Metaphors Between Hermeneutics and Deconstruction: A Textual Analysis of Avicenna's *the Recital of the Bird*

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I. Introduction

The Recital of The Bird is one of the allegorical treatises of Muslim philosopher Avicenna (also known Ibn Sīnā). As much as this short epistle is vital to unravel Avicenna's ontological hierarchy between the God and the universe and his cosmological view, it has a great influence on many Islamic philosophers and scholars. Moreover, with the other two spectacular recitals, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* and *Salaman and Absal*, *the Recital of the Bird* constitutes the core figures and ideas of later philosopher Ibn Tufayl's philosophical novel, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*.

In the second place, the recital has importance for being one of the very first examples of allegories in philosophy.[1] In this respect, Avicenna uses metaphorical language in this work in order to expound his philosophical views on being. However, regrettably, many scholars and commentators of Avicenna has regarded the work as just a representation of his classical doctrine of emanation which he explains in his magnum opus *al-Shifa'*. According to this reductive view, which similarly we are able to see in Western philosophers, metaphors in fact signify nothing new. They are some adornments and stylistic figures in language. Contrary to this, thanks to the works of Paul Ricoeur, Gadamer and Derrida, metaphors has begun to be counted as the most significant way to discourse.

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The other issue, which deserves to be mentioned, is that this reductive attitude of Avicenna's commentators also avoids the uniqueness of *the Recital of the Bird* per se. In the case that it is seen just a representation of previous thoughts of Avicenna, the difference, or the uniqueness, or even the event-ness of the recital faces the risk of fading away. It is "one" of Avicenna's works, not a by-product.

In this essay, I will concentrate upon how metaphors unveil different aspects of being with the very help of deconstruction, hermeneutics and phenomenology and how we can read Avicenna's use of metaphor in *the Recital of the Bird*. In order to do this, I will first touch on Avicenna's cosmological view, and then summarize the recital. Finally, I shall go through the analysis of the recital by using the twist, as deconstruction and hermeneutics did, in the concept of metaphor.

II. Avicenna's Cosmology

To comprehend the nature of *the Recital of the Bird*, we should gain a better understanding of his cosmological view because of the fact that most readings and interpretations of Avicenna's recitals mainly tie the stories with the doctrine of emanation and celestial spheres. From this point of view, his recitals are representations of the Avicennan cosmos. Even though many commentators and scholars of Avicenna share this kind of reading with some differences, I think some vital points in these works have been rather peculiarly overlooked. We will discuss this oversight later.

According to Avicenna's ontology, existence is of two kinds "the Necessary Existent" *(wajib al-wujud)* and "the Contingent Existent" *(mumkin al-wujud)*. While the Necessary Existent is the only unconditional existence, the rest of the existents, i.e., the cosmos, owe their existences to the Necessary one, i.e., the God. It is the One, eternal, and the ultimate cause of all things. Avicenna's maneuver is quite compelling: He gives primacy to the God ontologically, not temporally.[2] In lieu of the arbitrariness of temporal creation in which Islamic theology's arguments, Avicenna offers a new kind of doctrine of emanation. In addition, unlike Plotinus' "The One", Avicenna's the Necessary Existent is not in very close relationship with the cosmos. The first mover, in Avicenna's ontology, is the First Intelligence, not the One himself, as opposed to Plotinus' version. As a result, we can propound that Avicenna differentiates the God and the universe in very strict terms.

In the second place, the universe is also divided into two main categories: the supralunar region which is the abstract immaterial substances of the extraterrestrial or celestial spheres and the sublunar region, the material bodies

of the terrestrial world. While the former contains the nine spheres and the ten Intelligences emanated *(sudur)* from the Necessary Existent with their souls,[3] the latter comprises of the four elements, minerals, plants, animals, and humankind. The Active Intellect *(al-'Aql al-Fa'al)*, apart from its proceedings, is the intermediary intellect between celestial spheres and the sublunary world. It orders the generation and corruption *(al-kawn w-al-fasad)*, contacts and contents the human rational soul.[4] Here, in Avicennan cosmology, appears another vital move differently from the Neo-Platonist doctrine. Avicenna, as much as he regards the Necessary Existent as the ultimate cause of the emanation to the First Intellect in which the Neo-Platonist doctrine, conceives the God is also the ultimate cause of all the other celestial spheres. "Each of these spheres, according to Ibn Sina, is governed by an intelligence and a soul, which are respectively the remote cause and proximate principle of their motion."[5] The God, to Avicenna, is both having a different kind of existence (necessary) and existing causally in celestial spheres which are intermediary between the God and the terrestrial beings.

Herewith Avicennan cosmos, which is closely connected with the graduated ontological hierarchy, can be described as a chart in this way:[6]

The Necessary Existent

First of Universal Intelligence (al-'Aql al-Awwal) - Heaven of Heavens
Second Intelligence - Heaven of the Zodiac
Third Intelligence - Sphere of Saturn
Fourth Intelligence - Sphere of Mars
Fifth Intelligence - Sphere of Mars
Sixth Intelligence - Sphere of the Sun
Seventh Intelligence - Sphere of Venus
Eighth Intelligence - Sphere of Mercury
Ninth Intelligence - Sphere of the Moon

Tenth (Active) Intelligence (al-'Aql al-Fa'al) - The World of Generation and Corruption

The Four Elements
Mineral
Plants
Animals
Humankind

It can be noticed that following Aristotle's *Physics* and the *Ptolemaic* model of the universe, Avicenna structures a geocentric model allowing all spheres to position according to the Earth. This is so because whilst the celestial spheres move circularly in a perfect condition, earth must be motionless.[7] Motion in earth, thus, is within itself. All fundamental changes take place in earth such as locomotion, alteration, growth and diminution, generation and corruption.[8] However, due to the fact that these changes are not able to arrive at the level of circular movement, they leave a negative impact on humankind. With the help of the Active Intellect, man, instead of admitting the position on which he live, is supposed to make his soul ascended mentally towards to celestial beings. To say Gutas' words, "this is a compelling theoretical construct reflecting an integrated vision of the universe and man's position in it, and it is rendered all the more powerful on account of its thorough rationalism, the cornerstone of Avicenna's philosophy."[9]

III. Avicenna's Visionary Recitals and *the Recital of the Bird*

In this section, I would like to treat Avicenna's short allegorical recitals. These three epistles *(risala)*, which might be regarded interconnected, are *The Recital of Hayy ibn Yaqzan,* that *of the Bird,* andthat *of Salaman and Absal*, respectively.

The former, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*,[10] unlike the well-known version of Ibn Tufayl, is a visionary story about the function of the Active Intellect for many scholars. In the story, an elderly sage, Hayy ibn Yaqzan (Alive, The Son of Awake) preaches to the narrator about the nature of the universe by illustrating the kingdoms he visited. Here while the sage is symbolized as the Active Intellect, the narrator is the human rational soul. The sage wisely tells his eternal journey to nine kingdoms (the metaphor of celestial spheres) and what he knows about them. The second epistle, *the Recital of the Bird*,[11] is a story of the narrator's journey into the the almighty mountains. In short, the narrator personalized as a bird tells that his emancipation from traps (the human rational soul), that the journey from one mount to another (celestial spheres), that he met the King (the God), and that he returned with the King's messenger (the Active Intellect). As it is, *the Recital of the Bird* overtly seems full of metaphors and symbols in the terms of expounding Avicenna's cosmological view. Finally, *Salaman and Absal*,[12] is a story of the friendship of two royal brothers and of a forbidden love between Salaman's wife and Absal. In this context, Avicenna symbolizes man's psychological struggle: While Salaman is the human soul, or the thinking soul, Absal in turn is "[the] degree of progress in mystical gnosis." Unlike the other two

recitals elucidating the extraterrestrial part of the universe, *Salaman and Absal* is, so to speak, the complementary treatise with regards to explaining terrestrial area, i.e., the human intellect.

Let us now give a detailed summary of *the Recital of the Bird* in detail.

Just before the narrator begins telling the recital, he moans about that he has not found anybody who listens to what he has to say. Then, he mentions a group of people "united by the same divine kinship", namely, brothers of Truth. He gives some metonymic[13] and sophisticated advice to these people: "Retire as the hedgehog retires", "Strip yourselves of your skins as the snake casts his", "Take poison, that you may remain alive. Love death, that you may still live." After the prologue, Avicenna commences the recital.

The narrator, who is a bird flying together with the covey, is trapped by hunters. No matter how they try to escape their meshes, they cannot do it. With this despair, everyone gets used to living in pain. One day he sees a group of birds escaping their traps, but their cords still be seen tied to their feet. He asks them how to be freed from their nets. Although they at first hesitate to tell because of the fear of hunters' ruses, then they decide to help him to escape. When he wants them to open his cords, they answer in this way: "Were it in our power, we should have begun by removing those that encumber our own feet." He arises from the cage and flies with the others. By avoiding beauties and other hunters' traps, they arrive at the peak of a mountain and see eight other summits. Then they pass six more peaks one after the other and finally come to the seventh mount. In order not to be exhausted completely, they decide to have a rest there. They are enraptured by the beauty on which lies. Green gardens, beautiful palaces, charming pavilions, fruit trees, streams of living water. The birds, however, start off again for the eight mount and see there ineffable and indescribable things. Men who live on the mount utter to them that there exists a city beyond that mountain in which the King resides, and that they can complain about injustice and suffering issues. Herewith the birds fly to the city in order to see the King. They meet the King and recite the entire story and their complaints to him. The King responses: "None can unbind the bond that fetters your feet save those who tied it." Instead, he sends a messenger to help them in order for removing their cords. Avicenna ends up reciting in a very mysterious manner: "And now, we are on the road, we are journeying in company with the King's Messenger."

Finally, Avicenna, in the final part of the treatise, moans about people once more, people who regard metaphors as real beings: "The worst kind of

discourse is this chatter with which people are so liberal without any occasion!"

IV. Metaphor in Between Hermeneutics and Deconstruction

A metaphor, as is commonly used in daily language, is simply a figure of speech denoting an object or an idea is used in place of another literally unrelated object or idea to suggest a comparison or an analogy between both. On the other hand, etymologically, the metaphor, which comes from the Greek μεταφορά, means "carrying over" or "transfer", that from the roots, μετα (beyond, further or between), and φορά (to carry, to transfer or to bear).[14] In this way, metaphors are mostly conceived as a transference. In his book *Rhetoric*, Aristotle defines the metaphor as "the recourse to a name of another type, or the transferring to one object of a name belonging to another."[15]

Similarly, the Arabic word used for metaphor, *isti'arah* (استعارة), also derives from the word "ariyah" which means "the gratuitous loan of some object."[16] Arabic scholar, intellectual and litterateur al-Jahiz designates isti'arah "as calling one thing by the name of something else because of a similarity between two terms based on their contiguity and resemblance."[17]Following al-Jahiz, another scholar and also philologist Tha'alibi construes the transference of meaning in isti'arah in respect to mental imagery.[18] We will touch on this relationship between metaphors and imageries later.

It is the fact that after the misreadings of Aristotle, metaphor has gained a negative meaning in such a way that it is a kind of representation. In this regard, metaphors are nothing but adornment in language. Accordingly, in this point of view, since metaphors are regarded as just a mere substitution, they are believed to produce nothing new. Yet its reputation was re-established by the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur. In his book *The Rule of Metaphor*, he handles prominent views about metaphors from Aristotle to the present, and advances a new theory of the metaphors.

One of the views he discusses is Derrida's critique of Aristotle in his long essay, "White Mythology."[19] Derrida claims that Aristotle regards metaphor as just a transference with or without noticing the differences between two words, whereas Gadamer[20] and Ricoeur[21] give Aristotle credit for his interest in the power of poetic expression. Ricoeur says, "the definition of metaphor by Aristotle —as a transportation of an alien name (or word)— is not cancelled by a theory which lays the stress on the contextual action which creates the shift of meaning in the word."[22]

Here, instead of strictly illustrating the differences between hermeneutics and deconstruction separately, I would prefer linking concepts and building a bridge between them.[23]

To begin with, in his book *The Rhythm of Thought*, Jessica Wiskus finely condenses what metaphor is with the help of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology:

> The metaphor, in language, works in a way similar to rhythm in music; it can be said to reside not within the signification of a single word, but within the hollow or relief formed by two or more words in relation (or formed by the relationship between one word and its own history). And through the metaphor, as though rhythm and as though the dialectic, there is the recovery of the unsaid and the recasting of something that is known and recognizable as having the potential to encompass, in fact to adopt as essential to its nature, what is new, different, and other than itself. The metaphor, discloses the lacuna -the noncoincidence- as generative. This is the work, one could say, of all creative language.[24]

Following the lead of Wiskus' passage, we can briefly analyze Derrida's deconstructive twist in the status of metaphor. Contrary to the idea that metaphor is a sort of transference between two words -even in Aristotle, Derrida asserts, metaphor is structured not just by a single signification, or opposition.[25] Rather, since Derrida applies a more embodied and performative approach to language, he allows the structuralist theory on the differential nature of meaning to revitalize the network of association in metaphors.[26] The characteristic of the metaphor, thus, is that it is entangled or interlaced rather than an exchange in meaning.[27] It is *différance* that prevents us to unify the signifier and the (alleged) signified in a reductive way.[28] In this sense, Jean-François Lyotard says that "discourse [as a text] itself actualizes meaning."[29] This deconstruction of meaning in relation to signs reveals itself to a new philosophical line is comprised of an intricate but refreshing network of meanings.[30]

Lyotard assumes this entangled characteristic of the metaphor as enigmatic. In his monumental book, *Discourse, Figure*, the definition of metaphor is a figure built as a bridge between two words. This figure incommensurably compares one signification of a word with the other.[31] However, the comparison does not exist in the terms, but in the mind. Hence Lyotard says that the metaphor is "a non-signified comparison."[32] This leads us to the key concept of the Lyotard's work: Signs in discourse are always thick in the meaning of not wholly graspable.[33] In virtue of the metaphorical

language is a kind of discourse, its signs are also "endowed with an enigmatic thickness."[34]

On the other hand, Gadamer and Ricoeur do not acknowledge Aristotle's narrower perspective on metaphor. On the contrary, Aristotle remarks the dynamic changing meaning and signification. In Ricoeur's reading of Aristotle, metaphor is a metamorphosis from one tradition to another and more than a substitution or a reduplication.[35] Hence metaphors are, rather than just ornaments or stylistic figures in language, not only reorganizations of the worlds of two different words, but also discoveries of new potential meanings in a broader sense.[36]

Like the other types of discourse, a metaphor too is an interpretation of the real just because being that can be grasped is language. If we suppose that we discourse within a literal horizon, the metaphor paves a new way to another meaning, horizon, or being. In this context, according to Gadamer, the metaphor brings together these two different horizons and then ends up changing in meaning of one of the two words.[37]

It must be noted that by following Saussurean distinction between *langue* and *parole*,[38] Ricoeur posits that the discourse is the event of language.[39] The metaphor as discourse allows the shift from the literal meaning to the figurative one. This new meaning, namely, "the semantic innovation"[40] makes sense only in the sentence and the context.[41] If we here cite the intertwined dialectical unity of the event, meaning and the discourse: "If all discourse is actualized as an event, all discourse is understood as meaning."[42]

Moreover, the prominent feature of the metaphor is that it is polysemic. However much has been said about a metaphor, there are always more ways in which it can be construed. There is no final or finite meaning, rather, always more to discover new meanings. Here Ricoeur designates this polysemy as "the surplus of meaning."[43]

Now we can move here one step further, from the idea of the network of meanings in deconstruction and the intersection of two horizons in hermeneutics to the key concept of the area of metaphor: Imagination.

In his article on Gadamer's idea of metaphor, Ben Vedder pinpoints the crucial position of imagination in the use of metaphor:

> Imagination makes possible to transform the everyday and familiar meanings into new and possible perspectives… By the process of metaphorizing in language, the beings about which something is suggested by an author and his text appear in a new

> light. An understanding of the possible world revealed by the poetic imagination also makes possible a new understanding of ourselves as being-in-the-world.[44]

Imagination as an act of imagining an imagined object, in fact, reconcile these intricate and opposed meanings by establishing a new semantic horizon composed of content, imaginal margin and the image.[45] This creativity and productivity in language demonstrates itself in the verbal and nonverbal images and the literal and the figurative meanings.[46] For instance, in the metaphor "tree is life", the verbal "is", at the same time, states "is not". We have already known that tree is not life literally. However, we construe "is" as figuratively "is not." Here the process of understanding-as engenders the being-as. What emerges in the metaphor at this ontological level is undoubtedly the possibility of imagination and freedom of mind.[47]

V. Textual Analysis of *the Recital of the Bird*

Hitherto we have summarized Avicenna's cosmological view over the doctrine of emanation (sudur) and celestial spheres (falak) and over the story in which Avicenna recites metaphorically. Then we have analyzed what the metaphor literally is and how hermeneutics and deconstruction have twisted it into a broader meaning. Finally, I shall concentrate my remarks on Avicenna's recital one more time, but following the contributions of phenomenology, deconstruction, and hermeneutics.

For one thing, as I said above, many commentators of Avicenna's recital link the story with his doctrine of emanation. These interpretations submit that Avicenna's recital is simply metaphorical narrative of the Avicennan cosmos, and that all metaphors which Avicenna uses are representation of cosmological objects. In this context, the bird is the human rational soul, mountains are celestial spheres, the King is God, and the King's messenger is the Active Intellect *(al-'Aql al-Fa'al)*.

However, what the Avicennan tradition has avoided so far is the uniqueness, or the difference of the recital. In fact, metaphors used in the recital produces nothing new for Avicenna's philosophy for this consideration. This reduction prevents us to see how differently Avicenna builds his thought in his works. In other words, whereas Avicenna establishes two different horizons -one is literal in which his magnum opus *al-Shifa'*, the other is metaphorical in which *the Recital of the Bird*-, his commentators make both overlapped by putting the metaphorical recital into the literal expression. By doing this, regrettably, the difference of the

recital is lost. As a result, *the Recital of the Bird* is an irreducibly "different" version of Avicenna's cosmology in terms of both using metaphorical language and of being ultimately Avicenna's one of the works per se. Furthermore, *the Recital of the Bird* and the other two recitals are the very first examples of Islamic allegories. This strong language and style has influenced to many Islamic philosophers and scholars such as Ibn Tufayl, Suhrawardi, Rumi, and Attar.

In the second place, metaphors unearth new approaches to Being. As much as the doctrine of emanation is an interpretation of Being -over the Aristotelian and Neo-Platonist models-, the recital is an exegesis of the cosmology and even of the human rational soul and its relationship with the universe and the God. The polysemy of the recital has allowed the commentators to interpret the recital so differently. While some argue the recital is the representation of the emanation, some consider it -by referring to inauthentic Avicenna's recital *Mi'raj-Namah* (the Celestial Ascent)- as another version of Prophet Muhammad's spiritual Night Journey *(Mi'raj)* to the celestial universe. For the allegorical story, however, the signs expecting to be deciphered[48] are always thick, entangled and interlaced. It can never be said that it is over the process of interpretation.

Another issue here is that Avicenna does mention spheres, souls, or Muhammad's journey neither in prologue nor in epilogue of the recital. This attitude also approves that Avicenna does not deter his readers from different exegeses. In order to liberate the text from the author's indisputable authority, according to French philosopher Roland Barthes, the text must be separated from its creator.[49] In short, the author must be dead in order that the text survives. That Avicenna does not tie the story with any philosophical thought of himself undoubtedly makes the recital still alive for any interpretation.

Third, each metaphor is an act of imagination allowing us to establish two semantic horizons by using "is" and "is not" at the same time.[50] Within this creative activity, while we read the story, we attempt to link together the metaphors used with the references and meanings of them.[51] There have to be some references and meanings in imagination because of the very fact that "we ascertain nothing that we did not know beforehand in some respect."[52] Avicenna, by establishing his allegorical scenario, interprets a different version of being rather than creates a new being. To illustrate this new version, in *the Recital of the Bird*, the bird is the bird and is not at the same time. It is bird because it is presented as a bird. Also, since the story is an allegorical one, it is not a bird because there must be something more

than the existence of the bird. As long as the King, who has gardens, orchards, servants, and messengers, is the God, who does ontologically possess nothing in the universe, he is not the God at the same time. Finally, the King's messenger is messenger accompanying the birds to help them. On the other hand, he is the Active Intellect, the Tenth sphere bringing into connection to the sublunar world, the Holy Spirit (al-Ruh al-Quds), or the Gabriel (Jibril) according to different approaches.

Last, Avicenna's each work is an example of interpretation of Being. More precisely, in case of regarding Avicenna's doctrine of emanation, *al-Shifa'*, the recitals of *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, of *the Bird*, and of *Salaman and Absal*, all are already exegeses of Being. That is to say that each one is rather different with regards to treatment of the subject. Accordingly, each one makes the doctrine expanded in its meaning. In order to illustrate this expansion, let me here give some distinctions between them. For example, in *the Recital of the Bird*, Avicenna makes the bird tell the story. As an imperfect being, who gets trapped by the hunters, the bird, or the human rational soul, says they are "still" on the road in company with the King's messenger. Contrary to this, in *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, the wiseman, i.e., the Active Intellect tells the story of his journey to the nine kingdoms ruled by justice and wisdom. The journey is completely over. Then, in spite of the fact that the King is an indescribable being for the human perception in both recitals, there are extra curtains to arrive at the King's oratory in *the Recital of the Bird*. In addition, Avicenna interestingly describes the Third Intellect, the Sphere of Saturn, only in this recital. The birds stop over there for a while and then keep going. As far as I am concerned, Avicenna's emphasis on the Sphere of Saturn is arbitrary just because birds are the main character in the story. Birds are getting exhausted. That makes sense only in this event and this context, noting more.[53] Finally, as Avicenna never mentions the East or the West in *the Recital of the Bird*, the journey of Hayy ibn Yaqzan is towards the East. In the latter, whereas the East is the source of light, the West is in turn the source of darkness. Frankly speaking, since some scholars like Henri Corbin are obsessed with Avicenna's Eastern philosophy, they tend to read "the East" in which the recitals as a symbolic, esoteric, and also mystical figure.[54] The book, which they mostly ground on, *al-Hikma al-Mashriqiyya* (The Eastern Philosophy) is one of the first works of Avicenna. However, as Dimitri Gutas maintains, the book comprises of isagoge, Aristotelian logic, metaphysics, and physics.[55] Regarding the title of the work, "we have no concrete evidence about the precise title of the book from Avicenna himself and his immediate disciples."[56] In this regard, Corbin's argument that Avicenna established an Eastern philosophy including some Eastern

symbolism and mysticism is kind of overinterpretation. In my opinion, in his work *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, Corbin construes whatever he wants to see in Avicenna's philosophy.

VI. Conclusion

From what has been discussed above, it can be suggested that Avicenna's *the Recital of the Bird*, in respect of an allegorical work, is not a simple representation of his earlier thoughts, but an intermediary between two semantic horizons, which are literal and figurative. As it is, the recital can never be read in reference to each object in the doctrine of emanation. I strongly believe that Avicenna, as an Aristotelian philosopher, does not use metaphors for just ornaments nor for the substitution of two words. Rather, they too are exegeses of being. What is more, in the sense that metaphors include both logos and muthos, they are mainly untranslatable, thick, perplexed, entangled and interlaced discourses. We, the readers, are supposed to attempt to decipher these hieroglyphs by discovering new meanings in order to make the dormant potential of beings awaken. After all, the only way in order to accomplish this is the power of imagination allowing us to see the fusion of horizons.

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Notes

1 As a literary method, an allegory is simply a literary, visual, or musical story or a recital built with extended metaphors. In allegory, characters or events represent or symbolize ideas or concepts. Allegory comes from the Greek word ἀλληγορία which means "veiled language, figurative, or speaking otherwise." In turn, the act of what we construe metaphorical meanings in a story or a recital is called as allegoresis. An allegory typically contains symbols or metaphorical figures that "creates a coherent meaning beyond that of the literal level of interpretation." ("Literary Terms and Definitions."Accessed November 25, 2013. http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/lit_terms_A.html.")

2 McGinnis, Jon. *Avicenna.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, 179.

3 McGinnis, *Avicenna*, 203-204.

4 Gutas, Dimitri. "Avicenna: The Metaphysics of the Rational Soul." *The Muslim World* 102, no. 3/4 (2012): 418-419. Accessed November 14, 2013. doi: 10.1111/j.1478-1913.2012.01413.x.

5 Arif, Syamsuddin. "The Universe as a System: Ibn Sīnā's Cosmology Revisited." Islam & Science 7, no. 2 (2009): 128. Accessed November 14, 2013.https://www.academia.edu/2385702/The_Universe_as_a_System_Ibn_Sinas_Cosmology_Revisited.; This idea can be read with al-Farabi's notion that God is the remote cause of all things.

6 Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines: Conceptions of Nature and Methods Used for Its Study by the Ikhwān Al-Ṣafā', Al-Bīrūnī, and Ibn Sīnā.* Boulder: Shambhala, 1978, 202-204; The chart is cited from Heath, Peter. *Allegory and Philosophy in Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā) With a Translation of the Book of the Prophet Muhammad's Ascent to Heaven*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992, 38.

7 Arif, "The Universe as a System", 129-130.

8 Arif, "The Universe as a System", 145.

9 Gutas, "Avicenna", 425.

10 Corbin, Henry. *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital.* Translated by Willard Ropes Trask. Princeton N.J: Princeton Univ. Press, 1990, 137-150.

11 Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 186-192.

12 Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 224-226.

13 Metonymy is in brief a substitution of two objects or concepts associated in meaning. (Eco, Umberto. *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language.* Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Press, 1986, 90.) To give an example, whereas "burning fire" can be employed in lieu of "love" for metaphor, "pen" can express "author" for metonymy. That is, "we can make metaphors because we have a series of signs which are 'equivalent'"; on the contrary, in metonymy, one sign is associated with another because it is part of it. (Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction.* Minneapolis, Minn: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2008, 86.)

14 Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia."Metaphor."Accessed November 21, 2013. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphor.

15 Eco, "Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language", 91.

16 Encyclopedia Britannica."Ariyah (Islamic Law)."Accessed November 25, 2013. http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/34804/ariyah.

17 Kemal, Salim. "Aesthetics" In *History of Islamic Philosophy*, edited by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and Oliver Leaman. London: Routledge, 1996, 969.

18 Kemal, "Aesthetics", 969.

19 Derrida, Jacques. "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy." Translated by F.C.T. Moore. *New Literary History* 6, no. 1 (1974): pp. 5-74.

20 Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method.*Translated by Joel Weinsheimer, and Donald G. Marshall. London & New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013, 448-449.

21 Ricoeur, Paul. "Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics."*New Literary History* 6, no. 1 (1974): pp. 95-110; *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning.* Fort Worth, Tex: Texas Christian Univ. Press, 1976, 47-48.

22 Ricoeur, "Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics", 96.
23 For the metaphor of "the bridge", see. Silverman, Hugh J. *Textualities: Between Hermeneutics and Deconstruction*. New York: Routledge, 1994, 238.
24 Wiskus, Jessica. *The Rhythm of Thought: Art, Literature, and Music After Merleau-Ponty*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013, 10.
25 Wood, David. *Philosophy at the Limit*. London: Unwin Hyman, 1990, 39; Also see. Lyotard, Jean-François. *Discourse, Figure*. Minneapolis Minn: University of Minnesota Press, 2011, 74. Lyotard states here "difference is not opposition."
26 Cazeaux, Clive. *Metaphor and Continental Philosophy From Kant to Derrida*. London: Routledge, 2009, 177.
27 Cazeaux, *Metaphor and Continental Philosophy From Kant to Derrida*, 178.
28 Derrida, Jacques. *Positions*. Translated by Alan Bass, and Henri Ronse. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982, 26-29.
29 Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure,* 100; Conversely, for "texts as discourse" see. Ricoeur, "Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics", 98-99.
30 Cazeaux, *Metaphor and Continental Philosophy From Kant to Derrida*, 177.
31 Readings, Bill. *Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics*. London: Routledge, 1991, 25; "There is, first, an incommensurability within metaphor that displaces any attempt to understand metaphor as a vehicle of the communication of concepts, the site of cognitive understanding of signification.
32 Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, 284; Readings, *Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics*, 25.
33 Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure,* 9, 83, 101.
34 Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, 284.
35 Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, 42; "Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics", 101; Vedder, Ben. "On the Meaning of Metaphor in Gadamer's Hermeneutics." *Research In Phenomenology* 32, no. 196 (2002), 197.
36 Ricoeur, "Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics", 99; *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, 52; Vedder, "On the Meaning of Metaphor", 207, 198.
37 Theodorou, Stephanie. "Rethinking the Relation Between Mythos and Logos: Paul Ricoeur's Conception of Lexis as Metaphor." *Dialogue & Universalism* 15, no. 3/4 (2005): 133; Vedder, "On the Meaning of Metaphor", 199, 201.
38 de Saussure, Ferdinand. *Course in General Linguistics*. Edited by Charles Bally, Albert Sechehaye, and And Albert Riedlinger. Translated by Wade Baskin. LaSalle, Ill: Open Court, 1986.
39 Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, 9, 11; "Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics", 103; Pellauer, David. *Ricoeur: A Guide for the Perplexed*. New York: Continuum, 2007, 67.
40 Ricoeur, "Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics", 103.
41 Ricoeur, "Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics", 99; Due to the fact that the new meaning makes sense only in the context, the metaphor is not translatable, (Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, 52.)
42 Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, 12, 73.
43 Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, 45; Worsley, Richard. "Narratives and Lively Metaphors: Hermeneutics as a Way of Listening." *Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapies* 11, no. 4 (2012): 309, 311, 317; Theodorou, "Rethinking the Relation Between Mythos and Logos", 130.
44 Vedder, "On the Meaning of Metaphor", 203.
45 Casey, Edward S. *Imagining: A Phenomenological Study*, 2nd ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000, 49, 57; Vedder, "On the Meaning of Metaphor", 202
46 Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, 46; Vedder, "On the Meaning of Metaphor", 203, 206; Here it can be reminded that "metaphor (isti'arah)" is a mental imagery as Tha'alibi employs. (Kemal, "Aesthetics", 969.)
47 Casey, *Imagining: A Phenomenological Study*, 231; Vedder, "On the Meaning of Metaphor", 206.

[48] Deleuze, Gilles. *Proust and Signs: The Complete Text*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000, 92; Ricoeur uses "the resolution of enigma" in this context. (Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, 52.)

[49] Barthes, Roland. *Image, Music, Text.* Translated by Stephen Heath. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977, 147.

[50] Worsley, "Narratives and Lively Metaphors", 308

[51] Ricoeur, "Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics", 100, 105.

[52] Casey, *Imagining: A Phenomenological Study*, 16; Ricoeur, "Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics", 110.

[53] Ricoeur, "Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics", 99.

[54] Gutas, Dimitri. "The Study of Arabic Philosophy in the Twentieth Century: An Essay on the Historiography of Arabic Philosophy." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 29, no. 1 (2002), 16-19.

[55] Gutas, Dimitri. "Avicenna's Eastern ("Oriental") Philosophy: Nature, Contents, Transmission" *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 10, no. 2 (2000): pp. 159-180.

[56] Gutas, "Avicenna's Eastern ("Oriental") Philosophy", 166.