al. forthcoming. See also Bertolacci 2006, chapter 1. For a critical assessment of Uṣṭāṭ's translation of *Metaphysics* Δ as overly literal and inaccurate, see Halper 2025, chapter 3, III and chapter 5, especially 83; and n. 294 for further literature in this direction. I am grateful to Yehuda Halper for valuable indications on this issue and for sharing his work with me.

Rather, he offers a reinterpretation that consolidates the multiple senses of being into two overarching senses, thereby simplifying and reorienting the discussion in a distinctly Arabic philosophical idiom.⁸

The first of these is being *per se*, which Ibn Rušd identifies with essence (*ḡāt*) or thing (*šay'*). In this sense, being is subdivided, in line with Aristotle, according to the ten categories and is treated as a quasi-genus encompassing all that exists essentially. It is primarily articulated through two-place predications—assertions of the form 'S is P'—where the predicate is attributed to the subject in virtue of its essence.

The second is being true, which diverges more noticeably from the Aristotelian scheme. Unlike in Aristotle, where this sense appears as a marginalized entry in the list of senses of being, Ibn Rušd—again following al-Fārābī—elevates its significance and subdivides it into two forms: (1) absolute or simple being true, exemplified by one-place assertions such as 'S is', and (2) composite being true, exemplified by two-place assertions such as 'S is P'. These correspond respectively to affirmations of sheer existence and of specified existence within a predicative structure.

This twofold division is most explicitly articulated in Ibn Rušd's *Tahāfut al-tahāfut*, where he criticizes Ibn Sīnā for failing to differentiate these two senses of being.⁹ The passage is central to understanding the complexity of Ibn Rušd's distinctions:

⁸ Al-Fārābī discusses being in potentiality or actuality in *Kitāb al-ḡurūf* §§93–94, and again briefly at the end of §240, where he treats it as a subdivision of his first principal sense of being, namely, being as having a quiddity (*māhiyya*) outside the soul. By contrast, being true, predicated of a concept in the mind, is more closely aligned with being *per accidens*. Menn has compellingly reconstructed both al-Fārābī's reduction of Aristotle's fourfold division of the senses of being into three and then two senses, and Ibn Rušd's reception and adaptation of this innovation, which becomes central to his metaphysics in opposition to that of Ibn Sīnā. See Menn 2008 and 2011.

⁹ For an insightful analysis of Ibn Rušd's criticisms against Ibn Sīnā's metaphysics, see Menn 2011.

SYNTHESIS

T2: In reality, that-it-is-ness in existents (*al-anniyya, fī al-ḥaqīqa, fī al-mawǧūdāt*) is a mental meaning (*ma'nā dīhnī*), namely a thing's being outside the soul just as it is in the soul, and what signifies it is equivalent (*murādīf*) with the true (*ṣādiq*), which is what is signified by the existential copula (*al-rābiṭa al-wuǧūdiyya*) in predicative propositions (*al-qadāya al-ḥamliyya*).¹⁰ For the utterance existence

¹⁰ With *al-rābiṭa al-wuǧūdiyya* (existential copula) those words are meant, usually from the root *w-ǧ-d* but also *k-w-n* and *ṣ-y-r*, that serve in propositional structures as the copula, linking the subject with the predicate. Concerning the translation of *wuǧūdī* and *wuǧūd*, Zimmermann notes that in some cases 'the normal renderings "existential" and "existence" would have been so misleading as to be positively wrong'. Hence, he borrows from the Greek, *hyparctic* for *wuǧūdī* and *hyparxis* for *wuǧūd* (Zimmermann 1981, lx, n. 1; see also Klinger 2019, 64, n. 12). Menn renders *al-rābiṭa al-wuǧūdiyya* as the 'hyparctic copula' (2012, 55.29), defining it as a non-modal copula, i.e., 'S is P', as opposed to modalized variants such as 'S is necessarily P' or 'S is possibly P' (n. 7). This interpretation reflects al-Fārābī's tripartite classification of modal propositions into necessary, possible, and *muṭlaqa* (absolute), the last of which are unconditioned by modality and therefore signify mere existence (*wuǧūd*) without qualification. As al-Fārābī notes, the absolute proposition 'may just as well be called *wuǧūdiyya*' (al-Fārābī 1988a, 109; 1988b, 117; 1988c, 35; cf. al-Fārābī 1988c, 1–2; 2024, §103). Indeed, the meaning of existence (*ma'nā al-wuǧūd*), which is understood by al-Fārābī as identical to the meaning of relation (*ma'nā al-irtibāt*), that in turn means that the predicate exists or is found for the subject (*an yūǧada al-maḥmūl li-l-mawdū'*), is either taken absolutely (*muṭlaqan*) or with a stipulation clarifying the quality of the existence of the predicate for the subject (*ṣarīṭa tubayyinū 'an kayfiyya wuǧūd al-maḥmūl li-l-mawdū'*), which is called mode or mood (*ǧiha*) (al-Fārābī 1988c, 1–2). Besides this indirect reference to *wuǧūdiyya*, al-Fārābī also directly talks about *al-kalim al-wuǧūdiyya, mawǧūd as rābiṭan li-l-maḥmūl ma'a al-mawdū'* or *al-wuǧūd al-rābiṭ* (e.g. al-Fārābī 2024, §82, 109.6–7, §101, 171.2, §103, 175.5; 1988a, 88.14–20; 1988c, 33ff). According to al-Fārābī, whom Ibn Ruṣd follows closely, the copulative 'is' contributes no ontological content and serves only to connect subject and predicate syntactically. It signifies no relation between two extra-mental entities but only a mental relation between a subject and a predicate within the structure of a proposition. It does not imply that one essence is attributed to another, but only that one term is said of another in discourse, with no ontological commitment (al-Fārābī 2024, §102—I am grateful to Seyedali Taghaviniasab for drawing my attention to this text.) Its role is comparable to that of a particle in Arabic grammar, fully dependent in its meaning on the

(*wuǧūd*) is said in two senses: one is what is signified by the true (*al-ṣādiq*), as in our saying ‘is the thing existent or is [it] not existent? (*hal al-ṣay’ mawǧūd am laysa bi-mawǧūd*)’ and ‘does such-and-such exist as such-and-such or does it not exist as such-and-such? (*hal kaḏā yūǧadu kaḏā aw lā yūǧadu kaḏā*)’; the other is what is treated as if it were a genus in existents (*al-mawǧūdāt*), as when the existent (*al-mawǧūd*) is divided into the ten categories, and into substance and accident.¹¹

terms it links. According to al-Fārābī: ‘the two essences are potentially enveloped in it [i.e. the copula] only insofar as they are conceptualized as having the connection of predicate to subject and subject to predicate—nothing more. Included in it is not the relation of one essence outside the soul to another, but the relation in the soul of one of the two terms as subject and the other as predicate. Nor is the essence of one of the two having that predicate attributed to it included, but only what we have said. Indeed, it includes a particular relation by which one of the two objects becomes an enunciative (*ḥabaran*) and the other an enunciated object posited (*muḥbaran ‘anhu mawḏū’*)—nothing more’. See al-Fārābī 2024, §102 and §101;

انه تنطوي فيه بالقوة ماهيتان اثنتان من حيث هما متصورتان لهما نسبة المحمول إلى الموضوع والموضوع إلى المحمول فقط لا غير، وانه ليس يتضمن إضافة ماهية خارج النفس إلى ماهية خارج النفس، بل إضافة في النفس أحد طرفيها الموضوع والآخر المحمول، ولا يتضمن أن تكون ماهية أحدهما أن يوصف بهذا المحمول، بل إنما يتضمن ما قلنا فقط، وانه إنما يتضمن إضافة ما بها يصير أحد الأمرين خبرا والآخر مخبرا عنه موضوعا لا غير.

For discussion, see Klinger 2024, chap. 3, and Lameer 1994, III.4. Both Klinger, Lameer and (apparently) Menn follow Zimmermann’s terminology in their translation (Klinger 2019; Lameer 1994, 55; cf. Zimmermann 1981, xl, n. 1). However, in the passage discussed here, Ibn Ruṣd understands *al-rābiṭa al-wuǧūdiyya* not simply as a [non-modal] copula but as denoting being true (*wuǧūd ṣādiq*) in both one-place (‘S is’) and two-place (‘S is P’) assertions (see also appendix 2, II–III). Hence, I avoid ‘hyparctic’ not to run the risk of reducing *mawǧūd*, *yūǧadu*, and similar forms to the hyparctic copula. As I discuss below, their semantic range depends on syntactic structure and epistemic context: they may function as mere connectors, as full existential predicates, or even as ontological expressions of a subject’s essence, in both one-place and two-place cases. I also avoid translating *kalima*, in Ibn Ruṣd’s commentary on this passage, as verb, since it would go against al-Fārābī’s attempt, first using this expression instead of the grammarians’ *fi’l*, to dissociate himself from grammatical terminology towards creating new logical terminology (al-Fārābī 2002, 45.13–14; and appendix 2).

SYNTHESIS

This interpretive model—emerging from the semantic shifts introduced by the Arabic translation and carried forward in Ibn Rušd’s systematization—will serve as the foundation for the analysis that follows. The rest of the paper explores how Ibn Rušd inherits, reshapes, and partially resists the inherited framework, particularly in relation to the semantic and logical implications of ‘being true’ within dialectical and demonstrative modes of reasoning. Through this examination, I aim to show how Ibn Rušd’s metaphysical thought constitutes both a continuation and a transformation of the Aristotelian tradition as mediated through the Arabic language.

II. Absolute and Composite Being: The Conflation of Being True and Being *Per Se*

A central feature of Ibn Rušd’s treatment of *mawǧūd ṣādiq*—that is, ‘being true’—is the structural division he establishes between what he terms absolute and composite cases of truth or reality.¹² This interpretive distinction does not arise solely from his own philosophical system but is already present, in embryonic form, in the ninth-century Arabic translation of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* Δ7 by Uṣṭāṭ. This translation plays a formative role in shaping Ibn Rušd’s reading of the text.

¹¹ Ibn Rušd 1930, §5, 302.1–8 (translation from Menn 2011, 55–56 with modifications);

فإن الإنية في الحقيقة في الموجودات هي معنى ذهني وهو كون الشيء خارج النفس على ما هو عليه في النفس، وما يدل عليه فهو مرادف للصادق وهي التي تدل عليه الرابطة الوجودية في القضايا الحملية، فإن لفظ الوجود يقال على معنيين: أحدهما ما يدل عليه الصادق، مثل قولنا: هل الشيء موجود أم ليس بموجود، وهل كنا يوجد كنا أو لا يوجد كنا، والثاني ما يتنزل من الموجودات منزلة الجنس، مثل قسمة الموجود إلى المقولات العشر وإلى الجوهر والعرض.

¹² For further analysis of the distinction between truth (*ṣidq*) and reality (*ḥaqq/ḥaqīqa*), see below.

Unlike the terse and elliptical style of the Greek original, Uṣṭāṭ's Arabic version expands the passage and includes clarificatory examples.¹³ Specifically, it provides two illustrative statements that serve to parse the logic of truth-claims: the first asserts that saying something 'is' indicates its *ḥaqīqa* (its reality); the second asserts that saying it 'is not' amounts to a statement of falsehood (*kidb*). These examples are not merely exegetical aids but contribute to a structural refinement of the Aristotelian concept: they effectively divide 'being true' into two grammatical and ontological cases—namely, one-place and two-place propositions, as set out in the following comparative table:

Translation of the Arabic translation	Standard English translation ¹⁴
<1.> And <i>huwiyya</i> also signifies the <i>anniyya</i> (that-it-is-ness) of a thing and its <i>ḥaqīqa</i> (reality);	<1.> Further, 'to be' and 'is' signify that [something] is true,
<1.1> for when we say that the thing is, we signify its reality,	
<1.2> whereas when we say that it is not, we signify that it is not real but it is rather false.	<2.> 'not to be' that is not true but false.

¹³ Halper recognized here a problematic change in word order (2010, 36). For my take on this point, see Borgo et al. forthcoming.

¹⁴ The English translation is from Borgo et al. forthcoming, that is based on Werner Jaeger's edition of the *Metaphysics* (1957). I take 'to be' as translating the Greek τὸ εἶναι, rather than an implicit τὸ ὄν, reflecting the beginning of Δ7, and 'is', the Greek τὸ ἔστιν. Accordingly, *huwiyya* and *anniyya* translate the two explicit terms respectively. Martini Bonadeo (2012, 307.25–26) and McGinnis and Reisman (2007, 362, 4–6) do the same. For further discussion, see Borgo et al. (forthcoming). On *anniyya* see Gutas and Endress (2002), I, 428–436, Afnan (1964), 94–97. For *huwiyya*, see Afnan (1964), 121–124; Frank (1956); and with a focus on Ibn Sīnā's *Ilāhiyyāt*, Bertolacci (2003).

SYNTHESIS

While Ibn Rušd will distance himself from Uṣṭāṭ's formulation—particularly in his effort to remedy metaphysical errors of his predecessors—he ultimately affirms the value of this bifurcation. His own distinction between absolute and composite forms of truth mirrors Uṣṭāṭ's division of being into one-place and two-place uses. And even though Aristotle's Greek text does not explicitly offer one-place examples in this context, both Ibn Rušd and al-Fārābī adopt a systematic classification that integrates both types of predication.¹⁵ Their shared framework allows for the subdivision of both being *per se* and being true into what we may call 'absolute' and 'composite' cases:¹⁶

	Absolute (one-place)	Composite (two-place)
Being <i>per se</i>	S is	S is P
Being true	S is	S is P

Accordingly, the resulting four senses can be listed and explained as follows:¹⁷

¹⁵ Menn 2008, 78, and 2011, 56. Menn notes, that 'nothing in Δ7 would suggest that when we ask "does S exist?" we are asking about being as truth: all of Aristotle's examples for being as truth (like his examples for being *per se*) are two-place assertions "S is P", and it is hard to see what it could mean to interpret a one-place assertion "S is", "S exists", as "S is true". Specifically in the section on being true, all the examples Aristotle gives are of two-place form, even though for the other senses, some examples might be seen as examples of one-place being. Anyway, Δ7 does not seem to take into account the distinction between one-place and two-place senses of 'to be'. See also Menn 2020, 199–201.

¹⁶ Menn 2008, 78.

¹⁷ Ibn Rušd 1938–1942, 2:739–742. See also, respectively, al-Fārābī 2024, §§92, 239–241 and §245, where he also includes existence along essence; §231; §§246–247; §§88–89, §95. Concerning the last, see Menn 2008, n. 33.

- Being^{per-se-1p}: ‘S is’ means that S is circumscribed by an essence outside the soul, or that S is an essence in actuality or in its final perfection.
- Being^{per-se-2p}: ‘S is P’ means that the essence of S or what constitutes it necessitates its being P and P being attributed to it, for example, asking whether every triangle is existent such that its angles equal two right angles.
- Being^{true-1p}: ‘S is’ means that S is a non-fictional concept in the soul, a concept of what belongs to the class of existing things in the world.
- Being^{true-2p}: ‘S is P’ means that the composition (or separation in negation) in the proposition corresponds to real combination (or separation) between S and P outside the soul, or that it reflects a relation of correspondence between intelligibles and extra-mental existents.

This fourfold classification allows Ibn Rušd to differentiate the logical forms and ontological statuses that the term *mawǧūd* may assume. Importantly, it also shows how the Arabic translation influenced not only the semantic framing of the discussion but the philosophical logic underpinning Ibn Rušd’s commentary.

But Ibn Rušd does more than inherit this interpretive structure—he transforms it. By linking the truth-related senses of being to broader epistemological contexts, he introduces a new criterion for subsuming these distinctions. In dialectical discourse, where claims aim at plausibility rather than certainty, ‘being true’ tends to fall under being *per accidens*. In demonstrative science and metaphysics, where the focus lies on causal and essential structures, ‘being true’ aligns with being *per se*. In this way, ‘being true’ ceases to be a static sense of being. It becomes a cross-cutting epistemic distinction—one that overlaps with, and is ultimately determined by, the mode of reasoning in which the claim is

SYNTHESIS

situated. Ibn Rušd's philosophical intervention highlights the flexibility of Aristotelian concepts in their Arabic articulation and demonstrates how translation, commentary, and logical precision can converge in a refined metaphysical system.

III. The Scientific Context of Being and the Disagreement among the Commentators

As evident from the previous classification, the propositions 'S is' and 'S is P' can both fall under two overlapping types: the former may be interpreted as an instance of both being^{per-se-1p} and being^{true-1p}; the latter may exemplify both being^{per-se-2p} and being^{true-2p}.¹⁸ This raises the question: how can one discern which specific sense of being is at play in a given instance? The answer lies in the epistemic context in which the proposition is situated. Within the context of dialectic, being is to be considered as being^{true}, while within the context of demonstration, as being^{per-se}.¹⁹

Ibn Rušd foregrounds this logical model of syntax by making explicit the linguistic assumptions embedded in the Arabic translation of Aristotle.²⁰ In the first section of his commentary on Aristotle's text, he glosses the bare term *huwiyya* with 'the noun *huwiyya*', *anniyya* (that-it-

¹⁸ See Menn 2008, 82.

¹⁹ See below for Ibn Rušd. See also al-Fārābī 2024, §247: 'Dialectic does not rise above what are the generally accepted meanings of the existent. Therefore, it is sufficient for it to understand our asking "whether the human is existent"—that is, whether the human is one of the existents that are in the world [...]. For they call "not existent" what is only fancied in the soul without being outside the soul by way it is fancied, which is a false fancy and not an example of something outside the soul';

إنّ الجدل ليس يرتفع في معاني الموجود عن ما هو المشهور من معانيه. فلذلك يكتفي أن يفهم من قولنا «هل الإنسان موجود» أي هل الإنسان أحد الموجودات التي في العالم [...] فإنهم يسمون «غير موجود» ما كان قد يتوهم في النفس توهمًا فقط من غير أن يكون خارج النفس على ما يتوهم، وذلك هو الهوم الكاذب، وليس بمثال لشيء خارج النفس.

is-ness), and *ḥaqīqa* (reality) with ‘what is signified by our saying of a thing that it is *mawǧūd ṣādiq* (existent true)’. This semantic unpacking reorients the discussion from ontology (with terms like *ḥaqīqa* and *ḥaqq*) toward epistemology (with *ṣidq* and *ṣādiq*), eliminating the ambiguity—possibly deliberate in Uṣṭāṭ’s translation—between ontological reality (*ḥaqq*) and epistemic truth (*ṣādiq*).²¹

More significantly, Ibn Ruṣd emphasizes the necessity of distinguishing being^{true-1p} from being^{per-se-1p} to avoid metaphysical confusion. Here he introduces the disagreement among commentators with apparent neutrality. In his commentary on the passage, he reports that the question ‘Is the thing existent?’ was classified either as a question of accident or of genus. The division hinges on how the term *mawǧūd* is understood: if it signifies the true, it falls under accident; if it signifies what spans the ten categories, it belongs to genus:

T3: And thus, the commentators differed concerning the absolute object-of-inquiry—namely, our saying: ‘Is the thing existent?’ in the

²⁰ For a clear and concise exposition of the two different proposals for the syntax of predicative sentences, see Klinger 2024, 4–6.

²¹ Ibn Ruṣd frequently engages in terminological supplementation and substitution when commenting on the Arabic translation of *Metaphysics* Δ7, often aiming to stabilize or clarify its conceptual vocabulary. A notable example of this is his consistent pairing of the term *al-huwiyya*—employed in the translation by Uṣṭāṭ and possibly coined by him—with the more philosophically favorable term both to him and to al-Fārābī *al-mawǧūd*. While *al-huwiyya* (roughly: ‘is-ness’ or ‘being-ness’) appears in the Arabic translation to render various Greek terms such as τὸ ὄν and τὸ εἶναι, its abstract and somewhat rarefied character prompted Ibn Ruṣd to link it repeatedly with *al-mawǧūd*, a term more solidly anchored in the tradition of Arabic Aristotelianism. This substitution or coupling allows Ibn Ruṣd to clarify ambiguities in the source text and to bring terminological continuity across distinct semantic registers—linking grammatical, logical, and metaphysical levels of analysis. His intervention reflects a broader strategy of interpretive calibration: respecting the Arabic translation’s structure while subtly realigning its terminology with established conceptual norms (Afnan 1964, 94; Halper 2025, chapter 5). See also Appendix 2.

SYNTHESIS

second book of the *Topics*—whether it falls under questions of accident or questions of genus. For the one who understood from *mawǧūd* here the thing that encompasses the ten categories said that it falls under questions of genus (*maṭālib al-ǧins*). And the one who understood from the utterance *mawǧūd* here what is understood from [the utterance] true, said that it falls under questions of accident (*maṭlūbāt al-‘arad*).²²

In *Talḥiṣ kitāb al-ǧadal*, Ibn Rušd elaborates on this dispute.²³ He notes that the majority of commentators, including Alexander of Aphrodisias, take the expression ‘Is it existent?’ to mean ‘Is it true?’—i.e., whether what is in the mind corresponds to what is outside it. On this interpretation, the inquiry falls under accident. A minority, however, understand *mawǧūd* to refer to what has an essence and subsists through causes, and so place the inquiry under genus or definition. Although Ibn Rušd refrains from explicitly endorsing either view, his framing favors the first:

T4: As for the inquiry (*maṭlab*) ‘Is a thing existent in an unqualified sense?’, the commentators have differed regarding which of the four types of inquiries this belongs to [i.e. the inquiries into definitions, propria, genera and accidents]. But if, by our saying ‘Is such-and-such existent?’, we mean the same as when we say ‘Is it true?’—that is, that

²² Ibn Rušd 1938–1942. 561.8–13;

وإنك اختلف المفسرون في المطلوب المطلق وهو قولنا هل الشيء موجود في المقالة الثانية من كتاب
الجدل هل هو داخل في مطلوبات العرض أو في مطلوبات الجنس وذلك أنه من فهم من الموجود هاهنا
الشيء الذي يعم المقولات العشر قال هو داخل في مطالب الجنس ومن فهم من لفظ الموجود هاهنا ما
يفهم من الصادق قال هو داخل في مطلوبات العرض.

²³ Ibn Rušd’s account of this disagreement is often traced back to al-Fārābī’s *Kitāb al-Ḥurūf*, §246, where Alexander is explicitly mentioned. Menn (2011, 64) interprets this reference as pointing to Alexander’s commentary on the *Topics* (53, 2–10), while Butterworth connects it to 2. I (109a10–27) of that work, referring as well to Ibn Rušd’s *Talḥiṣ kitāb al-ǧadal*, the first two chapters of the second treatises on *mawāḍi‘ al-a‘rād*, (topics of accident) that are identical to the topics of absolute existence (*al-wuǧūd al-muṭlaq*). See Menn 2011, 64; al-Fārābī 2024, III, 414, n. 67, and Ibn Rušd 1979, 69–70 (cf. 1992, 530ff), respectively. McGinnis and Reisman link it with [Aristotle’s] *Topics* II, 1–2 (2007, 365, n. 64).

what is in the soul corresponds to what is outside the soul—then it undoubtedly falls under the partition of accident (*'arad*). And this is the most common understanding of what is indicated by our expression 'Is a thing existent or not?' This is also the view held by Alexander [of Aphrodisias]. Some have held that this inquiry falls under the heading of genus or definition, on the grounds that we may mean by 'existent' that which has an essence and the causes through which it subsists outside the mind. However, the first interpretation is the more common.²⁴

In the following passage, he reinforces this preference by appealing to Aristotle's argument, based on which he 'unified the topics for inquiries about unqualified existence with the topics for [inquiries about] accident [...] and dedicated to them a single treatise'.²⁵

T5:

[1] As for the inquiry (*maṭlab*) 'Is the predicate existent-only for the subject?' Aristotle explicitly states that it falls under the heading of accident.

[2] He classified it under accident even though, when a predicate is posited as existing for a subject, it is not thereby evident that it is an accident, nor that it is a genus, a definition, or a proprium. This is because, when it becomes clear that something exists for something else, the least that can be said of it is that it is an accident—if it is not one of the other three [i.e., genus, definition, or proprium]. Therefore, he considered its force as that of an accident [...]. Moreover, the

²⁴ Ibn Ruṣd 1992, 506.9–15;

وانما مطلب هل الشيء موجود باطلاق؟ فان المفسرين اختلفوا في اي صنف من اصناف هذه الاربعة المطالب يدخل. لكن اذا اردنا بقولنا: هل كنا موجود؟ مثل ما نريد بقولنا: هل هو صادق؟ وهو ان يكون ما في النفس فيه مطابقا لما خارج النفس، كان لا شك داخلا في باب العرض. وهذا هو الاشهر من مفهوم ما يدل عليه [و]النا هل الشيء موجود أم لا؟ وهذا هو الذي يذهب إليه الإسكندر. ورأى بعضهم ان هذا الطلب داخل في باب الجنس أو الحد، وذلك انه قد نعي بالموجود ما له ذات واسباب بها قوامه خارج النفس، الا ان الاول اشهر.

²⁵ Ibn Ruṣd 1992, 527.20–21;

انه (اي ارسطو) جعل مواضع مطالب الوجود المطلق ومواضع العرض واحدة باعيانها للعلة التي قلناها وافرد لها مقالة واحدة.

SYNTHESIS

definition, genus, and proprium each provide additional knowledge about the subject, whereas the accident here does not serve to give knowledge. What is sought in this case is merely that it exists, and for this reason, it has been counted among the existence-inquiries [*maṭālib al-wuḡūd*].²⁶

Yet this dialectical classification does not extend to the demonstrative context of metaphysics. In T6, Ibn Ruṣd turns against Ibn Sīnā's ontologization of *al-mawḡūd*. He criticizes the view that existence is something added to essence, calling it a 'grave error' that reduces *mawḡūd* to a shared accident across all categories:

T6: The claim that existence is something added to essence and that a thing does not subsist through it in its very substance is a grave error, because it entails that the term 'existent' refers to a common accident shared by the ten categories outside the mind.²⁷

²⁶ For the ambiguity between one-place and two-place being in this passage see below. Furthermore, Ibn Ruṣd's wording at the outset of this passage is ambiguous as well. In his formulation of the inquiry, Ibn Ruṣd writes: *hal al-maḥmūl mawḡūd li-l-mawḏū' faqaṭ*, where the adverb *faqaṭ* (only) might initially seem to qualify *al-mawḏū'* (the subject). However, such a reading is implausible. It is more coherent to take *faqaṭ* as qualifying the predicate (*al-maḥmūl*), a reading confirmed by Ibn Ruṣd's own reiteration at the end of the passage, where he explicitly describes the predicate as *mawḡūd faqaṭ* (existent only). See Ibn Ruṣd 1992, 506.2–9;

وأما مطلب هل المحمول موجود للموضوع فقط؟ فإن أرسطو يصرح أنه داخل في باب العرض، وإنما جعله داخلا في باب العرض مع أن المحمول اذا وضع انه موجود للموضوع لم يتبين منه انه عرض، ولا انه جنس، ولا حد، ولا خاصة، من قبل انه اذا تبين ان الشيء موجود لشيء فأقل ما يمكن ان يصدق عليه انه عرض ان لم يكن واحد من الثلاثة الباقية، فجعل قوته قوة العرض كالحال في المهمل الذي جعلت قوته قوة الجزئي. وايضا فان الحد والجنس والخاصة يعطي كل واحد منها في الموضوع معرفة زائدة، والعرض لم يوجد هنا معرفا وإنما الذي يطلب منه انه موجود فقط، ولذلك عد في مطالب الوجود.

²⁷ Ibn Ruṣd 1930, 304.13–16;

وأما قول القائل: إن الوجود أمر زائد على الماهية وليس يتقوم به الموجود في جوهره فقول مغلط جدا، لأن هذا يلزمه أن يكون اسم الموجود يدل على عرض مشترك للمقولات العشر خارج النفس.

To understand why Ibn Rušd classifies one-place being under the heading of accident in dialectical contexts—while at the same time rejecting Ibn Sīnā’s account of it as an accident—let us have another look at T5 to observe a significant shift. Ibn Rušd follows Aristotle in moving from one-place, in T5.1. to two-place being in T5.2: from ‘existent-only or S is’ to ‘exists for or S is P’. What initially appears as a standalone existential assertion (being^{true-1p}) is in fact, on closer analysis, an incomplete or indeterminate form of two-place predication (being^{true-2p}).²⁸ The proposition ‘S is’ belongs to the pre-scientific phase of inquiry, where the question is simply whether the concept corresponds to something real. It is only in the demonstrative phase—when predicates are linked to essences—that ‘S is’ can be expanded into ‘S is P’.

Accordingly, while Ibn Rušd corrects Uṣṭāṭ’s translation in the case of one-place being—section one of his commentary—by replacing *ḥaqq* (reality) with *ṣidq* (truth), he retains *ḥaqq* in the second section of his commentary dealing with two-place being. The shift is deliberate: one-place being concerns truth as belonging to the mental domain and finds no place in metaphysics (*ṣidq*); two-place being concerns *real* predication and concerns the extramental reality (*ḥaqq*). The terms track the move from dialectic to demonstration.

²⁸ Menn indicates that, even though Aristotle does not talk about one-place and two-place senses of ‘to be’, he seems to believe that these two senses of being are interconnected and can somehow infer from one to the other, i.e. if you understand a certain type of ‘X is’, this will correlate with a certain type of ‘S is P’, and vice versa. So when Aristotle divides up the senses of being (in either the one-place or the two-place sense), he is implicitly also dividing the other—even if he only speaks explicitly about one of the two (Menn 2020, 201–202). Both Uṣṭāṭ’s translation and Ibn Rušd’s commentary make this implicit link explicit in the Arabic tradition.

SYNTHESIS

IV. The Senses of Being and the Disagreement with Ibn Sīnā

As discussed in detail in secondary literature, Ibn Rušd sharply criticizes Ibn Sīnā.²⁹ One of his critiques concerns a double confusion in the interpretation of the term *mawǧūd*, the common equivalent of the Greek τὸ ὄν ('being' or 'existent'). Ibn Rušd charges Ibn Sīnā with a dual error—linguistic and metaphysical—that distorts the Aristotelian conception of being and its translation into Arabic. The disagreement is not merely terminological; it reflects a fundamental divergence in their metaphysical frameworks.

The first part of Ibn Sīnā's mistake, according to Ibn Rušd, lies in taking the Arabic word *mawǧūd* in its original lexical sense, i.e., as 'found' or 'perceived'. On this reading, *mawǧūd* or being inheres in the knower as something that appears to, or is grasped by, them. This interpretation reduces being *per se* to a subjective accident: it depends on perception or conceptual apprehension. As a result, being is not treated as a feature of things themselves, but as a function of human cognition; as if falling under the category of quality. Ibn Sīnā thus fails to consider *mawǧūd* as a quasi-genus said proportionally of all ten categories—as Ibn Rušd insists it should be:

²⁹ The relationship between Aristotle, Ibn Sīnā, and Ibn Rušd has been the focus of much scholarly discussion, especially in metaphysics. Stephen Menn and Amos Bertolacci examine Ibn Rušd's criticisms not merely as a two-way debate, but as a 'triangular' struggle where Ibn Rušd attempts to 'rescue' Aristotle from what he views as Ibn Sīnā's Neoplatonic or theological distortions, often utilizing al-Fārābī as a kind of filter to recover a more faithful Aristotelian position. Menn explains why Ibn Rušd criticizes Ibn Sīnā the way he does and demonstrates that Ibn Rušd's most famous criticisms of Ibn Sīnā—regarding the notions of being (*wuǧūd*) and unity (*waḥda*)—are actually a revival of Al-Fārābī's position (2011). Bertolacci argues that Ibn Rušd accuses Ibn Sīnā not just as wrong, but of abandoning the method of Aristotelian demonstrative project altogether. According to him, Ibn Sīnā 'started as if from himself' (*inceptit quasi a se*), creating a new philosophy instead of interpreting Aristotle faithfully (2023; see also 2006).

T7: Ibn Sīnā erred only because, when he saw that the term *mawǧūd* in Arabic signifies the true in speech, and that what signifies the true necessarily refers to an accident, and indeed, in reality, to a second-order intelligible, that is, a logical one, he thought that wherever the translators used it, they meant to signify this meaning. But this is not the case. Rather, what the translators intended by it was to signify what is signified by the term essence (*ḡāt*) or thing (*šay'*).³⁰

In other words, Ibn Sīnā conflates two distinct uses of *mawǧūd*: one that refers to truth in a propositional sense, and one that refers to the thing itself in an ontological sense. He mistakenly assumes that the translators used the term in the former sense only, overlooking the ontological commitments of Aristotelian metaphysics.

The second part of the error stems from the morphology of the Arabic word itself. *Mawǧūd* as a derived noun (*ism muštaqq*) misled Ibn Sīnā to take existence to be something that inhabits the thing—as if the infinitive *wuǧūd* inheres in a subject to make it *mawǧūd*. Derived nouns in Arabic often imply that the subject has acquired some attribute or undergone some change. Thus, like all derived nouns, *mawǧūd* appears to misleadingly imply that the thing is by or through some *wuǧūd* or existence added to it. In this case, *mawǧūd* becomes an external accident added to essence. As Ibn Rušd explains:

T8: Since the term *mawǧūd* in Arabic is one of the derived nouns (*asmā' muštaqqa*), and since derived nouns typically indicate accidents, it was imagined—when it was used in the sciences to refer to the essence of a thing—that it signified an accident inhering in it.³¹

³⁰ Ibn Rušd 1930, 371.9–15;

وإنما غلط ابن سينا أنه لما رأى اسم الموجود يدل على الصادق في كلام العرب، وكان الذي يدل على الصادق يدل على عرض، ولا بد، بل في الحقيقة على معقول من المعقولات التواني؛ أعني المنطقية ظن أنه حيث ما استعمله المترجمون إنما يدل على هذا المعنى وليس الأمر كذلك، بل إنما قصد به المترجمون أن يدل به على ما يدل عليه اسم الذات والشيء.

³¹ Ibn Rušd 1938–1942, 557.16–19;

SYNTHESIS

On this reading, existence becomes something external or superadded to essence—a property that a thing has rather than something that expresses what it is. This leads to the mistaken idea that essence and existence are separable, and that existence must be conferred upon an essence in order for it to be real. In Ibn Rušd's assessment, such a view is characteristic of Ibn Sīnā's metaphysical model, in which the quiddity (or *māhiyya*) of a thing seems to be ontologically prior to its existence.

Ibn Rušd rejects both interpretations. In his view, existence is mistakenly treated in the first case as an epistemic and subjective attribute dependent on the mind; in the second, it becomes an ontological accident in the strict categorical sense subsumed under being *per se*; a contingent accident added to essence. But being *per se*, he insists, cannot be either. It must name what belongs to a thing in virtue of its essence—not something superadded to it, nor something dependent on the knower:

T9: He [i.e. Ibn Sīnā] confused the noun *mawǧūd* which signifies the [quasi-]genus [of the ten categories], and [the noun *mawǧūd*] which signifies the true (*al-ṣādiq*): That which signifies the true is an accident, whereas that which signifies the genus signifies each of the ten categories in a manner of proportionality, just as *huwiyya* is said.³²

Thus Ibn Sīnā, in Ibn Rušd's reconstruction, conflated the contexts of dialectic and demonstrative investigation. In contrast, Ibn Rušd

ان اسم الموجود في كلام العرب لما كان من الاسماء المشتقة وكانت الاسماء المشتقة اما تدل على الاعراض خيل اذا دل به في العلوم على ذات الشيء انه يدل على عرض فيه كما عرض ذلك لابن سينا.

³² Ibn Rušd 1938–1942, 1280.8–11 (Menn 2011, n. 19);

انه التبس عليه اسم الموجود الذي يدل على الجنس والذي يدل على الصادق فان الذي يدل على الصادق هو عرض والذي يدل على الجنس يدل على كل واحد من المقولات العشر دلالة تناسب كما يقال الهوية.

maintains a strict semantic distinction between *mawǧūd* as a term for being true and *mawǧūd* as a term for being *per se*. The former refers to the correspondence between propositions and reality; the latter refers to the intrinsic constitution of things as expressed through predication.

In contrast to Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Rušd interprets the structure of being^{true} along two axes: the dialectical and the demonstrative.³³ In dialectic, ‘S is’ asserts truth in the minimal sense (being^{true-1p}), which he aligns with *per accidens* being. In demonstration and metaphysics, ‘S is P’ expresses a truth grounded in essence (being^{true-2p}), which corresponds to being^{per-se-2p}. Thus, while Ibn Rušd partially accepts the reinterpretation of Aristotle’s fourth sense of being implied by Uṣṭāṭ’s translation, he restricts its scope. Ibn Rušd’s account, in contrast to Ibn Sīnā’s, keeps essence and existence together not by conflation, but through a semantic and logical differentiation that traces back to the structure of predication itself.

³³ See Aristotle 1953, Θ10, Δ29, E4 and compare with Γ7.

SYNTHESIS

Appendix 1. Metaphysics $\Delta 7$ (1017a31–35) in the translation of Uṣṭāṭ³⁴

I	1. And <i>huwiyya</i> also signifies the <i>anniyya</i> (that-it-is-ness) of a thing and its <i>ḥaqīqa</i> (reality);	1. وَأَيْضًا الْهُوِيَّةُ تَدُلُّ عَلَى أَتْيَةِ الشَّيْءِ وَحَقِيقَتِهِ
	1.1. for when we say that the thing is, we signify its reality,	1.1. فَإِنَّهُ إِذَا قُلْنَا إِنَّ الشَّيْءَ دَلَّلْنَا عَلَى حَقِيقَتِهِ
	1.2. whereas when we say that it is not, we signify that it is not real but it is rather false.	1.2. وَإِذَا قُلْنَا إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ دَلَّلْنَا عَلَى أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ بِحَقٍّ بَلْ هُوَ كَذِبٌ
II	2. The same goes for affirmative and negative [proposition]	2. وَكَذَلِكَ فِي الْمَوْجِبَةِ وَالْمُسَالِبَةِ
	3. like our saying that Socrates is musical, since that is real	3. كَقَوْلِنَا إِنَّ سُقْرَاطَ مُوسِيقِيٍّ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ حَقٌّ
	4. and our saying that Socrates is not white, while that is not real.	4. وَقَوْلِنَا إِنَّ سُقْرَاطَ لَيْسَ هُوَ أَيْضَ وَذَلِكَ لَيْسَ بِحَقٍّ
III	5. And like our saying that the diagonal is equal with the side [of the square] is false.	5. وَكَقَوْلِنَا إِنَّ خَطَّ الْقَطْرِ مُسَاوٍ لِحَطِّ الصِّلَعِ كَذِبٌ

³⁴ For the Arabic original, see Ibn Ruṣd 1938–1942, 555.8–13. For translations into European languages, see McGinnis and Reisman 2007, 362.4–9 (English) and Martini 2012, 307.25–30 (Italian).

Appendix 2. Ibn Rušd's Commentary of Aristotle's text as contained in appendix 1³⁵

I	He wants [to say] that the noun <i>huwiyya</i> also signifies what is signified by our saying of a thing that it is existent true;	يُرِيدُ وَإِسْمُ الْهُويَّةِ أَيْضاً يَدُلُّ عَلَى مَا يَدُلُّ عَلَيْهِ قَوْلُنَا فِي الشَّيْءِ إِنَّهُ مَوْجُودٌ صَادِقٌ
	for when we say of a thing that it is, we thereby signify that it is true;	فَإِنَّا إِذَا قُلْنَا فِي الشَّيْءِ إِنَّهُ دَلَّلْنَا بِذَلِكَ عَلَى أَنَّهُ صَادِقٌ
	and when we say of it that it is not, we thereby signify that it is not existent, that is, [it] is false.	وَإِذَا قُلْنَا فِيهِ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ دَلَّلْنَا فِيهِ عَلَى أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ بِمَوْجُودٍ أَيْ كَاذِبٌ
II	He wants [to say] here by <i>huwiyya</i> what signifies truth, either simply/absolutely, or compositely.	يُرِيدُ بِالْهُويَّةِ هَاهُنَا مَا يَدُلُّ عَلَى الصِّدْقِ إِمَّا مُطْلَقاً وَإِمَّا مُرَكَّباً
	I mean by the singular and the composite object-of-inquiry,	أَعْنِي بِالْمَطْلُوبِ الْمَفْرَدِ وَالْمُرَكَّبِ،
	in the composite proposition, like our saying 'Zayd is musical' or 'Zayd is not musical',	أَمَّا فِي الْقَضِيَّةِ الْمُرَكَّبَةِ مِثْلَ قَوْلِنَا زَيْدٌ هُوَ مُوسِيقُوسٌ أَوْ زَيْدٌ لَيْسَ بِمُوسِيقُوسٍ
	and concerning the absolute object of inquiry, like our saying 'whether Zayd is or is not'.	وَفِي الْمَطْلُوبِ الْمَطْلُوعِ مِثْلَ قَوْلِنَا هَلْ زَيْدٌ هُوَ أَمْ لَيْسَ هُوَ
	The existential word [derived from <i>w-ğ-d</i>] ³⁶ as well is used in both objects-of-	وَكَذَلِكَ الْكَلِمَةُ الْوُجُودِيَّةُ تُسْتَعْمَلُ فِي الْمَطْلُوبَيْنِ جَمِيعاً أَعْنِي

³⁵ For the Arabic original of the three sections commenting the corresponding sections in appendix 1, see respectively, Ibn Rušd 1938–1942, 559.pu.–560.2 (I); 560.5–561.13 (II); 561.15–562.1 (III). For translations into European languages, see, respectively, McGinnis and Reisman 2007, 364.15–18 (I), 364.21–365.12 (II), 365.14–19 (III) for English, and Martini 2012, 309.31–34 (I), 309.36–310.15 and 310.19–27 (II); 310.28–32 (III) for Italian. Aristotle's words within Ibn Rušd's commentary are underlined.

SYNTHESIS

inquiry, I mean,	
the absolute [object-of-inquiry] like our saying ‘whether Zayd is existent’,	المُطْلَقَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِنَا هَلْ زَيْدٌ مُوْجُودٌ
and in the composite [object-of-inquiry], like our saying ‘whether Zayd is musical’	وَفِي الْمُرْكَبِ مِثْلَ قَوْلِنَا هَلْ زَيْدٌ يُوجَدُ مُوسِيقُوسٌ
and in general, the noun ‘ <i>al-mawğūd</i> ’ and ‘ <i>al-huwa</i> ’ here in both places signify the true - not the genus - I mean the copula <i>huwa</i> and the copula <i>yūğadu</i>	وَبِالْجُمْلَةِ فَاسْمُ الْمَوْجُودِ وَالْهُوَ هَاهُنَا فِي الْمَوْضِعَيْنِ إِنَّمَا يَدُلُّانِ عَلَى الصَّادِقِ - لَا عَلَى الْجَنْسِ - أَعْنِي رِبَاطُ هُوَ وَرِبَاطُ يُوجَدُ
For ‘ <i>huwa</i> ’ signifies in the case of the first saying what is used in the absolute proposition, and in the second, what is used in the composite proposition.	فَهُوَ إِنَّمَا دَلَّ فِي الْقَوْلِ الْأَوَّلِ عَلَى الَّذِي يُسْتَعْمَلُ فِي الْقَضِيَّةِ الْمُطْلَقَةِ وَفِي الثَّانِي عَلَى الَّذِي يُسْتَعْمَلُ فِي الْقَضِيَّةِ الْمُرْكَبَةِ
And this is what he indicated by saying ‘<2> And likewise in the affirmative and the negative [proposition] <3> as our saying that Socrates is musical, for that is real’,	وَهُوَ الَّذِي دَلَّ عَلَيْهِ بِقَوْلِهِ وَكَذَلِكَ فِي الْمَوْجِبَةِ وَالسَّالِبَةِ كَقَوْلِنَا إِنَّ سُقْرَاطَ مُوسِيقُوسٍ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ حَقٌّ
What he wants [to say] is that likewise, in the affirmative, when we indicate existence through affirmation, in which the copula appears, we also indicate that it is real—for example our saying Socrates is musical.	يُرِيدُ وَكَذَلِكَ فِي الْمَوْجِبَةِ إِذَا دَلَّلْنَا عَلَى الْوُجُودِ بِالْإِجَابِ الَّذِي فِيهِ زَابِطَةٌ دَلَّلْنَا عَلَى أَنَّهُ حَقٌّ مِثْلَ قَوْلِنَا سُقْرَاطُ مُوسِيقُوسٌ
And when we indicate it by negation, we indicate that it is not real—for example, when we indicate of Zayd that he is not white, this indicates that our	وَإِذَا دَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِ بِالسَّلْبِ دَلَّلْنَا عَلَى أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ بِحَقٍّ مِثْلَ دَلَّائِنَا عَلَى زَيْدٍ أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ أَبْيَضَ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ دَلَالَةٌ عَلَى أَنَّ قَوْلَنَا فِيهِ إِنَّهُ أَبْيَضَ لَيْسَ

³⁶ See above n. 10.

	<p>saying of him that he is white is not real.</p>	<p>بِحَقِّ</p>
	<p>And this is what he wanted [to say] by his saying ‘<4> and our saying that Socrates is not white, and that is not real’. He wants [to say], that our saying that Socrates is not white indicates that our saying of him that he is white is not true.</p>	<p>وَهَذَا هُوَ الَّذِي أَرَادَ بِقَوْلِهِ وَقَوْلُنَا إِنَّ سُقْرَاطَ لَيْسَ بِأَبْيَضٍ وَذَلِكَ لَيْسَ بِحَقِّ يُرِيدُ وَقَوْلُنَا إِنَّ سُقْرَاطَ لَيْسَ بِأَبْيَضٍ يَدُلُّ عَلَى أَنَّ قَوْلَنَا فِيهِ إِنَّهُ أَبْيَضٌ لَيْسَ بِحَقِّ</p>
	<p>But you should know, in general, that the noun <i>huwiyya</i> which signifies the essence of a thing is different from the <i>huwiyya</i> that signifies the true. And likewise, the noun <i>mawḡūd</i> that signifies the essence of a thing is different from the <i>mawḡūd</i> that signifies what is true.</p>	<p>وَلَا كُنْ يَتَّبِعِي أَنْ تَعْلَمَ بِالْجُمْلَةِ أَنَّ اسْمَ الْهُوِيَّةِ الَّتِي تَدُلُّ عَلَى ذَاتِ الشَّيْءِ غَيْرُ اسْمِ الْهُوِيَّةِ الَّتِي تَدُلُّ عَلَى الصَّادِقِ وَكَذَلِكَ اسْمُ الْمَوْجُودِ الَّذِي يَدُلُّ عَلَى ذَاتِ الشَّيْءِ هُوَ غَيْرُ الْمَوْجُودِ الَّذِي يَدُلُّ عَلَى الصَّادِقِ</p>
	<p>And thus, the commentators differed concerning the absolute object-of-inquiry—namely, our saying: ‘Is the thing existent?’ in the second book of the <i>Topics</i>—whether it falls under questions of accident or questions of genus.</p>	<p>وَلِذَلِكَ اخْتَلَفَ الْمُتَسَرُّونَ فِي الْمَطْلُوبِ الْمَطْلُوبِ وَهُوَ قَوْلُنَا هَلِ الشَّيْءُ مَوْجُودٌ فِي الْمَقَالَةِ الثَّانِيَةِ مِنْ كِتَابِ الْجَدَلِ هَلْ هُوَ دَاخِلٌ فِي مَطْلُوبَاتِ الْعَرَضِ أَوْ فِي مَطْلُوبَاتِ الْجِنْسِ</p>
	<p>For the one who understood from <i>mawḡūd</i> here the thing that encompasses the ten categories said that it falls under questions of genus. And the one who understood from the term <i>mawḡūd</i> here what is understood from [the term] true, said that it falls under questions of accident.</p>	<p>وَذَلِكَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ فَهَمَ مِنَ الْمَوْجُودِ هَاهُنَا الشَّيْءَ الَّذِي يُعَمُّ الْمُتَوَلَّاتِ الْعَشْرَ قَالَ هُوَ دَاخِلٌ فِي مَطَالِبِ الْجِنْسِ وَمَنْ فَهَمَ مِنْ لَفْظِ الْمَوْجُودِ هَاهُنَا مَا يُفْتَهُمُ مِنَ الصَّادِقِ قَالَ هُوَ دَاخِلٌ فِي مَطْلُوبِ الْعَرَضِ</p>
III	<p>...is another example he used for this purpose. What he wants [to say] is:</p>	<p>هُوَ مِثَالٌ آخَرَ اسْتَعْمَلَهُ فِي هَذَا الْمَعْنَى يُرِيدُ أَنَّهُ</p>

SYNTHESIS

<p>when we say that the diagonal is not equal to the side of the square, and that is true, then our saying this signifies that its being equal is false.</p>	<p>إِذَا قُلْنَا إِنَّ الظُّرَّ لَيْسَ هُوَ مُشَارِكًا لِضَلَعِ المَرْتَبِ وَكَانَ حَقًّا كَانَ قَوْلُنَا ذَلِكَ دَلَالَةً عَلَى أَنَّ كَوْنَهُ مُشَارِكًا كَذِبٌ</p>
<p>And what he intended by this was to distinguish between the expression <i>huwiyya</i> which signifies the copulative connection in the mind and the <i>huwiyya</i> that indicates the essence which is outside the mind.</p>	<p>وَأِنَّمَا أَرَادَ بِهَذَا أَنْ يُفَرِّقَ بَيْنَ لَفْظَةِ الْهُوِيَّةِ الدَّالَّةِ عَلَى الرِّبَاطِ فِي الذَّهْنِ وَالدَّالَّةِ عَلَى الدَّاتِ الَّتِي خَارِجَ الذَّهْنِ</p>

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