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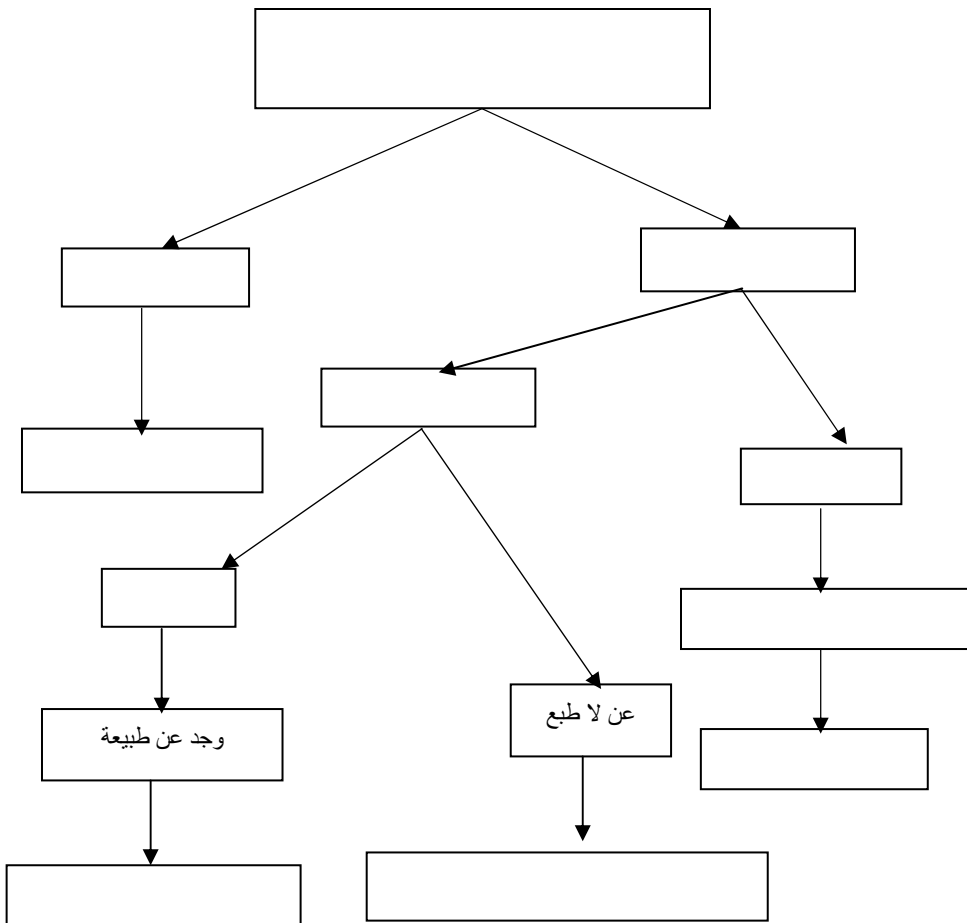
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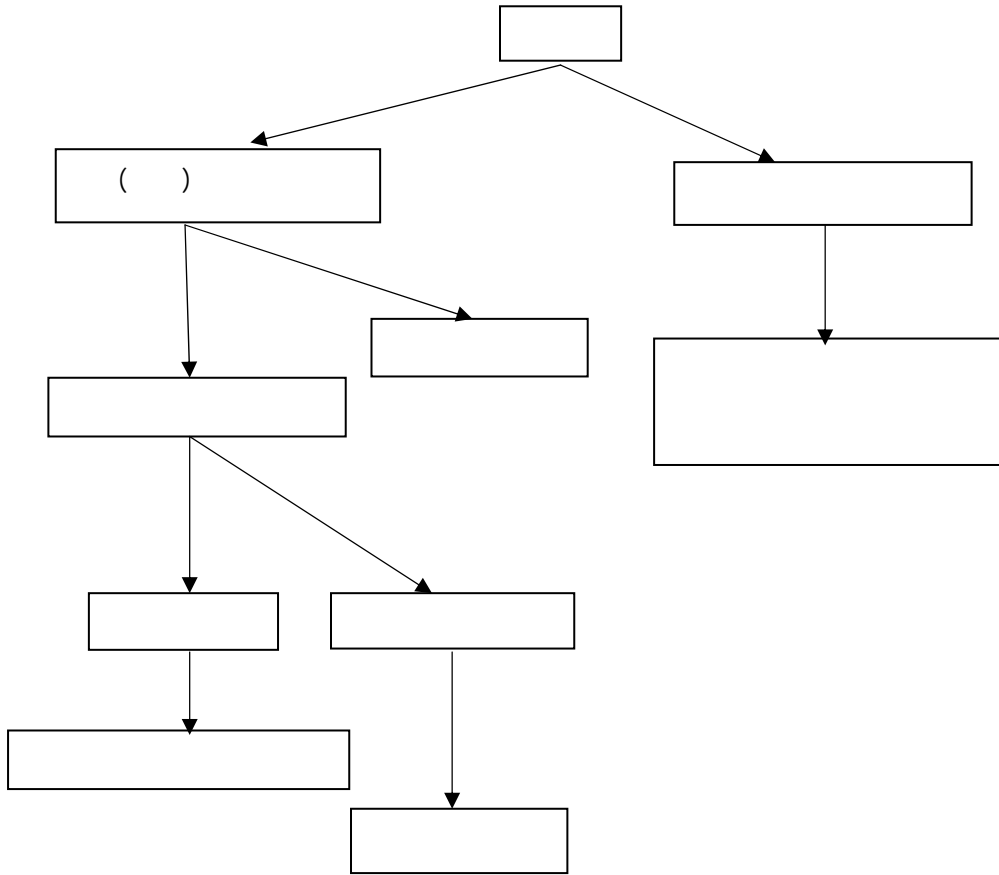
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Nature and Causality According to Al-Bakillani

*Mohammad .B. Altaie**

ABSTRACT

In this paper, we attempt to expose the opinion of Al-Bakillani with respect to the question whether the world can be created naturally without an external cause. This opinion is fundamental because it forms the basis of the Ash'arites' opinion on the subject of natural causality. For this reason, we studied the three main versions of the problem as presented by Al-Bakillani, and we analyzed his methodology of proof to refute the opinions of his opponents, exposing at the same time his implicit assumptions and the kalam opinions that stand behind the arguments. Although Al-Bakillani did not deny the existence of a related cause ('illa), he refused to consider that the cause acts by itself to produce the effect. One of the most important points exposed in this paper is the denial of Al-Bakillani, and other Ash'arites, of the four basic elements, i.e., fire, earth, air and water. It is also shown that Al-Bakillani refused to consider the heavenly bodies as having any specialty or being privileged in composition or material status. On the contrary, he considered all heavenly bodies including the Sun and the Moon being made of the same substance that makes the Earth. Al-Bakillani also strongly criticized Astrology and denied any kind of a metaphysical effect of the Stars and the Planets on mankind or processes taking place on Earth. We analyze the content of all these ideas and expose their relations to the arguments used by Al-Ghazali to refute philosophers in his book "tahafut al-falasifa", and show, contrary to the dominant opinion among some researchers, that the Mutakallimun actually did not deny causal relations, but rather they denied the natural deterministic causality; an important point that was overlooked by Wolfson and others.

KEYWORDS: Causality, Al-Bakillani, Mutakallimun.

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