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The Background of the Essential Primary Predication (al-ḥaml al-awwalī al-dhātī): Avicenna's Analysis of the Meaning of Predication

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Abstract

Predication is one of the significant issues in Islamic philosophical logic. "Essential Primary Predication" (*al-ḥaml al-awwalī al-dhātī*) is a new type of predication found mainly in late Islamic philosophers. The historical background of this predication is one of the controversial topics among post-Ṣadrīan thinkers, but it seems that it must be sought in

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Avicenna's discussions on the meaning of predication. To show this, I will focus on two fragments in which Avicenna talks about the meaning of predication; one in *al-Ishārāt wa al-Tanbīhāt* (*Pointers and Reminders*) and the other in *Manṭiq al-Mashriqīyyīn* (*The Logic of the Easterners*). In *Ishārāt*, we read that in a proposition like "A is B", what we mean is that "What is A is B", not that "The *ḥaqīqa* of A is the *ḥaqīqa* of B". Perhaps because the meaning of the word *ḥaqīqa* is a bit unclear here, post-Avicennan thinkers preferred to connect this to a fragment in *Manṭiq al-Mashriqīyyīn*, which explains that when we say "A is B" we don't mean that "the *meaning* of A is the *meaning* of B". There is a long history of discussion about what exactly Avicenna wants to exclude here. However, quite contrary to what Avicenna says, late Islamic philosophers clearly talk about a kind of predication, i.e. "Essential Primary Predication", which, in propositions like "A is B", points to the fact that "the meaning or concept of A is the meaning or concept of B". Obviously, there is a gap here; a gap that I will partly fill by showing some of the historical discussions that led to this shift. My approach to all of this is textual analysis, including describing, interpreting and understanding what has come as a continuation and interpretation of what Avicenna has said here.

Keywords: Islamic Logic, Avicenna, Mullā Sadrā, Predication, Essential Primary.

1. Introduction

"Essential Primary Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-Awwalī al-Dhātī*) is one of the types of predications that is mostly seen in late Islamic philosophical texts, especially in Ṣadrīan ones. Against this type of predication, all other types are usually called "Technical Common Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-Shāyiʿ al-Ṣanāʿī*).[1] The correct understanding of the meaning of the "Essential Primary Predication" depends, quite reasonably, on the understanding of its background. However, it has been controversial as to which of the philosophical issues is the background of this kind of predication. The hypothesis that I am going to follow here is that it is Avicenna's discussion about the right meaning of predication that has led to the distinction of "Essential Primary Predication" from other types of predication, and that there is a shift in the post-Avicennan historical discussions from rejecting it to its acceptance.

Avicenna has discussed predication and its divisions and meaning in several positions, but what seems more decisive here are his discussions in

two positions, one in *Ishārāt* and the other in *Manṭiq al-Mashriqīyyīn*. These two positions are also important because it seems that the thinkers after Avicenna saw them in close connection to each other, and interpreted them in relation to one another. In *Ishārāt* Avicenna says: "When we say that the shape is predicated of the triangle, we do not mean that the *ḥaqīqa* of the triangle is the same as the *ḥaqīqa* of the shape, but what we mean is that what is called a triangle is exactly the same thing that is called a shape" (Avicenna, 1996, vol. 1, p. 30). In *Manṭiq al-Mashriqīyyīn*, he says: "The condition for a thing to be predicated of something is not that its meaning is the same as the thing it is predicated of, but it must apply to it, even if it is not the same as it" (Avicenna, 1984, 12-13). It is clear that Avicenna has distinguished between two possible meanings of the predication in a proposition like "A is B": (1) the *ḥaqīqa* or meaning of A is the *ḥaqīqa* or meaning of B, and (2) There is something which is called A, and it is exactly the same thing that we are going to call B. This also is clear that for Avicenna the first possible meaning of predication is not the right way to interpret propositional statements with the form of "A is B".

Our focus in this research is more on the meaning that Avicenna tries to exclude, i.e. "the *ḥaqīqa* or meaning of A is the *ḥaqīqa* or meaning of B". This we think is the one that has been accepted as one of the true ways of interpreting propositions like "A is B" under the title of Essential Primary Predication in late philosophical tradition in the Islamic world. In what follows, an attempt has been made to address the historical discussions around this meaning of the predication with the hope of shedding light on some part of the process that led to its acceptance, after making it crystal clear that what is called Essential Primary Predication is the same meaning that Avicenna wanted to exclude from the possible meaning of the predication as a wrong one. In discovering the connection between the selective textual fragments in this historical tour, it is very important to pay attention to the terms *ḥaqīqa, maʿnā, mafhūm, dhāt* as well as the phrases "*ḥaml fī al-Alfāẓ al-Mutarādif*" and "*ḥaml al-Shayʾ ʿalā nafsih*". So we do not have any choice but to repeat them in their Arabic format to show how each fragment is the continuation of the previous ones, and how finally all of them are related to the Essential Primary Predication. It should be noted also that if we show an addition in a fragment by an Islamic thinker, we never mean that he is the first person who added it to the discussion. The addition itself is important here for us.

2. A Concise Review of Research Literature
Prior to delving into the main discussion it is necessary to briefly review the relevant research literature. Numerous studies have been conducted on Essential Primary Predication, each approaching the topic from a

distinct perspective.[2] Some of these include assumptions about the historical background of the formation of Essential Primary Predication. The oldest research on this topic, to my knowledge, is Mahdī Qawām Ṣafarī's article. In it, Mullā Ṣadrā's use of this particular predication to solve the Problem of Mental Existence (*masʾali-yi wujūd-i dihnī*) is traced back to Avicenna's solution for the same problem (see Qawām Ṣafarī, 2004). This claim proposes that the origin of this type of predication can be traced back to Avicenna's discussion on solving the Problem of Mental Existence. Some other articles have been published based on this hypothesis (see KāKāyi & Maqṣūdī, 2009; Akbarīyān & Ḥusiynī, 2010). However, I have already criticized this theory and believe that Mullā Ṣadrā's solution to the problem, based on Essential Primary Predication, differs from Avicenna's approach (see Zeraatpisheh, 2013).

We see another theory on the background of the Essential Primary Predication by Asadullāh Fallāḥī (2009). He traces the background of the discussion back to Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī (d. 1502) and his discussion of *Ḥaml al-Shayʾ ʿalā Nafsihī* (predicating a thing from itself) in statements such as "This is Zayd" or "Zayd is Zayd." However, in my opinion, the historical roots of Essential Primary Predication should be sought in the discussions that were pursued under the title of *al-Ḥaml fī al-Asmāʾ al-Mutarādīfa* (Predication in Synonyms) much earlier than Dawānī (d. 1502), an assumption that I pursue in this article. Even the nomination (Predication in Synonyms) is based on what Avicenna himself says. I believe that Predication in Synonyms is used to refer to propositions whose subject and predicate are general terms, such as "Man is man," while Predicating One Thing of Itself is used to refer to propositions whose subject and predicate are particular terms, such as "Zayd is Zayd," although this distinction is ignored by some Islamic thinkers.

Apart from what has been said, other assumptions can be made. One such hypothesis can be focused on the discussion of *māhīyyat min ḥayth hīya* (quiddity qua quiddity) in Avicenna's fifth essay of *Ilāhīyyāt al-Shifāʾ*. In this position, Avicenna distinguishes between two meanings of a universal concept: (a) universal concept *qua* universal and (b) universal concept in terms of being described as universal (Avicenna, 1983b, p. 196). He also made the same distinction with different interpretations in *al-Nijāt* (Avicenna, 200, p. 536) and *al-ʿIbāra* (Avicenna, 1983c, p. 48) under the title *faṣlᵘⁿ fī taḥqīq-i maʿnā al-kullī* (Exploring the Meaning of the Universal). Muslim philosophers and logicians have written commentaries on Avicenna in the context of this discussion, and in some commentaries of philosophers of the late Islamic period, Essential Primary Predication has also appeared. But in my opinion, rather than this discussion being the

starting point of this kind of predication, it seems that this predication has been used to better understand this discussion.[3]

Another hypothesis that may be able to trace the background of the Essential Primary Predication even further is the hypothesis of its origin in Fārābi's attempt to reduce the units necessary for a propositional contradiction to the unity of *nisbat ul-ḥukmīyya* (copula).[4] This hypothesis is supported by several indications. One of them is that, although Mullā Ṣadrā and post-Sadrians mainly use the term *waḥdat al-ḥaml* (the unity of predication) to refer to the distinction between Essential Primary Predication and other types of predication in the discussion of contradiction, Dawānī uses the term waḥdat al-nisba (the unity of copula). (See Dawānī, 1992, p. 221) Also, despite the fact that the term unity of predication is used in the Sadrians only to refer to the unity of Essential Primary Predication against other types of predication, the unity of copula in Dawānī, who is the first person to explicitly use the term Essential Primary Predication, is not limited to Essential Primary Predication, is not limited to distinguishing only this type of predication, but includes any predication, such as al-ḥaml al-khārijīyya (external predication), or al-ḥaml al-muwāṭāt (corresponding predication), etc.[5] Most important is Dawānī's claim that the unity of the copula he is talking about makes other kinds of unity required in the contradiction unnecessary, and not the other way around (ibid.). This sentence is obviously another interpretation of the same claim by Fārābī. But until sufficient evidence is found to connect the discussion of the unity of predication with the unity of copula in Fārābī, this view will remain a hypothesis.

3. Report and Analysis

In *Ishārāt*, Avicenna (d. 1037)[6] says: "When we say that the shape is predicated of the triangle, we do not mean that the *ḥaqīqa* of the triangle is the same as the *ḥaqīqa* of the shape, but what we mean is that what is called a triangle is exactly the same as what is called the shape" (Avicenna, 1996, vol. 1, p. 30). He, thereby, distinguishes between two possible meanings of a proposition in the form of "A is B": (1) the *ḥaqīqa* of A is the same as the *ḥaqīqa* of B, and (2) what is called A is exactly the same as what is called B. All of this is to foreclose the first possible meaning of the predication. What Avicenna has in mind from the second is clear. But what does it mean to say that "the *ḥaqīqa* of the subject is the same as the *ḥaqīqa* of the predicate"? The word *ḥaqīqa* has different meanings in the context of the Islamic philosophy. Avicenna, for instance, has himself used it to refer to the existence of something, and if we take it as that, it would be hard to differ the first and the second possible meaning of the predication from each other.

Fortunately enough, there is a similar fragment in Avicenna's other work, *Manṭiq al-Mashriqīyyīn*; a fragment that is seen in close connection with what he has said in *Ishārat* by later Islamic thinkers. Here Avicenna says: "The condition for a predicate to be predicated of a subject is not that its *meaning* is the same as the subject, but it must apply to it, even if it is not the same as it" (Avicenna, 1984, pp. 12-13). Avicenna uses the word *Maʿnā* (meaning) here, which is more obvious than the word *ḥaqīqa*. ʿAmr ibn Sahlān al-Sāwī (d. 1145) is one of the post-Avicennan thinkers who see a close connection between what Avicenna says in *Ishārāt* and what he says in *Manṭiq al-Mashriqīyyīn*. In *Kitāb al-Baṣāʾir*, Sāwī combined both fragments together to make a reasonable sense out of it. He says: "The condition for a predicate to be predicated of a subject is not that its *meaning* is the same as the subject, but it must apply to it, even if the *ḥaqīqa* of the predicate is not the same as the *ḥaqīqa* of its subject" (Sāwī, 2004, p. 65).

There is an important addition too. As Avicenna says in *Manṭiq al-Mashriqīyyīn* if we take the meaning of a proposition such as "A is B" as "the meaning of A is the meaning of B", then the predication would be limited to the propositions like "Man is human", and other propositions like "Man is laughing" would be wrongly excluded. Sāwī repeats this, except that he adds the title of *al-Ḥaml fī al-Asmāʾ al-Mutarādīfa* (Predication in Synonyms) to the discussion. He says: "If it were conditioned in a predication that the meaning of predicate is the same as the meaning of the subject then there would be no predication except the Predication in Synonyms". This denomination has received a wide acceptance by later thinkers as we see it repeated again and again in their works. Suhrawardī (d. 1191), for instance, says: "The meaning of predication is not the unity [of subject and predicate] in *ḥaqīqa* otherwise predication is not true except in synonymous words" (Suhrawardī, 1996, p. 146). It is quite possible that Suhrawardī was influenced by Sāwī, because we know that he read Sawi's book, *Kitāb al-Baṣāʾir*, with his teacher, Ẓahīr Fārsī (See Suhrawardī, 1999: xv). Suhrawardī uses another title too: *Ḥaml al-Shayʾ ʿalā Nafsihī* (Predicating One Thing of Itself). He says somewhere else with the same beginning: "The meaning of predication is not the unity [of subject and predicate] in *ḥaqīqa*. This would be Predicating One Thing of Itself, whereas in any *taṣdīq* (assent) there must be two *taṣawwur* (impressions)" (Suhrawardī, 2009, p. 9). By saying "In any assent there must be two impressions" Suhrawardī wants to say that you cannot predicate one thing of itself.

We see the title of *al-Ḥaml fī al-Asmāʾ al-Mutarādīfa* (Predication in Synonyms) in Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210) too. He says: "[in a proposition like "A is B"] if the *ḥaqīqa* of A is the same as the *ḥaqiqa* of B, then they are synonymous [which is not allowed]" (Rāzī, 2002, p. 34). The doctrine of having two impressions in one assent is also found in Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī

but with a different expression. He says: "Prediction, indeed, implies disunity in one respect as well as unity in another respect. Here [i.e. when we say "Triangle is a shape"] it is the concept (*mafhūm*) of triangle that differs from the concept of shape, whereas the *dhāt* to which both are applied is the same. And for this the predication is considered true" (Rāzī, 2005, vol. 1, p. 34). Here we see how Rāzī uses the word *mafhūm* (concept) instead of *ḥaqīqah* in Avicenna, just like Suhrawardī who used the word *taṣawwur* instead of it. The word *dhāt* is again one of the words which has different meanings, but it is clear that Rāzī has applied it for something extra-mental which can be considered as the referent of the concepts of triangle and shap. Using the word *mafhūm* by Rāzī as another alternatives for the word *ḥaqīqah* in Avicenna may have been due to Avicenna's own brief usage of the word in explaining his statements in *Manṭiq al-Mashriqīyyīn*, where he says: "When it is said 'Human is laughing' it does not mean that human as a concept is laughing" (Avicenna, 1984, p. 12).

It should be noted that there is a big difference between saying that the unity of *ḥaqīqa* is not to be taken as a condition of the predication, as Avicenna says, than taking the disunity of *ḥaqīqa* as a condition, as we just saw in Suhrawardī and Rāzī. It is according to the former that Avicenna takes propositions like *al-ʾInsānᵘ basharᵘⁿ* (Human is mankind) as real, but not exclusive, instances of predication, and it is according to the latter that thinkers like Rāzī doubted these propositions as being the real instances of the predication. We see Rāzī saying in *Manṭiq al-Mulakhkhaṣ* that an objector might say that "[In a proposition like "A is B"] if the *ḥaqīqa* of A is the same as the *ḥaqīqa* of B, so A and B would be synonymous. Therefore, there is no real predication here" (Razī, 2002, p. 34). Among the thinkers who insist that Predication in Synonyms is not in fact a predication, one is Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī (d. 1233). He has extended this discussion to syllogisms, and claims that an analogy consisting of propositions whose subject and predicate are synonymous is not an analogy at all. Āmidī's discussion begins with the word *ḥaqīqa*, but in the explanation of this word, he uses both the words *maʿnā* (meaning) and *mafhūm* (concept) as equivalents for it. His claim is that if it is meant by predicating B of A, and C of B in a syllogism like "A is B; B is C; So A is C", that "the *ḥaqīqa* of A is the same as the *ḥaqīqa* of B" and "the *ḥaqīqa* of B is the *ḥaqīqa* of C", then the syllogism is no syllogism at all, since there is no real predication in synonymous words. This syllogism, according to him, is made by repeating one concept, whereas to shape a real syllogism we need to have several separate concepts and propositions (Āmidī, 2002, vol. 3, p. 337). We have already seen Fārābī claims that "Synonymous words in propositions reduce them to one proposition, and does not help to have many", but it seems

from the terminology he uses that here Āmidī is under the influence of Avicenna's discussion more than the claim of Fārābī.

In Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 1274) we see how once again the claim is put forward that the predication in the meaning of the unity of subject and predicate in *ḥaqīqa* is not a real predication. Ṭūsī thinks that this is, in fact, a *Tasmīyya* (nomination) or *ʾiṭlāq al-ʾism alā al-maʿnā* (applying a name to a meaning). He, accordingly, believes that this is why, in *Ishārāt*, Avicenna talks about this unity in the chapter which is about *Alfāẓ* (words) (Ṭūsī, 1996, vol. 1, p. 30). Among his students, however, we see different opinions about this. Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 1311), for example, talks about uselessness of this kind of predication, not that it is not a predication at all (Shīrāzī, 2004, p. 65). For him, this is because such a predication is Predicating One Thing of Itself. What use does it have if you say "Man is man" or "Human is mankind"? But for Ḥasan ibn Yūsuf al-Hillī (d. 1325), another student of Ṭūsī, this kind of predication, which he insist in calling it Predication in Synonyms, is completely invalid. He says: "When a predicate is predicated of a subject, it does not mean that the *dhāt* of the subject is as the same as the *dhāt* of the predicate. That would be Predication in Synonyms which is invalid" (Hillī, 1992, p. 71). Here Hillī substituted *dhāt* with *ḥaqīqa* in Avicenna's formulation of the doctrine. It should be noted here that how Hillī has used *dhāt* in the opposite sense we see Rāzī has used it before, when he said: "Prediction, indeed, implies disunity in one respect as well as unity in another respect. Here [i.e. when we say "Triangle is a shape"] it is the concept (*mafhūm*) of triangle that differs from the concept of shape, whereas the *dhāt* to which both are applied is the same" (Rāzī, 2005, vol. 1, p. 34).This is because *dhāt*, exactly like *ḥaqīqa*, refers to both external and mental entities depended on the context. It is precisely in the sense that Rāzī uses the word *dhāt* that Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1365), for example, uses it in his discussion of synonymous words. He says: "Being synonymous means being united in concept, and not in *dhāt*" (Rāzī (Quṭb al-Dīn), 2005, p. 116).

Mīr Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413) is one of the other people who does not consider the predication in the sense of the union of the subject and the predicate in *ḥaqīqa* as a real predication according to the doctrine that in any predication there should be a difference between subject and predicate in impression or concept. But something new happens in his discussion of the issue. In a same work, for instance, we see him discussing the Predication in Synonyms separately from the Predication of One Thing of Itself. He says: "There is no predication in two synonymous words, because disunity in concept is a necessary condition in predication. And disunity in literal dictation [like when we say "Human is mankind"] is not enough" (Jurjānī, 2007, Part II, p. 35). Then he elsewhere says: "It is not

possible to predicate a particular thing of itself, since predication is a relation between two different things" (Jurjānī, 2007, Part I, p. 35). By a particular thing, he means something that is not universal, like Zayd. This is what Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī (d. 908) understood exactly, since in his commentary on this part he gives the example of "Zayd is Zayd" (Dawānī, 2007, p. 281). With the difference that Dawānī does not accept that a predication of a particular thing of itself is impossible. He thinks that here also the doctrine of the disunity of subject and predicate in impression or concept can be met, even if by mere hypothetical consideration of Zayd first in the subject of the predication and again as the predicate. He calls this hypothetical consideration of two Zayds as *taʿaddud al-ʾIltifāt* (multiplicity of consideration). Dawānnī talks about propositions like "Zayd is Zayd" under the title of Primary Predication.

We have Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Dashtakī (d. 1498), known as Sayyid Sanad, too, who is said not to accept the doctrine of disunity of subject and predicate in concept. A report is found in Alī al-Zanūzī (d. 1889) in his treatise about predication, *Risāla Ḥamlīyya*, containing several considerable point about Dashtakī's discussion (Zanūzī, 1984, p. 12). Not unlike Dawānī in his discussion of this doctrine, Dashtakī has also focused on the Predication of One Thing of Itself. In this, they may have been under the influence of Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī who is considered sometimes as one of the founders of the school of Shīrāz; the school both Dashtakī and Dawānī are members. Dashtakī, as Zanūzī claims, has even referred to some parts of Avicenna's *Shifāʾ* to show that predicating a particular thing of itself is possible. His reference may have been to this part of the book, in which Avicenna says: "The subject [of a predication] ... is either particular or universal. If it is particular, then the predicate of it is also either particular or universal. And if the predicate is also particular, then the predicate could be nothing other than the subject" (Avicenna, 1983, p. 20-21). The attention of Dashtakī and Dawānī to the permissibility of Predication of One Thing of Itself in Avicenna was probably to a large extent due to their competition in showing their better understanding of Avicenna's texts, and, as a result, of their frequent references to these texts.[7] Zanūzī says also that for Dashtakī not only it is permissible to predicate one particular thing of itself, but also necessary. This could be the reason that the Predication of One Thing of Itself is called the Primary Predication.

Dashtakī and Dawānī, both, considered it as a correct predication to predicate a particular thing of itself, although their justifications were different; one rejected the condition of disunity of subject and predicate in concept, the other put forward a new version of disunity named *taʿaddud al-ʾIltifāt* (multiplicity of consideration) that can be applied to one and the same thing. But when Mīrdāmād (d. 1041) took up this issue he seems to

prefer to make a clear distinction between Predication in Synonyms and Predicating One Thing of Itself. In fact, he gives a triple division of the predication: Common Predication, Primary Predication, and Predicating One Thing of Itself (Mīrdāmād, 2006, p. 39). By Common Predication he means all of the ordinary ones, like "Human is laughing". He calls such predication *mutaʿārif* (common) or *shāyiʿ* (common). For him it is the Predication in Synonymous Words, like "Human is mankind" that must be called Primary Predication, or as he says in some other places Essential Primary Predication. At last would be propositions like "Zayd is Zayd", which he prefers to call *Ḥaml al-Shayʾ ʿalā Nafsihī* (Predicating One Thing of Itself). It seems that the main basis of the distinction of Predication in Synonyms and Predicating One Thing of Itself is Mīrdāmād's attention to the fact that in the former, the subject and the predicate are two general concepts that have the same meaning, while in the latter the subject and predicate are one particular thing. We can understand this from the same examples given by Mīrdāmād himself. Mīrdāmād's distinction here is praised by Aḥmad ibn Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn al-ʿAlawī al-ʿĀmilī (d. 1644-1650), his student, as follows: "Among the people is he who is not able to distinguish between the Primary Predication and Predicating One Thing of Itself, so they fell into a disastrous trouble of confusing one with another. This is a difference that does not remain hidden from our opinionated expert [i.e. Mīrdāmad]" (ʿAlawī al-ʿĀmilī, 1997, p. 423).

The distinction made by Mīrdāmād between Predication in Synonyms and Predicating One Thing of Itself has apparently been forgotten after him. Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1635), his student, has only presented a dual division of predication, on one side of which there are all the common predication, which he calls "Common Technical Predication" and on the other side, "Essential Primary Predication". He says, for example: "Predication something of something else is conceived in two ways. One is the Common Technical Predication in which we have the unity of subject and predicate in existence, and the other is when we are going to say that the quiddity and concept of the subject is as the same as the quiddity and concept of the predicate, which is named Essential Primary Predication" (Mullā Ṣadrā, 1981, vol. 1, p. 292-293). Contrary to Mīrdāmād, Ṣadrā clearly called Predicating One Thing of Itself as one of the types of Essential Primary Predication: "Predicating One Thing of Itself is necessarily Essential Primary Predication, and not necessarily Common Technical one" (ibid. vol. 7, p. 324). He never gives an example to propositions like "Zayd is Zayd" as instances of Essential Primary Predication though. Ṣadrā has also declared explicitly that Predication in Synonyms is one of the types of Essential Primary Predication: "In Common Technical Predication we talk about the unity [of subject and predicate] in existence, while in Essential

Primary Predication we have the unity [of subject and predicate] in concept as in the Predication in Synonyms" (ibid. vol. 3, p. 351). This is probably what caused his greatest commentator and exponent, Mullā Hādī Sabzawārī (d. 1873) to declare more clearly in his marginal notes on Ṣadrā's *al-Shawāhid al-Rubūbīyyah* that the Predicating One Thing of Itself is one of the instances of the Primary Predication (Sabzawārī, 1981, p. 426).

Ṣadrā defines the Essential Primary Predication usually as "the unity in concept" (See, for example, Mullā Ṣadrā, 1981, vol. 7, p. 200) as well as "the unity in meaning (*maʿnā*)" (See, for example, Mullā Ṣadrā, 1984, p. 13), "the unity in quiddity (*māhīyya*)" (See, for example, Mullā Ṣadrā, 2008, p. 229), and in some rare cases as "the unity in title (*ʿinwān*)" (See, for example, Mullā Ṣadrā, 1981b, p. 28). In all these definitions, we should consider him more indebted to his predecessors and the additions they have made in the question of the meaning of predication begun by Avicenna. Take, for example, "the unity in title". We know that before him, in the same question, Afḍal al-Dīn al-Kūnajī (d. 1248) proposed a distinction in the subject of the proposition between *dhāt* (reality) of the subject and its *ʿinwān* (title) (Kūnajī, 2009, p. 83). Anyway, Ṣadrā's use of the Essential Primary Predication in his works is to the extent that it has led some people to the wrong belief that he is the one who innovated that (See, for example, Mīrbāqirī, 2001, p. 170). This shows nothing except the increasing acceptance of a meaning of predication by later Islamic thinkers, especially Ṣadrā, under the title of Essential Primary Predication; a meaning of predication that Avicenna tried his best to exclude from the possible meaning of it!

4. Conclusion

In *Ishārāt*, Avicenna put forward two possible meanings of predications in the form "A is B": (1) the *ḥaqīqa* of A is the *ḥaqīqa* of B, and (2) what is called A is what is called B. He excluded the first possible meaning from the correct meaning of predication. Post-Avicennan thinkers took the ambiguous word *ḥaqīqa* in the sense of *maʿnā* (meaning), which Avicenna himself seems to have used as an alternative in another of his books, i.e., *Manṭiq al-Mashriqīyyīn*. This is probably where the term "Predication in Synonyms" was produced for the first possible, but rejected, meaning of the predication. After Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, we witness the predominance of the use of the word *mafhūm* (concept) instead of the word *ḥaqīqa* in Avicenna. In the next commentaries on the issue, we also see the addition of the title The Predication of One Thing of Itself. It seems that Dashtakī and Dawānī's frequent references to Avicenna's texts made them doubt the validity of the claim that the Predication of One Thing of Itself is not a true

predication. Their doubts about the truth of this claim, despite the difference felt between the Predication of One Thing of Itself and the Predication in Synonyms, extended to the latter and thus to the general claim of the invalidity of the first possible meaning in propositions like "A is B" put forward by Avicenna, i.e. the possible meaning that "the ḥaqīqa of A is the ḥaqīqa of B". This eventually led to the acceptance of this meaning in all its modes under the title of Essential Primary Predication among later Islamic thinkers, such as Mullā Ṣadrā. Here we see how the Predication of One Thing of Itself has played a mediating role for the Predication in Synonyms to be accepted under the new title of Essential Primary Predication.

EndNote

1 "Essential Primary Predication" is called sometimes with the short title of "Essential Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-Dhātī*) or "Primary Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-Awwalī*). "Technical Common Predication" is also called sometimes "Technical Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-Ṣanāʿī*), "Common Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-Shāyiʿ*), "Common Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-Mutaʿārif*), and "Accidental Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-ʿAraḍī*), or even sometimes with the compound titles of "Common Common Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-Shāyiʿ al-Mutaʿārif*), "Common accidental Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-ʿAraḍī al-Mutaʿārif*), "Common Accidental Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-ʿAraḍī al-Shāyiʿ*), "Technical accidental Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-ʿAraḍī al-Ṣanāʿī*), "Technical Common Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-Mutaʿārif al-Ṣanāʿī*), and "Technical Familiar Common Predication" (*al-Ḥaml al-Mutaʿārif al-Shāyiʿ al-Ṣanāʿī*). (For the citation related to each of these names see Zeraatpisheh, 2012, p. 67; 95; 111; Zeraatpisheh, 2015, pp. 17-20)
2 Mostly in Persian. The English works are limited to one presentation (see Zeraatpisheh, 2021b) and a recently published article (El-Rouayheb, 2023).
3 For a research in this see Zeraatpisheh, 2012, pp. 46-63.
4 For a discussion of Fārābī's theory, see Dānishpazhūh, 1975.
5 For a research in the different meanings of the unity of predication, including different meaning of the unity of copula in Dawānī, see Zeraatpisheh & Ranjbardarestani, 2018.
6 All of the dates, except al-ʿAlawī al-ʿĀmilī's and al-Zanūzī's, are according to Rouayheb (2019).
7 For a discussion about this see Adamson, 2014, p. 375.

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