In The Name of God

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Contents

Persons without Immaterial Souls[1]

Lynne Rudder Baker[2]

Abstract

Traditionally, Christians and Muslims have held that a human person is (or has) an immaterial soul. Since there does not seem to be a place for immaterial souls in the natural world, I offer an alternative view that I call 'Person-Body Constitutionalism'. Person-Body Constitutionalism holds that there are no (finite) immaterial entities like souls. Instead of distinguishing between souls and bodies, Constitutionalism distinguishes between whole persons and bodies. Human persons are essentially embodied, but do not essentially have the bodies that they in fact have at any given time. So, human persons, though spatially coincident with their bodies, are not identical to their bodies. Persons are distinguished from their bodies by having first-person perspectives essentially. I shall try to show that Constitutionalism is consistent with Christian doctrines. First, I set out Constitutionalism. Then, after critically discussing Thomas Aquinas's view of Resurrection, I discuss the compatibility between Constitutionalism and the Resurrection, and an intermediate state between death and a general resurrection (e.g., Purgatory). Finally, I have a brief discussion of

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1. The late Lynn Rader Baker (1944-2017), an American philosopher and professor of the University of Massachusetts was the keynote speaker at The International Conference of Religions Doctrines and the Mind-Body Problem, held on March 9-10 at Islamic Sciences and Culture Academy in Qom, 2011 and presented the above paper. Unfortunately, the paper is published when he has passed away.

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Constitutionalism and the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation. The conclusion is that Person-Body Constitutionalism is congenial to these central Christian doctrines, and the existence of immaterial souls is not required for traditional Christianity.

Keyword

Introduction

Christians and many Muslims have traditionally held that a human person is (or has) an immaterial soul and a material body. Holy Scripture portrays human beings as spiritual entities, and one obvious way to be a spiritual entity is to be (or to have) an immaterial soul that can exist independently of any body. Despite the popularity of this position, I do not believe that it is required either by the Bible or by Christian doctrine as it has developed through the centuries. I want to show that there is a Christian alternative to immaterialism. I call this alternative 'Person-Body Constitutionalism', or just 'Constitutionalism' for short.

One of the deepest assumptions of Christianity is that there is an important difference between human persons and everything else that exists in Creation. We alone are made in God's image. We alone are the stewards of the earth. It is said in *Genesis* that we have "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." In the Christian tradition, we persons are children of the Fall and the beneficiaries of the Atonement. We persons are subject to judgment; only to us is given the promise of Eternal Life. Only we can enjoy faith, hope and love. It is difficult to see how a Christian could deny the significance of the difference between human persons and the rest of Creation. We human persons are morally and ontologically special. An appeal to immaterial souls speaks to this difference between us persons and the rest of nature.

However, immaterialism is not so successful in showing how we persons are fully a part of the nature. In the past 300 years, the sciences have exploded with knowledge that puts us human persons squarely into nature. Scientific knowledge is genuine knowledge. It would be unthinkable to me to turn my back, intellectually speaking,

on the fact that the sciences have met with astonishing success. Yet, the sciences are relentless in taking human persons to be just another part of nature: a little more complex than chimpanzees, but not essentially different-certainly not morally and ontologically special.

So, there is a tension between, on the one hand, human persons as significantly different from the rest of nature, and on the other hand, human persons as not significantly different from the rest of nature. My aim is to show how this tension may be resolved. Indeed, even apart from Christian conviction, it seems clear to me that in some ways we are like other living creatures, but in other ways we are radically different. In light of this, it seems desirable that we have a conception of human nature that allows us to be both part of nature and morally and ontologically different from every other kind of thing in nature. You might think of this as a story about how we can be "in the world but not of the world."

What I want to do here is to set out my view of persons, according to which there are no immaterial souls, and to show how this view is congenial to a doctrine shared by Christians and Muslims—bodily resurrection and purgatory or an "intermediate state" ("*barzakh*")—as well as to the specifically Christian doctrine of Incarnation.

1. Human Beings without Immaterial Souls

One reason, I believe, that Christians and Muslims have been drawn to immaterialism is that they think that if we did not have souls, we would be in no way spiritual beings. But if we understand 'spiritual beings' as beings capable of having inner lives, this does not follow. I think that it is obvious to each of us that we are capable of having an inner life. What I want to do is to set out a view according to which the capacity of having an inner life does not require that we have immaterial souls.

Person-Body Constitutionalism holds, in the first place, that human persons are necessarily constituted by bodies: to have a body is essential to a human person, but it is not essential to have the particular body that one has at some particular time. In the second place, human persons, though not identical with the bodies that constitute them, have no immaterial parts, and hence no immaterial souls that could exist separately from somebody or other. What distinguishes persons from their bodies is that persons have first-person perspectives essentially. Human persons are spiritual beings—they are capable of having inner lives—in virtue of having first-person perspectives essentially.

According to Constitutionalism, we are most fundamentally persons—whole persons—not minds, souls or brains. Our robust first-person perspectives distinguish us from all other creatures in the natural world. A robust first-person perspective is the ability to think of oneself without the use of any name, description or demonstration; it is the ability to conceive of oneself as oneself, from the inside, as it were. In English, linguistic evidence of a first-person perspective comes from use of first-person pronouns embedded in sentences with linguistic or psychological verbs—e.g., "I wonder how I will die," or "I promise that I will stay with you."[1] If I wonder how I will die, or I promise that I'll stay with you, then I am thinking of myself as myself; I am not thinking of myself in any third-person way (e.g., not as LB, nor as the person who is thinking, nor as that woman, nor as the only person in the room) at all. Anything that can wonder how it will die ipso facto has a first-person perspective and thus is a person.

A first-person perspective is a conceptual ability. It is the ability to think of oneself from the first-person, as a subject of thought

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1. Hector-Neri Castañeda developed this idea in several papers. See Hector-Neri Castañeda ,1966, pp. 130-57, and Hector-Neri Castañeda, 1967, pp. 85-100.

and action. This ability is exercised every time I think, "I'm pleased that I was invited to this international conference." What pleases me is that I myself was invited, not that Lynne Baker was invited or that the oldest woman in the philosophy department at UMass was invited. No, I can entertain thoughts that are self-consciously about myself without any names or descriptions. This ability manifests my first-person perspective. Although I could not exist without some body or other, what makes me 'me' is not this particular body; but rather what makes me 'me' is having this first-person perspective. What makes any person a person is his or her first-person perspective, not the "stuff" he or she is made of.

A first-person perspective is the basis of all self-consciousness. It makes possible an inner life, a life of thoughts that one realizes are one's own. It also makes possible moral agency, which requires understanding that one has done things for which one is responsible. It makes possible rational agency, the ability to evaluate one's desires and to decide on which ones to act. A world populated by beings with first-person perspectives is ontologically richer than one populated by beings without first-person perspectives. The essential property of persons—first-person perspectives—does not need to be secured by an immaterial substance like a soul. A first-person perspective is the essential property of persons, whole persons.

The kind of first-person perspective that I have just described is robust; it is tied to language. A human infant who lacks a language is nonetheless a person; the infant is born with a rudimentary first-person perspective that typically develops into a robust first-person perspective. Since a first-person perspective is an essential property of persons, normally there is no person until a fetal human organism develops a rudimentary first-person perspective. A first-person perspective, whether rudimentary or robust, is a mental property; but the bearer of any mental

property is the whole person, not an immaterial soul.

No soul is needed, because human brains provide the machinery to support first-person perspectives, both rudimentary and robust. Although there is much to be discovered about how the brain functions to make a first-person perspective, there is no disagreement that in (this-worldly) human persons our mental lives are made possible by our brains.

We are whole persons—subjects of experience and moral and rational agents, with inner lives made possible by our brains. How are we whole persons related to our bodies? We are *constituted* by our bodies, just as statues are constituted by pieces of bronze, or rugs are constituted by sums of threads. The threads become frayed, a few come loose altogether, but the rug may remain. Therefore, it follows that the rug is not identical to the sum of threads that constitutes it at a certain time. The rug can survive many changes of thread. Similarly, a human person can survive numerous changes. Not only are our cells continually being replaced, but also we can walk on artificial legs, see with artificial eyes; cochlear implants allow deaf people to hear. A totally paralyzed person with a brain implant can move a computer cursor merely by thinking. A human person can survive enormous changes in her body. What makes her the same person over time— regardless of the changes in the body that constitutes her—is the persistence of her first-person perspective.

Let me emphasize that Constitutionalism is not "property-dualism." I am not saying that there are two kinds of properties, mental and physical. I believe that there are countless kinds of properties that objects have essentially: the property of being an X-ray machine, the property of being a dog, the property of being a river, and so on. Constitution is a ubiquitous relation that we are all familiar with (though probably not under that label). A river at any moment is

constituted by an aggregate of water molecules. But the river is not identical to the aggregate of water molecules that constitutes it at that moment. Since one and the same river—call it 'R'—is constituted by different aggregates of molecules at different times, the river is not identical to any of the aggregates of water molecules that make it up. So, constitution is not identity.[1] Another way to see that constitution is not identity is to notice that even if an aggregate of molecules, A_1, actually constitutes R at t_1, R might have been constituted by a different aggregate of molecules, A_2, at t_1. But constitution is similar to identity: if x constitutes y at time t, then x and y occupy the same spatial region at t. Constitution is a relation that is in some ways similar to identity, but is not actually identity.

So, according to Constitutionalism, although a human person does not have a soul, a person is not identical to her body. But to say that a person is not identical to her body does not mean that the person is identical to the body-plus-some-other-thing (like a soul).[2] Michelangelo's statue, *David*, is not identical to a piece-of-marble-plus-some-other-thing. If x constitutes y and x is wholly material, then y is wholly material.[3] The human body (or human animal) is wholly material and the human body constitutes the human person. Therefore, the human person is wholly material. A human person is as material as Michelangelo's *David* is.

Let me explain Constitutionalism about persons with an

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1. I am assuming here the classical conception of identity, according to which if a = b, then necessarily, a = b.

2. Someone may ask: If a human person is not identical to a body or to a soul or to a body-plus-a-soul, what is she identical to? This question is a red herring. A person is identical to herself and not another thing.

3. For details, see *Persons and Bodies*, Ch. 2.

analogy: Michelangelo's *David* is essentially a statue. It is not identical to the *David*-shaped piece of marble that Michelangelo carved. If the *David*-shaped piece of marble had spontaneously coalesced in outer space, it would not have been a statue. After David carved the famous statue, the piece of marble that constituted it was derivatively a statue in 1503. Before 1503, the piece of marble was not a statue, even derivatively. And of course, the piece of marble was not essentially a statue; it was not a statue when it came out of the quarry. But David is essentially a statue: *David* is a statue non-derivatively; the piece of marble is a statue derivatively—during the period of time that it constitutes something that is a statue non-derivatively.

The analogy to persons and their bodies is this: Persons are related to their bodies as statues are related to pieces of marble, bronze, wood, etc. Persons are essentially persons (i.e., they essentially have first-person perspectives); during the period that a body constitutes a person, the body is a person derivatively—in virtue of constituting something that is a person non-derivatively.

There is also a disanalogy between persons and statues. There are limits to the changes that a piece of marble can undergo while the statue remains in existence. But with persons—whose essential property is a first-person perspective—the only limit on changes that a body can undergo while the person remains in existence are those that would destroy the first-person perspective. So, as long as your first-person perspective persisted, your body parts could be exchanged for nonorganic parts—robotic limbs, neural implants, synthetic organ replacements. In that case, you could continue to exist constituted by a different body from the organic body that you now have (By contrast, the piece of marble that constitutes Michelangelo's *David* could not be replaced by a piece of wood without destroying the original statue. That

is one way that statues differ from persons).

Whether we are talking about human persons, statues, rivers,or countless other constituted things, the basic idea is this: When certain things of certain kinds (human organisms, pieces of marble, aggregates of water molecules,) are in certain circumstances (different ones for different kinds of things), then new entities of different kinds come into existence. The circumstances in which an aggregate of water molecules comes to constitute a river have to do with the relation of the water molecules to each other; they form a stream. The circumstances in which a piece of paper comes to constitute a U.S. dollar bill have to do with its being printed in a certain way under a certain authority. In each case, new things of new kinds—rivers, dollar bills—with new kinds of causal powers, come into being.

So, constitution is the vehicle, so to speak, by which new kinds of things come into existence in the natural world. Since constitution is an engine of novelty, it is again obvious that constitution is not identity. Although not identity, constitution is a relation of real unity.[1] Human persons are real unities: If this body constitutes me now, my body and I are not two separate things. There is just a person-constituted-at-this-time-by-this particular body.[2] Persons cannot be

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1. Some philosophers have held that the idea of unity without identity is incoherent. In *Baker*, 2000, I give a completely general definition of 'constitution' that is coherent.

2. Any believer in the Christian Trinity is committed to there being some such relation that is a real unity but is not identity. This is not to suggest that a believer in the Christian Trinity must endorse constitution as I construe it; I am only suggesting that a Christian is in no position to reject my view on the grounds that a relation intermediate between identity and separate existence is incoherent.

reduced to bodies or animals. Indeed, this conception is relentlessly anti-reductive.

To summarize this discussion of the idea of constitution: Constitution is a very general relation throughout the natural order. Although it is a relation of real unity, it is short of identity. (Identity is necessary; constitution is contingent.) Constitution is a relation that accounts for the appearance of genuinely new kinds of things with new kinds of causal powers. If pieces of marble constitute statues, then an inventory of the contents of the world that includes pieces of marble but leaves out statues is incomplete.[1] Statues are not reducible pieces of marble; nor are persons reducible to human bodies.[2]

On Constitutionalism, I am a wholly material being, constituted by, but not identical to, my body. I continue to exist as long as something has my first-person perspective; if something has my first-person perspective, then that being is a person and that person is me. At any time that I exist, I am constituted by something that can support my first-person perspective. In this life, I am constituted by a human organism with a human brain. I am a person non-derivatively; the organism that constitutes me now is a person derivatively.[3]

The important distinction is between persons and bodies or organisms, not between minds and bodies. What we call 'minds' are not entities at all, but collections of mental properties and capacities. The primary bearers of some of these properties—like being in pain,

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1. There is much more to be said about the idea of constitution. See Baker, 2000, especially Ch. 2 and Peter A. French and Howard K. Wettstein,1999, pp. 144-165.
2. Note that this is a completely general claim. It is not "property dualism."
3. For details on the derivative/nonderivative distinction, see *The Metaphysics of Everyday Life*, Chapter 8.

or being thirsty—are organisms; a dog can be in pain or be thirsty. The primary bearers of other of these properties—like wondering how one will die, or being grateful that one is healthy (properties that require robust first-person perspectives)—are persons. So, my solution to the mind-body problem is to say that there are no minds, no finite immaterial entities that are parts of persons or that can exist apart from bodies. There are rather persons who have all kinds of complex mental properties.

Now let us turn to the question of whether Constitutionalism, this view of persons without immaterial souls, is consistent with religious doctrines of resurrection, and of intermediate states between death and resurrection.I believe so. Let us turn to the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body.

2. The Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body

All the great monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—recognize doctrines of an afterlife. I shall focus on doctrines of resurrection of the dead, and in particular on Christian doctrines. Christian doctrines have two sources. The first source is Second-Temple Judaism, which contributed the idea of resurrection of the body. (The New Testament mentions that the Pharisees believed in bodily resurrections, but that the Sadducees did not believe in an afterlife. Jesus endorsed the former, which was fixed as Christian doctrine by his own bodily resurrection.) The second source was Greek philosophy, which contributed the idea of the immortality of the soul (Cullman, 1973, pp. 53-85).

In what follows, I shall consider Christian views on Resurrection and souls and bodies. I shall discuss St. Thomas Aquinas's views in particular, and point to two difficulties it has.

Then, I shall show how the constitution view can avoid the Thomas's difficulties and provide an understanding of the doctrine of Resurrection without immaterial souls.

To the early Church Fathers, belief in the immortality of the soul was connected with belief in resurrection of the body. The belief that Jesus rose from the dead was the belief that his soul survived death of the body and was "reinvested with his risen body" (Wolfson, Harry A, 1956-1957, pp. 7-40. Quotation on p. 8). The belief in a general resurrection was the belief that surviving souls, at the end of time, would be "reinvested" with risen bodies. During the interval between death and the general resurrection, a soul would have a life without a body, but a person's final state would be embodied in some sense. In this general picture, belief in resurrection includes belief in immortal souls and belief in postmortem bodies (of some sort).

The Christian doctrine of an afterlife is pieced together out of hints and metaphors in Scripture. Jesus's resurrection is the paradigm case. According to Christian doctrine, Jesus was the Son of God, who was crucified, dead and buried. The third day he rose again from the dead and ascended into Heaven. Although Jesus' resurrection is the ground of the Christian doctrine of resurrection, many questions are left open. Perhaps the most explicit, but still sketchy and metaphorical, account of an afterlife in the New Testament is in I Corinthians 15, with its "seed" metaphor. Our bodies are said to be sown in corruption, and raised in incorruption; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a "spiritual" body. But this passage is notoriously open to several interpretations. What is a 'spiritual body'? Is it made of the same flesh-and-blood particles as the pre-mortem body? of the same kind of particles if not exactly the same ones? of some entirely different kind of stuff? There is no unanimity.

According to the seed metaphor, developed by Origen (a third-

century Greek Church Father), the body is dynamic and always in flux. Just as the body is transformed in life, so it is transformed in death too. The resurrected body will be radically changed, and will not be made of the same material as the pre-mortem body (Bynum, 1995, pp. 63ff). Augustine, by contrast, insisted on the reanimation of the same bodily material, which would be reassembled from dust and previous bones (Bynum, 1995, p. 95). Thomas Aquinas rejected both metaphors for understanding the nature of the body that is to be resurrected. His concern was more with the integrity of the body than with the identity of material particles. The resurrected body will contain the same fragments and organs, if not the identical particles (Bynum, 1995, p. 265). However, Aquinas sometimes suggested that there would be material continuity of the body in the resurrection.

There are many questions to be answered about the doctrine of resurrection. E.g., is there immediate resurrection at the instant of death, or is there a temporary mode of existence (an intermediate state) before a general resurrection at the end of time?There is no general agreement. But whatever the details of the conception of an afterlife, there are three characteristics of the Christian view of resurrection: First, it is miraculous. Unlike the classical Greek doctrine of the immortality of the soul, life after death does not occur naturally, and is not subject to natural law. It occurs only by the Grace of God. Second, life after death concerns the identity of the human being, the person. The very same individual person is to exist in the afterlife as exists today. The person does not merge with the universe, or with an eternal mind. 'Survival as' in a sense of, say, psychological similarity is not enough. The person retains her particular identity after death. Third, resurrection is bodily. Resurrected people are embodied. St. Paul in I Corinthians says that resurrection bodies will be 'spiritual' or 'imperishable' or 'incorruptible', depending on the English translation.

Philosophically speaking, the question of personal identity in particular stands out: In virtue of what is a person in an afterlife identical to a certain person in a pre-mortem state? To have life after death is to have post-mortem experiences linked to each other and to pre-mortem experiences in a way that preserves personal identity (Price, 1964, pp. 364-386. (p. 369)). Let us begin by considering the view of personal identity of one of the great Christian philosopher-theologians, St. Thomas Aquinas.

3. Thomas Aquinas on the Afterlife

Thomas Aquinas's contribution was to give an account of what happens between death and resurrection in terms of the subsistence of the rational soul. Aquinas's view has the advantage over the substance dualists like Plato and Descartes in that it gives a reason why resurrection should be bodily resurrection: The body is crucial for a complete substance.

Aquinas took over Aristotle's framework for understanding human beings, modifying it as little as possible to accommodate Christian doctrine. On Aristotle's view, all living things have souls—plants had nutritive souls, nonhuman animals had sensitive souls, and human animals ("men") had rational souls. According to Aristotle, the soul is not separable from the body. A human being is a substance; a substance is formed matter. The body supplied the matter, the soul the form. No more could a rational soul exist apart from the body whose form it was than could the shape of a particular ax exist apart from that ax. The soul is the form of the body. So, Aristotle had no place for an afterlife.

Following Aristotle, Aquinas agreed that the soul is the form of the body. (Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I Q75, ST I Q75). However, "[t]he human soul, which we will call the intellect or mind, is

something immaterial and subsistent." (ibid., ST I Q75 2 (p.5)) A soul is not a human being. The soul provides the form for the material body: A human being is a substance; it is formed matter. Building on Aristotle's concession that the "agent intellect" is separable (*De Anima* 3.5, 430a17), Aquinas held that the soul is a substantial form that could "subsist" on its own.

Aquinas assumed that there is a general resurrection at the end of time, before which those who have died are in an "intermediate state." The human being—the substance, the individual—does not exist as such during the intermediate state. What continues through the intermediate state is only the rational soul which "subsists" until reunited with the body, at which time the human being is fully recovered. The disembodied soul can neither sense nor feel; it is only the part of the person that thinks and wills. While the soul is disembodied, the soul is *not* the person who died. It is merely a remnant of the person, awaiting reunion with the person's body. It is only when the soul is reunited with the person's body (the same one) that the person resumes life.

So Aquinas's view of a human person is rather of a composite of body and soul. He does not equate personal identity over time with identity of soul. However, Aquinas's conception of the afterlife does require separability of souls from bodies—albeit temporary—and continued existence of souls after death. So, for Aquinas, after a period in which a soul exists disembodied (and is not a person), a postmortem person has the same body and the same soul.

However, a philosopher may worry that Aquinas's account commits him to a new ontological category of being: the rational soul as a subsisting entity that is not a substance. The rational soul is not really an individual, but a kind of individual-manqué. We can say very little about this new kind of entity except that it seems to fill

Aquinas's need to combine Aristotle's ideas with the Christian doctrine of an afterlife. It would be desirable to make sense of a Christian doctrine of resurrection without appealing to a new and strange kind of entity, and later, I shall try to do so.

Putting aside the worry about subsisting entities that are not substances, another question that immediately arises about the idea of a disembodied soul concerns the question of individuating souls at a time—the synchronic problem. In virtue of what are there one soul or two? If souls are embodied, the bodies individuate. There is one soul per body. But if souls are separated from bodies—existing on their own, apart from bodies—then there is apparently no difference between there being one soul with some thoughts and two souls with half as many thoughts. If there is no difference between there being one soul and two, then there are no souls. So, it seems that the concept of a soul is incoherent.

Aquinas has a response to this question of how to distinguish between one and two disembodied immaterial souls at a single time. Separated souls are individuated by the bodies that they long for. Each separated soul has an affinity to the body with which it was united in premortem life. Even when Smith's soul is disembodied, what makes Smith's soul *Smith's* soul—and not Brown's soul, say—is that Smith's soul has a tendency and potential to be reunited with Smith's body, and not with Brown's body. This reply is not available to proponents of immaterial souls—like Plato or Descartes—who take a human person to be identical to a soul.

There remains a difficulty: If the form (soul) has separated from the body at death, then what remains is just the matter, and the matter that individuates is mere potency. It contributes to the actuality of the person, but is not itself actual. So, there is no actual "it" for the soul to long for. There is simply no way for a body to be Smith's in

virtue of Smith's longing for it. What makes a soul Smith's soul cannot be the body that it yearns—because the identity of the body (whose body it is) will depend upon the identity of the soul.

This difficulty arises from combining Aristotle's view with Christian doctrine. On Aristotle's view, a soul cannot be separated from a body. Aristotle can say that form makes something a person (a "man"), and matter makes him the individual person who he is. Aquinas agrees with Aristotle that the form of a person is the soul; however, Aquinas's Christian goal led him to hold, against Aristotle, that the soul can exist separated from the body. But when the soul is separated from the body, the individuality contributed by the body is lost. A soul separated from a body is not Smith's or anybody's soul.

On the one hand, Aquinas says that the soul without a body is only a fragment, not a human being. On the other hand, he says that the soul is a substantial form that carries our identity and can enjoy the beatific vision on its own; the body is just an expression of its glory. But if the soul accounts for the identity of the resurrected person, and if the body is merely matter (potency) of which the soul is the form, then the body of the resurrected human being that rises—*whatever* its matter—will be that human being's body, by definition. As Bynum put it, "God can make the body of Peter out of the dust that was once the body of Paul." (Bynum,1995, p. 260). It is difficult to see how Aquinas can combine the Aristotelian view that matter individuates with his view that the soul is a substantial form that can "subsist"—and experience God—apart from a body. Now let us see whether Constitutionalism can give a better account of the Afterlife.

4. Constitutionalism and Resurrection

I believe that Constitutionalism can handle two problems that fall out of Aquinas's view: Constitutionalism does not need a new ontological

category of disembodied souls as subsisting entities that are not substances. And Constitutionalism is not committed to the identity of the resurrection body with the pre-mortem body.

Moreover, if I am right about the three features that characterize the doctrine of Resurrection —miracle, identity of person and embodiment—then Constitutionalism of human persons provides a good metaphysical backdrop for the doctrine of Resurrection.

First, consider essential embodiment. Being essentially embodied does not imply that we essentially have the bodies that we in fact have. We could have different bodies, and if we are resurrected, we will have different bodies. This is implied by St. Paul when he says, "What I mean, my brothers, is this: flesh and blood can never possess the kingdom of God, and the perishable cannot possess immortality." (I Corinthians 15:50). Our bodies now are perishable, but in the resurrection we will have imperishable bodies. This leads to a simple argument, letting Smith be a person who will be resurrected:

(1) The body Smith has now is perishable.

(2) The body Smith will have in the resurrection is imperishable.

(3) If (1) and (2), then the body Smith has now ≠ the body Smith will have in the resurrection.

∴(4) The body Smith has now ≠ the body that Smith will have in the resurrection.

Let me defend this simple argument. It is valid: The premises entail the conclusion. But are the premises true? First, consider (1): The body that Smith has now is a biological body—a carbon-based organism—and all carbon-based organisms are subject to decay and hence are perishable. Consider (2): Resurrected bodies are supposed to be eternal, and whatever is eternal is imperishable. Consider (3): (3) is likely to be more controversial. Could not God transform Smith's body that is perishable now into a body that is imperishable? Certainly. But

to do so is to effect a substantial change: Smith's new imperishable body would not be the same body as Smith's current perishable body. Why not? Objects have their persistence conditions essentially: an object cannot survive a change of persistence conditions. So, the same body cannot have different persistence conditions at different times, and a single object cannot be perishable at one time and imperishable at another time. Objects with different persistence conditions are not identical. Hence, the perishable body that Smith has now is not identical to the imperishable body that Smith will have in the resurrection. I think that it follows that Smith's resurrection cannot coherently be a matter of re-joining Smith's body with Smith's soul.

Here I just want to draw attention to the point that a resurrection body cannot be the same body as a biological body, and Constitutionalism can allow for a change of body without appeal to an immaterial soul.

Now consider identity of person. On the Constitution view, identity of person is identity of first-person perspective. There is no informative criterion for identity of first-person perspective over time. It is just a brute fact about some future person that I shall be. I do not think that this is a shortcoming of my view. If there were an informative criterion of identity over time of persons, it would be in non-personal terms. That is, it would be reductive (e.g., continuity of organic functioning, or continuity of psychological states, or continuity of brain states). But there is a strong religious reason to hold that there is no reduction of persons to non-personal entities. If Christ died for our sins, or if God punishes us for our sins, the object of attention is the sinner—that is, the person, not some subpersonal features of the person, even if those subpersonal features are part of the sin. For example, suppose that Smith sinned by lusting after Mrs. Jones and that the lust was constituted by some complex brain state.

God does not punish the brain state. It is the person who is the object of attention. And if the person is not reducible to subpersonal features, then there is no informative, noncircular criterion of personal identity over time. So, we can hold that personal identity consists in sameness of first-person perspective, while recognizing that this is no informative, noncircular criterion.

Finally, consider the miraculous nature of resurrection. In the natural course of affairs, human bodies decay and are not replaced by, or changed into, resurrection bodies. However, the domain of natural laws is nature. And God is supernatural—omnipotent, omniscient, and perfectly good. So, there is no conflict between natural laws and God's power to bring about resurrection.

5. Between Death and Resurrection

Some—but not all—Christians believe that there is a kind of existence after death and before resurrection. For example, the Roman Catholic Church holds that after death, those who will have eternal salvation undergo a final purification, "so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven." (Purgatory) The dead in purgatory suffer punishment for their sins before attaining the beatific vision of God. The Roman Church offers prayers and Eucharistic sacrifice for those in purgatory and also "commends almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance undertaken on behalf of the dead." (Purgatory) [The doctrine of Purgatory is not ancient. It was developing in the 12th century (Le Goff) and articulated at the Council of Lyons II (1274), and was repeated at the Council of Florence (1431) and finally defined at the Council of Trent (1563). (www.catholicapologetics.org/ap090400.htm, accessed 12/30/09)]

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, as we have seen, the soul (the form of the body) is separated from the body at death. It is the

separated soul (without the body) that undergoes suffering in purgatory; on Aquinas's view it could experience corporeal fire (Bynum, 1995, p. 281). In general, preachers and schoolmen saw nothing wrong in depicting "bodily tortures of disembodied spirits although they sometimes admitted it was odd" (Bynum, 1995,p. 281).

Aquinas's idea of purgatory implies mind-body (or soul-body) dualism. But this is no reason to be a mind-body dualist. If one believes in corporeal suffering in purgatory, it is surely more plausible to believe that there be a body and not just a disembodied soul. And if there are bodies in purgatory, there could be whole persons and not just disembodied souls that, on Aquinas's view, are not whole persons when they are separated from their bodies. And if we allow that there are embodied persons in purgatory, we can dispense with immaterial souls—as Constitutionalism holds. Although Constitutionalism implies that a human person hasa body in order to exist, it does not imply that the body a human person hasbe a biological organism; it could well be something else, something that is a "spiritual body".

We saw above the difficulty of supposing, as Aquinas does, that a separated soul can be reunited with "its" body (the body numerically identity withthe earthly body). Therefore, mind-body dualism with the possibility of disembodied souls does not seem to help us understand Purgatory. Whole persons as Constitutionalism construes them can better undergo the punishments of purgatory (if there are such) than disembodied souls.

Not all Christians, as I mentioned, believe in purgatory. Protestants from Martin Luther on, rejected the notion of purgatory, and its surrounding lore (e.g., praying for and offering sacrifices for the dead). They took Purgatory to be unscriptural, and a denial of the completeness of forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ's saving work.

Even without purgatory, some Protestants hold that there is an

"intermediate state" between death and a general Resurrection at the end of time, and at least one Protestant theologian—John W. Cooper— has argued that an intermediate state entails mind-body (or soul-body) dualism (Cooper, 1989).

The immaterial soul is taken immediately to Christ, and later when all the saved are resurrected, it will be reunited with "its" body. (We just saw difficulties with determining which body goes with which soul.)

However, I know of no reason—Biblical or philosophical—to suppose that the intermediate state must be a *disembodied* state. For all we know, persons in the intermediate state (assuming that there is one) are constituted by intermediate-state bodies. As we saw, when one is resurrected, one has a 'spiritual', or 'glorified', or 'imperishable' body. If God can so transform or replace our bodies once, he can do it twice. So, the arguments about the intermediate state provide no reason to prefer soul-body dualism to Constitutionalism.

6. A Brief Word about the Christian Doctrine of Incarnation

Christians believe that God is three immaterial persons—Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. The second person of the Trinity (the Son), became incarnate; he became a man, born of the Virgin Mary. He is 'the Word made flesh,' God who suffered, died and rose from the dead. Jesus Christ is one Person in two natures (the hypostatic union): the Son of God, of the same substance as the Father in his divine nature, and of the same substance as us in his human nature. He is fully divine and fully human, "like us in all things except sin." The Western doctrine of the Incarnation was codified by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. In the words of the definition of Chalcedon (451), Jesus Christ is

> recognized in "two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of

each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ (Bettenson, 1963, p. 73).

I confess that I find this "two natures" doctrine of the Incarnation fundamentally mysterious; but as far as I can understand the Incarnation, I think that Constitutionalism is congenial to the "two-natures" doctrine.

The doctrine of the Incarnation requires a slight modification of Constitutionalism as Ihave presented it. In order to accommodate Christ as fully human and fully divine, the claim that every (non-derivative) human person is essentially a human person must be qualified like this: Everything that begins existence as a human person is essentially embodied. Although Christ—the Second Person of the Trinity—was embodied during his Earthly sojourn, He is not essentially embodied. To be essentially embodied means to be such that it is impossible to exist without a body. However, Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, became a human being—and thus embodied—at a certain point in time; but He existed from eternity— "begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father...." The Second Person of the Trinity existed as an immaterial being from eternity, and He came to be constituted by a human body when he entered into time. He became embodied at the Incarnation. So, rather than saying that all human persons are essentially embodied, I say that all beings that *began existence* as human persons (i.e., were constituted by human bodies at the beginning of their existence) are essentially embodied.

With this amendment, Constitutionalism seems to be congenial to the Chalcedonian doctrine of the Incarnation. Constitutionalism can

hold that Christ's human nature is wholly material and his divine nature is wholly immaterial. By contrast to Constitutionalism, soul-body dualism holds that human persons have immaterial minds; and since Christ is fully human and fully divine unmixed, would seem to have to hold that Christ has two immaterial minds—one human and one divine. It is surely more straightforward and elegant to treat the "two-natures" doctrine as Constitutionalism does: Christ's human nature is wholly material and Christ's divine nature is wholly immaterial.

7. Conclusion

This concludes my discussion of persons without immaterial souls. What makes us persons is not having immaterial souls, but having first-person perspectives. This Constitution view depicts us as ontologically different from the rest of creation, but as biologically continuous with nonhuman animals. Constitutionalism both recognizes the claims of the sciences and is compatible with Christian orthodoxy. So, if Constitutionalism is right about our place in nature, I think that would be good news for Christians—and perhaps for Muslims and Jews as well.

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Dualist Afterlives: Avicenna and Mullā Ṣadrā

Jari Kaukua[1]

Abstract

Subscribing to the principles of logically valid reasoning and parsimony of presuppositions in the framework of a religion that hinges on a revealed eschatological message, the medieval Islamic philosophers were bound to interpret the Qur'ānic account of the afterlife in ways that may have compromised at least some of its literal meanings. However, to what extent precisely do these interpretations go against the grain of Revelation has to be determined separately in each particular case. Wholesale statements regarding the alleged coherence or incoherence of general types of philosophical theories with Revelation risk neglecting important variations between theories, and thereby rendering us blind to the scope of possibilities in the concepts involved. From this perspective, I will consider the eschatological implications of the psychological theories of Avicenna and Mullā Ṣadrā, who both subscribe to a dualistic view of human being and consequently claim that the afterlife does not concern one's body. Two questions will then emerge as especially central to dualistic accounts of the afterlife. (1) How do we make sense of the kind of first-personality that must be an irreducible constituent of existence in the hereafter, provided that the latter fulfills the eschatological promise given in the Revelation? For in order to be a justified reward or punishment for my acts in this life, the afterlife must be in an equally strong sense mine. In the Arabic Peripatetic tradition, many of the central doctrines of which Avicenna and Mullā Ṣadrā

subscribe to, individuality entails materiality, which seems to suggest that human being can have a distinctly first-personal existence only when some kind of connection is preserved to the body as the necessary condition of one's individuation. (2) How do we account for the emphatically sensual descriptions of the hereafter in the Revelation? Again, in the Peripatetic tradition all cognitive acts that involve objects with sensible characteristics require bodily instruments of cognition, in the absence of which the revealed account is in danger of becoming a mere metaphor. In the light of these two questions, I will argue that Avicenna's dualism ends up with a rather narrow conception of the afterlife. He does try to give an account of a genuinely first-personal afterlife, and thereby presents a carefully argued departure from the Peripatetic tradition. But because of the way in which Avicenna separates the soul from the body, Avicennian afterlife is bound to remain exclusively intellectual. Thus, with regard to the second question Avicenna seems forced to interpret the Revelation in almost exclusively metaphorical terms. On the other hand, while following Avicenna in the first question, Mullā Ṣadrā conceives of the separate existence of the human soul in much broader terms than his predecessor. By means of the concepts of mental existence (*wujud dhihniyy*) and the world of images (*'ālam al-mithāl*), he ends up with a conception of human afterlife that is rich in terms of experiential content, and thereby potentially more coherent with the revealed account.

Keyword

Introduction

As is well known, the Qurʾān contains vivid descriptions of the afterlife promised to the believers. For but one instance, the *Sura* of the Mountain (Ṭūr) reveals that "[t]hose who were mindful of God are in Gardens and in bliss, rejoicing in their Lord's gifts: He has saved them from the torment of the Blaze, 'Eat and drink with healthy enjoyment as a reward for what you have done.' They are comfortably seated on couches arranged in rows; We pair them with beautiful-eyed maidens; We unite the believers with their offspring who followed them in faith–We do not deny them any of the rewards for their deeds: each person is in pledge for his own deeds–We provide them with any fruit or meat they desire." (Q 52:17-22)[1]

If we read such passages literally, the Qurʾān describes the pleasures of the afterlife in terms that seem to require embodiment of the human subjects for whom those pleasures are proper. How can one enjoy the fruits and the flesh without the corporeal means of tasting them and becoming satisfied of them? How could one enjoy the company of the beautiful-eyed maidens or of one's own offspring, if one were deprived of the access to their presence provided by the cognitive means of one's body, that is, sight, touch, hearing, and so forth? At first glance, therefore, the Qurʾān seems to paint a picture of an afterlife in which the faithful are embodied individuals, in much the same fashion as we tend to perceive each other in our everyday interaction.

Texts such as this have always been something of a nuisance for thinkers of an explicitly intellectual bent. Most obviously they are a

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1. All citations of the Qurʾān are to the English translation in Abdel Haleem, 2010. Cf. 37:41-49; 38:50-52; 44:51-56; 56:17-26, 35-38; 76:19-22.

problem for those interpreters who propose a substance dualist account of human being, coupled as it often is with a derogatory view of the body and the idea that death amounts to liberation from corporeality. If we take human being to consist in an immaterial substance, which does have an instrumental or accidental relation to a body but is not essentially dependent on one, then we seem bound to interpret the Qurʾānic descriptions of the afterlife as metaphorical or allegorical accounts, which are intended to refer to pleasures of an entirely different, intellectual sort.

However, in the following paper I would like to argue that such wholesale assumptions about Islamic substance dualists may be a little too hasty. On the contrary, we have reason to believe that Islamic philosophers, most of whom endorsed some form of dualism, had at their disposal a considerably vaster conceptual space, quite allowing for variations with regard to the question of in what exactly the immaterial human being consists and what it can include. In order to show this, I will look at the theories of two famous dualists, Avicenna (d. 1037 CE) and Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1635/6 CE). By no means do I want to claim that they exhaust the available options, but I do think that they represent two rather far-removed positions, one with a very narrow, the other with a much more inclusive understanding of immaterial human existence.

Instead of the explicit comments Avicenna or Mullā Ṣadrā make on specific Qurʾānic verses, I will take my cue from their psychological theories of human beings, and then consider the consequences of those theories for their respective notions of eschatology. While a full-fledged account of our topic would require more extensive textual basis, the restricted approach is justified for two reasons. First, in the case of Avicenna, the systematic

psychological theory he presents in his main works, such as *al-Shifāʾ* and *al-Ishārāt waʾl-tanbīhāt*, as well as in the compendia of discussions appended to them,[1] represents his most considered thinking, and against this background the haphazard eschatological remarks that he makes in passing, and that do not sit well with his psychology, seem little more than cases of *ad hoc* invention.[2] Second, in the case of Mullā Ṣadrā, the systematic account he gives in *al-Asfār* and other philosophical works seems to be corroborated in his commentary to the Qurʾān.

I will begin with a discussion of Avicenna's psychology with a view to the question of what exactly the existence of the immaterial human substance consists in. Once this is clear, we will briefly consider what kind of afterlife we can legitimately expect for such a substance. I will then move on to discuss Mullā Ṣadrā, highlighting first the similarities between him and Avicenna as well as his reliance on Avicenna's theory of human subjectivity. The common ground between the two thinkers settled, I will conclude with an account of the way in which Ṣadrā departs from Avicenna, and of the consequences of this departure for his account of the afterlife.

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1. Here I mean chiefly *al-Taʿlīqāt* and *al-Mubāḥathāt*. I share Dimitri Gutas' view, 2014, pp. 159-164, that these texts should be read as compendia of Avicenna's answers to questions posed by his interlocutors, collected discursively during the period of time following the composition of the *Shifāʾ*. For the *Mubāḥathāt*, this was demonstrated by D. C. Reisman, 2002.

2. I refer to the theory that there is an imaginary afterlife by means of a pneumatic body or the celestial spheres in store for those believers who have not acquired a sufficient level of knowledge. To my knowledge, Avicenna never explicitly commits to this view. Cf., however, J. R. Michot, 1986, which not only introduces the problematic texts but also argues for the possibility of imaginary afterlife in the broader framework of Avicenna's philosophy.

1. Avicenna

Despite his endorsement of substance dualism, Avicenna latches on to the Peripatetic tradition in his theory of the individuation of concrete entities. According to this traditional view, a necessary condition of individuation is matter, which provides the sublunary entity with the possibility of acquiring its unique spatiotemporal co-ordinates. Without these co-ordinates, none of the entity's properties is guaranteed to be exclusively proper to it. Other properties of a human being, such as being of a certain skin complexion, of a certain height and weight, of a certain age, and so forth, are individual only because they exist in a certain location at a certain time, namely at the place and time inhabited by the human body. All is well and good as far as orthodox Aristotelian doctrine is concerned[1] (Avicenna, 1952, I.12, p. 70). But a dualist is left with a dilemma concerning the individuation of the immaterial soul: how to account for human individuality, when matter, the necessary condition of individuation, is by definition excluded from the account?

Avicenna tackles the problem in chapter V.3 of the psychological section of al-Shifāʾ. He first considers the possibility that the immaterial human substance is individuated through its relation to the body. However, since the human substance is immaterial, and since immateriality entails immortality – there being no substrate for the possibility of the corruption of the immaterial entity – the human substance must continue to exist at the corruption of the body to which it is related. This is a problem for the thesis that the individuation of the

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1. For further discussion, see D. Black, 2012, pp. 255-281; and F. Benevich, Individuation and Identity in Islamic Philosophy after Avicenna: Bahmanyār (d. 1066) and Suhrawardī (d. 1191), *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, forthcoming.

human substance is due to its relation to the body, for the relation will cease at the non-existence of one of the relata, and this will compromise the afterlife individuality of the immaterial human substance. Thus, Avicenna qualifies his thesis by saying that the individuality of the human substance is due to characteristics (*hayʾāt*) of and in the immaterial substance that are generated by but do not subsist through its relation to the body. He proceeds to give a preliminary list of such characteristics, including moral, emotional, and cognitive dispositions, as well as each human being's unique awareness of herself, but then leaves the matter at that (Avicenna, 1959, V.3, pp. 223-227).

Whether Avicenna considered the case settled or not, it is clear that his account in *Shifāʾ: Nafs* V.3 seems unsatisfactory in light of the earlier discussion in I.12 of *Shifāʾ: Madkhal*, for in that book properties like the acquired dispositions were explicitly argued to be insufficient for individuation in the absence of the unique spatiotemporal co-ordinates afforded by matter. Perhaps Avicenna perceived this discrepancy, indeed one would expect that it was brought to his attention by one of his more insightful interlocutors, for in the late *Taʿlīqāt* we find a much more central role assigned to self-awareness:

Self-awareness(*shuʿūr bi'l-dhāt*)[1](see Adamson and Benevich, 2018, pp.

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1. The term *dhāt* is a translator's nightmare. Primarily, it is the feminine form of *dhū*, which refers to the possessor of anything, for instance the possessor of attributes. Its technical use by the *falāsifa* for the essence of a thing, the subject for other attributes the thing may have, is easy to infer from this basic meaning. However, *dhāt* also functions prominently in perfectly commonplace reflexive structures, such as in our passage, where its rough English equivalent is 'self'. The translation of the present passage is made particularly difficult by the fact that Avicenna seems to rely on both meanings of *dhāt*: self-awareness is simultaneously awareness of one's substantial essence. For an interpretation of a similar passage that favours 'essence' over 'self' as a translation of *dhāt*, I have criticised a similar interpretation at some length in J. Kaukua, 2015, pp. 37-42.

147-164) is essential to the soul, it is not acquired from outside. It is as if when the self (*dhāt*) comes to be, awareness comes to be with it. [...]

Self-awareness is the soul in act, and its awareness of itself is continuous. [...]

Our awareness of ourselves is our very existence. [...]

Self-awareness is innate to the self. It is the very existence of the self, and we do not need anything external by means of which we would grasp the self (Avicenna, 2013, §§883-889, pp. 481-484).

In the *Taʿlīqāt*, self-awareness, one of the features in the list of individuating characteristics in *Shifāʾ: Nafs* V.3, has become the very existence of the individual instantiation of the human essence. Within the confines of this paper we cannot consider the question about the exact inference that led Avicenna to this identification. But we do have to ask why he thinks self-awareness is immune to the dilemma concerning individuation. This question must be approached by looking at Avicenna's description of the phenomenon: what does he mean by self-awareness?

The background to the claim that the self-awareness of the immaterial human substance is constant is probably the traditional idea that intellection consists of an identity between the intellect and its object.[1] Thus, in this abstract sense intellection is always self-intellection. But while this claim may seem relatively straightforward in the case of absolutely immaterial intellects, those that have no relation whatsoever to material bodies, it is not so obvious concerning human intellect. First of all, human intellects are unique in that their first perfection is temporally distinct from their second perfection. In the beginning of their existence, human intellects are mere

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1. This idea was already formulated by Aristotle in *De an.* III.5, 430a20-25(n.d.).

potentialities for actual intellection, which must be acquired through a laborious process of learning. Thus, if self-awareness is a constant feature of human existence, and if at the beginning of that existence there is nothing to be intellectually aware of, the traditional thesis about all intellection being self-intellection does not go very far in making sense of Avicenna's theory of self-awareness, for the kind of constant self-awareness he has introduced is something we should have regardless of whether we have learned anything at all.[1] Secondly, Avicenna explicitly rejects the identity of the subject and object of intellection in the case of the human intellect, while allowing its possibility for God's intellection[2] (Avicenna, 1959, V.6, pp. 239-240). Thus, although the traditional thesis may have been instrumental for Avicenna's arrival at his claim that self-awareness is the existence of the immaterial human essence, it cannot be what he means by self-awareness. This is tentatively corroborated by a brief remark in the *Mubā athāt*: "It may be that 'intellection' [in the sense of that] which grasps the intelligibles is not applicable to the purity of complete self-awareness, but is subsequent to it. That is worth thinking about"(Avicenna, *Mubāḥathāt* §373, 209; A. Badawī, (1947), pp. 118-239).

But if self-awareness is not actual intellection of one's essence in the same sense as we have actual intellection of other things, what is it? The answer to this question can be found in the scattered remarks Avicenna makes on the phenomenon in the various arguments that rely on it. Let us consider two texts, the first from *Shifāʾ: Nafs*, the second from *al-Ishārāt wa'l-tanbīhāt*.

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1. Note that in the aforementioned *locus classicus*, Aristotle explicitly distinguishes between the identity of subject and object in *actual* intellection as something that does not hold in a subject that has merely the potency for intellection.
2. For God's intellection, see Avicenna, 2005, VIII.6, pp. 284-290.

Now, if someone said that you do not know that [the I] is a soul (*nafs*), I would say that I always know it according to the sense in which I call it a soul.[1] I might not know it as designated by the word 'soul', but when I understand what [it is that] I refer to as a soul, I understand that it is that thing and that it is that which uses motive and cognitive instruments. I am ignorant of [the I as designated by the word 'soul'] for only as long as I do not understand the meaning of 'soul'. This is not the case with the heart or the brain, for I may understand the meaning of 'heart' and 'brain' but not know [the I]. If I mean by 'soul' that it is the thing which is the origin of those motions and cognitions that belong to me and that end in this whole, I know that either it is really me or it is me as using this body. It is as if I now was not able to distinguish the awareness of me pure and simple (*al-shuʿūr bi-anâ mufradan*) from [its] being mixed with the awareness that it [i.e. the I] uses the body and is associated with the body (Avicenna, 1959, V.7, pp. 256-257).

This passage is from a context in which Avicenna has to argue for the applicability of the common experience of being an I, a first-personal subject and agent, to make sense of the soul in psychology. The point he makes is that once we realise that the soul is precisely the entity that is responsible for the acts and passions one experiences oneself to enact and undergo, the identification of our first-personal I with the soul is but a matter of naming. Interesting for our concern, however, is precisely this reference to an isolated phenomenon of

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1. This is a reference to *Shifāʾ: Nafs* I.1, where Avicenna has defined 'soul' in relational terms: it refers to the efficient principle that animates the living body *insofar as* it is the principle of life. He purposefully excludes from the soul's definition the question of what the entity that acts as a soul is in itself, in order to fit all the different types of soul (vegetative, animal, human, and celestial) under the same definition.

first-personality, to being an I responsible for one's actions and subject to the passions one undergoes.

Now, compare this idea with that brought forth in the following passage from the *Ishārāt*:

Perhaps you say: I can only affirm myself by means of my act.

[Avicenna's answer:] If you have affirmed your act as an act in the absolute sense, it is necessary that you affirm an agent of it in the absolute sense, not in a particular sense. [This agent] is your very self. If you have affirmed [your act] as your act, you do not affirm yourself by means of it. On the contrary, your self is part of the concept of your act insofar as it is *your* act. The part is affirmed in the conception preceding it and is not made any less by being with it but not by means of it. Thus, your self is not affirmed by means of [your act] (Avicenna, (1892), *namaṭ* 3, p. 120 (emphasis added)).

Here we find Avicenna defending his theory of self-awareness as a constant constituent of what it is to be human. Earlier in the *Ishārāt* he has presented a version of his famous thought experiment of the floating man, by means of which he argues that self-awareness is prior to and independent of any actually acquired intellection. In the present passage, he explicitly refutes what we can call a reflection theory of self-awareness,[1] that is, the claim that self-awareness first takes place when one reflects upon a prior act or a prior experience of

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1. I am using this term in full awareness of its use in contemporary German philosophy of mind. The argument here has striking parallels to those put forth by the so-called Heidelberg school of philosophers, initiated by the work of Dieter Henrich. Interestingly, much of the material these philosophers apply to reject reflective, or higher-order, theories of self-awareness is derived from post-Kantian German idealism, especially from Fichte. For a seminal text, see D. Henrich, (1970), Bd 1, pp. 257-284.

one's own. Avicenna's argument is that unless one is already aware of the first-order act or experience as one's own, no non-arbitrary criteria can be given for its recognition as belonging to the reflecting subject. If there is no "mineness" in the first-order act, it is an "anonymous" act, or an act in the absolute sense, which cannot be attributed to me with any more justification than to any other person.

The point of relevance for our concern is that just as in the earlier text, Avicenna again refers to the bare fact of first-personality in his use of self-awareness. Thus, without belabouring the point at any greater length,[1] I would like to make the simple claim that this first-personality, in the sense of being an I, is what Avicenna means by self-awareness. Thus, the individual existence of each human essence consists in being a first-personal subject of experience, with a singular and exclusive perspective to whatever one acts upon or is passive towards. This first-personality is not a characteristic that can be shared with other entities, but rather a primitive fact of immaterial existence, analogous to the spatiotemporal co-ordinates that are responsible for the individuation of material entities. All further attributes of immaterial human substances are individuated by this first-personality, by being stamped as *my* perceptions, *my* emotions, *my* character traits, *my* acts – by always existing in the framework of a singular self-awareness.

To finally address our eschatological concern, it is important that Avicenna considers this self-awareness to be really distinct from all the experiential attributes it may come to receive. This is clear from such passages as the floating man, or from his comparison of our relation to our bodies and all their entailments to the clothes that we

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1. For an extended discussion, cf. Kaukua, *Self-Awareness in Islamic Philosophy*, chs 3-4.

wear, the point being that it is simply due to our becoming accustomed to our bodies and their effect upon us that we consider them parts of ourselves (Avicenna, *1959*, I.1, p. 16; Avicenna, *1959,* V.7, p. 255).

In reality, the body is a garment that we will eventually undress of, and thus really distinct from us. Thus, our self-awareness, our true existence, is disembodied, not just in the sense that it subsists independently of the body, but in the sense that it will ultimately have nothing that is due to the body present to it. When in death we leave the body, we thereby leave all perceptual content of experience, including all that the soul's internal senses are responsible for, because the function of these faculties always requires a respective corporeal organ[1] (Avicenna, *1959,* I.5, pp. 39-45). Our life in the hereafter will only consist in our self-aware existence at the degree of second perfection that we have reached during our sojourn in this world. In other words, there will be content to our afterlife, and our first-personality will be a perspective *to* something, at least in case we have acquired some knowledge to contemplate, but this content will be exclusively intellectual.

Thus, the Avicennian conception of the afterlife, in spite of its denying embodiment any role whatsoever, is capable of guaranteeing a genuine individuality or personality to the human subject. The afterlife will in each case be uniquely mine in exactly the same sense as this life is. Nevertheless, Avicenna will be bound to interpret the kind of Qur'ānic passages we started with as metaphorical or allegorical, since he has no means to give the human subjects any

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1. All cognitive faculties with the sole exception of the intellect belong to the so-called animal soul, which is "the first perfection *of a natural body possessed of organs* in terms of perceiving particulars and moving by volition" (emphasis added).

sensible experiences in the afterlife. Even imaginal representations will be excluded given that there is no brain in which the images could be retained and synthesised to form the experience of a beatific perceptual state. It is true that Avicenna elsewhere refers to the possibility of human imaginative faculties functioning by means of the celestial bodies (Avicenna, 1984, III.15, pp. 114-115; Avicenna, 1969, VI, pp. 222-224; Avicenna, 2005, IX.7.25, p. 356), but these texts are problematic in the light of Avicenna's broader theoretical commitments. First of all, in his psychology, Avicenna is adamant that each human soul has a unique relation to its body (1 Avicenna, 1959, V.3, pp. 224-225), and a capacity to connect to another body after death obviously violates this doctrine. By the same token, if the departed human soul could entertain mental images by means of the celestial body, one body would be governed by two souls, a position which Avicenna explicitly refutes in his argument against transmigration (Avicenna, 1959, V.4, p. 234). Secondly, the celestial bodies are simple, which raises the question of how they can function as instruments for many departed souls, each of which will presumably have its own peculiar imaginative content in the afterlife. Third, Avicenna explicitly states that celestial motion does not take place for the sake of "generated things" (Avicenna, 2005, IX.3.4-5, 319), and it is hard to think of an instrument not functioning for the sake of an objective extraneous to itself. Therefore, I am strongly tempted to consider the passages that introduce the idea of an imaginative afterlife as little more than ad hoc attempts to please the readers that were reluctant to accept an allegorical interpretation of the Qur'ānic passages, and especially one with so dire consequences for those sincere believers whose intellectual capacities have remained in a state of underdevelopment.

2. Mullā Ṣadrā

It is evident that Mullā Ṣadrā found Avicenna's description of self-

awareness of great theoretical potential in his *Asfār*. Let us consider just two passages as examples of this general tendency. First, we can find a faithful rendering of the Avicennian argument against reflection theories of self-awareness.

No one can say: my knowledge of myself is due to a medium, which is my act, and I gain information of myself from my act. This is not possible, [irrespective of] whether I gain information of myself from an absolute act or from an act which originates from myself to myself. If I gain information from an absolute act, the absolute act only requires an absolute agent, and only an absolute agent can be established by means of it, not an agent that would be me. If I gain information of myself through my own act, I can only know my act once I already know myself. Thus, if I can only know myself once I know myself, a vicious circle results, and that is false. This indicates, therefore, that a human being's knowledge of himself is not by means of his act[1] (Mullā Ṣadrā, 2001–2005, vols. 9, II.4, III,505-506).

Ṣadrā clearly makes the Avicennian point that self-awareness cannot be reduced to reflection upon a state of first-order awareness of other things, for this would either render completely arbitrary the recognition of the first-order state as one's own, or it would result in a vicious circle where we have to suppose the *explanandum* in the *explanans*. As a result, Ṣadrā maintains that we have to admit self-awareness as a primitive constituent of our experience. He also follows Avicenna in conceiving of this primitive type of self-awareness as first-personality, a point that by his time was a firm part of the tradition, and had been further solidified by Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī's (d. 1191 CE) distinction between 'I' and 'it' as respectively

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1. This edition is henceforth referred to as *Asfār*, followed by chapter number, and volume and page number.

the subjective and objective constituents of all experience, together with the introduction of the term *anāʾiyya* or "I-ness" for the prior.[1]

That Ṣadrā also subscribed to the Avicennian identification of self-awareness with the individual existence of the self-aware human being is evident from passages like the following:

Hylic souls are distinguished from each other by appendices that occur to them because of matter, for when souls come about, they are corporeal, and they are to be judged as material forms and natures that are multiple because of corporeal distinctions. Then results the individuation of each of them by an individual existence which is their very awareness of themselves, and that persists firmly while [undergoing] a kind of existential renewal. Thus, the distinction between [souls] certainly remains eternally even if existential diversity occurs to each of them because of their substantiation from the beginning of their being until the end of their substantial perfection (Mullā Ṣadrā, *2001-2005,* IV.7.2, VIII.395).

As can be seen from this passage, Ṣadrā's account of the individuation of human being curiously combines the two Avicennian phases in *Shifāʾ: Nafs* V.3 and the *Taʿlīqāt*. In the beginning of its existence, each human soul is a material form. At this level, it is individuated by the particular characteristics due to it because of matter, which are ultimately individuated by the unique spatiotemporal co-ordinates that matter affords. However, once human being becomes aware of itself, that is, when the kind of first-personal cognitive perspective we have just discussed emerges, it ascends to a distinct level of existence which Ṣadrā calls mental (*dhihnī*). On this level,

1. Cf., for example, Ṣadrā, *2001-2005,* III.1.3.1, VI.150, with Suhrawardī, 1999, II.1.5, pp. 115-116.

human being is individuated by its unique self-awareness, just as we saw Avicenna argue. Self-awareness will account for the individuality of human being from here on for the rest of its existence, the hereafter included.

Minor differences aside, so far the Ṣadrian account seems remarkably close to the Avicennian. However, there is one all-important difference. Ṣadrā's firm adherence to a broad and robust concept of cognitive unity, that is, the idea that the subject and object of cognition are identical, or really indistinguishable interdependent parts of a single whole,[1] leads him to reject Avicenna's claim that self-awareness is really distinct from the objective aspect of experience. Although he does recognise genuine argumentative power in such Avicennian arguments as the floating man,[2] they are only useful as aids in an analysis of the different interdependent constituents of mental existence. No real distinction between the self-aware subject and the objects of its experience can be inferred on their basis (Cf. Mullā Ṣadrā, 2001-2005, IV.2.3, VIII.48-53). In reality, human existence is always qualified by its objective content, it is a single structured whole of that content as first-personally apprehended at a certain level of cognition, either perceptually, imaginally, or intellectually. This is evident from the following passage:

When being a knower and being known is realised between

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1. For a study of this principle in Ṣadrā, see I. Kalin, 2010.

2. Interestingly, Ṣadrā recasts the argument as valid of all animals (see *Asfār*IV.2.2, VIII.48). This is a logical consequence of his view that all cognition, not just intellection but also the most elementary levels of perception, requires immateriality, the mode of existence of which is self-awareness. Interestingly, he even considers the question of whether plants have a faint apprehension of their surroundings and thereby of themselves, arriving at a hesitant affirmative, e.g. in *Asfār* IV.4.2, VIII.192.

two things, there is no doubt an essential connection between them with regard to existence, and so a unifying connection or an existential bond of one knowing the other is realised between the two things. […] That connection requires the occurrence of one of them to the other and its being revealed to [the other]. It may take place between the very essence of what is known and the essence of the knower, like in the soul's knowledge of itself, its attributes, its faculties, and the forms established on the tablets of its awareness, and it may be between a form which occurs from what is known and is additional to its essence and the essence of the knower, like in the soul's knowledge of what is external to itself and to the self of its faculties and its awareness, and it is called 'occurrent knowledge' (*al-ʿilm al-ḥuṣūlī*)[1] or 'newly acquired knowledge' (*al-ʿilm al-ḥādith*). What is really known is also here the form that is present (*al-ḥāḍir*), not what is extraneous to it. When it is said of the external thing that it is known, this is in a secondary sense (Mullā Ṣadrā, *2001-2005,* III.1.3.1, VI.154-155).

Now, we should pay special attention to the end of the passage. It is not particularly odd to claim cognitive identity between the subject and object of self-knowledge. But Ṣadrā here explicitly maintains that cognitive identity is true even when we perceive things we believe to be external to us and radically different from ourselves. The point is that in this kind of cognition, which Ṣadrā here calls "occurrent" or "newly acquired", the intentional supposition of an

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1. In later Islamic philosophy, the term *ḥuṣūlī* is the counterpart to *ḥuḍūrī*, or "presential" knowledge, which denotes the first type of unity Ṣadrā has just described. The distinction is between immediate phenomenal content and its supposed intentional reference. I have discussed the emergence of the distinction in Suhrawardī in Kaukua, *Self-Awareness in Islamic Philosophy*, ch. 6.1. For a more extensive study of presential knowledge, see M. Ha'iri Yazdi, 1992.

extra-mental object is an addition to the immediate experience of the phenomenal object. The phenomenal object is a constituent of the very same act of existence as myself, the subject that is aware of the object. If I suppose it to exist extra-mentally independent of my cognition of it, I perform a conceptual operation on the immediate act of experienced existence, an operation similar to that by means of which I assume myself to be distinct from whatever objects I am first-personally aware of. Elsewhere, Ṣadrā characterises such assumptions as based on custom or habit (Mullā Ṣadrā, *2001-2005,* I.9.2.6, III.521), which I take to denote the fact that we are rarely aware of making these assumptions, and we seldom have any reason to pause and consider their legitimacy. This, however, does not change the fact that the extra-mentality and independence of the object are not given in the act of existence I am primarily and immediately aware of, any more than my own distinctness of the object is.

The thesis of cognitive identity ultimately amounts to the claim that each of us is always an act of existence with a first-personal internal structure, an 'I' aware of an 'it'. This is an evident departure from the Avicennian idea that the 'self' unique to each of us is a static perspective that remains independent of and immune to any changes brought about by what it is a perspective to. But what are the eschatological consequences of this difference? First of all, we must pay attention to the fact that according to Ṣadrā, mental existence is completely independent of the body. This means that, just as in Avicenna, each human being subsists as self-awareness, whether or not she is connected to her body. But unlike Avicenna, Ṣadrā thinks that the existential content of mental existence, or all the qualifications our self-awareness receives, is not caused by the body but by the supernal principle of our existence through a process of emanation. External corporeal circumstances may be necessary conditions, or

accidental causes, for perception, but even so the actual existence of the phenomenal object of perception *as it is experienced* is caused by that higher principle. When it comes to imagination and intellection, this independence from external corporeal circumstances is complete, and the extra-mental object is no longer even a necessary condition. Thus, Ṣadrā can account for an embodied existence independent of the material body, the form of which the soul was before ascending to the level of mental existence. Distinct from corporeality in the sense of a form's existence in matter, this purely mental embodiment is the *experience* of inhabiting a body, and it entails the presence to our awareness of other entities with spatiotemporal co-ordinates, entities which we experience in a certain spatial relation to our embodied selves. In other words, we can be aware of perfectly ordinary perceptual objects even when we lack any relation to our erstwhile material bodies. Moreover, all the sense modalities remain as imaginal possibilities in this disembodied state. Therefore, Ṣadrā can incorporate a literal interpretation of the Qurʾānic descriptions of the afterlife in his systematic metaphysics, only the kind of objects described in the Revelation will exist imaginally, not perceptually. Yet they need not be any less real as phenomenal objects of experience.

The question remains, however, whether Ṣadrā thinks imaginal existence is proper to human perfection, the reward for which the beatific existence in the hereafter is. If intellection is the summit of our aspirations, shouldn't the afterlife consist of intellectual contemplation rather than imaginal experience of concrete phenomenal objects? If that is the case, Ṣadrā will end up with a similar account of the afterlife as Avicenna, though for a different reason. In his reading of Ṣadrian eschatology, Christian Jambet insists that imagination is required in all cases in the hereafter as well (Jambet,2008, pp. 73-110). This is because Ṣadrā seems to have proposed a

quasi-Lockean theory about personal identity, according to which our personal history determines our present awareness through imagination. Suppose, for instance, that I have developed a profound fondness for chocolate. As a consequence, when I pass by a chocolaterie on the street, its offerings will appear quite different to me than they would if I were averse to or ignorant of the substance. Since Ṣadrā's conception of the human self is considerably broader than that of Avicenna, this is of crucial importance for his conception of the hereafter: if the perspective to whatever one is aware of in the Garden is supposed to be unique to oneself, then one's personal history must determine that perspective. Thus, even if our main activity in the afterlife were the contemplation of God, we would still contemplate Him as creatures determined by their unique personal histories. The kind of narrow first-personality Avicenna proposed cannot accommodate this more robust uniqueness of our perspective, and Ṣadrā would perhaps say that this is symptomatic of its being based on the ultimately unwarranted supposition of the separability of the self from its experiential content.

Thus, although Ṣadrā's adherence to substance dualism is every bit as firm as Avicenna's, his broader and more robust conception of our selfhood allows him to incorporate a literal interpretation of the Qurʾān's sensual descriptions of the afterlife, and even makes such descriptions appropriate from a purely systematic point of view. If we value adherence to the apparent meaning of the Scripture, we can therefore say that there is an important difference between the respective dualisms of Avicenna and Mullā Ṣadrā: while both seem capable of guaranteeing genuine individuality in the afterlife, only Ṣadrā can incorporate perceptuality in it. This eschatological difference is a direct consequence of differences in their psychologies, which Ṣadrā was fully aware of when he claimed that a correct understanding

of the afterlife requires the correct account of the human soul (Mullā Ṣadrā, 1384HSh, XIX.2, II.1003).

Ultimately, however, we are faced with a question of theoretical priorities. For an uncompromising *faylasūf* like Avicenna, Ṣadrā's conception of mental existence comes at too great a metaphysical cost. Although the substantial change from material existence to mental existence may have had its precedents in Islamic philosophy (Cf. Fārābī, 1964, p. 36), it poses grave problems for a Peripatetic natural philosopher, insofar as it requires the emergence of what is ontologically superior from what is inferior. Moreover, the complete rejection of the function of corporeal organs in imagination would seem to violate the principle according to which nature does nothing in vain, for what use can there be for an idle brain? Finally, since only like produces like, how can the higher metaphysical principles cause perceptions in us, unless they consist of perception in themselves? Such a claim, however, would go severely against the grain of the traditional account of the very superiority of those higher principles. These are but some of the problems Avicenna would likely have perceived, and if any kind of principle of parsimony is adhered to, Ṣadrā seems to be compelled to make a few too many metaphysical assumptions to make his theory palatable. But Ṣadrā's willingness to pay the price may have been dictated by the ulterior motive of strict submission to Revelation. If interpreters like Jambet are right, and if Ṣadrā's priority throughout his philosophical career was to make theoretical sense of the Revelation in its terms, we have to ask whether his metaphysics and psychology are ultimately as parsimonious as he could make them. Categorically resistant to any revisions of the Revelation by means of special strategies of interpretation, and starting from the premise that philosophical psychology must be molded to accommodate the Qur'ānic description of the afterlife, perhaps his theory is the natural outcome.

3. Conclusion

Let us conclude as we began, with the Book. Again, *Sura* 52 tells us that "[t]hose who were mindful of God are in Gardens and in bliss, rejoicing in their Lord's gifts: He has saved them from the torment of the Blaze, 'Eat and drink with healthy enjoyment as a reward for what you have done.' They are comfortably seated on couches arranged in rows; We pair them with beautiful-eyed maidens; We unite the believers with their offspring who followed them in faith – We do not deny them any of the rewards for their deeds: each person is in pledge for his own deeds – We provide them with any fruit or meat they desire. They pass around a cup which does not lead to any idle talk or sin. Devoted youths like hidden pearls wait on them. They turn to one another and say, 'When we were still with our families [on earth] we used to live in fear – God has been gracious to us and saved us from the torment of intense heat – We used to pray to Him: He is the Good, the Merciful One.'" (Q 52:17-29)

Amid the references to sensual pleasures, the Qur'ān here mentions inter-subjective relations between the faithful in its description of the hereafter. If this reading is correct, and if these relations contribute to the beatitude, then it seems we can duly ask whether a paradise is imaginable without the possibility of contact to real human others. For example, would the hereafter be as enticing without the presence of one's "offspring", as the text has it?

If questions like this are considered worthwhile, they will leave the dualist with a further dilemma. Even if we agreed that Ṣadrā found a way to interpret literally the Revelation's highly concrete and sensual descriptions of the afterlife, though arguably at a high metaphysical cost, it remains an open question whether he, or any other dualist, can incorporate relations to human others in his philosophical system. The treatment of this question, however, is topic for another paper.

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Animal Afterlife from the Viewpoint of the Quran, Islamic Narrations and Mulla Sadra

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Abstract

Muslim philosophers and theologians have disputed over the animal afterlife. Most Muslim scholars hold that the Quran, Islamic narrations and rational arguments affirm the resurrection of animals in the afterlife, though there is a dispute concerning how they will be resurrected and whether they will be rewarded or punished as humans will. Beside the controversies and disputes, several reasons suggest that they have their own afterlife. To prove the animal afterlife, it is necessary to prove primarily that they have soul. Mulla Sadra has attempted to prove that animals have soul, based on the immateriality of the faculty of imagination (*al-Khayāl*). Likewise, most of the reasons provided for the immateriality of human soul could be employed for the animal afterlife. The second stage is to explain the purpose of animal afterlife. Two goals could be mentioned regarding this issue: first, the compensation of evils harming them requires the afterlife. Second, some Quranic verses and Islamic narrations establish the fact that at least some animals have the intellectual faculty and thus have responsibly for their actions. Though

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these Quranic verses and Islamic narrations are not explicit, they can be a probable evidence for the animal afterlife. Finally, two points must be noted: first, though there are several arguments in favor of animal afterlife, there is no general agreement on it in the Islamic world. Second, the above arguments are not general, but they include merely those animals that have the faculty of sensation and have been inflicted by evils.

Key words

Animal, Afterlife, Resurrection, Soul, Quranic Verses, Islamic Narrations, Mulla Sadra.

Introduction

Though there is no agreement on animal afterlife among Muslim philosophers and theologians, some arguments and Islamic narrations suggest their resurrection on the Day of Judgment and afterlife. But there remain some important questions:

1. Do all animals have afterlife or some?

2. What is the purpose of animal afterlife?

3. If some animals will be resurrected, does it follow that they are responsible for their actions?

4. Will animals be rewarded and punished as humans will, or they will be resurrected for other purposes?

In this paper, I review the philosophical theory of the view presented by Mulla Sadra, the eminent Muslim philosopher, on these questions, and then concentrate on Quranic verses and Islamic Narrations concerning this subject.

1. Animal afterlife in Mulla Sadra's View

There is, as I explained, no consensus on animal afterlife among Muslim philosophers and theologians, some accepted it and some rejected it. Likewise, there are various theories on how they will be resurrected;will they be resurrected with their personal identity? will they be punished or rewarded for their actions or they have no wisdom and responsibility toward their actions?

In Mulla Sadra's view, all animals have afterlife, but some lose their personal identity and some preserve it. He distinguishes between two sorts of animals:

A: some animals lack the faculty of imagination (*al-Khayāl*).

In Islamic philosophy, the faculty of imagination (*al-Khayāl*), as will be explained, is the power of understanding of particular images like the image of a particular tree, a particular animal, a particular man etc. Mulla Sadra believes that some animals, like someinsects, are not complicated enough to have this capacity. Therefore, they will not be resurrected with their personal identity.

These animals, in Mulla Sadra's view, will be resurrected without their personal identity. This belief is derived from Mulla Sadra's view that all things, including mineral and inanimate things, will be resurrected in the sense that they will return to God. He believes that all things created by God havea goal and purpose, and the purpose of material things is to move toward immateriality and God. He contends that this verse of the Quran refers to this fact:

"Surely, to Allah all things return" (aš-Šûrâ /53).

Thisopinion of Mulla Sadra is grounded on his belief that no creature has been created futile, and all creatures have the purpose of getting more perfect. The perfectness of inanimate things is to be annihilated in God. Similarly, the perfectness of these animals is to lose their materiality and to be annihilated in God.

B: Mulla Sadra holds that some animals have the faculty of imagination. This faculty, in Mulla Sadra's view, is immaterial, and thus the animals owning it must have immaterial souls. Then since these animals have immaterial souls, they will be resurrected with their personal identity (Sadra, 1960, pp. 248-250; Sadra, 2003, pp. 400-401).

So, the foundation of the theory of animal afterlife for Mulla Sadra is his philosophical principle that the faculty of imagination is immaterial. To explain more, it is necessary to expound that in Muslim philosophy, the soul has the power to perceive four sorts of ideas each of whichbelongs to a particular faculty:

1. Sensible faculty: this faculty understands sensory ideas; they are simple phenomena in the soul which result from the effects of the relations between the sensory organs and material realities, such as images of scenery which we see with the eyes, or sounds which we hear with the ears. The subsistence of this kind of idea depends on the subsistence of relations with the external world, and after being cut off from contact with the external world, they vanish in a short time (about one tenth of a second).

2. The faculty of imagination (*al-Khayāl*): this faculty understands imaginary ideas. Theyare simple specific phenomena in the soul which are subsequent results of sensory ideas and link with the external world. But their subsistence does not depend upon links with the external world, such as the mental image of a view of a garden which remains in the mind even after the eyes are closed, and may be recalled even after years have gone by.

3. The estimative faculty (*al-Wahm*): Many philosophers have mentioned another kind of particular idea which is related to particular meanings, and which is exemplified by the feeling of enmity which some animals have for some others, a feeling which requires them to flee. Some philosophers have extended this term to cover all *particular meanings*, including the feelings of affection and enmity of man, etc.

4. Intellectual faculty: the function of this faculty is to comprehend universal conceptions and ideas (Mesbah, 1999, pp. 133-134).

Mulla Sadra's view on the immateriality of the animal's soul is in contrast to Avicenna. According to Avicenna, if someone has the intellectual faculty, he must have a soul understanding these universal conceptions, but comprehension of other sorts of ideas, like imaginary ideas, does not require an immaterial soul. Accordingly, Avicenna concludes that since animals are unable to have intellectual faculty

(the faculty of understanding universal conceptions), they lack an immaterial soul (Avicenna, 2000, p. 355).

Mulla Sadra disagreed with Avicenna, suggested that any sort of comprehension and understanding requires soul; he argued that all sorts of knowledge are not material and thus they need an immaterial soul. Therefore, he concluded that since animals can understand imaginary concepts, they must possess an immaterial soul by which they get able to understand these conceptions. This theory of animal's soul made a solid foundation for their afterlife, or at least made their afterlife more plausible.

The basic arguments provided by Mulla Sadra to prove animal's soul are:

A: animals can understand themselves as a united being persisting over time. As we can referto ourselves by "I", animals understand themselves as a singular being owning personal identity. This singular being cannot be a material part of their bodies, since all parts of animals are changing, so the personal identity of animals is because of their immaterial soul; animals have an immaterial soul preserving their personal identity (Sadra, 1960, p. 42).

In fact, this argument had been used before Mulla Sadra to prove the immateriality of the human soul, but Mulla Sadra extended its domain, asserting that it can be used for the immateriality of the animal's souls too.

B: animals know themselves, and achieving knowledge for the knower needs an immaterial subject. In fact, Mulla Sadra believes that the nature of knowledge is the presentation of an immaterial reality for someone; and given this belief, anyone, including animals, who can possess any sort of knowledge must have an immaterial soul (Sadra, 1960, p. 43).

This argument had been used before Mulla Sadra by other Islamic philosophers, but Mulla Sadra employed it for all sorts of knowledge, arguing that possessing any sort of knowledge by animals indicates that they have an immaterial soul.

Therefore, it could be concluded that Mulla Sadra has endeavored to prove the existence of a soul for some animals owning the faculty of imagination, and then proved that they will have afterlife, but the important point that must be noted is that this afterlife is not necessarily a place where they will be punished or rewarded for their actions. Mulla Sadra accepts the afterlife for animals, but it does not follow that they are responsible for their action and will be rewarded or punished, as humans will, in terms of their free actions and decisions.

Consequently, the rational argument of Mulla Sadra for animal afterlife is that they have an immaterial soul, like humans; but in addition to this argument, Mulla Sadra appeals to some Quranic verses upholding his theory of animal afterlife.

Mulla Sadra says that this verse of the Quran might show the resurrection of animals:

"When the savage animals are resurrected" (at-Takwīr/5).

Mulla Sadra holds that this verse of the Quran is vague, since there is the possibility that the meaning of the *savage animals* is people who will be resurrected in the image of savage animals. Given Quranic verses and narrations, wrongdoers on the Day of Judgment will be resurrected in the image of animals. Therefore, Mulla Sadra supposes that there is a possibility that the meaning of this verse of the Quran refers to criminals and wrongdoers who will be resurrected in the image of savage animals. This possibility makes the verse of the Quran ambiguous and maybe irrelevant to animals (Sadra, 1982, p. 285).

Regardless of Mulla Sadra's interpretation of these verses, in the following section, I explain all verses related to animal afterlife and the possible meaning they may have.

2. Animal Afterlife in the Quran

In this section, I seek to focus more carefully on the Quranic verses showing animal afterlife and elucidate their meaning. The verses are as follows:

1. When the savage animals are resurrected (at-Takwīr/5).

There are several possible meanings for this verse of the Quran:

A: the dead animal will be resurrected as humans will. This interpretation is the most possible meaning and is the most compatible with the literal meaning of this verse of the Quran.

B: the living animals will be gathered on the Day of Judgmentbecause of their fear. Thisis the second possible meaning derived from the word " *ushirat*". This word means "gathering" and normally refers to gathering of people in Judgment Day after their resurrection from death, but literally it might refer to living animals who will be gathered in Judgment Day for their fear.

C: human beings will be resurrected in the Judgment Day in the image of savage animals. AsI quoted, Mulla Sadra has already referredto this interpretation, but it seems incompatible with the apparent literal meaning of the words of this verse.

However, the first interpretation, which is most probable given the apparent literal meaning of the verse, implies the animal afterlife. But what is the cause behind it and what then happens to them? This verse indicates none of these questions and to find a response tothese questions, we should refer to Islamic narrations.

And there is no animal that walks upon the earth nor a bird that flies with its own wings but (they are) groupslike you; we have not neglected anything in the book, then to their Lord they shall be gathered (Al-An'am, 38).

2. As I explained, the word "*yuḥsharūn*" refers normally to resurrection and then gathering of creatures in the Judgment Day. Thus, the best possible meaning of this verse is the animal resurrection and afterlife of animals.

3. Thereare some Quranic verses showing the power of animals to understand. Avariety of verses of the Quran does not explicitly refer to animal afterlife, but show their power of understanding. These verses of the Quran make the theory of animal afterlife and even animal responsibility more probable, since the power of understanding makes them responsible to what they do.

The Quran refers to the power of Solomon to speak with animals. Verses 16to 24 of the chapter Al-Naml (The Ant) of the Quran display plainly the rational power of animals. God says:

Solomon inherited David. He said: 'Know, my people!we have been taught the speech of birds and given everything. Surely, this is a clear bounty. We gathered to Solomon his army of jinn, humans and birds; gathered and dispersed, and when they came to the Valley of the Ants, an ant said: 'OAnts!Go into your dwellings lest Solomon and his army should, unknowingly, crush you. He smiled, and laughed at its words, and said: 'O My Lord!inspire me that I should be thankful for Your blessing with which You have blessed me and my parents, and that I may do good works that will please You. Admit me, by Your Mercy, among Your righteous worshipers. He reviewed the birds and said: 'Why is it that I do not see the hoopoe here? Or is he among the absent? Surely, I will punish him with a terrible

punishment, or I will slaughter him or he gives me a good reason. He was not long in coming, and said: 'I know what you do not know. I come to you from Sheba with certain news. There I found a woman ruling over them. She possesses everything and has a great throne. But she and her people prostrate to the sun instead of Allah. And Satanhas made their deeds seem pleasing to them and barred them from the Path, and therefore they are not guided.

These verses of the Quran suggest explicitly the intellectual faculty of animals, and thisupholds the possibility of their afterlife.

However, if someone persists on the metaphorical interpretation of these verses of Quran, I reply that we are not permitted to interpret a text metaphorically, unless we have a strong reason for it. In our discussion, there is no cause to interpret these verses allegorically, and thus the literal meaning of the verses, showing the intellectual power of animals, must be accepted.

3. Animal afterlife in Islamic Narrations

There are several narrations indicating animal afterlife, some show merely their resurrection in afterlife and others suggest their responsibility. They are as follows:

Abuzar [the companion of the Prophet of Islam] says: when we were with the prophet of Islam, two goats were horning each other. The Prophet said [to his companions]: do you know why they were horning? They replied: we don't know. The Prophet said: but God knows it and will judge between them (Howayzi, 1995, Vol. 1, p. 715).

This narration does not only show animal afterlife, but even implies their responsibility to what they do. Likewise, it indicates that some animals will be rewarded or punished for their actions.

It is narrated from al-Sakuni that the Prophet (of Islam) saw a

camel tied and his load was on his back. TheProphet (of Islam) said: Where is the owner? Tell him: Prepare yourself for a complaint (of this camel on afterlife) (al-Saduq, 1993, Vol. 2, p. 292).

Al-Shaykh al-Saduq, one of the greatest Shi'a hadith scholars, explained the hadith that the meaning is that on Judgment Day (afterlife) the camel complains against his owner to God and says: ""what was my sinthat you tyrannized me?"ThenGod takes away his right from the owner. (al-Saduq, 1993, Vol. 2, p. 292). So, the narration implies that those animals sufferedand oppressed will have afterlife, not all animals. Likewise, this narration only implies animal afterlife, not their responsibility for their actions.

Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h) said: every camel by whom people go to the pilgrimage (to Mecca) three years (or seven years in other narrations) will be from the animals of the heaven (al-Saduq, 1993, Vol. 2, p. 293).

This narration only implies animal afterlife, not their responsibility for their actions.

The Prophet of Islam (p.b.u.h) said: respect your sacrificial animals, since you will be ride on them in the bridge of *Serat* (in the judgment day) (al-Saduq, 1966, Vol. 2, p. 438).

This narration only implies animal afterlife, not their responsibility for their actions.

"It is narrated that the horses of fighters [in the way of God] in this world will be their horses in the paradise" (al-Kulaynī, 1987, p. 3).

This narration only implies animal afterlife, not their responsibility for their actions.

Some of these narrations suggest that animals will be resurrected and will live in afterlife, but the first and second narration

adds the point that they will be rewarded for their actions and the oppressions they endure in their life will be compensated. Muslim theologians have advanced this subject in the topic of "compensation" *(al-Evaz)*, holding that if an animal is oppressed in this world, God must compensate and reward the animal for tyrannies it hasexperienced in this world. Shaykh al-Mofid, an eminent Muslim theologian, says:

Given the mercy of God and His grace, it is necessary to compensate pains occurring to animals in this world, whether it is from divine action or action of others… God is just and benevolent and does not create something to be harmed (Al-Mufid, 1993, p. 110).

We can argue that for animals suffered in this world, it is necessary for God to compensate their sufferings, but it does prove their responsibility. However, the first narration might be an argument corroborating their responsibility and thus their being rewarded or punished for their action, but there is no chain of narrators for this narration, and given the laws of the science of Hadith (traditions), it cannot be considered as an authentic narration.

So, it could be held that given the Quranic verses and Islamic narrations, the responsibility of animals is almost likely, but there is no certain argument supporting it.But, is there any rational argument affirming this position?

Some Muslim scholars disagree with it, contending that animals have no intellectual faculty, wisdom and free will, and thus the belief in their responsibility is absurd (Taleghani, 1983, Vol. 3, p. 173).

In contrast, some contemporary interpreters of Quran attempted to prove their responsibility in terms of their limited rational faculty. Allama Tabataba'i (Tabātabā'ī, 2015, Vol. 13, pp. 82-86) and Ayatollah Makarem (Makarem, 1995, Vol. 5, pp. 224-228) believe that animals have a

low level of intellect and rationality and thus might have responsibility for their actions. This responsibility (if proven) shows the necessity of the existence of afterlife, because this responsibility requires the existence of a world in which animals see the result of their actions.

Allama Tabataba'i, the great cotemporary interpreter of Quran, refers to the verse of the Quran "And there is no animals that walks upon the earth nor a bird that flies with its own wings but (they are) groupslike you; we have not neglected anything in the Book, then to their Lord they shall be gathered"(Al-An'am, p. 38), and then holds that the words at the end of the verse, then to their Lord they shall be gathered, show that the resemblance does not mean merely similarity of animals with human being in food, cohabitation and shelter; rather, there is another aspect of similarity which makes them similar to man and that is their gathering in afterlife to God. And being gathered to Allah is naught but a type of conscious life animals, like humans, possess it.

The animal life shows their power to understand. An individual animal, as we observe it, in search of the necessities of its life resorts to systematic movements through which it maneuvers to fulfill its needs about food, cohabitation and shelter, which leaves no room for doubt that it perceives its needs and understands how it would be fulfilled. Thus, it has opinions and beliefs with which it rises to catch beneficial items and repulse harmful things. The scholars who have researched about animals have found in many species like ant, bee and termite, wonderful traces of civilization, fine points of manufacturing and subtle aspects of norms and policies which are generally not found except among civilized and developed human groups. Allama Tabataba'i argues that theses evidences show that animals have a sort of faculty of understanding of goodness, badness and even of justice and injustice. It is the basis of their being gathered and reckoning of their deeds as well as their recompenses in form of

reward or chastisement in the next life. Thus, it might appear to us that the animals too are subject to gathering (*al-Hashr*) like the human beings. They may be rewarded and punished, like humans, but it does not mean that animals will be equal to man in perception and will, or that animals will rise up to the rank of man in psychology and spirituality. Such supposition is rejected evidently, and the effects appearing in animals and man refute it.

Allama Tabataba'i concludes that animal societies, like the human society, contain the element of divine religion that is nourished from its nature in the same way as the religion gets nourishment from the human nature and prepares it to be gathered towards Allah, as the natural religion prepares the man for gathering and recompense, even though the observation of the animal's condition, compared to that of the man, shows that animals have not been given details of human cognition nor are they subjected to duties of intricate burdens placed upon the man (Tabātabā'ī, 2015, Vol. 13, pp. 82-86).

Likewise, Ayatollah Makaremembraces the same position, holding that the complexity of actions practiced by animals is a sign of their intellectual power. Then though he denies the high level of responsibility and intellectual power of animals, he refers to the responsibility of them in terms of the low level of their understanding (Makarem, 1995, Vol. 5, pp. 224-228).

4. Conclusion

Reviewing Mulla Sadra's view, Quranic verses and Islamic narrations, it could be concluded that:

- − Animal afterlife is necessary for animals that suffered in this world, given the Mercy and Justice of God.

- − There are some evidences suggesting animal afterlife, even

those who were not oppressed, but these evidences are not a definitereason. They show only the strong possibility of animal afterlife.

– There is no certain evidence espousing the responsibility of animals, though it is probableaccording to some Quranic verses, Islamic narrations and rational arguments. However, the evidences for the moral responsibility of some animals may not be generalizable to all animals.

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Augustine and Ibn Sina on Souls in the Afterlife

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Abstract

Despite remarkable similarities between Augustine and Ibn Sina on the soul's knowledge of itself, there seem to be important differences between these two thinkers on issues concerning souls in the afterlife. The question of what individuates a soul after bodily death is a serious and difficult question for Ibn Sina. He seems to find this matter quite perplexing. By contrast, Augustine does not address this topic directly. Nevertheless, Augustine does make various claims about the afterlife that would give him at least the basis for an account of soul individuation after physical death. One might well wonder, however, whether either Augustine or Ibn Sina should be satisfied with the account I offer Augustine.

Keyword

Augustine, Ibn Sina, Soul, Afterlife, Dualism, Individuation.

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   https://philpapers.org /rec/MATAAI-7

Introduction

Richard Sorabji in his book, *Self:* *Ancient and Modern Insights about Individuality, Life, and Death*, points out many similarities between what Ibn Sina says about self-knowledge and what Augustine says in his *De trinitate*, Book 10, about the mind's knowledge of itself. These similarities, according to Sorabji, cannot have been the result of any direct influence Augustine had on Ibn Sina since Ibn Sina had no access to any of Augustine's writings. Sorabji surmises that it may instead be the result, or at least partly the result, of both thinkers having read, and been influenced by, some earlier philosopher, perhaps a Neo-Platonist. "Gilson noticed the general similarity between Augustine's use of the Cogito here and Avicenna's Flying Man," Sorabji writes, and appears to suggest as common sources Plotinus and Proclus;but this cannot have been his intention [Sorabji adds, with characteristic generosity] since Proclus is too late to have influenced Augustine. If there is a common source [he adds], I think it is likely to be Porphyry (Sorabji, 2006, p. 226).

Sorabji has quite a bit to say about the similarities between Augustine and Ibn Sina on self-knowledge. One very important similarity is that they both use a claim about self-knowledge to underwrite an argument for soul/body, or mind/body dualism. I am going to discuss their arguments in a moment. However, Sorabji also points out what is apparently an important difference between Ibn Sina and Augustine. The soul/body dualism that self-knowledge underwrites for each philosopher presents a challenge for Ibn Sina that seems not to have concerned Augustine. That challenge concerns the individuation of souls in the afterlife. According to Sorabji, Ibn Sina thinks he must account for how it is that separated souls are individuated in the afterlife and he is not sure how to do this. In fact, in one important passage, Sorabji suggests, he presents no fewer than

six different suggestions for how separated human souls are individuated, but is unable to settle on any one of them. By contrast, Augustine, again, according to Sorabji, is ambivalent about whether it would even be good to survive bodily death by existing as a separated soul; perhaps it would be better for the righteous human soul in the afterlife to merge with God. Being ambivalent about whether it would even be good to survive as a separated soul, Augustine is therefore not motivated to figure out the metaphysics of separated-soul individuation.

Sorabji attributes Augustine's ambivalence on these matters to his having read Plotinus. Here is a Plotinus-like question Sorabji thinks Augustine asks himself: "Might not our individuality ideally be merged in the divine Intellect, from which indeed our souls ultimately derived, and did we not lose our true identity by separating out from it?" (6) Sorabji adds that Augustine "felt torn" "between an intense sense of individuality and an aspiration for a less individual life after death" (Sorabji, 2006, p. 226).

Later in his book, Sorabji returns to this theme. He writes:

Augustine, who was inspired by Plotinus, was [like him] torn in two directions in his *Confessions,* between on the one hand love of his mother as in individual and hopes that his unnamed dead friend will remember him, and on the other hand aspiration towards a heaven in which there is not genetic relationship and no memory (Sorabji, 2006, p. 37).

Before I take up this alleged difference between Augustine and Ibn Sina on soul individuation in the afterlife, I want to discuss the similarity that Sorabji and others have found between the accounts of self-knowledge in Augustine and Ibn Sina and how these two thinkers thought self-knowledge supports soul-body, or mind/body, dualism.

1. Augustinian Dualism

Here is the kernel of Sorabji's account of Augustine on self-knowledge:

> In *on the Trinity* 10.10.14, Augustine produces some of his many versions of the Cogito argument that Descartes was much later to offer in his *Second Meditation*. First, doubt [about one's existence] is impossible, because if you doubt, then you are alive, think, understand, judge, want to resolve the doubt, know your ignorance, are cautious, and so you cannot rightly doubt the existence of these mental operations. ([*De trinitate*] 10.10.14): Augustine makes the basis of the argument even clearer than Descartes does, and in more than one way. He is not appealing to the supposed infallibility of introspection, of which we are all the more suspicious in the wake of Freud. Instead, he is looking for those conditions that would have to be fulfilled if any doubt is to be entertained at all. If there is doubt, there is life, thought, understanding, desire, and he adds, judgment, self-awareness and caution (Sorabji, 2006, p. 218).

So far, on Sorabji's telling, Augustine has offered each of us a way of establishing for our individual selves, that we exist and also live, remember, understand, will, think, know, and make judgments. Then, Sorabji goes on to say, Augustine makes a second use of the Cogito. It is an argument for mind/body dualism. Sorabji summarizes it this way:

> The incorrect, but crucial, principle is offered that a thing can only rightly be said to be known if its essence is known. So the soul knows with certainty not only the operations listed in the Cogito argument above, but also its own essence. But it has no certainty whether it is air, fire, or any other body, or bodily thing. So it is none of these ([*De trinitate*] 10.10.16)

Here is the actual Augustinian passage:

T1.. . . . . the mind knows itself, even when it seeks itself, as we have already shown. But we can in no way rightly say that anything is known while its essence (*substantia*) is unknown. Wherefore, since the mind knows itself, it knows its own essence (*substantia*). But it is certain about itself as is clearly shown from what we have already said. But it is by no means certain whether it is air, or fire, or a body, or anything of a body. It is, therefore none of these things (*De trinitate* 10.10.16).

Somewhat regimented, Augustine's argument seems to be something like this:

Argument A1

(1) The mind knows itself with certainty.

(2) If x knows y with certainty, then x knows the essence of y [with certainty]. *Therefore,*

(3) The mind knows the essence of itself with certainty.

(4) The mind does not know with certainty whether it is air or fire or a body, or anything bodily.

Therefore,

(5) The mind is not air or fire or a body, or anything bodily.

[*Therefore,*

(6) The mind is something immaterial.]

This argument, as it stands, is not formally valid. Adding this premise after (3) would help it approach validity:

(3.5) If x knows y with certainty and x does not know whether y is z, then y is not essentially z.

But then (5) should be changed to this:

(5*) The mind is not essentially air or fire or a body, or anything bodily.

And then the more general conclusion would be,

(6*) The mind is not essentially anything material.

I myself think that Augustine has a better argument for dualism than what he offers in **T1.** Sorabji quotes the better argument, but, surprisingly, he does not discuss it. It focuses on the ways in which various kinds of thing can be present to the mind. Physical objects, Augustine thinks, are present to the mind by either the mediation of sense perception or else the mediation of mental representations. Crucially, the mind is primarily present to itself without any mediation at all. Augustine seems to be thinking of the mind (*mens*) here as the conscious mind, or what people talk about today simply as consciousness. To an approximation, the mind is fully present to itself; that is, consciousness is fully present to itself. But the brain is not, even to an approximation, fully present to itself. Nor is anything material fully present to itself. So the mind is not the brain, nor anything else material. I'll return to this argument later on.

2. Ibn Sina on Self-Knowledge

So what does Ibn Sina say about self-knowledge and why does Sorabji think it is similar to what Augustine has to say?

Sorabji concentrates his discussion of Ibn Sina on Ibn Sina's famous thought experiment, "the Flying Man." Although Ibn Sina presents this thought experiment in several different passages, Sorabji takes the following passage as definitive of it:

2-1. The Flying Man

T2. The inquiry leads us to concern ourselves with grasping the quiddity (*mâhiyya*) of this thing that is called 'soul'. We must here indicate a way to affirm the existence (*wujûd*), Latin, *esse*) of our soul with an affirmation that may serve as an admonition and a reminder. This will be a pertinent indication for one who has the ability to observe the truth by himself, without needing to be instructed or rebuked, or averted from errors.

We say that one of us must imagine (*yatawahhamu*, Latin, *putare*) himself as if he were created all at once and as a whole, but with his sight covered so that he cannot see anything external, and created falling through the air or a vacuum, but falling in such a way that he encounters no air resistance nor anything else that would allow him to have any sensation, and with his limbs separated from one another so that they do not meet or touch. Then consider whether he will affirm the existence of his essence [or of himself, *dhâtihi*, Latin *essentia*]. For, he will not have any doubt in affirming existence for his essence, yet he will not, along with this, affirm [the existence of] the extremities of his limbs, nor his innards, his heart, his brain, or anything external to him. Instead, he will affirm [the existence of] his essence, without affirming that it has length, breadth, or depth. Nor, if in that state he were able to imagine [*yatakhayyalu*, Latin *imaginari*] there to be a hand or other body part, would he imagine (*yatakhayyalu*, Latin, *imaginary*) that it was a part of himself (*dhâtihi*] or a condition for his essence (*dhâtihi*, Latin, *essentia*).

You know what is affirmed is different from what is not affirmed. And what is grasped immediately [literally, 'what is near at hand'] is different from that is not grasped. Therefore the essence (*dhât*, Latin *essentia*) whose existence is affirmed [by the Flying Man] is proper to him, insofar as it is his self (*'ayn*), not his body or his

limbs, which he does not affirm. Thus he is admonished and has a way of being awake to the existence of his soul as something distinct from the body and immaterial, and he knows and is aware of it [sc. his soul] (Sorabji, 2006, p. 124).

I take Avicenna's argument here to be something like the following:

Argument A2

(1) The Flying Man knows that he exists.

(2) If x knows that y exists, then x knows the essence of y.

Therefore,

(3) The Flying Man knows his essence.

(4) The Flying Man does not know that he has a body.

(5) If (3) and (4), then having a body does not belong to the essence of the Flying Man.

Therefore,

(6) Having a body does not belong to the essence of the Flying Man.

(7) If (6), then the Flying Man is essentially incorporeal.

Therefore,

(8) The Flying Man is essentially incorporeal.

(9) If (8), then the Flying Man is essentially an incorporeal soul.

Therefore

(10) The Flying Man is essentially an incorporeal soul.

The further implication is, of course, that if the Flying Man is essentially an incorporeal soul, then you and I and all other human beings are essentially immaterial souls as well.

2-2. The Individuation of Souls

The Flying Man passage above, **T2**, includes this crucial conclusion:

T3. Therefore the essence (*dhât*, Latin *essentia*) whose existence is affirmed [by the Flying Man] is proper to him, insofar as it is his self (*'ayn*), not his body or his limbs, which he does not affirm.

This passage, translated in this way, suggests that the Flying Man has an *individual* essence, that is, an essence that not only guarantees his humanity but also his individuality. Moreover, since, implicitly, any of us might be a Flying Man, each of us human beings also has an individuating essence. Since Ibn Sina seems to have found it difficult to say what individuates separated souls, that is, souls after one's bodily death, it must have been difficult for him to decide what an individuating essence for each of us might be. Thus separated souls pose a problem more starkly that, nevertheless, should be a problem for the Flying Man, too, even though, *ex hypothesi*, the Flying Man is not, or at least, not yet, a soul separated from his body.

Here is the passage in which Ibn Sina tries out, according to Sorabji, six different suggestions as to what might individuate separated souls:

T4. But doubtless, there is something by which the soul is made individual, but it is not the impression of soul on matter, because we have already destroyed that. Rather it is some of the effects, and some of the virtues, and something from the accidental spiritual attributes, or a composite from those things, *although we do not know it*. But after it comes to be individual on its own, it is impossible that it should be a numerically different soul, and that the two souls should be [or have?] one essence. We have said much to deny that elsewhere. But we will demonstrate that since the soul is created with a creation,

involving some combination, it is possible (1) that after it, there should be created some affect in rational actions and in rational passions by the combination of which its action differs from similar action in another soul, and (2) that the acquired affect that is called intellect in actuality should be so defined in one soul that that soul differs from another through that affect, and (3) that because it falls to it to perceive its own individual essence, it has some affect from what it perceives that is unique to itself and possessed by no other. It is also possible (4) that there arises in the soul from its bodily virtues a unique affect that depends on moral affects, or the moral affects themselves, or (5) that there are yet other properties there hidden from us that accompany souls when they are created and after they have been created, and differentiate them, like the individual traits of bodily forms that accompany them, and (6) that souls exist in such and such a way, but are individuated in the properties on account of which bodies have or have not been created, whether we know those dispositions or some of them, or not (Sorabji, *De anima* 5.3, 2006, pp. 134-35).

A first thing to say about **T4** is that it concerns the *metaphysics*, not the *epistemology*, of soul individuation. That is, the problem Ibn Sina is addressing is what *makes* Jacob's soul to be Jacob's soul, rather than, say, the soul of Esau. The problem is not how Jacob recognizes that his soul is, indeed, his own soul. Thus, Ibn Sina says of the proper essence of each of us that we have it, "although we do not know it."

Apparently the Flying Man thought experiment applies to separated souls as well as to souls conjoined with bodies. This consideration should help us understand **T3**. Even if Avicenna thinks that the Flying Man can affirm his own individual essence, it will not be by using his knowledge of his essence as a criterion for determining which particular being he is. But how could it really be that the Flying man is able to affirm his own individual essence

without having a criterion and using that criterion to determine which being he is?

In trying to come up with a solution to this last problem, we may be helped by a passage in Augustine I sketched earlier. In the continuation of *De trinitate* 10.10.16, Augustine tells us, as I have already explained, that there are three ways in which an individual thing may be present to the mind. First, a physical object, such as a tree, may be present to the mind through sense-perception, as when one actually sees the tree. Second, a physical object may be present to the mind by one's calling up a mental image, for example either a memory image of the individual tree, or perhaps a fictitious image, such as my mind might fabricate when you tell me about a tree I have never actually seen. Third, an individual thing may be present to the mind by *being* that mind. "Nothing," Augustine writes, "is more present [to the mind] than the mind itself." This means that, according to Augustine, the mind is non-representationally present to itself. It has no need of, nor any use for, a way of picking out itself by distinguishing itself from other individual things.

Ibn Sina also speaks, in *The Healing* and in the *Book of Discussions* of the soul as being present to itself. Perhaps it is his view that the Flying Man, like Augustine's "mind" (*mens*),can infallibly identify his own individual soul without needing or even using a representation of himself or, let alone, a criterion for picking himself out.

If all this works out, as Ibn Sina needs it to, the next question is this: What underlies, not the epistemology of the Flying Man's self-recognition, but the metaphysics of his soul's individuation, especially when it is separated from the body? This is the question Ibn Sina seems to be addressing in **T4.**

By Sorabji's count, Ibn Sina in **T4** presents no fewer than six

distinct alternatives to explain the soul's individuation in the afterlife. But syntactically there seem to be only three possibilities mentioned. The first possibility is (1) and (2) and (3). The second possibility is (4). And the third possibility is (5) and (6). With each of these possibilities, it seems that individuation arises from the soul's acquisition of some affect that the soul did not initially have. One wants to protest that if one's soul were not an individual from the very beginning, *ab initio*, then *it* would not become an individual by the acquisition of some affect or other. Indeed, Ibn Sina says, in **T4**, "after it comes to be individual on its own, it is impossible that it should be a numerically different soul, and that the two souls should be one essence." So it is unclear what work the three (or six, on Sorabji's count) alternatives are supposed to be doing.

In any case, it seems to be true that Ibn Sina was puzzled about the individuation of souls in the afterlife – not, I repeat, about how each soul could identify itself as the distinct being that it is, but rather about what would actually make it a distinct individual. How does this compare with Augustine?

3. Augustine as Christian Neo-Platonist

There is good reason to think that, when Augustine became a Christian, he did not immediately become what he himself would *later* have considered an orthodox Christian. Thus, it is not clear that he immediately accepted the full doctrine of the Trinity, and, with it, the idea that both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are each God, although, of course he later came to give eloquent expression to that idea in his *De trinitate*.

In any case, the young Augustine was certainly attracted to the Plotinian idea that individual souls can, after their separation from the body at death, merge with the Divine Intellect. However, in later life

he took much more seriously the idea of the bodily resurrection. No doubt, influenced by his close study of St. Paul's letter to the Romans, Augustine took on the Pauline notion that the blessed will enjoy a resurrection of their own individual earthly bodies, even though those bodies will then be transformed into spiritual bodies. Here is part of what Augustine says in his *City of God*, Book 13, about those resurrected bodies:

T5. A human being [*homo*] will then be not earthly but heavenly—not because the body will not be that very body which was made of earth, but because by its heavenly endowment, it will be a fit inhabitant of heaven, and this not by losing its nature, but by changing its quality (DCD 13.23).

The "qualitative" change that Augustine here speaks of is actually quite a drastic change, yet Augustine seems to think of what he calls, following St. Paul, the "spiritual body" that the blessed will receive in heaven as a spiritualization of the individual earthly body, where spiritualization is understood as a transmogrification that, at least for those who die in adulthood, preserves the shape, size, and anatomical and even physiological structure of the original body. Thus, in the last book of the *City of God,* Augustine asks such questions as these:

(i) What size bodies will resurrected persons receive who died, not in adulthood, but in infancy?

Answer: The size of the bodies they would have had if they had lived to adulthood (DCD 22.14).

(ii) What teeth will persons have who either died in infancy or for some other reason failed to develop a full adult set of teeth?

Answer: The full set of teeth they would have had, if their teeth had been able to develop naturally (*ibid*.).

What would it be to get back the very same body one had in earthly life, so that it could then be spiritualized? In a way Augustine is very explicit about this, and, in a way, he is hardly explicit at all. On the explicit side he says things like this:

T6. Let it never be said that the Almighty Creator, in his purpose of raising up bodies and restoring them to life, is unable to recall all the substance which beasts or fire have consumed, or which has crumbled to dust or ashes, or has been dissolved in water or gone with the winds. Let it never be said that there is any recess or hidden place in nature where any thing, though removed from our perceptions, can hide from the knowledge or escape the power of the Creator of all (DCD 22.20).

Augustine is vague about which particles God must reassemble at the resurrection – just the particles that belonged to one's body at the moment of death, or also some particles before one was wasted by, perhaps, a very long illness, or simply by the natural replacement of one's bodily cells.

4. A Human Life: The Simple Picture

Here is a simple picture of a human life, according to late Augustine. A man and a woman have intercourse and conceive a child. At conception, there is a human corporeal seed, with a program of development (*ratio seminalis*, *De genesi ad litteram* 9.17.32). At 40 or 90 days, depending on gender, it receives a human soul. The now ensouled body develops according to its *ratio*, but is perhaps thwarted in this respect or that so that it does not achieve, for example, a "normal" height, or a full set of adult teeth. Let's call this person "Lee."

At death, Lee's soul is separated from Lee's body. But Lee's

soul retains a longing to return to the very same body:

T7. Thus the souls of the departed saints are not affected by the death which dismisses them from their bodies, because their flesh rests in hope, no matter what indignities it receives after sensation is gone. For they do not desire that their bodies be forgotten, as Plato thinks fit, but rather, because they remember what has been promised by Him who deceives no man, and who gave them security for the safe keeping even of the hairs of their head, they, with a longing patience [*desiderabiliter et patientier*]await in hope of the resurrection of their bodies, in which they have suffered many hardships and are now to suffer never again. For, if they did not "hate their own flesh," when it, with its native infirmity, opposed their will and had to be constrained by the spiritual law, how much more shall they love it, when it shall even itself have become spiritual! (Augustine, 1993, pp. 13-20, Dodds trans).

It is important that what Lee's soul longs for, in its disembodied state, is the very same body Lee had in mortal life, not a replica of Lee's mortal body, or something indistinguishable from it, but *the very same body*. It will be given to Lee's soul, Augustine tells us, by God's miraculous action in collecting particles that once constituted Lee's body. Only after it has been reconstituted will it be transformed into a spiritual body. The spiritual body Lee receives in the resurrection will be superior to Lee's earthly body in many ways. If the earthly body was abnormal in any way, that abnormality will be corrected. Although Lee's spiritual body will have the same gender as the one Lee had in earthly life, there will be no lust in heaven and the gendered organs will have no specifically sexual or reproductive function.

It is important to understand that the account of soul individuation implicit in this story is a metaphysical account, rather

than an epistemological account. Thus, there may be no way for Lee to determine, except by God's own assurance: The resurrection body I now have is the very same body I had in my earthly life. Nevertheless, God has the power and the knowledge to make this the case.

5. An Augustinian Account of Soul Individuation

So what about the individuation of human souls according to this Simple Picture? Although Augustine does not explicitly say this, it seems that the soul given to Lee at either 40 or 90 days gestation is individuated by the body to which it is attached. It remains individuated throughout Lee's earthly life, it seems, by the rule, one living human body, one human soul. At death and before resurrection, it is individuated, it seems, by its longing for the particular body it used to ensoul. That longing is not merely for re-ensoulment. Nor is it a longing for a replica body, let alone for an improved body very much like the body Lee had in mortal life. At the resurrection, God miraculously gives Lee's soul the reassembled original body and then transforms it into a spiritual body.

This Simple Picture, as I have painted it, thus includes an implicit Theory of Soul Individuation. I say the theory is implicit, because Augustine does not, so far as I can tell, address explicitly the metaphysical question of soul individuation. Yet implicitly, particularly in his discussions of the resurrection, and most especially in his imputation of a desire of the separated soul for the resurrection of its very own earthly body, he seems to be responding to a need to say something about what makes Lee in the resurrection to be Lee, and not some other person, say, Lee's identical twin.

In extrapolating an Augustinian account of the individuation of separated souls, I want to insist that a soul's desire to get its very own

body back is a *de re* desire with respect to a particular body, that the soul get that very body back, not just a *de dicto* desire to receive a body under some description that might be satisfied by two or more bodies. God, in his omnipotence, can assure that the body Lee's soul gets is the individual body Lee's soul longed for, and not merely a perfectly matched facsimile.

6. Conclusion

I began this paper with Richard Sorabji's claims of similarity and difference between Augustine and Ibn Sina. According to Sorabji, Augustine and Ibn Sina present rather similar accounts of the human soul's knowledge of itself. Moreover, according to him, they base their argument for soul-body or mind-body dualism in a similar way on their claims about the soul's knowledge of itself. So much for the similarities.

Augustine and Ibn Sina differ, according to Sorabji, in their attitudes toward the soul's afterlife. Whereas Ibn Sina considers it philosophically important, but also philosophically frustrating, to explain how human souls can be said to be individuated in the afterlife, Augustine, Sorabji tells us, is of two minds as to whether an individuated afterlife would even be preferable to having one's soul merge with the Divine Intellect.

I have left Sorabji's claim of similarity largely unchallenged. What I have taken issue with is Sorabji's claim that Augustine was ambivalent about wanting an individuated existence in the afterlife. I have pointed out that the later Augustine, as opposed to the early, Neoplatonic Augustine, was as much interested in a well-individuated afterlife as Ibn Sina. However, for Augustine the individuality of a human soul in the afterlife includes each soul's desire to be given back

its very own earthly body. The blessed, according to Augustine, will indeed be given back their earthly bodies in the resurrection, although those earthly bodies will be immediately transformed into spiritual ones.

Augustine, unlike Ibn Sina, seems not to have been caught up with the philosophical challenge of explaining how souls are individuated in the afterlife. However, his insistence that each soul desires to get its own earthly body back offers a way of supplying a criterion of individuation for souls in the afterlife. So, I end with this intriguing irony: Whereas Ibn Sina wanted to be able to supply a satisfying account of the individuation of souls in the afterlife that he was apparently not able to provide, Augustine, though seemingly not especially interested in supplying any such an account, nevertheless attributed to separated souls a desire to return to their very own bodies, which suggests a way of developing such an account.

Would Ibn Sina have been attracted to such an account? I am not sure, since it requires longing for one's previous body to individuate one's soul. It was certainly important to Ibn Sina to show that the nature of the soul is independent of anything bodily. I suspect that he would have wanted the individuation of the soul to be equally independent.

I should point out, however, that Ibn Sina's fourth suggestion in **T4** (in Sorabji's numbering) might be thought somewhat similar to my Neo-Augustinian criterion. This is Ibn Sina's suggestion #4:

T4*. It is also possible that there arise in the soul from its bodily virtues a unique affect [or perhaps, distinctive desire, Latin: *affectionem proprian*]that depends on moral affects [or moral desires, *quae pendeat ex affectionibus moralibus*].

Would Ibn Sina have counted the separated soul's longing for its very own earthly body as the "unique affect," or "distinctive

desire" that arises from the soul's "bodily virtues" he talks about in **T4**? I am somewhat skeptical, but perhaps unduly so. If my skepticism can be overridden, then a way of filling out one of Ibn Sina's suggestions for soul-individuation in the afterlife would make it fit the criterion of soul individuation I have reconstructed from Augustine.

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Islamic Eschatology and Religious Differences

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Abstract

The issue of religious diversity is explicitly addressed in a number of *āyāt* of the Qur'ān. One of the recurrent themes that is found in these passages is the resolution of religious differences. The theme of religious difference is treated with assertions that diversity arose out of an original unity. There may be partial resolutions to issues over which there is contention, but ultimate resolution of differences is only to be expected in the eschaton. The morale given in such passages is a counsel of patience. The implications of this message for an Islamic theology of religions areconsidered.

Keywords

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1. The Philosophy of Religious Diversity

A number of theologians and philosophers have written about religious diversity as a problem in the theology of religions and in the philosophy of religion. Perhaps no one has done more to emphasize the importance of this issue than John Hick (1922-2012). Over the course of his career he advocated his own *pluralistic hypothesis* as an answer to the problem of religious diversity and as a Christian answer to this problem in the theology of religions. His writings on this topic have provoked a number of reactions, some favorable, but more highly critical. One of the results of the ensuing debate has been an increased awareness of the range of available positions on religious diversity available to theologians and to philosophers of religion. Although Hick's pluralistic hypothesis was introduced as *a Christian response* to religious diversity, the adherents of several non-Christian traditions have also taken up the cause, including Muslims.[1]

Hick begins a brief summary of his pluralistic hypothesis in the introduction to the second edition of his *An Interpretation of Religion* with the claim of *the religious ambiguity of the universe*, that is, "the fact that it can be understood and experienced both religiously and naturalistically" (Hick, 2004, xvii). The religious ambiguity of the universe posed a problem for the meaningfulness of religious propositions when verificationist theories of meaning were taken seriously. In the 1950's, Hick sought to respond to positivist charges of the meaninglessness of religious claims with his theory of *eschatological verification* (Hick, 1988, 176 ff.; Hick, 1975, 193 ff). He continues to defend this position in his later writings, and explains the basic idea in *An Interpretation of Religion*, as follows:

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1. See the review of positions in (Dag, 2017).

However if we are considering the case of … the theistic picture of the universe as a creative process leading to a limitlessly good end-state in conscious communion with God, I suggest that to participate knowingly in that fulfillment would confirm the reality of God beyond the possibility of rational doubt…. The prediction that the universe is leading to a limitlessly good end-state in communion with God would have been fulfilled (Hick 2004, p. 179).

The possibility of eschatological verification also could be used to defend the meaningfulness of the differences among the various religious traditions, as Hick recognizes. The differences among the religions are parallel to the differences between the religious believer and the atheist. In both cases there is a kind of religious ambiguity, that is, as Hick sees it, none of the disputants has an epistemic advantage:

Persons living within other traditions, then, are equally justified in trusting their own distinctive religious experience and in forming their beliefs on the basis of it (Hick, 2004, p. 235).

Despite the equality of epistemic justification, there is a factual difference that will be verified, if any are true, in the eschaton.

I have sought to establish the basically cognitive and fact-asserting status of standard religious discourse, both western and eastern, by stressing its eschatological component. Because the religions of Semitic and Indian origin offer coherent world-views entailing verifiable expectations they constitute factually true or false systems of belief. But it is clear that these expectations are very different. Hindu and Buddhist expectations differ, and both differ even more markedly from Jewish, Christian and Islamic expectations, which also differ among themselves. Each separately constitutes a

genuinely factual system of beliefs (Hick, 2004, pp. 187-188).

So, according to Hick, the religious ambiguity of the world does not mean that there is no fact of the matter about whether a religious or atheistic view is correct. Likewise, the fact that the adherents of different religious traditions are equally justified is consistent with an eschatological verification of just one of them. Despite the parallels, Hick's pluralism excludes atheistic or naturalist worldviews; and the religious pluralism he advocates would appear to be consistent with an eschatological verification of just one of the religious traditions, or one such family of traditions. Hick's response to the reconciliation of pluralism with the factual differences among religions that may receive eschatological justification is that the differences are not important with respect to soteriology. But Hick's religious pluralism is not only soteriological. It is also defined in terms of adequacy of reflecting reality or truth and the validity religious experiences. If one of the traditions has eschatological verification at the expense of others, then even if they all lead their followers to nirvana, they cannot be said to be equal reflections of ultimate truth.

In early statements of religious pluralism, Hick defines it with regard both to truth and to salvation/liberation (Hick, 1985, p. 91). In later works, the emphasis is placed more heavily on soteriology (Hick, 2004, xvii); although he retains the view that the major religious traditions are epistemologically on a par. The factual differences between them require eschatological verification, while in present circumstances, according to Hick, there is an equality of justification. If equality of justification is a condition for recognition in the plurality of valid religions, the religious ambiguity of the world means that some naturalistic views fulfill this condition.

Atheistic and agnostic worldviews are excluded from those that are considered valid in the pluralistic hypothesis, despite the doctrine of the religious ambiguity of the world, which states that believers and unbelievers may be equally justified in their worldviews. When Hick considers which worldviews to be excluded from the pluralistic hypothesis, morality is no less important than epistemology. While naturalism per se may not have any particular moral outlook, there is certainly an abundance of non-religious ethical systems of thought that would seem to qualify for effectiveness at salvation/ liberation if this is defined by moral criteria.

In conclusion, if our epistemic situation is as ambiguous as Hick takes it to be, this should lead us, by his reasoning, to a different conclusion than he reaches. Instead of a religious pluralism in which apparent epistemological and moral equality requires recognition of the equal status of the major religious traditions, we should expect a secular pluralism in which naturalistic ethical views take their place alongside the religious traditions. On the other hand, if eschatological verification is capable of showing that there is truth in the religious view to the exclusion of secular naturalism, an appeal to this same eschatological verification could be made to deny that truth is equally distributed among the major religious denominations.

2. The Theology of Religions of the Qur'ān

In the Qur'ān, various kinds of religious differences are discussed. There are differences between the pagan Arabs and Christians and Muslims. Differences between Jews and Christians. There are three references to the Sabaeans, about whose identity there is still much unknown. In addition to differences between groups, there are several mentions of the internal differences among the Jewish and Christian

groups. On the Day of Judgment, all the issues over which there were differences will be cleared up. The first example of this theme refers to the Children of Israel.

This Quran recounts for the Children of Israel most of what they differ about, (76) and it is indeed a guidance and mercy for the faithful. (77) Your Lord will decide between them by His judgement, and He is the All-mighty, the All-knowing. (78) (27:76-78)[48]

In Surah Yūnus, the theme is extended to all religious differences. After a condemnation of paganism as having no basis in knowledge, we find:

Mankind were but a single community; then they differed. And were it not for a prior word of your Lord, decision would have been made between them concerning that about which they differ. (10:19)[51]

This is not saying that the differences are desirable; quite the contrary. The Lord issued a word to spare those who differ wrongly until the Day of Judgment, after which those who differed because of lies they fabricated will be punished accordingly. The word that prevents the immediate destruction of the wrongdoers and liars appears to have been given by God in order that people may be tested.

Certainly, We settled the Children of Israel in a worthy settlement and We provided them with all the good things, and they did not differ until [after] the knowledge had come to them. Your Lord will indeed judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that about which they used to differ. (10:93)[51]

Say, 'Shall I seek a Lord other than Allah, while He is the Lord of all things?' No soul does evil except against itself, and no

bearer shall bear another's burden; then to your Lord will be your return, whereat He will inform you concerning that about which you used to differ. (6:164)[55]

Indeed, only exclusive faith is worthy of Allah, and those who take other as *awliya* besides Him [claiming,] 'We only worship them so that they may bring us near to Allah,' Allah will judge between them concerning that about which they differ. Indeed Allah does not guide someone who is a liar and an ingrate. (39:3)[59]

Say, 'O Allah! Originator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of the sensible and the Unseen, You will judge between Your servants concerning that about which they used to differ.' (39:46)[59]

The pagan Arabs protested about Jesus (p.b.u.h) asking whether their gods were better or him. We are informed in the Qur'ān that they raised the issue solely for the sake of contention. Following this is an extraordinary claim about Jesus (p.b.u.h), after his divinity is denied he is said to be an exemplar, and he resolves some of the things about which there were differences. The fact that the resolution of differences had been otherwise expressly attributed only to God at the end of the world confirms the exceptional status of Jesus (p.b.u.h) against the contentions of the pagans, while at the same time insisting that he was a mere servant of God. The humble nature of the servant is explained as allowing him to serve as an exemplar. Otherwise God could have sent angels.

He was just a servant whom We had blessed and made an exemplar for the Children of Israel. (59) Had We wished We would have set angels in your stead to be [your] successors on the earth. (60) When Jesus brought those manifest proofs, he said, 'I have certainly brought you wisdom, and to make clear to you some of what you differ about. So be wary of Allah and obey me. Indeed Allah is my

Lord and your Lord; so worship Him. This is a straight path.' (64) But the factions differed among themselves. So, woe to the wrongdoers for the punishment of a painful day!(65) (43:59-65)[63]

and We gave them [the Children of Israel] manifest precepts. But they did not differ except after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves. Indeed your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that about which they used to differ. (45:17)[65]

One of the issues about which there was contention was the Resurrection of the dead. Those who deny it will be proven wrong.

They swear by Allah with solemn oaths that Allah will not resurrect those who die. Yes indeed [He will], it is a promise binding upon Him, but most people do not know, (38) so that He may clarify for them what they differ about, and that the faithless may know that they were liars. (16:39)[70]

Do not be like her who would undo her yarn, breaking it up after [spinning it to] strength, by making your oaths a means of [mutual] deceit among yourselves, so that one community may become more affluent than another community. Indeed Allah tests you thereby, and He will surely clarify for you on the Day of Resurrection what you used to differ about. (16:92)[70]

The Sabbath was only prescribed for those who differed about it. Your Lord will indeed judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that about which they differ. (16:124)[70]

Indeed your Lord will judge between them [the Children of Israel] on the Day of Resurrection concerning that about which they used to differ. (32:25)[75]

The theme continues to be taken up in the following Medinan *āyāt*. In the first of these we find a condemnation of a kind of exclusivism explicitly stated in the Qur'ān:

And they say, 'No one will enter paradise except one who is a Jew or Christian.' Those are their [false] hopes! Say, 'Produce your evidence, should you be truthful.' (111) Certainly, whoever submits his will to Allah and is virtuous, he shall have his reward from his Lord, and they will have no fear, nor shall they grieve. (112) The Jews say, 'The Christians stand on nothing,' and the Christians say, 'The Jews stand on nothing,' though they follow the [same] Book. So said those who had no knowledge, [words] similar to what they say. Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that about which they used to differ. (2:113)[87]

In his *Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī observes that what is stated here indicates that denomination is not a criterion for spiritual success or felicity. The criteria are submission to God and *iḥsān*, which Sachiko Murata and William Chittick translate as "doing the beautiful" (See Murata & Chittick, 1994, p. 269). 'Allāmah asserts that this is this point also is made in two previous *āyāt* of this *sūrah* of the Qur'ān (See Tabataba'i 1984, pp. 55-56).[1] The theme comes up again in a later *āyah* of this surah.

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1. The other *āyāt* are:

   Indeed the faithful, the Jews, the Christians and the Sabaeans—those of them who have faith in Allah and the Last Day and act righteously—they shall have their reward from their Lord, and they will have no fear, nor will they grieve. (62)
   Certainly whoever commits misdeeds and is besieged by his iniquity—such shall be the inmates of the Fire, and they will remain in it forever. (81) And those who have faith and do righteous deeds—they shall be the inhabitants of paradise; they will remain in it forever. (82)

That is so because Allah has sent down the Book with the truth, and those who differ about the Book are surely in extreme doubt. (176) Piety is not to turn your faces to the east or the west; rather, piety is [personified by] those who have faith in Allah and the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets, and who give their wealth, for the love of Him, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler and the beggar, and for [the freeing of] the slaves, and maintain the prayer and give the zakat, and those who fulfill their covenants, when they pledge themselves, and those who are patient in stress and distress, and in the heat of battle. They are the ones who are true [to their covenant], and it is they who are the Godwary. (177) (2:176-177)[87]

Among the major religious scriptures, the Glorious Qur'ān is unique in promising rewards in the afterlife for those among whom religious disagreement persists. (2:113), however, pertains to both the question of divine rewards and to religious truth, what one "stands on". So, the rejection of exclusivism pertains to both alethic and soteriological pluralisms. Furthermore, the reference to the Day of Resurrection (*yawm al-qiyāmah*) indicates that we can expect religious disagreement to remain with us until the end of the world, for only after thatwill God judge about the matters of contention.

When Allah said, 'O Jesus, I shall take you, and I shall raise you up toward Myself, and I shall clear you of the faithless, and I shall set those who follow you above the faithless until the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me will be your return, whereat I will judge between you concerning that about which you used to differ. (3:55)[89]

For every nation, We have appointed rites [of worship] which they observe; so let them not dispute with you concerning your religion, and invite to your Lord. Indeed, you are on a straight

guidance. (67) But if they dispute with you, say, 'Allah knows best what you are doing. (68) Allah will judge between you on the Day of Resurrection concerning that about which you used to differ. (69) (22:67-69)[103]

The final statement of the theme sounds the same points. God appointed different rites for different peoples. Those differences are not going to bar anyone from achieving felicity. As long as people get the basics right, and act accordingly, there will be a reward. As for points of contention, we will have to wait until Judgment Day for all these matters to be cleared up.

We have sent down to you the Book with the truth, confirming what was before it of the Book and as a guardian over it. So judge between them by what Allah has sent down, and do not follow their desires against the truth that has come to you. For each [community] among you We had appointed a code [of law] and a path, and had Allah wished He would have made you one community, but [His purposes required] that He should test you in respect to what He has given you. So take the lead in all good works. To Allah shall be the return of you all, whereat He will inform you concerning that about which you used to differ. (5:48)[112]

3. The Eschaton

While most theological discussions, whether among Christians or Muslims, about the Day of Judgment, the Resurrection of the Dead, the Return, and the End of the World take up issues such as the sequence of events, signs that hearken the end, whether beliefs about such matters can be epistemologically justified, and metaphysical theories about the nature of the body and identity conditions, far less theological attention

has been given to the functional role of the eschaton in scripture. By reviewing the passages cited in the previous section, we find that one of the functions of the eschaton is to be a venue for the resolution of religious differences, an eschatological verification of the sort that John Hick has discussed in several of his works.

The repeated statements in the Glorious Qur'ān that religious differences will only be cleared up on the Day of Judgment together with other verses already mentioned imply the following points:

- religious differences will persist until the end

- patience is thus required

- there should be no expectation that argument will resolve all the differences, although allowance is made that some differences may be resolved before this

- specifics of religious rites do not determine that some will and others will not have heavenly rewards

- punishment awaits those who willfully differ because of rebellion against the divine message or unauthorized claims to superiority

- Jesus (p.b.u.h) is not only to come at the end along with the Mahdi (p.b.u.h), according to narrations, but the differences about the status of Jesus (p.b.u.h) are to be resolved in the eschaton.

4. The Trilemma

The tripartite division of views about the diversity of religions— exclusivism, inclusivism, pluralism—is usually attributed to Alan

Race (b. 1951), who introduced the division in a Christian theological work of 1983 (Race, 1983). In the same year, John Hick (1922-2012) made the same division (Hick, 1983);[1] and prior to this he essentially recognized the division without using the terms.[2] Furthermore, Race, who was a student of Hick, refers to Hick's work in his publication, while Hick's first uses of it do not mention Race. Although Race may have used the word "inclusivism" prior to Hick, Hick was already comparing the concept of what would become known as *inclusivism* to epicycles in a Ptolemaic system to be replaced by his own Copernican, divinity centered, theology of religions in 1972 (Hick, 1993, pp. 124-127). So, with some caution, it may be appropriate to attribute the tripartite distinction to Hick.[3]

Hick's division grows out of the need for tolerance in the religiously plural society of Britain in the late sixties and the seventies.[4] Theology is carried forward on a wave of social changes. The meaning of "pluralism" shifts from a social-political framework in which there is an advocacy for the recognition of racial and religious diversity in the author's society to a theological position in which the acceptance of a variety of religious traditions is advocated; the demand for social equality is reflected in the claim that the religions are equal.

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1. reprinted in (Hick, 1985).

2. The division without the names is clearly present in (Hick, 1980, pp. 49-51); and the basic idea is even stated on the last page of (Hick, 1973, p. 129). J. J. Lipner contrasts his own inclusivist view (without calling it by that name) with exclusivism and Hick's pluralism in (Lipner, 1977).

3. I will willingly retract the claim if evidence to the contrary is found; but I have found no references prior to 1983 for Race's thinking on the trichotomy, while it is clearly present in the earlier cited writings of Hick. Nevertheless, the division is nearly universally attributed to Race by contemporary writers on this topic. See (Harris, 2016).

4. See Hick's autobiographical remarks in the first chapter of (Hick, 1985).

The theology of religious pluralism that Hick defends is multidimensional: It includes positions in epistemology, ethics, and several areas of Christian theology, including Christology, soteriology, and eschatology. It is also bold in its outlook and has been the cause of religious condemnations as well as academic criticisms. While most of those who have engaged with Hick's work ultimately reject some key features of his position, Hick's theology continues to attract defenders, and the controversy about his views continues (See Sugirtharajah, 2012).

In his earliest discussions of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, they are presented as the three *main* options for responding to the question of religious diversity with particular emphasis on the question of salvation/liberation. So, strictly speaking, no claim is made that these are the only possible options. Nevertheless, they have been treated as such and have given rise to a tendency to pigeonhole anyone who expresses a view on religious diversity with the expectation that their views must fall into one of these three categories.

Hick defines the trichotomy in 1983 in terms of truth or validity, although the soteriological element is also presented.

By 'exclusivism' I mean the view that one particular mode of religious thought and experience (namely, one's own) is alone valid, all others being false. By 'inclusivism' I mean the view … that one's own tradition alone has the whole truth but that this truth is nevertheless partially reflected in other traditions; and, as an additional clause special to Christianity, that whilst salvation is made possible only by the death of Christ, the benefits of this are available to all mankind…. And by 'pluralism' I mean the view - which I

advocate - that the great world faiths embody different perceptions and conceptions of, and correspondingly different responses to, the Real or the Ultimate from within the different cultural ways of being human; and that within each of them the transformation of human existence from self-centeredness to Reality-centeredness is manifestly taking place (Hick, 1985, p. 91).

In a piece published the following year, each part of the trichotomy is defined in some detail in relation to salvation or liberation.

'Exclusivism', relates salvation/liberation exclusively to one particular tradition, so that it is an article of faith that salvation is restricted to this one group, the rest of mankind being either left out of account or explicitly excluded from the sphere of salvation (Hick, 1985, p. 31).

The second answer to the question of the relation between salvation/liberation and the cumulative traditions is inclusivism, of which Hick presents two varieties:

A juridical or of a transformation-of-human-existence conception of salvation. In the former terms it is the view that God's forgiveness and acceptance of humanity have been made possible by Christ's death, but that the benefits of this sacrifice are not confined to those who respond to it with an explicit act of faith. The juridical transaction of Christ's atonement covered all human sin, so that all human beings are now open to God's mercy, even though they may never have heard of Jesus Christ and why he died on the cross of Calvary…. [T]he other form of Christian inclusivism, which accepts the understanding of salvation as the gradual transformation of human life… regards this however, wherever it happens, as the work of

Christ—the universal divine Logos, the Second Person of the divine Trinity, who became incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth. Thus we can speak of 'the unknown Christ of Hinduism' and of the other traditions, and indeed the unknown Christ within all creative transformations of individuals and societies. And, if we ask how this differs from simply saying that within all these different streams of human life there is a creative and re-creative response to the divine Reality, the answer of this kind of Christian inclusivism is that Christians are those, uniquely, who are able to identify the source of salvation because they have encountered that source as personally incarnate in Jesus Christ (Hick, 1985, pp. 32-33).

Pluralism is then introduced as the recognition that salvation/ liberation takes place within all the major traditions:

Pluralism, then, is the view that the transformation of human existence from self-centeredness to Reality-centeredness is taking place in different ways within the contexts of all the great religious traditions (Hick, 1985, p. 34).

Later in the same essay, Hick presents the trichotomy as answers to the question of the validity of religious experience:

At this point the three answers that we discussed above become available again: exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism. The exclusivist answer is that only one's own form of religious experience is an authentic contact with the Transcendent, other forms being delusory….

Moving to the inclusivist answer, this would suggest that religious experience in general does indeed constitute a contact with the Transcendent, but that this contact occurs in its purest and most salvifically effective form within one's own tradition, other forms

having value to the varying extents to which they approximate to ours (Hick, 1985, p. 38).

Hick criticizes the exclusivist and inclusivist positions and offers pluralism as the preferable alternative, giving credit for the contribution of Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1916-2000) to this standpoint. There is much that can be questioned here: whether the positions he attributes to those to whom he describes as exclusivists and inclusivists would agree with his characterizations of their views; whether salvation/liberation are to be understood in the various traditions as Hick describes it; whether revelation can be understood as a form of religious experience; and much more. These are topics about which much has been written and debated. Here, however, I am interested in the structure of Hick's trichotomy, not the merits of the concepts used to define its parts or the attributions of views to particular groups or authors.

In the introduction to the second revised edition of his *An Interpretation of Religion,* published in 2004, Hick explains the first two divisions of the trichotomy in quick parenthetical remarks, as to aid those new to the discussion:

An exclusivist (Christianity alone is true/salvific) or inclusivist (Christianity alone is fully true/salvific, but non-Christians can be included within the sphere of Christian salvation) theology of religions…(Hick, 2004, xvii).

The alternative *theology of religions* proposed by Hick, which he now calls *the pluralistic hypothesis* is developed at length through a series of points, somewhat in the style of a creed or manifesto. Pluralism is still presented as the major alternative to exclusivism and inclusivism, but it is admitted that there are several versions of religious

pluralism; and *the pluralistic hypothesis* is the name he gives to his own version, which he refined over the course of the twenty years since he introduced the trichotomy in his examinations of Christian responses to religious diversity. The pluralistic hypothesis of *An Interpretation of Religion* is so rich in content that the idea of a comprehensive trilemma becomes preposterous. It does not require much reflection to realize that dissatisfaction with exclusivism and inclusivism does not force one to accept Hick's Kantian thesis of an ineffable ultimate conceptualized with equal accuracy in the religions of the world.

Hick's trilemma is rejected by authors who offer versions of pluralism that differ from Hick's on several points. However, in fairness, although Hick welcomes non-Christian analogues to his view, he presents the pluralistic hypothesis as *a Christian response* to religious diversity. The adherents of several non-Christian traditions have also taken up the cause, including Muslims.[1] Second, distinctions have been made between moral, soteriological, alethic, and other forms of pluralism.[2] In general, with regard to any given value, V, that is ascribed by adherents to a preferred religious tradition, r^*, the trichotomy can be formulated as follows:

1. V-exclusivism: V is exclusive to r^*.

2. V-inclusivism: V is maximally in r^*, ($MAXr^*V$), but inferior degrees of v are in traditions other than r^*.

3. V-pluralism: V is equally in r^* and in a plurality of other religious traditions.

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1. See the review of positions in (Dag, 2017).
2. I list seven value dimensions in (Legenhausen, 2009). The notation used in what follows that given in this paper, but with some simplification.

Third, some have presented pluralism in contrast to other alternatives than exclusivism and inclusivism. For example, David Basinger offers an alternative trichotomy, which I reformulate here to facilitate comparison with the above:

1. DB V-exclusivism: MAX$r*V$.

2. DB V-non-exclusivism: $r*$ is not superior to all other religious traditions with regard to V, that is, *not*-MAX$r*V$.

3. DB V-pluralism: DB V-non-exclusivism plus EITHERV is equally in $r*$ and in a plurality of other religious traditions or, if this is not possible, there is equal justification for believing that some aspect of V is reflected in $r*$ and in a plurality of other religious traditions (See Basinger, 2018).

Although one could quibble with Basinger's characterization of pluralism—because mere recognition of equal justification for belief that V is reflected in some manner in various traditions allows the possibility of superior reflection of V in one tradition—what is more important, it seems to me, is the recognition that there can be a kind of V-pluralism that is not tied to the condition that V is actually present in the different religions. There can be an *epistemological V-pluralism* that depends not on the actual presence of V in $r*$, but on epistemic justification.

Epistemological justification comes in several varieties (See Alston, 2005), which may be considered with regard to exclusivism and inclusivism, as well as pluralism. Given some version of justification, J, an epistemic exclusivist would hold that the distinctive claims of $r*$ have J, while for any r other than $r*$, the distinctive doctrines of r lack J. Other epistemic values that might be considered are knowledge and certainty. We can designate any such epistemic

value as V^e, and approach Basinger's epistemological pluralism by restricting the epistemic value to J and further restricting it to beliefs about the possession of other values, such as being the religion most favored by God. Suppose that Lessing's (See Lessing, 1912) merchant, knight, and sultan each believes that his own religion, r_1, r_2, and r_3, respectively, is most favored by God, call this value V^f. Since it is not logically possible for two different religions to possess V^f, Bassinger allows one could be a pluralist by allowing that beliefs about the possession of V^f are equally justified. So the merchant might be a V^e-pluralist with regard to the belief that r_n has V^f, but not a V^f-pluralist. The policy that pluralists, like Hick, have proposed, however, is to abandon V^f. Once one has become convinced of the truth of the pluralistic hypothesis, one is supposed to realize that one's former beliefs about V^f were mistaken. Neither the merchant, the knight, nor the sultan has justification for their beliefs about V^f. This is what makes religious pluralism most controversial. It does not merely assign equal status to the denominations; rather, it requires reform through the elimination of beliefs about value superiority. The position taken by Lessing's merchant, Nathan, is not one of religious pluralism as Hick understands it, for Nathan holds that we just do not know which, if any, of the religions is most favored by God, although each is justified by the testimony of those deemed trustworthy. This would be sufficient, however, for Nathan to be a pluralist in Bassinger's sense.

Yet another way of understanding religious pluralism is presented in the zealous defense of the doctrine by Kenneth Rose. Rose suggests a linguistic interpretation of pluralism.

Exclusivism may be defined as taking one of the many available bodies of religious teachings as final to the exclusion and even negation

of other bodies of religious teaching; *inclusivism* may be defined as a weaker or minimal expression of exclusivism that takes terminology in the home tradition as the "final vocabulary" to interpret all religious phenomena; and *pluralism* (as a theological and philosophical stance rather than just as the reality of religious diversity or diverse religious views) may be defined as the view that the limitations of language necessarily imply the ceaseless proliferation of religious languages, none of which can be universally plausible (Rose, 2013, p. 8).

Unfortunately, Rose defines *exclusivism* in terms of "bodies of religious teachings", while *inclusivism* and *pluralism* are defined with respect to terminology and religious language. Nevertheless, the suggestion is clear enough that some linguistic value is considered for exclusivists to be the sole property of one tradition, while for inclusivists linguistic value is admitted for a plurality of religions, but with one vocabulary holding clear superiority over all rivals. One would expect that *pluralism* would then be defined as the recognition of various vocabularies without giving any privilege over the others; but Rose's pluralism is more radical, for it involves the rejection of all religious vocabularies as inadequate. He goes on to distinguish a strong and a weak version of pluralism. The strong version attempts the construction of a new universal religious "teaching or practice" (although it would be more consistent to use "language"); while the weak version considers all religious views to be deficient because of "the limitations of language". If this seems more like a rejection of religion than a defense of a pluralistic theology, Rose admits: "This version of pluralism may move beyond the spectrum of religious views altogether, since it resembles secular, historical, literary, and social-scientific approaches to the study of religion" (Rose, 2013, p. 9). Needless to say, there is a danger that the movement toward pluralism, which began with the intention to accept the plurality of religious

traditions, will lead to either the formation of a new syncretic sect or to the rejection of religion altogether.

Certainly the kind of pluralism that seems to be indicated in the *āyāt* of the Qur'ān with which we began is neither Rose's strong nor weak pluralism. Since it involves the explicit recognition of truth in different traditions and spiritual reward regardless of denomination, the view is not exclusivist. One might consider it to indicate some sort of inclusivism; but, if so, it is not the inclusivism defined by Rose, for there is no claim in the cited passages of the Qur'ān and none in any other passages that requires a belief that all religious phenomena must be interpreted in the language of Islam. The Qur'ān was revealed "in clear Arabic" (See Qur'ān: (12:2); (13:37); (16:103); (20:113); (26:195); (41:3); (42:7); (43:3); 46:12)) so that it could be understood, and confirm what came before, but only in a general manner without any attempt to "translate" all religious phenomena into the language of the final revelation.

The statement of the Qur'ān (5:3) that religion has become complete, (which, according to the Shī'ah, was revealed immediately after the Prophet's (p.b.u.h) announcement of the *wilāyah* (guardianship) of Imam 'Ali (p.b.u.h), while Sunni scholars place the revelation after the Prophet's (p.b.u.h) farewell pilgrimage) likewise makes no mention of and has no implication about the relation of the language of Islam and the various religious traditions of the world. What is stated is merely that the divine guidance that constitutes Islam became complete by the time of the revelation of (5:3).

If the Qur'ān does not provide sufficient evidence to endorse inclusivism as defined by Hick or Rose, there are still other versions of inclusivism that might be considered. The inclusivisms of Hick and Rose posit a single set of standards (salvation/liberation, reality

orientation, linguistic superiority) associated with one religious tradition that is to be used to measure the worth of all others. What we find in Islamic sources, to the contrary, is clear condemnation of the polytheistic religions of ancient Arabia, affirmations of some aspects of other religions, and silence about most of the religious traditions of China and India, let alone the aboriginal religious beliefs in Australia and the Americas. Dale Tuggy explains that the difference between exclusivism and inclusivism is a matter of degree. Both privilege a particular religion, although the inclusivist recognizes greater value in other religions than the exclusivist does; while pluralists hold some broadly defined group of religions to be equal.

Roughly, pluralistic approaches to religious diversity say that, within bounds, one religion is as good as any other. In contrast, exclusivist approaches say that only one religion is uniquely valuable. Finally, inclusivist theories try to steer a middle course by agreeing with exclusivism that one religion has the most value while also agreeing with pluralism that others still have significant religious value (Tuggy, n.d.).
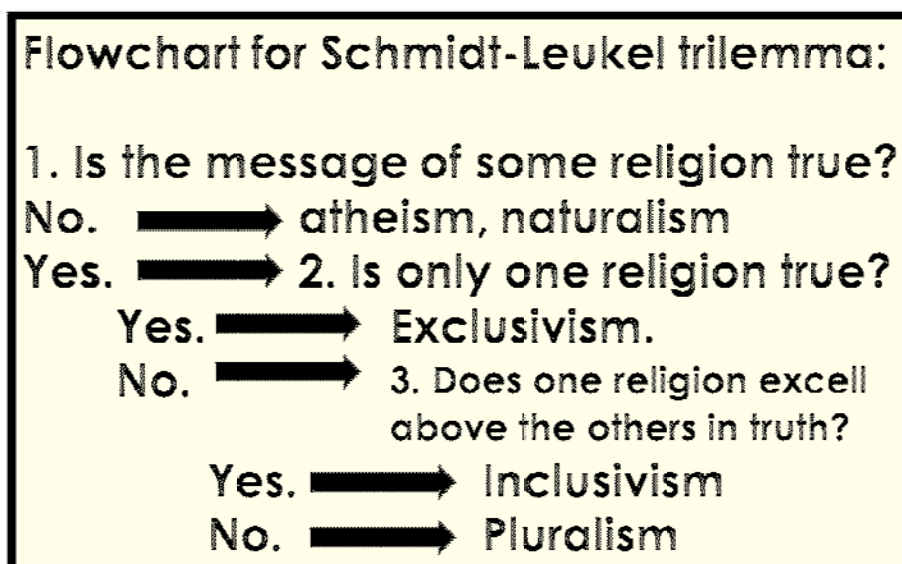
Although this initial statement of the trichotomy is rather vague, Tuggy distinguishes several varieties within each of the three main types. Thus, he describes the sort of "pluralism" indicated in the Qur'ān as a kind of "Abrahamic inclusivism". If the teachings found in the Qur'ān and some Islamic traditions may be considered to form a kind of Abrahamic inclusivism, it is only with respect to the relative merits of the religions mentioned in the sources. To extend this to other views, one would have to decide whether those views are sufficiently similar in relevant ways to those about which clear judgments are found on the basis of which to extend those judgments to others.

The tri-polar typology has been defended most prominently in

recent years by Perry Leukel-Schmidt. He claims that his refinement of the typology makes it: "logically comprehensive, coercive, and universally, that is, interreligiously applicable" (Leukel-Schmidt, 2017, p. 14). So, it may be instructive to consider why we should think it is none of these things. Leukel-Schmidt asks us to consider the following question:

The question of diversity: To what extent might the different religious messages of salvation be true?

(We have already mentioned that the focus on "salvation" is not shared by other traditions, even if it is broadened enough to include Buddhist concepts of liberation.) He characterizes the atheist/naturalist as answering that none are true. Aside from atheism, Schmidt-Leukel claims that one must either hold that only one religion is true (exclusivism), or that although more than one are true, one is superior to all others (inclusivism), or that none is superior to all the rest and some are equally valid (pluralism). We can put Schmidt-Leukel's trilemma in the form of a flow chart:

Flowchart for Schmidt-Leukel trilemma:

1. Is the message of some religion true?
No. ➡ atheism, naturalism
Yes. ➡ 2. Is only one religion true?
 Yes. ➡ Exclusivism.
 No. ➡ 3. Does one religion excell above the others in truth?
 Yes. ➡ Inclusivism
 No. ➡ Pluralism

At least one reason why the Schmidt-Leukel trilemma is not logically comprehensive is that it ignores the possibility of *relative truth*. The point here is not to defend any sort of relativism about religion, but, rather, to point out a logical possibility that undermines the trilemma. For the sake of argument, suppose the truths contained in religious traditions were all relative to those traditions. Then we could not even answer the first question in the flow chart. All of the questions in the flow chart would be incomplete. Relative to one set of religious standards, religions R_1 and R_2 might be equal in truth, while relative to another set of standards, one could be superior to the other, and relative to a third set of standards they might be incomparable.

Incommensurability is another reason the trilemma fails. Maybe on the Day of Judgment the resolution of some religious differences will take the form of a divine ruling that some differences involve no contradiction because some of the truth claims made in two religious traditions are mutually incomprehensible. One religious point of view might be just different from another without there being any possible ranking of the amount of truth they convey. One is not superior to the other, but neither are they equal. The possibility of radically incommensurable worldviews is treated at length by Carol Rovane, and draws on the work of Nelson Goodman to allow for the possibility of *multimundialism*, the idea that incommensurable assertions might accurately describe the different worlds in which those who make the assertions live (Rovane, 2013; Goodman, 1978). Rovane's advocates a form of epistemic indifference that is not to be confused with what has been condemned in the Catholic Church as the *heresy of indifferentism*. The heretical view is that religious commitment is a matter of indifference: one religion is as good as another. Rovane's epistemic indifference *prohibits* the judgment that one is as good as

another, and insists that different traditions are *incommensurable*. It is the refusal to pass judgment, either to condemn the other or to pronounce them equal, that enables Rovane's *multimundialism* (multiple world-ism) to resist both the heresy of indifferentism and the trilemma of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism.

Finally, a third reason the trilemma fails is because of suspended judgment, what the ancient skeptics called "*epoché*" (ἐποχή). If, as the Glorious Qur'ān teaches, religious differences will remain until the Day of Judgment, and if these differences include questions of whether the amount of truth to be found in various traditions is or is not equal, then the theology of religions that would suggest itself would be neither exclusivist, inclusivist, nor pluralist, but what we might call a *skeptical theology of religions* or an *epochist theology of religions.*

An epochist Islamic theology of religions would hold that although we may have *revealed* reasons to affirm the unique superiority of Islam to other religions, there are no religiously neutral criteria by which conclusive judgments or purely rational reasons could be made about the relative merits of other religious traditions that would be found convincing by all rational agents. Thus we would have an inclusivist position internal to Islam together with a healthy skepticism about comparative judgments about the worth of other traditions. And God knows best.

5. Conclusion

The Noble Qur'ān contains numerous *āyāt* that state that at least some religious differences will not be resolved until the Day of Judgment. This is an aspect of Islamic eschatology that has been neglected by theologians and philosophers of religion. The significance of these

Islamic teachings about the eschaton isprofoundly significant for the theology of religions and comparative religion. Muslims engaged in comparative theology should not expect that all religious differences will be resolved as a result of their comparative studies. Most significantly, however, is that the teachings of the Noble Qur'ān about the eschaton make it demonstrable that the trilemma among exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism is incomplete. Here, I have suggested a skeptical or epochist theology of religions that allows that the amount of religious truth to be found in different traditions as well as particular differences about religious claims might be such that no resolution is to be expected before the end of the world.

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On Motahhari's Theodicy of Hell

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Abstract

One of the main problems for the doctrine of the traditional view of hell is Proportionality objection. It claims that eternal punishments for finite crimes of human beings cause undue harm and therefore are incompatible with divine justice. The proportionality principle states that the degree of punishment that a person justly merits must be proportionate to the level of his wrongdoing. One of the common ways to respond to this objection is rejecting the retributive nature of hell. Morteza Motahhari denied retributivism by distinguishing between the criminal system of the world and hereafter. He believed punishments in hell are identical to human deeds and they are nothing more than spiritual aspect of them. Regarding this view which is called 'Self-imposed punishments', God is not the punisher of the sinners, and the residents of hell suffer from their sinful actions. This paper begins with examining Motahhari's metaphysical theory of punishment as a theodicy of hell. Then I will discuss a modal argument against his theory. I shall argue there is not a necessary correlation between crimes and punishments. My conclusion is that Motahhari's theodicy would be undermined God's moral perfection either therefore it does not get God off the moral hook.

Keywords

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Introduction

Within the Abrahamic theological traditions, there has always been a variety of perspectives on hell. The prominent view in the early Islamic eschatological thought is 'Traditionalism' which maintains that the suffering of the damned lasts forever. God punishes people who performed sinful actions in their finite earthly life for an infinite amount of time. Hell is described as a very distressing and undesirable state of being. There is no mercy or escape from hell and suffering has no ends nor would it be diminished. This view was derived from the literal interpretation of the Quran. For Example, we read: **"Allah has promised the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women and the unbelievers the fire of hell to abide therein; it is enough for them; and Allah has cursed them and they shall have lasting punishment." (9, 68)** Hell has also been mentioned in numerous verses of the Quran as Fire: "Fear the Fire whose fuel is men and stones, which is prepared for those who reject Faith" (2, 24). The Quran's detailed attention to issues concerning hell strongly reinforces the need for a philosophical inquiry into the issue.

Jonathan Kvanvig lists four features that define what he calls 'the strong view of hell':

1. The Anti-Universalism Thesis: Some persons are consigned to hell.

2. The existence Thesis: Hell is a place where people exist if they are consigned there.

3. The No Escape Thesis: There is no possibility of leaving hell and nothing can do change, or become in order to get out of hell, once one is consigned there.

4. The Retribution Thesis: The justification for and purpose of hell is retributive in nature, hell being constituted to

mete out punishment to those whose earthly lives and behavior warrant it (Kvanvig, 1993, p. 25).

Some philosophers believe that the strong view of hell poses a kind of problem of evil which called 'Soteriological problem of evil'. The main question here is that why an omnipotent, omniscient and omnibenevolent God permits the eternal suffering of the damned? David Lewis described this problem as "A simpler argument one that has been strongly neglected" (Lewis, 2007, p. 231). Everlasting torment of the conscious creatures is the most intense evil and since God himself perpetrates them, what God does is thus infinitely worse than what the worst of tyrants did (Lewis, 2007, p. 232). It is worth noticing that the eternity of soteriological evils is problematic for the task of developing an acceptable theodicy because unending torment would be pointless which could never lead to anything good beyond it.

A satisfactory answer to this problem must seek to explain the duration, quality, purpose, and finality of hell. Analytic theologians have solved this problem by defending some alternative views of hell. 'Universalism' by denying the first thesis rejects the hell's eternity and believes in God's victory over evils. In this view, hell is temporary and has purgatorial function, therefore redemption and bliss are for all human beings. 'Annihilationism' denies the second thesis of the strong view of hell with rejection of the idea of the inherent immortality of the soul. It states that the final destiny of the wicked is annihilation. 'Escapism' is another view which rejects the third thesis and argues that the ability to leave hell and enter heaven is possible. Rejection of the fourth thesis implies a theory which is called 'Choice model view'. According to this theory, hell is not a punishment imposed by God but is the natural consequence of the choices of free agents. Besides these non-traditional views, the traditional view also has been remained in

the theist's doctrinal thoughts and its rationalization will be discussed in the section below.

1. Hell and Justice

It is reasonable to suppose that for any instance of human suffering allowed or caused by God, there must be some sufficient reason for permitting or causing it failing this, it would appear that traditionalism affirms the eternal existence of gratuitous suffering. Nevertheless, the traditional view is not without any rational justification. It responds that hell is necessary to satisfy the demands of divine justice. Perfect justice cannot be achieved in this world, therefore Post–mortem punishment seems necessary from a justice standpoint. Traditionalism affirms Retributivism, a theory of punishment that asserts that the only justification for punishment is that it serves the cause of justice. According to this theory, the justification for punishment has nothing to do with deterring crime, or with rehabilitating the criminal or protecting society against criminal behavior. As a result, the point of hell seems in no way capable of redresses by future good because it looks backward. The Punishment is imposed for its own sake.

Contemporary philosophers of religion have been pondering this response in a detailed manner. The main objection begins with the claim that punishments should be proportionate to the seriousness of the sin and since all human sins are finite in seriousness, then infinite punishments for finite sins are unjust.

The traditional doctrine of hell clearly requires a retributivist theory of punishment but it also seems to contradict the retributivist's principle itself. Proportionality is the core principle of retributivism which asserts that punishment must be in proportion to the degree of crime. We must measure the seriousness of a crime according to the

degree of harm done. Accordingly, God will be unjust if he treats some persons worse than they deserve; therefore,it would not justify God in making sinners horribly suffered forever.

This understanding of the nature of hell as an eternal torment imposed by God presents tremendous difficulties from the standpoint of justice. The argument from justice has been summarized here:

    A. All human sin is finite in seriousness.

    B. Punishments should be proportionate to the seriousness of the sin.

Therefore, no human being deserves infinite punishment (Seymour, 2000, p. 37).

Such unending punishment is too severe given that the sins of any human being are finite. Since God is perfectly just, we can be confident that he would never punish in this way. Consider Hitler, for example, who killed 20 million innocent people during his life. If he might punish 100 years per person killed, he would justly deserve 2 billion years of punishment which is supposed to be considerably less than eternity (Clark, 2001, p. 22). No matter how many sins an individual committed in his life, it is far out of proportion to punish him for all eternity.

2. Motahhari's Theodicy

It has widely suggested by theologians that the justice of God was represented in the creation of heaven and hell but since hell is theorized as a place of eternal punishment and none of the humans deserve this, hell would be understood against divine justice. Morteza Motahhari, a contemporary Muslim theologian, addressed this problem in his works and tried to solve it by rejecting the retribution

nature of hell. In response to the question of why people go to an everlasting hell, he modified our understanding of hell. He rejects retributivism, the fourth thesis of the strong view, as a divine motivation for hell. His solution entails conceiving hell as a natural consequence of rejecting God rather than a means of retributive punishment for sin and rebellion. Damnation in this sense is chosen by the damned and God's role here is simply to show the true nature of their actions in consigning some to hell.

At the beginning of Motahhari's theodicy, he illustrated the different characterization of this life and the hereafter. According to Motahhari, there are kinds of similarities between earthly life and the life to come. Firstly, both are real and true. Secondly, humans, in both states, have consciousness; therefore, pleasure and pain could be experienced. Thirdly, nature, instincts, and physicality rule over both realms. But the differences should be noticed. Life and death, elderly and youth, work and activity, the existence of unconscious minds, collective destiny, causality laws, motion and evolution, exhaustion and boredom are all the characteristics of the earthy life that the afterlife lacks. In addition, the most important feature of this life is the possibility of changes in one's own destiny. The horrible fate of the evildoer can simply be changed by turning his vices into virtues (Motahhari, 1985, pp. 19-20). Motahhari asserts that this life and the afterlife are related to each other in the manner of continuity. By analogy, this life is like a farm for the afterlife. It is the place of sowing and planting the seeds and the afterlife is the place of reaping them. Morally right actions are analogous to sowing the seeds hence evil thoughts and deeds have nothing beneficial and will not profit one in the afterlife (Motahhari, 1985, p. 17). He sketched out the afterlife as a time when your results will be achieved just like the day when examination

results are announced: 'If the student pleads to be given respite to study at the hour of the examination,or if he asks to be tested at the time that the results are being announced, then the only answer he will hear is that the time for examination has finished and now is the time for awarding grades' (Motahhari, 2004, p. 189). He pointed out the irreversibility of final destination by another analogy: 'If it were possible for a fruit already separated from its tree to return back to the tree and regain its former position to ripen and sweeten as a fruit, then it would have been possible to return to this world, but the law of creation is otherwise' (Motahhari, 2004, p. 190). Consequently, people's destination will be fixed immediately after death. There is no way to punish or reward a person for his afterlife's deeds. These characteristics that were mentioned above are essential and belong to the nature of these two separate realms.

Motahhari's differentiation relates to the nature of punishments as well. He distinguished between three possible types of punishment and noted which one appropriately exists in the afterlife. In this life punishments are conventional and they are legislated in order to deter and prevent crimes or calm the revengeful victims. Conventional punishments must proportionate to the crimes. Such punishments cannot occur in the afterlife because the goal of punishment is not achievable so it will be understood as totally pointless (Motahhari, 2004).

The second criminal option is the natural consequence theory of punishment. In this view, punishments are a direct effect or natural consequence of crimes rather than being man-made. They governed merely by nature rather than convention. For instance, drinking poison causes death naturally. The proportionality principle here is not required to be observed. Punishments are necessary and natural effects of actions and are unforgivable. Motahhari argued that some of the

wrongdoers saw the natural consequence of their actions in this life (Motahhari, 2004, pp. 198-201).

The third theory of punishment which is special for the afterlife is something different in comparison with the previous views by means of its intense connection between punishments and crimes. In this view, Punishment is neither legal nor natural effect of crime but it is crime itself (Motahhari, 2004, p. 201). Every action has had a material aspect which is finite and its physical property appears in this life and a spiritual aspect which is infinite and its non-physical property will be embodied to either suffer or bliss the agent (Motahhari, 2004, p. 205). Motahhari indicates that not only human beings have eternal life but their deeds and acquisitions are eternal either. In this world, man is unable to perceive them until the afterlife. Virtuous deeds will be manifested and make agents happy while evil deeds will be manifested to make agents suffered as a result (Motahhari, 1985, p. 18). His formulation requires that the quality of one's everlasting life will be determined by the value of his moral behaviors (Motahhari, 1985, p. 19). From this point of view, hell, like heaven, is an empty desert. The punishment or reward are the embodiments of the man's own sins which are created by man himself (Motahhari, 2004, p. 195).

According to the two last theories, punishment is self-imposed and there is not meant to be any punisher outside of one's own hand. Hence Punishment will not be inflicted by God therefore there is no concern whether it is unjust or not. If God is not the one inflicting it, there is no concern that he is being unjust. The solution here is that God's treatment of the damned is not counted as punishment at all. There is nothing outside of themselves that causes the damned to suffer as they do. God's indirect intervention here is simply giving sinners what they have chosen freely for themselves.

This view allegedly presumes the world to be created and formed in this way. The pre-mortem life has fixed metaphysically by these natural causal laws which make every human deed to be punished or rewarded. However, I will show that since God himself creates the world plus laws governed it, the natural or metaphysical theories of punishment as a whole could not persuasively answer the argument from justice.

3. God's Responsibility and Possible Worlds

Reflecting upon the problem of hell leads to a reflection upon God's attributes. God is traditionally understood to be a perfect and powerful being who is the creator and sustainer of all that is. God's creative and sustaining activity is often thought to involve choosing a possible world for actualization. It has been widely accepted that besides the actual world (i.e., the world where we live) there were numerous possible worlds that could have been actualized. A possible world is a way the world could have been or possible state of affairs could have had. By assuming that the actualization of a specific world among others is God's action, the actual world is one of the possible worlds that was actualized by God. The "Possible world" principle plays a vital role here. In the contemporary propositional modal logic, modal propositions like necessity and possibility have depicted in terms of possible worlds semantics. A necessary existent utterly exists in all possible worlds including the actual world. God, to say, is necessary because He exists in all possible worlds. Numbers, propositions, and pure sets are other examples of the necessary state of affairs and they exist in all possible worlds too. We cannot imagine a world without these mentioned entities, since their nonexistence is logically impossible. Clearly, God's power is constrained by actualizing these

states of affairs because all possible worlds include them (Plantinga, 1974, p. 169). In addition, morality also constrains divine power in choosing whatever world he wants. God's moral perfection prevents him to actualize worlds contain instances of gratuitous evils. If a world were more evil than good, then necessarily it is morally (not logically) impermissible for any perfect being to allow it to be actual.

Traditional Abrahamic interpretation has been that God created the universe out of nothing and no other power limited God's freedom in creation. Because of God's free choice prior to this world being actualized, he bears some responsibility due to his world-actualization activity. He is responsible for the actualization of this world rather than a better alternative possible world. This point makes problematic the theodicy that Motahhari proposed. According to his view, God actualized a world where sinful creatures suffer for all eternity and it is unjust and unloving. God ought not to allow it to become actual with respect to moral considerations given the fact that the punishing system is not a necessary state of affair which supposed to be considered as being out of God's creative activity. God's choice of creating this system of punishment seems to be regarded as manifesting a defect of his perfection. I doubt that there would be any justification for God's setting the world up such that some individuals do suffer eternally. There should be further clarifications here: Of course,'every action has its necessary outcome' but it is different from 'necessarily every action has its outcome'. The former statement is acceptable but the latter one depends on the authorization of necessary causal laws between actions and their consequences. Since God is the only creator of the world and the author of it, the laws within the action-outcome relation is up to him.

There would be another significant challenge in trying to

explain why God does not annihilate the damned by putting them out of both mercy and misery once they are punished justly for their evil deeds. It is at least possible for God, as suggested by non-retributive annihilationists, to actualize a world where sinners will completely be destroyed by committing evil and it is purportedly closer to justice than traditionalism. It means that their soul will pass away along with their body after divine justice comes off.

This line of argument was also objected by Stephen Kershnar in "*The Injustice of Hell*". He has argued against the natural consequence view of hell by claiming that God is still responsible for setting up the level of well-being that a person will justly receive. He argues that God indirectly make sresidents of hell suffer by creating a system whereby the result of rejecting God's grace is ending up in everlasting severe punishment; and since God sets up a system where punishments are far greater than crimes, then he is responsible for this outcome. He draws an analogy between God and a school principal who sets up the punishment for student fighting whereby the janitor forcibly sodomizes fighters. In this analogy, God is responsible for human suffering just like the principal's responsibility for the fighters' suffering even if they have made themselves liable for it (Kershnar, 2005, p. 106). His conclusion incorporates the claim that the resulting condition is unjust and wholly out of proportion and it does not matter whether the suffering is caused by a morally responsible third party or an impersonal mechanism (Kershnar, 2005, p. 106). If the above objection plus the modal version that I have articulated were true, then natural consequence or choice model views of hell, including Motahhari's theodicy, are not sound theories of punishment to justify everlasting hell.

4. **Conclusion**

The existence of hell reveals a lot about the divine nature and attributes, specifically God's perfection and goodness.When it comes to punishment, justice requires proportionality between the punishment and the seriousness of the crime. Punishment must fit the crime therefore infinite punishment for finite earthly life is not to be expected. This involves disproportionality between offence and atonement that signals an injustice on God's behalf. In Motahhari's view, God does not consign agents to hell, and the residents of hell are there for eternity because it is the embodiment of their sinful actions, hence hell is the direct object of choice of those who are finally lost. He distinguished between the criminal system of the world and hereafter because of their different natures and describes the latter as a formative system where there are identity and unity between crimes and punishments. This system has held an unchangeable necessary law which makes itimpossible for God to choose alternatives. But since actualization of alternative possible worlds with perfect justice is within God's power, therefore God's responsibility for his creatures has been preserved.

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