Ibn Sina: Qiyās ii.3

Trans. Wilfrid Hodges,
based on the Cairo text ed. Ibrahim Madkour et al.
(DRAFT ONLY)
4 November 2012

95

فصل في عكس الضروريات والمكنات

ii.3 Conversion of necessaries and possibles

[Nec E and poss I]

ونقول: إذا قلنا بالضرورة لا شيء من بـ جـ ، فيجب أن يكون بالضرورة

[2.3.1] We say: If

(1) With necessity, no C is a B.

then it has to be that

(2) With necessity, no B is a C.

{NB Here as often, quln¯ a serves as quotation marks, not part of the content. }

{Prior Anal i.3, 25a28.}

لا شيء من بـ جـ . قالوا: وإذا أمكن أن يكون بعض بـ جـ ، فامكن أن يكون

 بعض

[Aristotle] says:

Otherwise it would be possible that some B is a C, and so it
would be possible that some C is a B.
But there is a problem here: the argument uses conversion of a possibility proposition, and this is something that hasn’t yet been proved.

شَبَابًا، آمَنَ أَن يَكُونُ ذلِكَ الشيء الآخر ذلِكَ الشيء. ولَنَا كَانَ هذَا بُعْنًا بَنَفسِهِ،

جَازِ تَعْرِيفَ غَيْرِهِ بِهِ، غَيْرِ مَتْوَقِفٍ فِيهِ أَن بُعْنًا حَالَهُ. وَعَدَّى أَنَّهُ يَحَتَّج

But in my view

هَذَا العَكْسُ إِلَى بِيَانٍ مَا أَيْضًا. وَلَا إِبْزَامٌ مَا فَرْضَوهُ بُعْنًا أَفْرَغْنَ مِن أَنَّ المَنْصَعَ كَوْنَهُ

هَذَا اللَّيْلَةُ لَيْدَوْى مَنْ طَلُوبٌ أُوْرِبٌ مِن الْمَتْحُوبِ. يَكْسِبُ كَوْنُ كَذَا اللَّيْلُ الَّذِى هوُ الْمَطْلُوبُ أُوْرِبٌ مِن الْمَتْحُوبِ

يَكْسِبُ كَوْنُ كَذَا اللَّيْلُ الَّذِى هوُ الْمَطْلُوبُ أُوْرِبٌ مِن الْمَتْحُوبِ 

prevents X from being Y, which is what we were trying to show, or close to it.

[2.3.3] What

ما قَالَ الْآخَرُونَ أَحْسَنِ، وَهُوَ أَنَّهُ إِنَّ آمَنَ أَنَّ يَكُونَ بَعْضٌ بَعْضٌ كَانَ مِنْ فِضْلِهِ

ما قَالَ الْآخَرُونَ أَحْسَنِ، وَهُوَ أَنَّهُ إِنَّ آمَنَ أَنَّ يَكُونَ بَعْضٌ بَعْضٌ كَانَ مِنْ فِضْلِهِ

other people say is better, namely that if it’s possible that some B is a C, the assumption of it

غير حال. وأَكثَرُ آنَ يَكُونُ كَذَّباً. وَالْكَذَّبُ الغَيْرِ الحَالَ لَا يَلِمُّ مِنْهُ حَالَهُ. فَإِنَّ
is not impossible. It may be false in most cases; but when a thing is false and not impossible, nothing impossible follows from it, because

لاًرم ما عُمِّكن ممكن. فإِنَّ المحال لا يكون البَيْتَةَ. فَا لا يكون إلاّ ويلزمه المحال

what follows from something possible is itself possible. Now what is impossible will absolutely never be the case, and so what will not be the case unless something impossible follows from it

لا يكون البَيْتَةَ. وكيف يكون، وإنما يكون مع كون ما لا يكون البَيْتَةَ. فالفَكذب

الفِيبر will never at all be the case. How could it be, when it could only occur 95.15 together with something that will never occur? If a thing is false but not
impossible, no impossibility follows from it. So if it’s assumed that

(3) Some $B$ is a $C$.

is true, then in that case

(4) Some $C$ is a $B$.

{NB *mawjūd* for ‘true’, and in next line. It’s contrasted with *kiḏban*.}

is true, and hence (4) is — as you know — false but not impossible. But you

{What Ibn Sīnā writes is blatantly self-contradictory. But he is probably foreshortening his source. For Aristotle, if something is possible, then to assume it’s true is to assume something ‘false but not impossible’ (34a25), which must be shorthand for ‘not impossible, though it could be false’. And of course to assume something is to assume it’s true.}

قد قلت بالضرورة: لا شيء من $\sim B$ ، كيف يكون قولنا: بعض $\sim C$ ،

have already said

(5) Necessarily no $C$ is a $B$.

So how could the sentence (4)

غير محل، فهو مفهوم. وازم من قولنا: بعض $\sim C$ ، فقولنا: بعض $\sim B$ كذب

not be impossible, when it is in fact impossible? But (3) follows from the sentence (3), so (3) is false

ويمكنه.


[2.3.4] This on the basis of something that can be put in a way which in my view is very close (to the truth), namely that

{Several mss give al-‘aqrabu, which looks plausible.}

إذا جاء وأمكن شيء، أمكن لازمه. فإذا أمكن أن تصدق المطلقة القائلة: بعض
if a thing is possible and can be the case, then what follows from it is also possible. So if it’s possible that the absolute proposition (3) is true,  
{NB The principle ‘What follows from the possible is possible’ presumably is for modality of the quantifier. What would it mean for modality of the predicate? }  

بَقَّ، أَمْكَن لَازَمَة ضُرورة، أَيْ قُولُنا: بَعِضُ جَ بَ. وَهَذَا أَصْحَب مَا يَنْبِعُ أَنَّ  
its consequence (4) has to be possible. This is a very sound view, and it’s what one should  
say.

[Nec A]

وَأَمَا إِنَّ كَانَ الْقُوْل مُوجِيْحاً مَثْلَ قُوْلِكَ بَعِضُ جَ بَ،  
If a sentence is affirmative, for example the sentence 96.8

(6) With necessity every $C$ is a $B$.  

أَوْ بَعِضُ جَ بَ، فَقُولُونَ إِنَّ بَعِضُ إنَّهُ بَعِضُ بَ جَ.  
or

(7) [With necessity] some $C$ is a $B$.  
then [Aristotle] says that

(8) With necessity some $B$ is a $C$.  

{Prior Anal i.3, 25a32.}

The standard proof 96.9

وَالبَيْان المُثْبَر  
لَهَذَا هُوَ أَنَّهُ لَا بَدَّ مِنْ أَنْ يَكُونَ بَعِضُ بَ جَ، لَكُنَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ هُوَ مِتَّلُ هذَا  
حكمه. of this is:
There is no doubt that some $B$ is a $C$, because when we take the converse as absolute, this is its content.

{NB This is reporting a mashūr position which uses min haytu. Who can it be? Note also that here we first find the consequence with the modality removed, and then we ask questions about restoring it.}

غيتنذ إما أن يكون بإضطرار، أو لا يكون بإضطرار. فإن كان لا

Then this converse has to be either with necessity or not with necessity. If it is not with necessity,

فعض ح ب لا بإضطرار، وكان كه بإضطرار، وهذا خلف. وفي هذا

then some $C$ is a $B$ not with necessity, but [in (7)] every $C$ was a $B$ with necessity. This is an absurdity.

This proof contains

مواضع كتفيط.

elements of muddle.

{The muddle that Ibn Sīnā complains of is not in Alexander, who tries to recover Aristotle’s argument and interprets it as an argument by reductio: we assume that every (or some) $C$ is a $B$ with necessity, and the contradictory negation of ‘Some $B$ is a $C$ with necessity’. The contradictory negation says that every $B$ is possibly not a $C$. (Alexander gets in a muddle by writing ‘contingently’ for ‘possibly’, but Ibn Sīnā ignores this.) Alexander now drops the modality and infers that no $B$ is a $C$ and hence no $C$ is a $B$. Restoring the modality, no $C$ is necessarily a $B$, and this contradicts that every (or some) $C$ is a $B$ with necessity. Ibn Sīnā notes the move of dropping the modality, but he puts it in a different place: ignoring modalities, the converse is ‘Some $B$ is a $C$’, and what remains is to apply the appropriate modality. The person under attack argues that it can’t be ‘It is not necessary that’; Ibn Sīnā ungenerously takes him to be arguing that the converse is never a necessary proposition. Later Ibn Ruṣd will review this argument of Ibn Sīnā with a similar lack of generosity.}
[2.3.5] [In the first place,] what [Aristotle] said earlier in his teaching, 96.14 about conversion of an absolute affirmative proposition, was just {Aristotle said this at i.2, 25a16ff.}

إِنَّها تُعْكِسُ جِزِئَةً فِي قَضَائِرِهَا وَلَمْ يَبْيَنَ أَنَّها إِن كَانَتْ لَا بِاضْطَرَارٍ فِي كُونٍ عَكْسَهَا

that an existentially quantified proposition converts; it wasn’t shown that 96.15 if the proposition is not with necessity then its converse is
not with necessity. In fact it is altogether not true: every human is a writer,

not with necessity, but every writer is a human with necessity.

[2.3.6] And as to the second muddle, this is that even if we admit that

this proof is useful for establishing conversion of universally quantified affirmative propositions, how does that help to prove conversion of existentially quantified affirmative propositions? In fact

the sentence

(9) Some $C$ is a $B$ with necessity.

doesn’t exclude that some $C$ is a $B$ not with necessity.  
[NB Here ‘necessarily’ can’t have widest scope. ]

So it’s possible that the converse of the sentence

(10) Every $B$ is a $C$ with necessity.

is

(11) Some $C$ is a $B$, not with necessity.

{Presumably first letter is $fa$, not $qa$ as printed. }

Then if it converts as they say but becomes (11), it can be true together with

some of the aforesaid, and it is obvious that some $C$ is a $B$ not with necessity, and there is no necessity for the existence of such $C$.
the original [converse], namely the sentence (9), and no absurdity follows.
As you know,
{What he ought to say here is that ‘the’ converse of φ is the strongest form
that follows from φ under all choices of terms. Why doesn’t he? Does he
ever use the notion of ‘under all choices of terms’? }

أن بعض الأجسام متحركة ضرورة، وبعضها متحركة لا بالضرورة. وكذلك
some bodies move necessarily and some bodies move but not with neces-

ty. And similarly

بعض الأجسام سود بالضرورة أي دائما، وبعضها سود لا بالضرورة،
some bodies are with necessity (i.e. permanently) black, and some are black
but not with necessity.

[2.3.7] But rather

الحق أن هذه تعكس مطلقة بالمعنى الأعم، وهو أن بعض ب ح بلازيادة
the truth is that (10) converts to an absolute proposition in the general sense
of ‘absolute’, namely

(12) Some B is a C.

with no condition

شرط. والبرهان عليه هو المثالان الذكوران. وأنت تعلم أنه ليس يجب أن
added. The proof of it is the aforementioned two examples. You know from
the example above that

{Possibly the latter example is 97.1f, though strictly it wasn’t given as a
conversion; the mss have long additions to the next line, explaining how to
read it as an example of a conversion. Not clear what the ‘two examples’
are; they should be the pair at 97.6f, but it’s not clear how he deduces his
statement from them. }

يكون عكس غير الضروري عن غير الضروري من المثال الذكور فلا عتب
the converse of something not necessary need not also be not necessary. It

is not impossible

Transcription checked 8 Oct 09. Readings checked 1 Nov 12.
Every writer is a human, with necessity.

true, because nonexistent writers are nonexistent people; so some writers

are human [only] with possibility, i.e. it’s possible for them to become human.

This is the same person who said that the meaning of the phrase ‘Every C is a B’ is ‘Everything that fits the description of being a writer is a human being’.

We will give you a further explanation of this in the appropriate place.
a C in act', and he excluded what is a writer with possibility from counting under the description ‘writer’.

But now he has included potential writers in this class. Besides this, [on his interpretation] we won’t ever find a premise that is universally quantified, necessary and affirmative. Thus the sentence

(14) Every human is an animal with necessity.

is false,

because nonexistent people are animals [only] with possibility. So some people (namely those who are potential)

are animals [only] with possibility, and so it is not true that with necessity every human is an animal. [Using his interpretation] we can’t find a single real-life example

of a universally quantified affirmative true proposition.

[Nec I and ‘by his being a writer’]

{The next few pages, up to the end of 103, discuss the two phrases min jihati and min haytu, literally ‘from the aspect’ and ‘from the place where’. Ibn Sinā seems to regard the phrases as synonymous; he flits between them, e.g. at 99.11, 100.13. The two phrases as Ibn Sinā uses them need extended treatment; I am working on it. Meanwhile:

Today both phrases are regarded as typically philosophical. There is no sign that the classical Arabic speakers saw them this way. For example Ibn Hisham in the 14th century regards min haytu as typical of Islamic law, and he doesn’t suggest any connection with philosophy. Ze’ev Maghen, After Hardship Cometh Ease: The Jews as Backdrop for Muslim Moderation, De Gruyter, Berlin (2006) p. 182, quotes an item of the hadīth literature from late in the 7th century, in which there is a discussion of the meaning of}
the phrase *min ḥaytu*. Both interlocutors assume that ḥaytu carries its early literal meaning of place, but only one takes the *min* ‘from’ literally. The dispute is about whether men are instructed to penetrate their wives ‘in the right place’, or ‘from the right direction’. In view of Ibn Hisham’s remark, the connection with rules of behaviour is interesting.

As far as I know, *min jihaṭi* occurs a few times in the 9th century translations of the Organon, *min ḥaytu* never. In the 10th century al-Fārābī uses both phrases often, particularly *min ḥaytu*. It’s virtually certain that these pages of Ibn Sīnā, and a further discussion at pp. 144–149 below, respond to a discussion in al-Fārābī’s now lost *Longer Commentary on the Prior Analytics*. Ibn Ruṣd in his *Masa’il* quotes al-Fārābī in words which appear more or less verbatim in Ibn Sīnā. So the good money is on al-Fārābī being the person who introduced the pair of phrases *min ḥaytu* and *min jihaṭi* to logical discussion. See Tony Street, ‘“The eminent later scholar” in Avicenna’s Book of the Syllogism’, *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 11 (2001) 205–218. Very regrettably, al-Fārābī doesn’t include either *min jihaṭi* or *min ḥaytu* among the logical phrases that he discusses in *Alfāz* or Ḥurūf.

*min ḥaytu* and similar phrases made their way into Scholastic discussions, translated as *qua* or *inquantum*. Burley quotes Ibn Sīnā as an authority on these phrases; he cites the *Ilḥāyāt*, not the *Qiyās* which he didn’t know. Burley also attributes to Ibn Sīnā a rule for paraphrasing out these phrases: ‘*A is B qua C*’ means ‘*A is C* and every *C is B*’. I refer to this rule below as Burley’s rule. It works quite well in some cases, though I doubt that it correctly represents Ibn Sīnā’s thought.

English translations of the Scholastics tend to translate *qua* and *inquantum* as ‘insofar as’. There are a few cases where this represents the literal sense of *min ḥaytu*. But aside from these, ‘insofar as’ is a weasel phrase better suited to politics than to logic. I would never knowingly use it in logical research, and I would need reassurance about the competence of any other logician who so used it. A very sound principle is to avoid ever using the phrase in translations of Ibn Sīnā. Fortunately in the passage under discussion here this is not hard.

One of the commentators said:

(15) Some writers are human with [necessity].

is [not] true,
{In spite of the unanimity of the mss in reading ‘with possibility’, this must surely be ‘necessarily human’?? Similarly the ‘not’ is needed from the comments below. }

{ ‘One of the commentators’: Ibn Sīnā describes him below (99.9) as careful with details but given to partisanship. At 102.2 he quotes a commentator who must be al-Fārābī, if we compare the text with what Ibn Rušd quotes from al-Fārābī. Ibn Sīnā doesn’t say that the commentator at 102.2 is the same as the present one, but he doesn’t deny it either and it seems to be a continuation of the same discussion. So one’s first guess must be that the person being quoted throughout this discussion is al-Fārābī. The remark about partisanship could be Ibn Sīnā’s normal complaint that other logicians rely too much on Aristotle. }

\[\text{ وذلك لأنَّ معنى هذا أنَّ بعض ما يوصف بأنه كاتب بالضرورة هو إنسان.}\]

because this sentence means that something fitting the description ‘writer’ is necessarily human.

\[\text{وسواء لم يكن كاتباً، أو كان كاتباً، وكان بالضرورة كاتباً، أو كاناً.}\]

But it’s irrelevant whether he is or is not a writer, and whether his being a writer is...
or is not with necessity — he would be human by necessity even if he hadn’t been a writer. Therefore his being

with necessity a human is not a consequence of his being a writer.

So when you say: ‘Something that fits the description ‘writer’ would be human with necessity, even if it weren’t a writer’,

then you say to yourself ‘Not just because he is a writer’, because the fact that he is a writer

{My translation ‘just because’ for là min jihati ’an is taken from the context. At 145.11 Ibn Sinā glosses min jihati as li-‘anna. It is not clear from Ibn Sinā’s discussion what kind of ‘because’ the commentator has in mind. Ibn Sinā’s own view is that ‘human’ is part of the definition of ‘writer’ (100.7 below), and hence we can deduce ‘human’ from ‘writer’ immediately. The commentator could differ about this, or he could take the view that even though ‘writer’ entails ‘human’, being a writer is not what makes a person a human — a more metaphysical kind of ‘because’. The fact that Ibn Sinā doesn’t discuss this issue doesn’t tell us anything about the commentator, because it was Ibn Sinā’s strong view that metaphysical questions of this kind have no place in logic. For a min jihati clause that is meant but not expressed, see Ibn Rušd Masā’il 104.6 in a discussion of al-Fārābī.}

لا توجب الضرورة. فإذا يكن غير ضروري أن تكون معه الإنسانية، فيكون
doesn’t impose any necessity. Therefore being human is not a necessary consequence of being a writer. So

some writer, namely

(16) The writer, just because he is a writer
doesn’t necessarily have to be either a human
{NB ‘The writer, min jihati mà he is a writer’ is an example of a writer. }

or not a human, as far as his being a writer is concerned. In fact some writers, just from the fact that they are writers, could be

إنسان من جهة ما هو كاتب.

[not] human.

{Again have to add ‘not’, probably ‘an là yakūna. }

[2.3.10] This man took care with details, but he still said misleading things, and his tolerance of partisanship led him to improbably lengths of casuistry.

وَهَذَا الرجل، وَإِنْ دَقَّقَ فَفَقَدْ غَالَطَ وَحَمَّلَ التَّعْصِيبَ عَلَى مَعْجِلٍ وَجِهٍ بَعْدَهُ;

It would be a mistake for anyone to think that the phrase ‘The writer, just
due to his writer doesn’t affirm any necessity,

and hence that it is correct that ‘the writer, just because he is a writer’ doesn’t have ‘human’ predicated

{NB min haytu hūwa paraphrased as min jihati mà hūwa.}

{Not sure what ma’ahu is doing here. }
of him necessarily. What we are saying is not that his being a writer either
does or doesn’t make it necessary to predicate ‘human’

of him, but rather we are discussing whether ‘human’ is in fact true of ‘the
writer, just because

he is a writer’. If one were to say ‘It is true of him permanently’, then that
would [make it] necessarily true of him.

Now it’s clear that [‘human’] is true of [any writer], even if the reason is not
that he is a writer. And likewise if an individual writer ceases to be a writer

{This remark could refer back to (15), because it is not clear that ‘human’ is
true of ‘the writer, just because he is a writer’}. But I am trying to make this
still part of an argument about ‘the writer, just because he is a writer’.

Transcription checked 8 Oct 09. Readings checked 2 Nov 12.
while 'being a human' is true of him, this doesn’t stop 'human' being true of the writer, and permanently so. So it is not the case that [if 'writer'] ceases to be true in some case, then it has to be that while he is human it is not predicated of him permanently. {This translation is rather desperate. Possibly a corrupt text. }

فأنا إن قَالُ: إن الكاتب من جهة ما هو كاتب، هو كاتب فقط ولا زيادة;

[2.3.11] Suppose he said:

The writer just because he is a writer is purely a writer with nothing added; and 'human' means something distinct from his being a writer. So 'human' is not true of the writer just because he is a writer. This is about the content of 'human', and [the same applies to] 'animal'.

والإنسان معنى آخر غير أنه كاتب، فليس معلوم عليه، كان هذا حكم الإنسان وأخواني. فان الإنسان، من حيث هو إنسان، هو أن حيوان، تمم الحيوان.

But in fact [HUMAN] is an animal. Yes, [ANIMAL]

{At some point, which is indeterminate in the text but in the translation I make it happen here, Ibn Sinā moves over to the viewpoint he had expressed in 'Ibāra i.7. He explained there that in the proposition ‘The human is X’, ‘The human’ can refer to the ‘nature’, i.e. in effect to the meaning [HUMAN]. The sentence is true when X is part of the nature [HUMAN], for example if it is a constituent of the definition of [HUMAN], and in this case X will be true of all individual humans. But as he notes here, neither [WRITER] nor [NOT WRITER] is a constituent of [HUMAN], so both ‘The human is a writer’ and ‘The human is not a writer’ are false. Near enough, these X are the things that are true of a human just because he is a human; so it is legitimate to treat the phrase ‘the human, just because he is a human’ as naming the idea [HUMAN]. Ibn Sinā has in fact done just this in several
places earlier in the Ṣifā’; for example at REF. Ibn Sīnā also tends to refer to [ANIMAL] as hayawāniyya ‘animalness’; this usage appears at 101.8 below.

in this case is a part of the definition of [HUMAN], and likewise [ANIMAL] and [HUMAN] are two parts of the definition of [WRITER].

الكاتب من الخواص الذاتية، تعمى، أنها توجد في حدها الموضوع وحده [WRITER] is an essential proprium (of [HUMAN]), in the sense that its definition contains its substrate, which is of course its genus ([HUMAN]).

لا محالة. وبعد هذا كله، فإن الكاتب إذا أخذ أنه كاتب فقط، وكان

All of that being so, if the writer was taken to be purely a writer [and nothing else], even with

{I think this is meant to show up al-Fārābī’s claim as absurd. But Arabic doesn’t always flag up counterfactual conditions as counterfactual, so only the context shows that Ibn Sīnā’s conclusion here is not one that he is himself endorsing.}

الإنسان مقارنا له كان غير ممول عليه بالضرورة لا بالإمكان؛ فكان بعض ‘human’ linked to him, then ‘human’ would not be true of him either with 100.10 necessity or with possibility; so we would have

(17) Some writer is not human, with necessity and not possibility.

الكاتب بالضرورة ليس إنسانا لا بالإمكان، وهو الكاتب من جهة ما هو

This writer would be ‘the writer, just because he is


a writer’.

على أن هنالك خطا أخر. وهو أن قولنا: من حيث كذا، ومن جهة كذا;

[2.3.12] There is another error here. The phrases ‘just because etc.’ and 100.13 ‘from the aspect etc.’

{NB Here Ibn Sīnā directly associates min haytu with min jihati.}

من أجزاء الحمول. فقوله: بعض الكتاب من جهة ما هو كاتب ليس بالضرورة are parts of the predicate. So the sentence

(18) Some writers, just because they are writers, are with necessity not human.
The writer is, from necessity, not human just because he is a writer.

If this phrase was interpreted not as a part of the predicate, but as a part of the subject,
The animal, just because it is an animal, is rational (or isn’t rational).

{NB This is reduplication (min jihati) in the Burley sense. See following lines.}

If it was — just because it is an animal — rational, then it would follow that every animal was rational;

and if the animal — just because it is an animal — was not rational, then it would follow that no animal is rational. This is because if \( X \) is true of \( Y \) just because it is \( Y \), and because that is its nature, then \( X \) is true of \( Y \) because of what it is and in all cases. But just because’ or ‘from the aspect’ etc. is a part of the predicate, it doesn’t follow that the animal has to be —

just because it is an animal — not rational, or rather that the animal has to be not — just because it is an animal — rational; rather it can be rational and it can be not rational. And because its being [ANIMAL] denies
a meaning for min āyt which he can lift compositionally to sentences containing it; in any case this is generally not how he thinks. Rather he asks how we normally use sentences containing the phrase. Without knowing his criteria for counting the phrase as part of the predicate, or having any concrete examples of the kinds of sentence that he would take as illustrating this possibility, there is very little we can do to test his conclusions.

By the implication of the phrase, without its being not [ANIMAL] forcing it to be rational, it doesn’t follow that the thing can equally well be assumed to go either way. 101.10

[2.3.13] But how can it be a part of the subject? When a part of the subject is followed by something that is predicated of the subject, there has to be something that reaches across the distance of the thing [from the subject]. For example (21) The rational animal etc.

معناه الحيوان الذي هو الناطق كذا. فإذا قلنا: بعض الكتاب من جهة ما هو means

(22) The animal which is rational etc.

So when we say

(23) Some writer, just because he is a writer

كتب، فيجب أن يكون معناه بعض الكتاب، الأخوذ من جهة ما هو كاتب، it would have to mean

(24) Some writer, who is taken to be only because he is a writer
Adding the quantifier ['some']
In the sentence gives nonsense. ‘The writer who is taken as only because he is a writer’ can’t be separated out into individuals. Nor does it make sense to quantify it universally, as in

(26) Every writer who is taken as only because he is a writer.

It is not nonsense when this is put as a part of the predicate, as in

(27) Some of the writers are, just because they are writers, etc.

But when this is a part of the predicate, then it would have to be a part of the subject if we converted.

{The conclusion from this argument seems to be that min haytu phrases can occur in the subject only when the subject is a nature or meaning read materially (à la Carnap), in which case they can’t be quantified. So a proposition with such a phrase as a component of its predicate can’t convert to a quantified proposition.}

وهل أنه جزء من الموضوع، أليس يجب أن يكون جزءاً من الحمول؟

[2.3.14] Grant that it is a part of the subject; then isn’t it possible for it to be a part of the predicate?

قيل: فيكون قوله كلّ إنسان ممكن أن يكون كاتباً، معناه أن كلّ إنسان

It was said:

The sentence

(28) Every human can be a writer.

means that every human
{This is almost verbatim what Ibn Ruṣd ascribes to al-Fārābī, Masa’il p. 102, but with a different example (Every animal can be sleeping). }

مكان أن يكون كاتبًا، الذي هو من جهة ما الكاتب كاتب فقط؛ وهذا

can be a writer who is, just because he is a writer, a writer,

But this is false,

فإنه ولا واحد من الناس يوصف بأنه كاتب المأخوذ من جهة ما هو كاتب

in fact nobody is described as ‘a writer taken as only because he is a writer’.

فإن الإنسان لا يكون الشيء الذي هو مجرد الكاتب فقط الذي أنه إنسان

[HUMAN] is not an idea which is just stripped down from [WRITER] by
denying of it that it is human and

وأنه حيوان خارجاً من وجوده مسلوباً عنه. واسنا نتفق عند ما نقول

animal, taking these as outside its mode of existence. When we say

{‘Mode of existence’ (wjūd): One of Ibn Sīnā’s key doctrines (Madkūl i.2) is that universals have two modes of existence, one in the world and one in the mind. The one in the mind consists in the universal having abstract relations to other universals. I take him to be referring to this mode here. }

إن الإنسان ممكن أن يكون كاتباً إلى اعتبار في الكاتب، وجهة تقع به;

(29) The human can be a writer.

we don’t put any special interpretation on ‘writer’ or attach to it any aspect

{Ibn Ruṣd takes issue with Ibn Sīnā here, saying that the aspect is always understood even if not uttered. He seems to be following al-Fārābī in this. }

غير معنى مطلق أنه كاتب بلا شرط لا بشريت لا فنفور، هل يتبع ذلك على

which is different from the absolute meaning of ‘writer’, without any condition. So we consider whether ‘writer’ is true of

{My translation follows the mss which omit lā bi-ṣarto lātā. I suppose it could mean ‘without a second-order condition ruling out a first-order one’. ?? }

24
the human, and for this one shouldn’t take into account any features of the subject except that it is described as such-and-such,
{Should probably be ‘we shouldn’t’, though there is no ms evidence for this.}
103

without any condition that it is permanent, or that it is not, or any condition of aspect, and we take into account the predicate

\[\text{إلا مأخوذة محمولة فأي شرط أحقناد به، فهو جزء المحلة، هو المحمول، ثم\}\]

only as we have it. If we attach any condition to the predicate, it is a part of the whole predicate. Then if we convert the proposition,

\[\text{بعد ذلك يربط ويأخذ عند العكس فيما يجعله محمولا أو موضوع، ولا يعلم.}\]

after that it is linked and taken in the conversion in what the conversion makes [the predicate or] the subject, so it doesn’t go missing.

{From the sense it seems we should delete mahmutlan ‘avu. No mss support this, but there is evidence that the present text confused the copyists. Alternatively Ibn Sinā has switched in midstream from talking about predicate conditions to talking about conditions of any kind.}

And if these conditions are taken into account, then many necessary premises are falsified and become

{NB In general, taking into account conditions (on the predicate?) makes it harder for a proposition to be true, and thus necessary propositions are often downgraded to possible.}

\[\text{ممكنات.}\]

\[\text{ولجمع جوامع ما قلتاه. فلننظر هل إذا كان ج ب، و ب ممكن في ج خاص به، فيل إذا حمل ب}\]

[2.3.15] Let us sum up what we have said. So let us consider whether, when there are \(C\) and \(B\), and \(B\) is possible in \(C\) as a special case of it, then 103.6 when \(B\) is true

\[\text{(Amending to read} j wa-b \text{instead of} j b, \text{as the sense requires.)}\]

\[\text{على ج، ف ج أيضا محمل على ب أو لا محمل؟ of} C, \text{is} C \text{also true of} B \text{or is it not?}\]

\[\text{فلتكن ج الحيوان، و ب الكاتب، فلننظر هل يجب أن نأخذه من حيث}\]
So let $C$ be animal and $B$ writer, and let us consider whether we should take ‘writer’ as ‘writer, just because he is a writer’. But we find that no ‘writer, just because he is a writer’ is an animal, and so $C$ ([i.e. ‘animal’]) is false of the animal who is a ‘writer, just because he is a writer’! But rather we have to

So you can see that it will be true of him at some time, or for as long as his essence continues to be satisfied. And if the truth was

that it was predicated of him permanently so long as the essence of the writer continues instantiated, then ‘animal’ is necessary

for the writer, and ‘writer’ is not necessary for the animal. That is enough about this for any unprejudiced person.
[Nec O]

[2.3.16] Existentially quantified negative necessity propositions don’t convert. When

\{Prior Anal i.3, 25a33. Aristotle says ‘same reason as before’, i.e. as at i.2, 25a23 where he uses ‘human’ and ‘animal’. \}

بالضرورة ليس كل موصوف بأنه حيوان إنسان، يجب أن لا يكون بالضرورة

(30) With necessity not everything fitting the description ‘animal’ is a human.
it doesn’t have to be that

(31) With necessity not every human is an animal.

كل إنسان حيوان. وإعلم أن قولنا بالضرورة ليس، ليس سلب الضرورة، بل
And be aware that the negation of ‘necessarily’ is not the phrase ‘with

‘not with necessity’.

[Poss ø]

[2.3.17] My view of possibility premises has already been discussed when we considered similar things. [Aristotle] says:

\{Conversion of ‘Some C is a B with possibility’ at 95.7. \}

إنة الممكن بإشتقاق الإيم يقال على الضروري وعلى الطلق وعلى الممكن الحقيقي.

‘Possible’ is used ambiguously for necessary and absolute and strict possible.

\{Prior Anal i.3, 25a36–25b20. There is nothing about ‘strict’ in
Theodorus’ Arabic, though modern commentators seem to agree with Ibn Sīnā that Aristotle is here talking about contingency.

The cases that fall under ‘necessary’ and ‘absolute’ behave as in those two classes. The cases that fall under ‘strict possible’ can behave in different ways, as we will show you in another place.

The plain sense of this expression makes us think that [he means that] when ‘possible’ is applied things that are necessary, it differs from ‘necessary’ only in expression, so that ‘possible’ is said and we mean ‘necessary’. If it does differ only in expression, then it converts the same way as ‘necessary’. But this is not the right way to understand the thing. No person in any language describes necessary things as ‘possible’ and means by it that they are necessary.

The problem which invites us to take the expression ‘possible’ as ambiguous takes the form that {NB The là at the beginning of this line is cashed in only at 104.18. Unfriendly sentence construction!}
in some cases ‘possible’ has to apply to necessary things and in other cases it doesn’t. Also when it applies to

\[ \text{فَإِذَا كَانَ مَمْكٌنُ أَنْ لاَ يَكُونُ، وَكَانَ يُوجِبُ كُونُهُ مَقْوَلاً عَلَى الضَّرُورِي} \]

necessary things, this prevents us from making the kind of conversion which runs between affirmative and negative, using the fact that what can possibly

\[ \text{أَنْ يَكُونَ مَمْكُونُ أَنْ لاَ يَكُونُ. وَكَانَ يُوجِبُ كُونُهُ مَقْوَلاً عَلَى الضَّرُورِي} \]

be the case can also possibly be not the case. Also when ‘possible’ applies to necessary things, this requires that

\[ \text{سَبَبًا لَا يَقَالُ عَلَيْهِ، وَإِلاَّ كَانَ تَقْيِيدًا وَهُوَ أَنْ لَيْسَ مَمْكُونٌ مَقْوَلاً عَلَى الضَّرُورِي،} \]

its negation doesn’t apply to necessary things — otherwise its contradictory negation, ‘not possible’, applies to necessary things,

\[ \text{وَكَانَ الضَّرُورِيَ مُسْتَنَا شَبْهَةَ تَوْجِبُ أَنْ يَكُونَ حَلْلًا بَأَنَّ المَمْكُونَ يَقَالُ عَلَى} \]

ضَرْوَرِي so that the necessary becomes the impossible. This is not a problem which requires for its solution that ‘possible’ is applied to necessary things

\[ \text{فَقُولَا مَتَادَافًا.} \]

as a synonym of ‘necessary’.

\[ \text{فَإِنَّ المَمْكُونَ إِذَا كَانَ لَهُ مَعْنَيَانَ، وَأَحَدَهُمَا أَعْمَمُ مِنَ الْوَاجِبَ، وَالآخَرُ } \]

[2.3.18] But ‘possible’ has two meanings, one of them including ‘necessary’ and the other
مابين للواجب فإن الشبهة تححل أيضا. وهل الممكن الذي يجب قوله على disjoint from 'necessary'. This solves the problem too. Is the 'possible' which has to be said [just] of

{The discussion down to line 4 is hairy and I’m not sure I have it right. As always, the text may be corrupt. }

الضروري إذا الممكن الذي سلب لا يقال على الضروري؛ لأن سلبه أنه ليس necessary things different from the 'possible' whose negation doesn't apply to necessary things? [The question arises] because the negation [of the latter] is 'not

‘possible’, meaning impossible. [If the two ‘possibles’ are the same, then] the ‘possible’ that has to apply [just] to necessary things is what

هذا سلبه. فإذا كان هذا الممكن المقول على الضروري الوجود معناه أنه ضروري has this as its negation. When this ‘possible’ is said of something that is necessarily true, its meaning is that the thing is necessary.

ومفهومه ذلك، كما يكون في الأسماء المتارة، كان ما ليس بضروري وما ليس

But [if they are the same ‘possible’], then as with any two synonymous nouns, we must understand that ‘not necessary’ and ‘not

ممكن معنى واحد، وكان ما ليس بضروري إذن هو الممتنع، وهذا معنٍ؛ بل possible’ mean the same, so that what is not necessary is the same as what is impossible. This can’t be correct. But rather

الممكن المقول على الواجب هو إم محض موضوع بدل إم غير محض هو

‘possible’ in the sense in which it applies to necessary things is a determinate name which is used instead of the indeterminate name

لفظة غير ممتنع، وهو أعمَّ من الواجب ومن الممكن. فليس إذن صحة إنعكس ‘not impossible’, and it includes both the necessary and the possible. And in that case the correct form of its converse is not
either necessary or absolute, both of which are special cases of it, so the
correct form of its converse has to be possible in the same sense.

[2.3.19] But one should

أن يعلم أنّ معنى الكلام المذكور في التعلّم الأول الصحيح هو أن هذا إذا قيل
know that the correct meaning of the text in the First Teaching discussed
above is that when ‘possible’ is applied

على الضروري وعلى المطلق وعلى الممكن، فما منه في مادة الضروري فحكمه ما
to propositions that are necessary, propositions that are absolute and proposi-
tions that are possible, then propositions with necessary matter behave as has already been stated,

{NB Here he states that Aristotle’s discussion of conversion of e.g. ‘neces-
sary’ propositions is meant to be about ones which are necessarily true, not
about ones that state that their content is necessarily true. Also he doesn’t really
mean ‘matter’ in the sense discussed in ‘Ibāra, which refers only to the
terms and not to what is expressed about them. }

وذلك ما هو في مادة المطلق فحكمه ما قبل. وأما الممكن الحقيقي فسيُفسَح
and likewise propositions with absolute matter behave as has already been
stated. But as for propositions whose matter is strict possible,

أمره بعد، لعلم أنّ بعد إيضاح الحكم في جميع ما يجب هذا العام، يُفضح حكم
the facts about these will be made clear later. This is so that we know that
after he has set out the facts about all the cases implied by ‘possible’ in the
general sense, the facts

{The text would read better without hāthā, which is no doubt why several
mss leave it out. But we don’t know that Ibn Sīnā didn’t write it. }

هذا العام، والمطلق في الممكن الحقيقي وفي عكمه جزء المادة يتأثره، فنؤخذ
about this general ‘possible’ will have been set out. The custom is to post-
pone discussion of the strict possible proposition and its conversion, so let
us postpone it.

{Picked up again at 205.11. }
QIYAS ii.3  Prior Anal i.3, 25a36

Transcription checked 8 Oct 09. Readings checked 2 Nov 12.