

JYX



This is a self-archived version of an original article. This version may differ from the original in pagination and typographic details.

Author(s): Daşdemir, Yusuf

Title: Speaking of what is not : Hatibzâde and Taşköprizâde Kâsım on the existential import of negative propositions

Year: 2024

Version: Published version

Copyright: © 2024 the Authors

Rights: CC BY 4.0

Rights url: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Please cite the original version:

Daşdemir, Y. (2024). Speaking of what is not : Hatibzâde and Taşköprizâde Kâsım on the existential import of negative propositions. *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, Early online. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09608788.2024.2315589>



Speaking of what is not: Hatibzâde and Taşköprizâde Kâsım on the existential import of negative propositions

Yusuf Daşdemir

To cite this article: Yusuf Daşdemir (07 Mar 2024): Speaking of what is not: Hatibzâde and Taşköprizâde Kâsım on the existential import of negative propositions, British Journal for the History of Philosophy, DOI: [10.1080/09608788.2024.2315589](https://doi.org/10.1080/09608788.2024.2315589)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09608788.2024.2315589>



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 07 Mar 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 270



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

Speaking of what is not: Hatibzâde and Taşköprizâde Kâsım on the existential import of negative propositions

Yusuf Daşdemir

Department of Philosophy, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland

ABSTRACT

This paper undertakes an in-depth examination of the intriguing argument for the existential import of negative propositions by the fifteenth-century Ottoman scholar Hatibzâde Mehmed (d. 1496) and the counterarguments by his disciple, Taşköprizâde Kâsım (d. 1513). It argues that this discussion is a significant example of Ottoman scholars engaging in long-standing disputes concerning the nature and ontological ground of negative propositions, which date back to Plato and Aristotle. It is also intended to underline the need for considering not only logic texts but also works primarily associated with other disciplines in order to attain a comprehensive picture of logical discussions in the post-classical period of Islamic thought.

ARTICLE HISTORY Received 8 May 2023; Revised 6 June 2023; Accepted 3 February 2024

KEYWORDS Existential import; Arabic logic; Ottoman logic; negation; negative propositions

Introduction

“A proposition has existential import if and only if it cannot be true unless its subject refers to some existing object(s)” (Chatti, “The Cube, the Square”, 102). In other words, it has existential import (EI) “if it entails the corresponding existential proposition based on its subject term” (Horn, *A Natural History*, 24). ‘S is P’ is said, therefore, to have EI if its truth presupposes that ‘S is’ or that there is at least one thing that is S. Conversely, if the subject of a proposition is empty with nothing existent to which it refers, then the proposition is inevitably false. In Arabic logic, it has been held that only affirmative propositions have EI.¹ Nevertheless, throughout the tradition’s extensive history,

CONTACT Yusuf Daşdemir  dasdemiry@hotmail.com

¹Ibn Sinâ is quite clear in this regard (see, e.g. *Al-Najât*, 16; *Al-Shifâ’*: *Al-Maqûlât*, 258–259; *Al-Shifâ’*: *Al-’Ibâra*, 80–82), and his view seems to have substantially determined the route subsequent generations took. See also Chatti, *Arabic Logic*, 26–36. Unfortunately, the secondary literature on Arabic logicians’

© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

dissenting voices have emerged, challenging this prevalent position, such as the fifteenth-century Ottoman scholar, Hatibzâde Muhyiddin Mehmed (d. 1496).²

In his influential set of super-glosses on al-Sayyid al-Sharîf al-Jurjânî's (d. 1413) glosses on Shams al-Dîn al-Işfahânî's (d. 1349) commentary upon Naşîr al-Dîn al-Tûsî's (d. 1274) widely studied philosophical kalâm handbook, the *Tajrîd al-i'tiqād*, Hatibzâde often adopts a rather polemical style, engaging in objections to various aspects of the glossator's interpretations. Given the significant esteem in which Jurjânî was held by contemporary Ottoman scholars, it should come as no surprise that Hatibzâde's critical stance gave rise to numerous rejoinders within the literature of *Tajrîd* glosses and treatises on mental existence, two genres that were very popular in the Ottoman scholarly circles of the final quarter of the fifteenth century and the initial half of the sixteenth century.³

Regarding the issue of EI, for instance, Hatibzâde (*Ḥawāshî*, fols. 39a–b)⁴ raises three objections to Jurjânî:

- (1) Like affirmative ones, negative propositions have EI.
- (2) Just like other affirmative propositions, the affirmative propositions with negative predicates (*sālibat al-maḥmūl*) have EI.
- (3) Not only the subject-term but also the predicate of any proposition should denote something existing.

These claims, at odds with the orthodox theory of EI, elicited elaborate responses from Taşköprizâde Kâsım (d. 1513), who once studied with Hatibzâde.⁵

The paper picks up (1) as its subject,⁶ and its first section analyzes Hatibzâde's argument for it while the second is devoted to Taşköprizâde Kâsım's

theories of EI is rather limited. Among the studies immediately related to the subject are Chatti, "Existential Import", Daşdemir, "The Problem", and El-Rouayheb, "Dashtakî (d. 1498)".

²Another significant figure who questions the prevailing stance of Arabic logicians on the EI is Shihâb al-Dîn al-Suhrawardî (d. 1191), the founder of the Illuminationist School, who pursued a similar approach with Hatibzâde's, albeit on a distinct ground. For the overall reductionist project of Suhrawardî, see Kaukua, *Suhrawardî's Illuminationism*, Chapter 2, and for the translation of the relevant passage, see 38. On the other hand, on Hatibzâde's life and work, see Taşköprizâde, *Eş-Şakâ'iku'n-nu'mâniyye*, 250–255; Bursalı, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, 1/307; Brockelmann, *History of the Arabic Written Tradition*, 1:301, 588; 2:257; Suppl. 1:668, 880, 964; Suppl. 2:332. For the sake of convenience, the Ottoman proper names are transliterated hereafter according to the modern Turkish conventions.

³For the historical reasons why discussions of mental existence became widespread in this period, see Fazlıoğlu, "Between Reality and Mentality".

⁴The references to Hatibzâde's super-glosses throughout the paper are to the copy in MS Istanbul, Beyazit Manuscript Library, Veliyüddin 2006 (henceforth, *Ḥawāshî*), which was handwritten by Taşköprizâde Ahmed, as the colophon on fol. 236a witnesses by noting that he completed the copy on the 20th of al-Jumâdiya l-Ukhrâ, 930 (the 25th of April, 1524).

⁵Taşköprizâde Ahmed (*Eş-Şakâ'iku'n-nu'mâniyye*, 616) mentions Hatibzâde among the masters of his paternal uncle, Taşköprizâde Kâsım.

⁶His arguments for (2) deserves an independent treatment that is beyond the scope of this paper while those for (3) will be occasionally touched upon in the following.

counterarguments. The third section attempts to demonstrate the pertinence of the discussion within the broader context of an age-old debate concerning the ontological ground or truthmaker of negative propositions, thereby linking it to the contemporary quandary recognized as the paradox of negative judgement.

The study aims to underscore the importance of broadening the scope of inquiry to include not only logic textbooks and their commentaries but also texts primarily associated with other disciplines. This comprehensive approach is essential to obtain a holistic and nuanced understanding of the intricate and far-reaching logical discussions of the post-classical period of Islamic philosophy.

1. Hatibzâde on the existential import of negative propositions

To begin with, let me give a quick overview of what I take as the orthodox position of Arabic logicians on the EI of propositions. It is necessary on this juncture to refer to the onto-logical principle, I will call the 'principle of dependence' (*qā'idat al-far'iyya*),⁷ which always makes appearance in various formulations at the centre of discussions of EI.

The principle of dependence: one thing's existing (*thubūt/wujūd*) for, or being affirmed (*ithbāt/ijāb*) of, another depends on the other thing's itself existing.⁸

In negative terms, nothing could exist for a non-existent subject; nor could a predicate be affirmed of such a subject. In sum, no property could conceivably subsist in a subject if the latter by no means existed, and no predicate could be affirmatively said of a non-referring subject-term.⁹

Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī al-Taḥṭānī (d. 1365), one of the most influential logicians of the post-Avicennian period, accounts for the EI of affirmative propositions with reference to the principle. For him, nothing could be affirmed of a non-existent subject because of the necessary fact that affirming (*ijāb*)

⁷In recent secondary literature, this foundational principle has been referred to under various designations. For instance, Benevich uses the "positive of positive rule" ("The Reality of the Non-Existent," 37), while Adamson and Benevich use 'the affirmation principle' (*The Heirs of Avicenna*, 140). Zamboni prefers "the existential entailment of attribution" (*At the Roots of Causality*, 77) to speak of relatively early formulations of the principle. Nevertheless, taking into consideration the facts that the prevailing formulations of the principle frequently include the term 'dependent' (*far'*) and that Mullā Ṣadrā calls it "*qā'idat al-far'iyya*" (*Metaphysical Penetrations*, 29), I adopt in the following the designation of 'the principle of dependence'. I am grateful to Hassan Rezakhanly for convincing me that this rendering is preferable to others on philosophical grounds.

⁸Although the underlying idea of the principle can be easily traced back to Ibn Sīnā and his immediate successors (see, e.g. Ibn Sīnā, *Al-Ilāhiyyāt*, 33; *Al-Shifā': Al-'Ibāra*, 79; Bahmanyār, *Al-Taḥṣīl*, 288–289), it seems, we owe Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī its first formulation in its fullness as "something's obtaining (*ḥuṣūl*) for something else is dependent on that thing's obtaining in itself" (*Al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyya*, 1:130; see also *Al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyya*, 1:132; *Al-Mulakhkhas*, 1:296).

⁹There is another principle accounting for the fact that negative propositions are true in the case that the subject-term is empty: "The absence of something from another could be due to the absence of the other itself" (Jurjānī, *Hāshiyat al-Tajrīd*, 2:197).

one thing of another depends on the existence of the subject of the affirmation (*al-muthbat lah*). Negation, on the other hand, does not adhere to this limitation, because if affirming something of a non-existent subject is not true, then denying it of the same subject must be true. Hence, the truth of a negative proposition does not presuppose that its subject-term refers to something existent (*Taḥrīr al-qawā'id al-mantiqiyya*, 99).

Hatibzâde, however, is not content with this position and, as we saw above, argues that negative propositions and affirmative propositions with a negative predicate (*sâlibat al-maḥmûl*) also have EI. For him, the requirement of EI should be extended to the predicate of propositions, too; the proposition will be true only if its predicate also refers to something existent. Hatibzâde sets forth his argument for the EI of negative propositions as follows:

[t1] The first [of my objections is that] the truth of a negative proposition is due to the predicate's being absent from the subject in *nafs al-amr*, which depends on the two [parts of the proposition] being multiple and different from each other in *nafs al-amr*, because negating something of itself could [never] be true. Their being multiple and different from each other are in turn based on their being distinct from each other with respect to *nafs al-amr*. 'Being multiple' and 'being distinct' are two positive attributes that apply to both the subject and the predicate, and therefore their subjects must also exist and be present. There is no difference, therefore, between affirmative and negative propositions in terms of the requirement that the subject of each exist during the time the predicate is considered.

(Hatibzâde, *Ḥawāshī*, fols. 39a21–39b4)

I will reconstruct the argument in the text, which I will call the distinctness argument, as follows:

The distinctness argument:

(Assumption) A negative proposition like 'S is not P' is true only if S exists.

(Premise 1) 'S is not P' is true only if P is absent from S in *nafs al-amr*.

(Premise 2) P is absent from S in *nafs al-amr* only if S and P are two different things in *nafs al-amr*.

(Premise 3) S and P are two different things in *nafs al-amr* only if they are distinct from each other in *nafs al-amr*.

(Premise 4) S and P are two things and distinct from each other only if they exist in *nafs al-amr* (during the time that P is taken as different and distinct from S).

(Conclusion) Therefore, 'S is not P' is true only if S and P exist in *nafs al-amr* (during the time that S and P are different and distinct from each other).

The argument seems valid, but to establish whether it is also sound, we should take a closer look at the premises and Hatibzâde's justification for them.

(Premise 1) 'S is not P' is true only if P is absent from S in *nafs al-amr*:

This premise differentiates between the proposition and what it is about,¹⁰ which it refers to as *nafs al-amr*,¹¹ grounding the truth of the former in the latter. A proposition is about a state of affairs in *nafs al-amr*, and it is true only if this state is just as the proposition says it is. That is, the proposition is made true by the state of affairs in *nafs al-amr*. In Hatibzâde's interpretation, the state of affairs in the context of a negative proposition is nothing but P's being absent from S. This interpretation appears consistent with the conventional understanding of predication, given that Ibn Sînâ, for instance, defines affirmation as the judgement that something exists for something else and negation as the judgement/judgement that something does not exist for another (*Al-Najât*, 13; also, *Al-Shifâ': Al-'Ibâra*, 42–43).¹² Hence, an affirmative proposition signifies that the predicate exists for the subject in *nafs al-amr*, whereas a negative one denotes that the predicate does not exist for the subject therein. The proposition is true only if the situation in *nafs al-amr* is as the proposition says it is, i.e. if there is a correspondence between the proposition and the state of affairs in *nafs al-amr*.

In fact, the relationship between a negative proposition and the reality it is about is symmetrical: if the predicate is not present for the subject, the negative proposition is true, and conversely, if the proposition is true, the predicate is absent from the subject. This symmetry would be succinctly captured if Premise 1 were put as a statement of logical equivalence: 'S is not P' is true *if and only if* P is absent from S in *nafs al-amr*. However, the current formulation of the premise with 'only if' highlights Hatibzâde's emphasis on the fact that the situation in *nafs al-amr*, the right-hand part of the premise, serves as the cause for the truth of the negative proposition in the left-hand part. The causal relation is not symmetrical; it is not because the proposition is true that the predicate does not exist for the subject in reality.

As a final point related to the Premise 1, I should handle *nafs al-amr*, which stands for the domain of reality that is supposed to make the proposition true. Unfortunately, Hatibzâde provides no explanation of what he means by the term, but his glosses furnish us with some important hints for speculating. He, for instance, silently passes over Jurjânî's remarks about the term in his *Ḥāshiyat al-Tajrid* (2:201), although he is normally very vocal in disagreeing with him. Taking his silence as a sign of agreement, I will assume that Jurjânî's

¹⁰In fact, Hatibzâde regards this distinction as a necessary one, giving it a highly crucial role to play in his solution to the liar paradox as a part of his manoeuvre to dismiss certain self-referential sentences as not propositions. For the edited Arabic text and translation of his treatise devoted to the paradox, see Daşdemir, "A Fifteenth-Century Ottoman Treatise".

¹¹I will discuss *nafs al-amr* in detail shortly.

¹²For similar definitions, see Fārābî, *Kitāb al-Qiyās*, 14; Rāzî, *Al-Mulakhkhaṣ*, 1:112.

view of *nafs al-amr* mirrors Hatibzâde's. Let us then examine Jurjānī's theory of *nafs al-amr* in more detail.

According to Ṭūsī, one of the first figures to influentially associate *nafs al-amr* with the role of a truthmaker for certain propositions: when only one or neither of the elements exists extramentally, the proposition is true if it corresponds to *nafs al-amr* (see Işfahānī, *Tasdīd al-qawā'id*, 2:200). Commenting on these sentences (*Hāshiyat al-Tajrīd*, 2:201–202), Jurjānī explicates the concepts 'mental', 'extramental', and *nafs al-amr* as well as the relationship between them. He first reminds us that there are only two kinds of existence: (i) primary (*aşīl*) existence from which effects proceed and in which properties manifest and (ii) secondary (*zillī*) existence from which no such effects proceed. The latter can only be conceived of in the perceptive faculties (*al-quwā al-darrāka*), which is why it is called 'mental existence', whereas the former obtains only outside these faculties. Hence, extramental existence is opposed to existence in the mind. *Nafs al-amr*, on the other hand, literally means the thing in itself (*nafsu l-shay'i fī ḥaddi dhātihī*), and accordingly, "The thing exists in *nafs al-amr*" means that it is existent in itself (see Rezakhanly, "Jalāl ad-Dīn ad-Dawānī's Solution", 194). That is, its existence is not contingent upon someone's perspective (*i'tibār*) or supposition (*fard*) such that it would still exist even if all perspectives and suppositions were ignored.

Jurjānī also addresses the relationship between these concepts. *Nafs al-amr* in a sense encompasses both the mental and the extramental realms of existence; it contains the latter in its entirety, for whatever exists extramentally also exists in *nafs al-amr*, but not vice versa. On the other hand, there is a partial overlap between *nafs al-amr* and the mind, as both contain some things that the other does not. For example, false judgments, like 'Five is even', can occur in a mind but cannot be realized in *nafs al-amr*.¹³ It is clear therefore that *nafs al-amr* for Jurjānī is a term that refers to the sum of extramental existence and a part of mental existence.

At this point, a possible objection may occur: if *nafs al-amr* is supposed to be an objective and mind-independent mode of existence, how or in what sense could it overlap with mental existence, even if only partially? How could something existent in the mind exist objectively and mind-independently? This question brings us to the most problematic aspect of the theory of *nafs al-amr*, an explanation of which is in order.

¹³For an examination of Jurjānī's theory of *nafs al-amr*, see Hasan, "Foundations of Science", 181–212, but notice the common mistake of misattributing to Jurjānī a treatise titled as *Risāla fī taḥqīq nafs al-amr*, which is in fact by Shams al-Dīn al-Samarqandī, as recently shown by Aktaş, "An Examination of Authenticity". Therefore, the author's interpretations based on the treatise should be taken with caution.

Let me first distinguish between two classes of entities that are mentally existent, based on Jurjānī (*al-Hāshiya al-kubrā*, 125; for the translation of the relevant passage, see Hasan, “Foundations of Science”, 420):

- (i) The things whose existence in the mind relies solely on the assumption of the mind. This class, termed by Jurjānī as the “suppositional mental” (*dihniyyan farāḍiyyan*), encompasses counterfactual fabrications of the mind, devoid of, and indeed impossible to possess, existence in *nafs al-amr*. Jurjānī gives ‘the evenness of five’ as an example of the class. One could believe, for example, that five is even, but this belief is doomed to be false because it lacks a correspondent in *nafs al-amr*. Nonetheless, notice that its parts, namely ‘evenness’ and ‘five’, could well be existent in *nafs al-amr* to function as the subject or predicate of a true proposition, such as ‘Five is odd’ and ‘Four is even’.
- (ii) The sort of things, Jurjānī refers to as the “real mental” (*dihniyyan ḥaqīqiyyan*), whose existence in the mind takes its source from certain extramental facts, such as the evenness of four and the entailment relation between sunrise and the presence of daylight. This is because although the evenness of four and the mentioned entailment relation exist only in the mind, they possess a real aspect; one could arguably claim that there are no such things as ‘evenness’ or ‘entailment’ in the extramental reality despite one’s believing that four is even and sunrise entails the presence of daylight, even if no mind or mental supposition is considered. They are *in the mind*, but do not depend on the *assumptions* of the mind.¹⁴ Hence, it is the real mental part of mental existence that overlaps with *nafs al-amr*.

Another point concerning *nafs al-amr*, both Jurjānī and Hatibzāde disagree with Ṭūsī that *nafs al-amr* is identical to the Agent Intellect (*al-‘aql al-fa‘ī‘āl*), the tenth of the celestial intellects according to Muslim philosophers’ emanationist scheme (see, e.g. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes on Intellect*; McGinnis, *Avicenna*, 130–137). Hatibzāde raises three counterarguments against this view (*Ḥawāshī*, fol. 105b5–9), which, for brevity’s sake, I will here leave aside.¹⁵

It seems therefore justified to conclude that, for Hatibzāde, *nafs al-amr* is a term used to refer to a mode of existence that applies to all externally existent things and only some mental existents. It signifies that these exist objectively

¹⁴Noteworthy here is the view that some predicates that are not extramentally existent could be truly said of extramentally existent subjects because it will serve as the pivot of Taşköprizāde Kâsım’s counterargument.

¹⁵For Jurjānī’s objections against Ṭūsī’s view, see *Hāshiyat al-Tajrid*, 2:202; for the translation of the relevant passages, see Hasan, “Foundations of Science”, 425–426.

and independently of the *assumptions* of minds. According to Hatibzâde, to locate *nafs al-amr* in the Agent Intellect is also wrong as it would lead to certain absurdities. Therefore, to wrap it up, he repeats *nafs al-amr* in his argument to make it clear that for him, the subject of a negative proposition must have an objective mode of existence that is independent of the assumptions or perspectives of any individual mind.

(Premise 2) *P* is absent from *S* in *nafs al-amr* only if *S* and *P* are two different things in *nafs al-amr*:

Regarding this premise, I must state that it is the most crucial, but at the same time the most vulnerable, part of the argument, as evinced by the fact that both of Taşköprizâde's counterarguments will attack this premise. Hence, delaying the elaborate discussion of the premise to the next section, I will call attention to some basic points. First, with this premise Hatibzâde moves from the view of negation as the absence of predicate from the subject to the view of negation as the lack of co-extension between the subject and predicate. It is noteworthy that this transition is facilitated by Hatibzâde's theory of predication,¹⁶ according to which predication involves the unity of two terms differing in meaning in terms of *dhât*, the thing(s) to which the subject and predicate correctly apply (*Ḥawāshī*, fol. 107a3–6).¹⁷ That is, for Hatibzâde, an affirmative proposition signifies that the extension of the subject is (at least partly) overlaps with that of the predicate. A negative proposition, this theory implies, is true if the subject and predicate are extensionally distinct, there being nothing to which the subject and predicate jointly refers.

Nevertheless, Hatibzâde seems to have added a highly crucial spin to this theory. If an affirmative predication signifies the extensional identity of the subject and predicate, then a negative one entails its negation, i.e. the non-existence of that identity. But we still have a negative concept, the non-existence of identity, which could not help Hatibzâde achieve the conclusion he sought, given that he tries to recast negative propositions in *positive* terms. The lack of the identity between two things is by no means a positive thing that could necessitate for them to exist. To overcome this problem of negativeness, he has explained the negation in the negative propositions in terms of *being two different things* in this premise, instead of the

¹⁶On different interpretations of predication in Islamic philosophy, see, e.g. Tahtāni, *Tahrīr al-qawā'id al-manṭiqiyya*, 91–92; Işfahāni, *Tasdiq al-Qawā'id*, 2:202 ff.; Jurjāni, *Ḥāshiyat al-Tajrīd*, 2:273; Tahānawī, *Kashshāf*, s.v. "ḥaml".

¹⁷Although the term '*dhāt*' could be employed to mean 'reality' and 'essence', these particular meanings would not be suitable within the context of the theory of predication because then it would exclude the predication of non-essential attributes. By interpreting '*dhāt*' as 'the thing to which the subject and predicate are correctly apply', Hatibzâde identifies '*dhāt*' with the extension of terms. This interpretation effectively broadened his theory of predication, permitting the predication of non-essential attributes and even negative predicates. For different meanings of '*dhāt*', see Tahānawī, *Kashshāf*, s.v. "*dhāt*".

denial or non-existence of identity. Being two different things (*ta'addud* and *taghāyur*) could count as possible enough to resolve the problem, or at least, Hatibzāde seems to have assumed it so. However, note here that being extensionally identical and being two different things are not contradictory if both are positive and apply to the existent subjects, which is the deadly complication of the operation Hatibzāde has carried out to get rid of negativeness.

Probably because of its vulnerability, Hatibzāde needs to justify this premise by stating that if the predicate's absence from the subject were not because of their being two different things, then there would occur an absurdity, which is one thing's being negated of itself. This is because we have a negative proposition 'S is not P', which negates P of S. If one were to deny that they are two different things, one would have to commit to the idea that they are one and the same thing. Yet in this case, the proposition denies one thing of itself, which is impossible. Therefore, for Hatibzāde, S and P must be different things. However, as I already pointed out, Hatibzāde seems to have missed a point here, which is the fact that 'being one thing' and 'being two things' are not contradictory, there being a third option: if either or both of S and P are not existent, then there remains no possibility of their being one or being two. This is the crux of Taşköprizāde Kâsım's second counterargument to be discussed in the next section. Let us now proceed to Premise 3.

(Premise 3) S and P are two different things in nafs al-amr only if they are distinct from each other in nafs al-amr:

I think, this premise is unnecessary in the sense that the argument yields the same conclusion without it. This is because, first, we have no textual evidence that Hatibzāde finds any significant difference between the two notions of "being two different things" (*ta'addud*) and "being distinct" (*tamāyuz*). Even if we grant that there is such a difference, Hatibzāde's mention of "being two things" in Premise 4 renders this premise redundant. He might have wanted to take advantage of the fact that 'distinctness' made more of an appearance in philosophical/theological discussions.¹⁸ So let us proceed to Premise 4.

(Premise 4) S and P are two things and distinct from each other only if they exist in nafs al-amr (during the time that P is taken as different and distinct from S):

Hatibzāde sets forth a justificatory argument for this premise, too. Although he does not make explicit, this argument depends on the principle of dependence. He just states that "being two things" and "being distinct" are two positive properties, assuming that, according to the principle, the subject

¹⁸On the conviction that distinctness is relation that requires its *relata* to be existent, see, e.g. Rāzi, *Al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyya*, 1:131–132, 439.

of a positive predicate must be positive/existent. Moreover, these two relational properties apply to both S and P in the same manner: 'P is distinct from S' is as true as 'S is distinct from P'. Therefore, both S and P must exist if they are two different and distinct things, which is why Hatibzâde claimed in (3) above that the predicate of a proposition must also refer to something existent.

Hatibzâde needs also to qualify the existence of S and P by the stipulation that they must exist as long as they are different and distinct (*ḥāl 'tibār al-ḥukm*), which is the point that renders his argument controversial, as we will see shortly. By this, Hatibzâde must have been alluding to the distinction between *ḥāl al-ḥukm*, the time span during which the judgement is made, and *ḥāl 'tibār al-ḥukm*, the period during which the predicate is present for, or absent from, the subject in reality, depending on whether the proposition is affirmative or negative.¹⁹ I must regretfully note, however, that this is another case where Hatibzâde uses terms without explaining them. However, we find sufficient explication of the distinction in the primary literature to understand what he means by *ḥāl 'tibār al-ḥukm*.

In his *Al-Mulakhkhaṣ* (1:115), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210) raises an objection to the prevalent view of EI, particularly challenging the conviction that, unlike negative propositions, affirmative ones require EI for their subjects. If, by asserting negative predications being true of empty subjects, logicians mean the subject's being empty both in the extramental and mental realms, this is false. Such things would fall beyond the purview of human knowledge, rendering proposition-making about them impossible at all, be it affirmative or negative. On the contrary, if they mean that the subject's referents do not exist extramentally but do exist in the mind, then the distinction between affirmative and negative propositions will dissolve because both can be made about entities existing in the mind but devoid of external reality. This is because affirmation is a judgement, and as such, it requires the existence of the subject and the predicate only in the mind as its parts.

Later logicians responded to this objection by delineating a distinction through temporal qualifications between two kinds of existence that negative and affirmative propositions require for their respective subjects, which I call judgemental and attributional existence:

- (a) **judgemental existence:** Any judgement, by virtue of its very nature as a judgement, necessitates its subject to exist in the mind during the act of judgement, that is, as long as the judge continues to engage in the act of

¹⁹Note here that *ḥukm* is used for judgement in the first case, but for predicate in the second; on these two meanings see Tahānawī, *Kashshāf*, s.v. "*ḥukm*". Also, we learn from Rezakhany ("The Paradox", 154) that the distinction was deployed by Ṣadr al-Sharī' al-Maḥbūbī (d. 1346) in his attempt to solve the paradox of the absolute unknown.

judgement. This is because it is impossible to form a judgement without there already being any of its parts. The subjects of affirmative and negative propositions and even their predicates share in this mental kind of existence, which is usually referred to by expressions like *ḥāl al-ḥukm* or *waqt al-ḥukm*.

- (b) **Attributional existence:** Affirmative judgements, however, necessitate an additional form of existence only for their subjects (not for their predicates), contingent upon the time during which the subject is attributed the predicate. This requirement is grounded in the principle of dependence, asserting that the presence of an attribute (*al-ṣifa*) for the attributed (*al-mawṣūf*) relies on the existence of the attributed. For instance, if the predicate is always existent for the subject, then the subject must endure perpetually; if for a specific time, then for that time, and so forth. This particular form of existence is denoted by expressions such as *ḥāl thubūt al-maḥmūl* or *ḥāl 'tibār al-ḥukm*. Exceptionally, Taḥṭānī (*Lawāmi' al-asrār*, 276) speaks of this attributional kind of existence concerning negative propositions and refers to it by the phrase of the “time of the removal of the predicate” (*ḥāl rtifā' al-maḥmūl*). Yet he is clear that the subjects of negative propositions do not need to have this mode of existence.²⁰

Noteworthy here is that Hatibzāde specifies in Premise 4 the requirement of this attributional existence for the subjects of negative propositions. For him, S and P must exist as different and distinct entities for the proposition ‘S is not P’ to be true. By this assertion, he contends that negative propositions have EI and not only the subject but also the predicate of the proposition must refer to something existent, contradicting the majority of Arabic logicians on these two points, as mentioned in (1) and (3) above.

To conclude, I could state that Hatibzāde’s argument for the EI of negative propositions, albeit valid, is quite susceptible to criticisms of soundness, particularly in two key aspects: Premise 2 and 3 and the requirement of attributional existence for subjects of negative propositions in Premise 4. These two points precisely indicate where Taṣkōprizāde Kāsim will attack.

2. The counterarguments by Taṣkōprizāde Kāsim

A disciple of Hatibzāde, Taṣkōprizāde Kāsim²¹ dedicates a notable place to the refutation of his master’s argument for the EI of negative propositions

²⁰As far as I could establish, the first scholar to draw this distinction in these terms is Shams al-Dīn al-Samarqandī (d. 1322): *Kistāsu'l-efkār*, 199; *Sharḥ al-Qistās*, fols. 60b–61a. See also Tūsi, *Asās al-iqtibās fi l-mantiq*, 110; Jurjānī, *Ḥāshiyat al-Sayyid*, 137; Taṣkōprizāde Ahmed, *Al-Shuhūd al-'ayni*, 45.

²¹For his life, see Taṣkōprizāde Ahmed, *Eṣ-ṣakā'iku'n-nu'māniyye*, 616–618; see also Arıcı & Arıkan, *Taşradan Merkeze*, 22–24.

in his treatise of mental existence, the only extant work by him to my best knowledge. He raises two counterarguments against Hâtibzâde, the first of which is against Premise 2 and 3 of the argument while the second against the argument Hatibzâde sets forth to justify Premise 2.

He initiates his first counterargument with a conjecture regarding what Hatibzâde may have meant by “the absence” in his argument. He discerns two plausible ways to interpret this term: (i) the absence of predicate from the subject or (ii) *our judgement* of that absence. He would be ready to agree with Hatibzâde, Taşköprizâde Kâsım says, if he meant by this term our judgement of the absence (ii), because, in that case, Hatibzâde’s argument would be of no use in arriving at the conclusion he sought that there is no difference between affirmative and negative propositions in terms of EI in *nafs al-amr* (*Risāla fī l-wujūd al-dhihnī*, fol. 181b20–22). This is because, as I discussed, there is an agreement that negative propositions qua mental judgements require judgemental existence for its parts, viz. the subject and predicate. Yet this could not be what Hatibzâde meant to ascribe to negative propositions as is clear from his caveat at the end of Premise 4, “during the time that *P* is taken as different and distinct from *S*”. That is, he argued for an attributional mode of existence for the subject. Therefore, it is obvious that Hatibzâde could not have meant by “the absence” our judgement of absence.²²

Taşköprizâde Kâsım then addresses (i) to reject it in more detail, arguing that Hatibzâde would be wrong even if he meant the absence itself because this would not lead to the conclusion he desired, either:

[t2] [It is] rejected because, in that case, he must have taken *nafs al-amr* as the container (*zarfan*) for the *self* of the absence (*li-nafsi l-intifā'*), not for its *presence* and *existence*, and [if this is the case], then it would be quite possible for the absence not to be present therein although *nafs al-amr* is the container for its self, just as with other things because the external world or the mind serves as a container for their very selves but not for their existence. In that case, the absence would not be distinct [in *nafs al-amr*], because the presence of something for something else depends only on the presence of that of which it is affirmed. If it has no presence, it could not be distinct, and if the absence is not distinct in *nafs al-amr*, it is not necessary for its *relata* to be distinct from each other in *nafs al-amr* either, because a relation entails that its *relata* be distinct in *nafs al-amr* only if it is itself distinct therein. Now, because these two [*relata*] are not distinct in *nafs al-amr*, being two different things, which depends on being distinct, will not hold true of them.

(Taşköprizâde Kâsım, *Risāla fī l-wujūd al-dhihnī*, fol. 181b10–15)

²²Taşköprizâde Kâsım’s nephew Taşköprizâde Ahmed (*Hāshiya ‘alā Hāshiyat al-Tajrīd*, fol. 73b; *Al-Shuhūd al-‘aynī*, 48) also claims that Hatibzâde’s argument results from his misconception of the distinction between *ḥāl al-ḥukm* and *ḥāl ‘tibār al-ḥukm*, that is, the judgemental and attributional forms of existence I discussed above.

I will address the question of what it means for *nafs al-amr* to be a container for the self or existence/presence of a predicate, but first I will reconstruct Taşköprizâde Kâsım's argument to make its logical structure clearer:

Taşköprizâde Kâsım's first counterargument:

(Assumption) It is possible that P is absent from S in *nafs al-amr* although they are not different and distinct therein.

(Premise 1) If P is absent from S in *nafs al-amr*, *nafs al-amr* is a container for the self of the absence.

(Premise 2) If *nafs al-amr* is a container for the self of the absence, it is possibly not existent therein.

(Premise 3) If the absence is possibly not existent in *nafs al-amr*, it is possibly not distinct there.

(Premise 4) If the absence is possibly not distinct in *nafs al-amr*, its *relata*, i.e. S and P, are possibly not distinct, either.

(Premise 5) If S and P are possibly not distinct in *nafs al-amr*, they are possibly not two different things, either.

(Conclusion) If P is absent from S in *nafs al-amr*, S and P are possibly not two different things therein.

Taşköprizâde Kâsım tries here to refute the implications in Premise 2 and 3 of Hatibzâde's argument, which argue together that "If S and P are two different and distinct things in *nafs al-amr*, then P is absent from S in *nafs al-amr*". Against this, Taşköprizâde Kâsım grants that "P is absent from S in *nafs al-amr*" to prove that this implies the contradictory of the antecedent of Hatibzâde's premise, i.e., "S and P are possibly not two different and distinct things in *nafs al-amr*". In formal terms, if Hatibzâde's premise is 'If P, then Q', Taşköprizâde Kâsım says this is not necessary, but 'If Q, then not-P' is well possible. This is to say, Hatibzâde was taking the absence of P from S as a given fact and trying to identify its necessary and sufficient cause as their being two different and distinct things. Taşköprizâde Kâsım also takes the same premise as a fact and shows that it can imply the contradictory of Hatibzâde's conclusion. That is, S and P's being two different/distinct things might be sufficient, but not necessary, cause of P's being absent from S because the latter might be implied by something else, e.g. either or both being not existent at all.

Yet to properly understand and assess this argument, we should address the distinction between *nafs al-amr* being a container for the self of a thing and being a container for its existence. As reiterated earlier, Arabic logicians consistently emphasize the necessity of the subject's existence but never deem the existence of the predicate as necessary. This difference

between the subject and predicate arises from the fact that the subject is considered in terms of its extension and individuals falling under it while the predicate is taken in terms of its meaning (*mafhūm*) and intention (Taḥṭānī, *Taḥrīr al-qawā'id al-mantiqiyya*, 92; Jurjānī, *Ḥāshiyat al-Sayyid*, 130). Consequently, a predicate, whether existent or not, can be said of a subject present in the external world, in the mind, or more broadly, in *nafs al-amr*. This perspective leads to a classification of predicates into those that exist and those that do not exist in a way reminiscent of concrete and abstract predicates. For instance, in 'This swan is white', whiteness is a concrete predicate existing in the external world. Conversely, in 'This swan is blind', blindness, being a privation and negation, does not exist in the external world. Even in the proposition 'This swan exists', it is open to question whether the predicate of existence extramentally exists.²³ As far as I could establish, Islamic theologians, starting with Jurjānī, assert that the external world, the mind, or *nafs al-amr* serves as a container for the *self* (*nafs*)²⁴ of the predicate that lacks existence there but can still be correctly said of existing subjects. According to this distinction, while the external world, for example, acts as a container for the existence of the swan and whiteness, it is a container for the *self* of blindness or existence itself. Consequently, as in Taşköprizâde Kâsım's usage, the fact that *nafs al-amr* functions as a container for the self, rather than for the existence, of any specific entity implies that this predicate, even if lacking existence in *nafs al-amr*, can correctly hold true of things that do exist therein (Jurjānī, *Ḥāshiyat al-Tajrīd*, 2:77; *al-Ḥāshiya al-kubrā*, 158–159).²⁵

To turn to Premise 1 in the light of this explanation, Taşköprizâde Kâsım assumes that Hatibzâde should have taken *nafs al-amr* in his argument as the container for the self of the absence, but not for its existence/presence. Probably, this is because it would be very absurd on Hatibzâde's part if he meant the *existence* of the absence. For no one can reasonably claim that the absence, a concept evidently negative and non-existential, exists in *nafs al-amr*. Then he must have meant that *nafs al-amr* was a container for the self of the absence.

Premise 2 is lucid: if *nafs al-amr* operates as a container for the self of the absence, it is not necessary for it to be existent therein, according to the distinction just explained. In Premise 3, Taşköprizâde Kâsım takes a pivotal step in achieving his objective, inferring from the absence's non-

²³On different positions on the external existence of existence, see Zamboni, 'Existence and the Problem of Aḥwāl,' 21 ff.

²⁴Actually, the reason why such a problematic term as *nafs* was preferred in this context is currently unclear to me.

²⁵Hatibzâde (*Hawāshī*, fol. 105a) is also aware of this distinction and even seems to concede it but does not address it in the context of the EI of negative propositions.

existence in *nafs al-amr* the possibility that it is not distinct. Here, he invokes the principle of dependence to substantiate this inference: if one thing's existence for another is contingent upon the other thing itself being existent, then nothing non-existent could serve as the subject of a positive property—in this context, distinctness. Incidentally, it appears that Taşköprizâde Kâsım agrees with Hatibzâde in considering distinctness as a positive property. Premise 4 is a conclusion in a sense because Taşköprizâde Kâsım obtains with it a part of the main conclusion, namely that S and P might not be distinct. Moving to Premise 5, he attains the desired consequence that S and P might not be two different things in *nafs al-amr*, either. This conclusion follows because S and P being two different things depends on their being distinct, a point Hatibzâde has also granted in his Premise 3. Collectively, these premises lead to the overarching conclusion that P's being absent from P implies the possible scenario where they are not two different and distinct entities. This is to say, negative propositions do not have EI because they could be true even in the absence of their subjects in *nafs al-amr*.

In his second counterargument, Taşköprizâde Kâsım challenges the justificatory argument Hatibzâde raises to support Premise 2, in which Hatibzâde contends that a predicate's being absent from a subject builds upon their being different from each other; otherwise, it would lead to the denial of something of itself, which he deems impossible. For Taşköprizâde Kâsım, however, rejecting the subject and predicate's being different from each other would not boil down to the denial of something of itself. He argues as follows:

[t3] It is not granted that such a denial is implied because [the fact that the subject and predicate are] not different from each other does not entail that [they are] one and identical. How could it be? "Being different" is the contradictory of "being not different", not of "being one", because ["being not different"], being more general, does not [necessarily] entail ["being one"]. For the former's being true [of the subject and predicate] could be due to either one or both [of the subject and predicate] fails to exist. If either or both of them do not exist, being different could not apply to them so that denying something of itself could follow.

(Taşköprizâde Kâsım, *Risâla fi l-wujūd al-dhihni*, fol. 181b15–20)

The passage makes a clear point: being one and being different are not contradictory pairs; both apply to existent subjects, and there is an intermediary between them. Therefore, something's being not one does not necessarily entail that it is the other. For if either or both *relata* do not exist, which are possible scenarios as Taşköprizâde Kâsım proved in the first counterargument, neither 'being one' nor 'being different' apply to them. If they are not one, there could be no talk of denying something of itself.

3. The ontological ground of negative propositions

The foremost distinctive feature of propositions is the fact that they are either true or false.²⁶ According to a widely held theory of truth dating back to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* 1011b25, a proposition is true if it faithfully represents in the mind an extramental reality. That is, this theory assumes a correspondence between the mental and external realms, and the proposition is true if the fact or the state of affairs in the world end of this world-to-word relation is as represented by the proposition; otherwise, the proposition is false. Hence, it is the extramental reality that constitutes the truthmaker of a proposition.

Nevertheless, this intuitive theory of truth encounters a peculiar challenge when it comes to negative propositions. This challenge is eloquently put by Molnar ("Truthmakers", 72) in four propositions: (i) the world is everything that exists; (ii) everything that exists is positive; (iii) some negative claims about the world are true; (iv) every true claim about the world is made true by something that exists. Taken on its own, each of these propositions appears sufficiently reasonable. However, considered collectively, they give rise to the dilemma that is called the paradox of negative judgement: if an affirmative proposition corresponds to a positive fact, then what does a negative proposition refer or correspond to? (Horn, *A Natural History*, 3)

Numerous solutions to this problem have been proposed throughout the history of philosophy as well as in contemporary discussions,²⁷ but I shall concentrate here on a specific solution, particularly relevant to the Ottoman debate in question, namely one that depends on finding a positive rendering to negative propositions: the correlation of the negative judgement with the positive relation of 'difference' or 'otherness' (for other solutions, see Wood, "The Paradox"). Historically, this approach, which is called 'negation-as-otherness', has often been associated with Plato.²⁸

In Plato's *Sophist* 257b, the Eleatic Stranger posits that when we speak of "not being", we are not speaking of something opposed to being, but rather something different from being. He elucidates this by stating that the prefixed term "not" signifies something other than the subsequent words or, more precisely, something apart from the entities to which the uttered words following the negative apply.²⁹

²⁶This Aristotelian view of propositions as the only sentence type that is truth-bearer (see *De Int.* 16b35–36) has been also universally held by Arabic logicians; see, e.g. Ibn Sīnā, *Al-Shifā': Al-'Ibāra*, 32; *Al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbihāt*, 1:222; Rāzī, *Al-Mulakhkhaṣ*, 1:107; Tahtānī, *Tahrīr al-qawā'id al-mantiqiyya*, 82.

²⁷For example, in an attempt to solve the problem, Russell went so far as to accept the existence of negative facts; see, e.g. "On Propositions," 287.

²⁸For the designation of this approach as 'negation-as-otherness', see Horn, *A Natural History*.

²⁹For a discussion of the passage, see, e.g. Lee, "Plato on Negation", Brown, "Negation and Not Being", and Frede, "Plato's *Sophist*".

Having laid this groundwork, let me return to Hatibzâde's argument in order to argue that it exhibits notable parallels with the Platonic interpretation of negation: negation-as-otherness.³⁰ As we saw in [t1], Hatibzâde's expedient in attributing EI to negative propositions is based on interpreting negative propositions primarily as involving the predicate's being absent from the subject. However, since absence is a clearly negative concept and therefore useless for Hatibzâde's purpose, he accounts for this absence in terms of difference, distinctness, and otherness. Accordingly, 'S is not P' will mean that S is different/distinct from, or other than, P. Moreover, for him, 'being distinct' and 'being different' are positive concepts of relations. Therefore, as a positive relation, their *relata*, viz. the subject and predicate of the negative proposition, must exist, because otherwise it would be impossible for S to be other than P or the other way round. Such a view of negative propositions, I argue, is no doubt a form of the theory of negation-as-otherness. It evidently attempts to reduce negation to certain positive relations in order to identify positive/existential reference for negative propositions in the mind-independent world.

However, Hatibzâde's argument suffers from some crucial deficiencies prompting one to question the strength of his theory of negation-as-otherness. First, its pivotal move of basing the absence of the predicate from the subject on the difference/distinctness relation between them is a particularly contentious step. For 'S is not P' is more generally true than 'S is distinct from P' and therefore does not necessarily imply it. As Taşköprizâde Kâsım has aptly shown in his second counterargument, in the case that either or both of S and P are not existent, the former is true but not the latter. That is, unlike the former, the latter has EI. To put otherwise, as Taşköprizâde Kâsım's first counterargument is meant to show, the former is true even if S and/or P are non-existent, but in that case, S and/or P are in no position to be *relata* of a positive relation like distinctness. Hence, Hatibzâde seems to commit an unwarranted step while inferring from the EI of the latter to that of the former.

Another notable flaw in his argument arises from the consequence that if interpreted as statements of distinctness, a negative proposition would no longer contradict its affirmative counterpart. As mentioned earlier, Hatibzâde's interpretation of predication relies on the notion of identity between the respective extensions of the subject and predicate, and he attempts to extend this view to negative propositions by positing non-identity between them. However, 'being identical' and 'being non-identical' are contrary predicates that apply exclusively to existent subjects. In order to

³⁰In this debate, Taşköprizâde Kâsım seems to have tended to agree with the negation-as-falsity approach, which is generally associated with Aristotle and probably with Ibn Sînâ (see Wood, "The Paradox", 422; Horn, *A Natural History*, e.g. 60), but he does not put forward any positive argument on the issue. Therefore, commenting on his position would be too speculative.

maintain the contradiction between affirmative and negative propositions, Hatibzâde would need to interpret negative predication as ‘S is not identical with P’. Yet, if Hatibzâde were to adhere to this interpretation, there would be no logical basis that enables him to argue for the EI of negative propositions because ‘being not identical’ requires no existent subjects.

To overcome this difficulty, Hatibzâde could consider categorically dismissing sentences with empty subjects as meaningless, not subject to truth or falseness,³¹ on the ground that, as Hume suggests (*A Treatise*, 48), “to think of an object is always and necessarily to think of an *existent* object” (Reicher, “Nonexistent Objects”). According to this perspective, it is impossible to speak of what is not in a meaningful way. Hence, sentences like ‘God’s partner is not omnipotent’ or ‘Pegasus does not exist’, which are meaningless as their subjects are empty, are not propositions. If no sentences with empty subject are propositions, then no propositions are with empty subjects. This amounts to saying that propositions do not imply, but rather *presuppose*, the existence of the subject in the Strawsonian sense (see Chatti & Schang, “The Cube, the Square”, 107). In other words, a sentence must first have a non-empty subject to count as a proposition, be it true or false. On this reading of propositions, ‘S is identical with P’ and ‘S is non-identical with P’ contradict each other because sentences with empty subjects has already been excluded from the set of propositions, and as acknowledged by Arabic logicians as well, if S refers to something existent, ‘S is non-identical with P’ is equivalent to ‘S is not identical with P’, which is the direct contradiction of ‘S is identical with P’ (Ibn Sīnā, *Al-Najāt*, 17; *Al-Shifā’*: *Al-‘Ibāra*, 82; Taḥṭānī, *Taḥrīr al-qawā’id al-mantiqiyya*, 100; *Lawāmi’ al-asrār*, 282).

However, there might be another option before Hatibzâde. He could also attribute an objective existence in *nafs al-amr* to everything that we can talk about, with some sort of epistemological realism that some of Hatibzâde’s contemporaries, such as Jalāl al-Dīn al-Dawānī (d. 1502),³² appear to have adopted. Hatibzâde seems to have leant towards resolving the problem by adopting this option. Regarding true propositions about impossible concepts, like “non-haecceity” (*lā-huwiyya*), for instance, ‘Non-haecceity is not haecceity’, Hatibzâde argues that the subject of such a proposition—‘non-haecceity’ in this case—exists in *nafs al-amr* insofar as it exists in the mind. This is because mental constructs have existence in *nafs al-amr* as long as the mind is engaged with them (*Ḥawāshī*, fol. 104b–105a).

Nonetheless, this solution brings together its own shortcomings. First, it poses a significant threat to the objective and mind-independent nature

³¹Indeed, Hatibzâde maintains a similar stance regarding liar sentences, asserting that despite their formal resemblance to propositions, they do not qualify as genuine propositions; see Daşdemir, “A Fifteenth-Century Ottoman Treatise”.

³²All conceptual meanings (*al-mafhūmāt al-taṣawwuriyya*) are present in *nafs al-amr*” (Dawānī, *al-Ḥaṣhiya al-jadida*, 57a18).

attributed to *nafs al-amr* by scholars such as Ṭūsī and Jurjānī. Furthermore, asserting that this proposition has a reference in *nafs al-amr* as long as the mind attends to it grants a limited and subjective kind of existence to its subject, namely judgemental existence, according to the distinction discussed above. However, Hatibzâde's primary claim was to attribute objective and mind-independent existence to the subject and predicate of negative propositions, not solely a judgemental, but also an attributional form of existence. Perhaps more significantly for a theologian like Hatibzâde, assigning an objective and mind-independent existence to non-existent and even impossible entities could give rise to theological quandaries, because it would mean, for example, that God's partner exists in *nafs al-amr*.³³ However, this is in flat contrast to the fundamental tenet of Islamic theology—the unity of God, as eloquently articulated by Hatibzâde's Iranian contemporary, Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Daštaki (d. 1498), in response to Dawānī: (*Ḥaṣhiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Tajrid*, fol. 29b13–14). This could explain why Ṭūsī confines the content of *nafs al-amr* to possible entities (*Risāla fī ithbāt*, 7) and his commentator, Shams al-Dīn al-Kishī (d. 1296), underscores that impossible entities cannot exist in *nafs al-amr* (*Rawḍat al-nāzir*, 12, 15). Thus, it appears that this solution is also incapable of solving the complexities Hatibzâde's position gives rise to.

To wrap up, Hatibzâde's argument for the EI of negative propositions could be read as a formulation of the negation-as-otherness position, but it appears inadequate in addressing the logical difficulties it is faced with. Consequently, the party that has the upper hand in this debate seems to be the other side presented by Taşköprizâde Kâsım.

Conclusion

This paper has examined Hatibzâde's objections to the prevailing position of Arabic logicians on the EI of simple negative propositions and the counterarguments of Taşköprizâde Kâsım. It has found that Hatibzâde's argument can be regarded as a new formulation of the ancient approach to negation, which is called 'negation-as-otherness' and associated with Plato while Taşköprizâde Kâsım's position seems to be closer to the other well-known position, 'negation-as-falsity', although he does not provide any argument for it. Hatibzâde's stance on the problem appears to fall short in establishing a robust objective foundation for negative propositions, given the counterarguments presented by Taşköprizâde Kâsım and the limitations I have highlighted. Nevertheless, I should make the caveat that Hatibzâde may have only wanted to raise certain issues rather than develop a consistent and systematic theory of propositions. The fact that his relevant work is a series of super-glosses on Jurjānī's glosses and is largely written in a polemical and non-committal style makes it difficult

³³For related discussions in Islamic theology, see Benevich, "The Reality of the Non-Existent", Chapter 5.

to understand his real views and whether he had in mind a systematic theory of negative propositions.

Acknowledgements

This paper owes much to the editors and anonymous reviewers of the BJHP; I express first my gratitude to them for their constructive criticisms and suggestions. I also extend my thanks to my colleagues at JYU, Jari Kaukua, Francesco O. Zamboni, and Hassan Rezakhany, for their valuable comments on the earlier drafts; and to the Wihuri Foundation for funding my research on Ottoman logic.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by Jenny ja Antti Wihurin Rahasto.

Bibliography

- Adamson, Peter, and Fedor Benevich. *The Heirs of Avicenna: Philosophy in the Islamic East, 12-13th Centuries Metaphysics and Theology*. Leiden: Brill, 2023.
- Aktaş, M. Maşuk. "An Examination of Authenticity and Content: Demonstrating the Epistle on Nafs al-amr Attributed to Jurjanī as Having Been Taken from al-Samarqandī's *al-Ma'ārif*." *Nazariyat* 8, no. 2 (2022): 97–127. doi:[10.12658/Nazariyat.8.2.M0182en](https://doi.org/10.12658/Nazariyat.8.2.M0182en)
- Arıcı, Müstakim, and Mehmet Arıkan. *Taşradan Merkeze Bir Osmanlı Ulema Ailesi Taşköprülüzâdeler ve İsmüddin Ahmed Efendi*. Istanbul: İlem, 2020.
- Aristotle. *Categories and De Interpretatione*. Trans. with notes by J. L. Ackrill. Oxford: Clarendon, 2002.
- Aristotle. *Metaphysics*. Trans. with an Introduction and Notes by C. D. C. Reeve. Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 2016.
- Bahmanyār b. al-Merzubān. *Al-Taḥṣīl*. Edited by Murtaḍā Muṭahhari. Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tehrān, 1375.
- Benevich, Fedor. "The Reality of the Non-Existent Object of Thought The Possible, the Impossible, and Mental Existence in Islamic Philosophy (eleventh–thirteenth centuries)". *Oxford Studies in Medieval Philosophy* 1 (2018): 31–61. doi:[10.1093/oso/9780198827030.003.0002](https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198827030.003.0002).
- Brockelmann, Karl. *History of the Arabic Tradition*. 2 Vols. and 2 Supplements. Trans. by Joep Lameer. Leiden: Brill, 2016.
- Brown, Lesley. "Negation and Not-Being: Dark Matter in the *Sophist*." In *Presocratics and Plato: Festschrift at Delphi in Honor of Charles Kahn*, edited by Richard Patterson, Vassilis Karasmanis, and Arnold Hermann, 233–54. Las Vegas; Zurich; Athens: Parmenides, 2012.
- Bursalı, Mehmed Tahir. *Osmanlı Müellifleri*. Edited by M. A. Yekta Saraç. Ankara: Tüba, 2016.
- Chatti, Saloua. "Existential Import in Avicenna's Modal Logic." *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 26, no. 1 (2016): 45–71. doi:[10.1017/S0957423915000119](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0957423915000119)

- Chatti, Saloua. *Arabic Logic from Al-Fārābī to Averroes A Study of the Early Arabic Categorical, Modal, and Hypothetical Syllogistics*. Springer, 2019.
- Chatti, Saloua, and Fabien Schang. "The Cube, the Square and the Problem of Existential Import." *History and Philosophy of Logic* 34, no. 2 (2013): 101–32. doi:[10.1080/01445340.2013.764962](https://doi.org/10.1080/01445340.2013.764962).
- Daşdemir, Yusuf. "A Fifteenth-Century Ottoman Treatise on the Liar Paradox: A Case for Ḥaṭībzāde's Authorship." In *Theories of Paradox in the Middle Ages*, edited by Stephen Read and Barbara Bartocci, 204–38. College Publications, 2023.
- Daşdemir, Yusuf. "The Problem of Existential Import in Metathetic Propositions: Qutb al-Din al-Tahtani Contra Fakhr al-Din al-Razi." *Nazariyat İslam Felsefe ve Bilim Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi (Journal for the History of Islamic Philosophy and Sciences)* 5, no. 2 (2019): 81–118. doi:[10.12658/Nazariyat.5.2.M0075en](https://doi.org/10.12658/Nazariyat.5.2.M0075en)
- Dashtakī, Şadr al-Dīn. *Ḥashiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Tajrid*. MS Istanbul: Beyazıt Manuscript Library, Veliyüddin 2027.
- Davidson, Herbert A. *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes on Intellect*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Dawānī, Jalāl al-Dīn. *al-Ḥashiya al-jadīda 'alā Sharḥ al-Tajrid*. MS Istanbul: Nuruosmaniye Manuscript Library, 2107.
- El-Rouayheb, Khaled. "Dashtakī (d. 1498) and Dawānī (d. 1502) on the Analysis of Existential Propositions." *Oriens* 47, no. 3–4 (2019): 365–88. doi:[10.1163/18778372-04800300](https://doi.org/10.1163/18778372-04800300)
- Fārābī. *Kitāb al-Qiyās*. In *al-Manṭiq 'inde l-Fārābī*, edited by Rafiq al-'Ajam, 11–64, Vol. 2. Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1986.
- Fazlıoğlu, İhsan. "Between Reality and Mentality -Fifteenth Century Mathematics and Natural Philosophy Reconsidered-." *Nazariyat İslam Felsefe ve Bilim Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi (Journal for the History of Islamic Philosophy and Sciences)* 1, no. 1 (2014): 1–39. doi:[10.15808/Nazariyat.1.1.M0001](https://doi.org/10.15808/Nazariyat.1.1.M0001)
- Frede, Michael. "Plato's *Sophist* on False Statements." In *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, edited by Richard Kraut, 397–424. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. doi:[10.1017/CCOL0521430186.013](https://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL0521430186.013)
- Hasan, Moiz. "Foundations of Science in the Post-Classical Islamic Era: The Philosophical, Historical, and Historiographical Significance of Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī's Project." Unpublished PhD Diss. The University of Notre Dame, 2017.
- Hatibzāde Muhyiddin Mehmed. *Ḥawāshī Khaṭībzāda 'alā Ḥāshiyat al-Tajrid*. MS Istanbul: Beyazıt Manuscript Library, Veliyüddin 2006.
- Horn, Laurence R. *A Natural History of Negation*. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications, 2001.
- Hume, David. *A Treatise of Human Nature Volume I Texts*. Edited by David F. Norton and Mary J. Norton. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Ibn Sīnā. *Al-Najāt*. Edited by M. S. al-Kurdī. Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Sa'āda, 1938.
- Ibn Sīnā. *Al-Shifā': Al-Maqūlāt*. Edited by George Anawātī. Cairo: al-Hay'at al-'Āmma li-Shu'ün al-Maṭābi' al-Amīriyya, 1959.
- Ibn Sīnā. *Al-Shifā': Al-'Ibāra*. Edited by Maḥmūd al-Khuḍayrī. Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Miṣriyya al-'Āmma, 1970.
- Ibn Sīnā. *Al-Shifā': Al-Ilāhiyyāt*. Edited by George Anawātī and Sa'īd Zāyed. Cairo: al-Hay'at al-'Āmma li-Shu'ün al-Maṭābi' al-Amīriyya, 1960.
- Ibn Sīnā. *Al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbihāt*, Vol. 4. Edited by Sulaymān Dunyā. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Nu'mān, 1992.
- İşfahānī, Shams al-Dīn. *Tasdiq al-Qawā'id fī sharḥ Tajrid al-'aqā'id*. Vol. 3. Edited by E. Altaş, et al. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2020.

- Jurjānī, al-Sayyid al-Sharīf. *al-Hāshiyā al-kubrā*. Istanbul: Hacı Muharrem Bosnevî Matbaası, 1303.
- Jurjānī, al-Sayyid al-Sharīf. *Hāshiyat al-Sayyid 'ala l-Taşawwurāt wa l-Taşdiqāt*. Istanbul: Cemal Efendi Matbaası, 1318.
- Jurjānī, al-Sayyid al-Sharīf. *Hāshiyat al-Tajrīd*. In *Tasdid al-Qawā'id fi Sharḥ Tajrīd al-'aqa'id*, edited by Eşref Altaş et al. Vol. 3. Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2020.
- Kaukua, Jari. *Suhrawardī's Illuminationism A Philosophical Guide*. Leiden: Brill, 2022.
- Kishī, Shams al-Din. Rawḍat al-nāzir fi sharḥ nafs al-amr. In *Risāla fi ithbāt al-'aql al-mujarrad wa shurūḥ-i ān*, edited by Ṭayyiba 'Ārifniyā, 11–44. Tehran: Markaz-i Pazhūhash-i Mirāth-i Maktūb, 1393.
- Lee, Edward N. "Plato on Negation and Not-Being in the *Sophist*." *The Philosophical Review* 81, no. 3 (1972): 267–304. doi:10.2307/2184327
- McGinnis, Jon. *Avicenna*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Molnar, George. "Truthmakers for Negative Truths." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 78, no. 1 (2000): 72–86. doi:10.1080/00048400012349361
- Mullā Şadrā. *Metaphysical Penetrations Kitāb al-Mashā'ir*. Edited by Ibrahim Kalın & translated by S. Hossein Nasr. Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 2014.
- Plato. *Theaetetus and Sophist*. Edited by Christopher Rowe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn. *Al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyya fi 'ilm al-ilāhiyyāt wa-l-ṭabī'iyāt*. Vol. 2. Edited by Muḥammad M. al-Baghdādī. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1990.
- Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn. *Al-Mulakhkhaş fi al-mantiq wa-l-ḥikma*. Vol. 2. Edited by Ismail Hanoğlu. Jordan: al-Aşlayn, 2021.
- Reicher, Maria. "Nonexistent Objects." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman. Winter 2022 Edition. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2022/entries/nonexistent-objects/>.
- Rezakhany, Hassan. "Jalāl ad-Dīn ad-Dawānī's Solution to the Liar Paradox and Its Reception in Qāḍī Mubārak and Mullā Mubīn." *Journal of South Asian Intellectual History* 1 (2018): 183–220.
- Rezakhany, Hassan. "The Paradox of the Absolute Unknown: Notes on the Eastern Islamic Literature." In *Theories of Paradox in the Middle Ages*, edited by Stephen Read and Barbara Bartocci, 130–67. College Publications, 2023.
- Russell, Bertrand. "On Propositions: What They are and How They Mean." In *Logic and Knowledge Essays 1901–1950*, edited by Robert C. Marsh, 283–320. New York: Macmillan, 1956.
- Samarqandī, Shams al-Dīn. *Sharḥ al-Qiştās*. MS Istanbul: Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Amcazade Hüseyin 342.
- Samarqandī, Shams al-Dīn. *Kiştāsul-efkār Düşüncenin Kiştası*. Edited by Necmettin Pehlivan. Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2014.
- Tahānawī, Muḥammad 'Alī. *Kashshāf iştilāḥāt al-funūn wa-l-'ulūm*. Vol. 2. Edited by Rafiq al-'Ajam et al. Beirut: Maktabat Lubnān Nāshirūn, 1996.
- Tahtānī, Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī. *Lawāmī' al-asrār fi sharḥ Maṭālī' al-anwār*. Edited by 'Alī A. Ja'farīvalanī. Qum: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tehrān, 1393.
- Tahtānī, Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī. *Tahrīr al-qawā'id al-mantiqiyya*. Cairo: Muşṭafā al-Bābī al-Halabī wa Awlādūh, 1948.
- Taşköprizāde Ahmed. [*Hāshiyā 'alā Hāshiyat al-Tajrīd*]. MS Istanbul: Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Ragıp Paşa 732.
- Taşköprizāde Ahmed. *al-Shuhūd al-'aynī fi mabāḥith al-wujūd al-dhihnī*. Edited by M. Zāhid Kāmil Jül. Köln: Al-Kamel Verlag, 2019.

Taşköprizâde Ahmed. *Eş-Şakâ'iku'n-nu'mâniyye fî ulemâ'î-d-Devleti'l-Osmaniyye Osmanlı Âlimleri*. Edited by Muhammet Hekimoğlu. Istanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2019.

Taşköprizâde Kâsım. *Risâla fî l-wujūd al-dhihnî*. MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Ragıp Paşa 1459, fols. 175b–184a.

Ṭūsī, Naşir al-Dīn. "Risâla fî ithbât al-'aql al-mujarrad". In *Risâla fî ithbât al-'aql al-mujarrad wa shurūḥ-i ān*, edited by Ṭayyiba 'Ārifniyā, 1–8. Tehran: Markaz-i Pazhūhash-i Mirāth-i Maktūb, 1393.

Ṭūsī, Naşir al-Dīn. *Asās al-iqtibās fî l-mantiq*. Translated Into Arabic by Molla Hüsrev & edited by Ḥasan al-Shāfi 'ī & Muḥammad S. Jamāl al-Dīn. Cairo: al-Majlis al-A'lā li-l-Thaqāfa, 2004.

Wood, Ledger. "The Paradox of Negative Judgment." *The Philosophical Review* 42, no. 4 (1933): 412–23. doi:10.2307/2179908.

Zamboni, Francesco O. "Existence and the Problem of Aḥwāl: The Quiddity and Ontological Status of Existence in Avicenna and His Islamic Reception." *Oriens* (2023): 1–45. doi:10.1163/18778372-12340026.

Zamboni, Francesco O. *At the Roots of Causality Ontology and Aetiology from Avicenna to Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī*. Leiden: Brill, 2023.

Appendix: Arabic Texts

t1: Hatibzâde, *Ḥawāshī*, fols. 39a21–39b4:

• ما الأول فلائ صدق السالبة بانتفاء المحمول عن الموضوع في نفس الأمر وهو يتوقف على تعددهما وتغايرهما في نفس الأمر إذ سلب الشيء عن نفسه غير صادق وهما متوقفان على تمايزهما بحسب نفس الأمر والتعدّد التمايز صفتان ثبوتيتان ثابتتان للمحمول والموضوع فيجب أن يكون موصوفهما ثابتاً وموجوداً فلا فرق بين السالبة والموجبة في اقتضاء وجود الموضوع حال اعتبار الحكم.

t2: Taşköprizâde Kâsım, *Risâla fî l-wujūd al-dhihnî*, fol. 181b8–15:

• فممنوع لأنه حينئذ جعل نفس الأمر طرفاً لنفس الانتفاء لا لثبوته ووجوده فيجوز أن لا يكون ثابتاً فيها مع كونها طرفاً لنفسه كسائر الأمور التي يكون الخارج أو الذهن طرفاً لنفسها لا لثبوتها فلا يثبت له التميز فيها لأن ثبوت شيء لشيء إنما هو فرع ثبوت المثبت له وإذ ليس له ثبوت ليس يثبت له تميز فإذا لم يثبت التميز للانتفاء في نفس الأمر لا يلزم أن يكون طرفاه متمايزين فيها لأن النسبة إنما يقتضي تمايز طرفيها في نفس الأمر إذا كانت متميزة فيها فإذا لم يكونا متمايزين في نفس الأمر لا يثبت لهما التعدّد والتغاير المتوقفان على التمايز.

t3: Taşköprizâde Kâsım, *Risâla fî l-wujūd al-dhihnî*, fol. 181b15–20:

• لزوم هذا السلب غير مسلم لأن عدم ثبوت التعدّد والتغاير لا يقتضي ثبوت الاتحاد والنفسيّة كيف وثبوت التعدّد نقيضه عدم ثبوت التعدّد لا ثبوت الاتحاد والأول لكونه أعمّ من الثاني لا يستلزمه لأن صدقه قد يكون بأن لا يوجد معاً أو لم يوجد أحدهما فإذا لم يوجد أو أحدهما لا يثبت الاتحاد لهما أو لأحدهما كما لا يثبت التعدّد فيلزم سلب الشيء عن نفسه.