



A Contemplation on Avicenna's Arguments on Immateriality of the Soul

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Abstract

Total intellectual immateriality of rational soul is one of the major subjects in philosophy and anthropology among Muslims, especially Avicenna. Avicenna has provided several arguments to prove the intellectual immateriality of rational soul, using the position and insensibility of intelligible forms, the unlimited power of the soul in the perception of intelligible forms, and rational soul being needless of physical tools in some of its perceptions. In the present study, the mentioned arguments are explored and criticized, demonstrating that they cannot prove the total intellectual immateriality of the rational soul, that is, its complete lack of matter and the properties of matter (volume and mass). Therefore, it seems that other viewpoints such as the materiality of soul in the time of creation and its singularity after creation due to substantial motion (point of view of mulla sadra shirazi) or imaginary immateriality of soul since the creation humans until his death, replace the Avicenna's and his follower's viewpoints

Keywords: *Soul; Immateriality of the Soul; Imaginary Immateriality; Proofs of Soul Immateriality; Avicenna*

Introduction

As it is known, Plato is the first philosopher who clearly believed in the distinction between body and soul (Plato, 1987: 488/1; Copleston, 2001: 240/1). However, previous philosophers have considered the soul to be the harmony of human body parts, just as the melody of a harp is the result of the harmony of its strings (Plotinus, 1987: 627/1). Some Muslim philosophers such as Abdul-Jabbar Mu'tazeli, Abul-Huzail Allaf (Ash'ari, 1963: 190/1; Mo'tazeli, 1965: 311/11) and Seyyed Mortaza (Mortaza, 1984: 130/1) did not consider the soul to be anything other than the body, while others such as Mu'ammam Mu'tazeli, Hisham-Ibn Hakam, Al-Shaykh al-Mufid, Al-Shaykh al-Saduq, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi and Al-Ghazali (Razi, 1990: 10/1) believed in the distinction between the soul and the body (Mofid, 1993: 58-59; Saduq, 1984: 5).

In the definition of the soul (psyche), Aristotle considers it to be the perfection or act of the body that has the potential for life (Copleston, 1989: 373). He considers the soul to be the cause and essence of the body of a living being and introduces it with three characteristics: the origin of motion, the final cause, and the true essence of living bodies (Copleston, 1989: 374).

Regarding the soul, Avicenna says this way: by the detailed definition of perfection, we realize that the soul is perfection, yet we do not know the nature of the soul, but that being the soul. The name of the soul stands from the point of view that considers it as the organizer of the body and is compared to it, not because the soul is the essence. In addition, regarding the soul as the soul, the body is included in the definition of the soul, and therefore, the study of the soul is part of natural science. However, to distinguish between the essence of the soul, another independent discussion must be raised (Avicenna, no date: 9-10).

Therefore, Aristotle considers the soul to be the act or perfection (synonymous) of the body, but Avicenna considers the soul to be the perfection and organizer of the body. In addition, Avicenna considers the soul to have two aspects: one is the organizer of the body, which is discussed in natural science, and the other has the essence and substance, which cannot be discussed in natural science. However, Aristotle did not make such a distinction regarding the soul.

If it is said that the soul is not a substance, in response, it can be said that if someone understands its self, it must be a substance because if it is not a substance, it should not be present to its self; rather, it should be present in its place. However, man is present to its self, and then it is a substance (Mulla Sadra 2007: 211). Of course, other reasons regarding the soul being a substance are mentioned in philosophical literature, which can be referred to.

Aristotle proposed three meanings for the substance: matter, form, and object, which is a combination of matter and form. He considers the object more deserving of being the substance than other objects; therefore, he considers the soul to be essentially the substance, meaning that the form is for a body that has potential for life (Aristotle, 1987: 75). However, Avicenna neither considers the soul to be intrinsic in the body nor considers its substance the same as the substance of the form; he proposes a dependent relationship between the soul and the body instead of the impressible relationship of the soul in the body (Avicenna, no date: 23).

Muslim thinkers have considered the soul to be immaterial, some Muslim theologians have considered the soul to be substance and some to be accident. Theologians often consider God the only immaterial entity and deny the immateriality of other entities. Some Muslim theologians, such as Bani-Nobakht and Al-shaykh al-Mufid from the Imamiyya theologians, and Al-Ghazali and Ragheb from the Asha'ereh theologians, also consider the soul as an immaterial essence (Helli, 1992: 184).

It is highly probable that Aristotle is the first who proposed a branch of philosophy as self-knowledge and codified this knowledge, but based on many reasons and evidences, Avicenna once again compiled this science under the title of Science of the soul. Despite having many commonalities with Aristotle's self-knowledge, Avicenna's Science of the soul is significantly different. Among Avicenna's innovations, we can mention the following: He identifies the new nature of the soul, introduces it as free from matter, and mentions several reasons for it. He considers intellection to be an important action of the soul by which he proves its immateriality. The relationship between body and soul and its impact on individual, social, and moral behavior, knowledge of resurrection, etc. are among the philosophical achievements of his science of the soul.

Muslim thinkers and theologians who believe in immateriality of the soul, have provided several proofs for their beliefs in their works, including the book "Tajrīd al-i'tiqād" by Nasir al-Din al-Tusi and the book "Al-Shifa al-Tabiyat" by Avicenna. Now, this question arises, whether or not this evidence can prove the immateriality of the soul. In addition, based on this evidence, it can be said that all human beings are immaterial. Assuming the efficacy of this evidence in proving the soul's immateriality, how much is the scope of this immateriality? Is immateriality rational or imaginary? In the present study, the arguments of proponents of immateriality are declared and criticized, and solutions are proposed.

Concepts and Terms

1- Soul

Aristotle defined the soul as the primary perfection of the natural body that has a potential life, that is, for a body that has tools or powers (Aristotle, 1987: 412).

Avicenna considers two aspects for the soul: one is the nature of the soul and the other is the relationship between the soul and the body. He considers the soul a simple substance with no limits. The limit is formed by genus and differentia, whereas the soul is simple and has no genus or differentia. He also considers the soul limited because it belongs to the body. In addition, he uses the soul in two contexts: the celestial soul and earthly soul. He considers the earthly soul to be of three types: vegetative, animalistic, and rational (Avicenna, 2004: 11) and defines the rational soul as follows: The primary perfection which is for a natural body that has organs, does its work with willpower, and understands general affairs (Avicenna, 2004: 11; Avicenna, 1996: 55, 21-22).

-Soul Restrictions

There are two types of perfection: primary and secondary perfection. "The primary perfection" is the perfection that the Type being the Type depends on it; in such a way that the Type is demolished if it is not there. "The primary Perfection" is against "the Secondary Perfection." Secondary perfection is the attribute obtained after consistency of the type (Avicenna, 1979: 167).

There are two types of bodies: natural and artificial. A natural body is a body that is not man-made but exists spontaneously in nature, such as plants and animals. A natural body is the opposite of an artificial body. An artificial body is a body that did not exist by itself in the world but was given a special shape and form by an external factor, such as a chair (Avicenna, 2004: 11; Avicenna 1979: 167).

Moreover, in the definition of the human soul by Avicenna, it is the natural body that functions by means of its organs. Therefore, if something is the primary perfection for a natural body but it functions without organs, it is not called the soul according to this definition, for example, the form of fire (Avicenna, 2021: 167)

Organic and artificial creatures mean something that has tools and organs; that is, the soul is the primary perfection for the natural body that performs activities such as growth, feeling, and movement through its organs. Therefore, if actions are performed without organs, they are not called soul. For example, the face of fire.

Only those natural bodies that act with will and discretion and understand general affairs are desired. Therefore, creatures such as plants, which have organs but do not have will and authority, or creatures such as animals, which have will but do not understand general affairs, do not have a rational soul (Avicenna, 1991: 55).

2-Substance

Substance is an essence and reality, which, if it exists independently, cannot be found in the subject that is based on it (Helli, 1992: 183).

3- Immateriality

The term immateriality refers to exposure, while the term is the opposite of the word material. Immateriality refers to something that is not material. Material is related to matter, and in terms of usage,

it is almost equivalent to the word physical. Immateriality refers to a being that is not material and corporeal, and corporeal is a being that has three dimensions, can be sensed, and occupies a place. Thus, immateriality refers to a being that does not have three dimensions, cannot be sensed, and does not occupy a place (Mesbah-Yazdi, 1987:2/124-125).

In Islamic philosophy, there are two types of immaterial beings: complete immateriality, such as contingent and intellectual existence, which do not have any of the physical properties of the material. Incomplete immateriality, which lacks the physical properties of the material, divisibility, alteration, time dependency, and spatiality but has corporeal properties such as shape, size, and color. This type of immateriality is called imaginary and purgatory immateriality. By “immaterial being,” peripatetic Muslim philosophers mean “intellectual essence” which is the only being that holds complete immateriality (Avicenna, 1996 A: 287)

4- Mundus Imaginalis

Peripatetic Muslim philosophers, including Avicenna, deny the existence of the Mundus imaginalis and its immateriality. In Avicenna’s words, the actualization of shape and form without matter is impossible. That is, there is no doubt in physical form because it is a physical form. Therefore, it is not acceptable for some to be based on the matter and for some not to be. And it is impossible for an immaterial essence -which there is no doubt in its nature- to doubt its existence. Because the existence of that single nature is also single, on the other hand, the single existence of this nature and physical form falls within one of three states: either it must be in the matter, it must not be in the matter, or part of it must be in the matter and another part not.

A part can’t be in the matter and another part not, because we have considered it as a single reality without any doubts. Therefore, either all truth must be based on matter or all of it must be without matter. Since this truth does not need matter, we conclude that all of it is based on matter (Avicenna, 2006: 34).

Arguments Regarding the Immateriality of the Rational Soul

According to the history of self-knowledge, Plato was the first to consider the soul to be immaterial, and his student, Aristotle, agreed with him, although he disagreed with his teacher on many issues. He has cited reasons to prove the immateriality of the soul, including that the soul is not a body because some of the bodies have life. Thus, the soul is not a body, but the body is the substance of life, and life is held within it. Having life is the same as having a soul (Qavam safari, 2003: 294).

Peripatetic Muslim philosophers, including Avicenna, consider the soul to be an immaterial substance that acts as a matter and needs matter; that is, it performs its actions through the body. Therefore, like Plato and Aristotle, they consider the soul immaterial. These philosophers consider imagination as a physical power because imagination perceives partial forms and performs its action with the help of physical tools. Avicenna has stated several arguments in his books to prove the immateriality of the soul.

1. In this regard, Avicenna presents some of his arguments in terms of the indivisibility of intelligible form. He says that if the place of intelligible form is the body, the intelligible form dissolves either in a place that cannot be divided (i.e., a point) or in a place that can be divided. The first situation—the dissolution of intelligible form in a point- is impossible. Because the point is the non-existent side and intelligible form, which is an existential matter, it does not dissolve in the non-existent side of the body. If the place of intelligible form is a divisible part (i.e., the body), the intelligible form must be divided according to the place as well; however, the intelligible form cannot be divided. Therefore, its place—the rational soul—is immaterial (Avicenna, 1996 A: 288). Avicenna then expresses multiple modes of the divisibility of the intelligible form, and their place and their negation, which are passes off in this study.

2. If the intelligible form dissolves in the matter, which is divisible and has direction, then either none of the components of the place have a relationship with that intelligible form, all the components of the place have a relationship with that intelligible form, or some of the components of the place have a relationship with that intelligible form, while others have not.

In the first case, all components have no relationship with that intelligible form, and the place of the intelligible form is not material but immaterial. In the second case, each of the components will be rationalized independently of each other, whereas only one intelligible form has been assumed. In the third case, it is impossible to have a place for those components that have no relation to that intelligible form (Avicenna, 1996 A: 294-295).

Someone may argue against the indivisibility of human knowledge and his soul, stating that, for example, by cutting off a part of the body, such as a hand or leg, a person loses part of his knowledge, that is, the knowledge to that part.

In response, it is said that by paying little attention, we understand that even when a part of the body is amputated, present self-knowledge does not change, and it seems that the questioner here is oblivious to his present self-knowledge.

Some may argue that it is not possible to prove the immateriality of the soul through the indivisibility of intelligibilities or forms that dissolve in the soul because philosophers do not consider point, form, and quality to be divisible, and at the same time, they do not consider this to be against their materiality (Fayyazi 2014: 202).

In response, it is said that although these matters cannot be divided by nature, they can be divided according to their place, while intelligibilities and the soul cannot be divided according to other matters. For example, perceptible things such as blackness and temperature are not divisible by nature, but are divisible according to their place (i.e., body) (Mulla Sadra, 1981: 61/4).

In further explanation about the indivisibility of intelligibilities, Mulla Sadra states that intelligible form is not divisible and cannot be sensed in any way, neither substantially nor accidentally. For example, although "blackness" cannot be divided by nature, it can be divided according to place. Or "point" has the accidental capability of sensibility. Whatever cannot be divided in any way, and cannot even be sensed accidentally, it cannot be reached for a material object. Therefore, whatever perceives the intelligible form must be immaterial in its place (Mulla Sadra, 1989: 470-471).

One may argue that we can assume a line in our minds and divide it into two separate parts. For example, we can imagine a person in our minds and then separate its parts. Thus, our knowledge is divisible and material, and the soul's (self) immateriality cannot be proved.

In response, it is said that the division in the above-mentioned case is subjective and not a true one. Sometimes, we divide something in the extrinsic world in such a way that the first being demolished and two separate beings emerge, that is, the true division. However, sometimes we do not divide something in the extrinsic world; rather, we divide it into our minds. In this case, the first entity does not disappear and only two separate beings appear. This division is subjective.

Therefore, regarding the division of the line into two parts, it can be said that these two newly formed lines are equal to the initial line, and this 'equality of the two newly formed lines with the initial line' indicates that the first line is still present; otherwise, it cannot be equal to those two lines. Therefore, in reality, the first line has not been destroyed, but two other lines have appeared in the person's mind. This type of division is a subjective division and not a true one (Tabatabai, 2007: 924/4). Therefore, there

is nothing wrong with proving the indivisibility and immateriality of the soul by the indivisibility of intelligibilities.

Both of these two arguments can be criticized. In the first and second arguments, and through the non-divisibility of the intelligible form, the non-divisibility of their place and the consequent non-physicality of that place (the soul) is proved. This non-divisibility of intelligible forms can be due to their place in the brain, and if experimental scientists succeed in proving the divisibility of that part of the brain, the divisibility of intelligible forms is also proven.

3. Intellectual power sets intelligibilities free from properties such as quantity, position, and place. Being free of these properties is attributed to either the extrinsic world or the substance that intellects it. In the first case, this was not possible. This is because extrinsic matter possesses certain properties. Therefore, the intelligible form is free from these properties, because it is within the intellection. That is, when the intellection intellects, it cannot be pointed out or divided. Therefore, the place of the intelligible form is not body, but immaterial (Avicenna, 1996 A: 294).

As it was said, in this argument Avicenna proves the immateriality of the rational soul, using lack of place (not having a spatial position) and lack of sensibility of intelligible forms, while imaginary forms are not sensible either.

4. The intelligibilities that the rational soul actually rationalizes, are potentially infinite because the soul can rationalize the intelligibilities one after one, and use the results of some logical proofs as an introduction for other proofs. Anything with infinite power is not a body, therefore the soul is not a body (Avicenna, 1996 A: 296). As it can be realized, in this argument, Avicenna proves the immateriality of the rational soul through its infinite actions.

But it seems that this argument can be refuted and criticized, because there is no limit in the division of line, distance, and time as well, whereas these concepts are not considered intellectual immateriality in philosophy. Also, the power of imagination is capable of making infinite imaginary forms with the help of immaterial intellects, while the power of imagination does not possess intellectual immateriality. In addition, it cannot be proven that the actions of material and physical objects are limited; but in philosophy, the infinity of actions can sometimes be attributed to matter and body. As they say, the first monster can take infinite forms.

5. If the intellectual power has dissolved in matter, then the action of that power must be done with material tools and instruments, and therefore the rational soul should not perceive its being, the perception of the perception of its being, and the instrument of its perception. Since there is no intermediary between the soul and such perceptions, therefore, the rational soul is not matter but is immaterial (Avicenna, no date: 276/3).

As it can be seen, in this argument and through the fact that the soul does not need the body and bodily organs for some of its actions and perceptions, Avicenna proves the immateriality of the rational soul.

Regarding this argument, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi states several premises which need to be proven:

1. The intellectual power does not need a body for its actions, because the power to act perceives itself and this perception is done without intermediaries.
2. Whatever needs a tool for its action, does not need a tool in its essence, which is proven in two ways. First, physical powers such as sight and hearing are physical, hence they cannot perceive their essence, perception, and place. If the intellectual power was like these physical powers, it

was incapable of perceiving these things, whereas it is not. Second, the action is derived from the essence of the object. If the essence belongs to the place in its consistency and existence, its action is inevitably derived from the place, so the action is done with the participation of its place. However, regarding the soul, it can be seen that nothing interferes with its actions, so what is needless in its actions, is also needless in its essence (Razi, 1990: 372/2).

Then he criticizes this argument and says that accidents and forms that need their place, do not need another place or tool for this need. Using this description, we do not say that they do not intrinsically need a place (Razi, 1990: 372/2).

Also, in the criticism of this argument, it can be said: that creation is subordinate to existence, and the action follows the essence. So, if anything needs something in its essence and existence, it will definitely need that thing for performing the actions, but not vice versa. While in Avicenna's argument, the opposite was practiced and it was said that since the soul does not rely on the body in its actions, then it does not rely on the body in its essence and existence either (Mulla Sadra, 1981: 296/8).

6. If the intellect of the soul is through bodily instruments and tools, whenever these instruments are exhausted and drained, the rational soul must also be exhausted and drained, but it is not this way. Rather, in this case, the rational soul sometimes gets tired and sometimes not. Sometimes even the intellection of the rational soul becomes stronger. Therefore, the intellection of the soul is not always through physical tools, and thus the soul is not matter in its essence, but is immaterial (Avicenna, no date: 267/3).

The analogical form of this argument is as follows: if the intellectual power is physical, it will be weakened in everybody during old age, but since the latter statement is invalid, the preceding is also invalid, and the intellectual power is not physical.

It may be argued that in many cases, the weakness of body parts causes weakness in human intellect. Whereas, if the intellect is immaterial and non-physical, it should not be affected by the disorders of the physical body.

In response, it can be said that in hypothetical syllogism, Modus Ponens cannot be concluded from Modus Tollens. Second, in such cases, the weakness in intellection is due to the preoccupation of the soul with other issues (Mulla Sadra, 1981:293/8; Avicenna, 1996 B: 269/3).

7. A person might neglect everything, but not his being, although he may not be aware of his knowledge. A person perceives himself, so he is present to himself, and such perception is through the knowledge by presence, not posteriori knowledge. Because if this perception is through posteriori knowledge, then the Identity of the Indiscernible should be considered. As in this case, when a person is imagined, his nature comes to mind and thus two natures are precepted: the intellect and the intelligible. In addition, in this argument, it is assumed that knowledge is intrinsic, while the imaginary form has some kind of contradiction with the being (Avicenna, 1991: 157).

8. Imagine that a person is born with intact mental and physical powers but he is oblivious to all his organs and surroundings. This person is in a vacuity where he is not facing anything and his organs are not in contact with each other. Such a person does not doubt his being. The result is that the rational soul does not need the body or physical tools for the perception of its being and therefore is immaterial (Avicenna, 1996 A: 26).

In another context, Avicenna expresses a different statement: Return to yourself and ponder. Imagine your essence at the beginning of creation with a sound mind and a flawless physical body. Then suppose you are in a state where you cannot see your body parts, they are not in contact but far from each

other, suspending in the air without receiving any sensory stimulation. In such a situation, you will find that you are unconscious of everything except your being and identity (Avicenna, 1996 B: 292/2; Avicenna, 1991: 60; Avicenna, 1983:13/2).

In explaining the notion of this argument, Al-Tusi says: Avicenna wants to make us aware of the existence of the human soul and its contradiction with the body, and he does this by assuming a state for a person in which he perceives nothing but his being, in such a way that he assumes himself at the beginning of creation. The phrase "beginning of creation" means that there should not be any mental, sensory, imaginary, or rational form of his body.

There is also another condition: In the above-mentioned state, one should not have any mental disability and his perceptive powers should be sound, in order to be able to understand his being. Physical and mental health is also another condition so that he does not suffer from any ailment or pain that could prevent him from perceiving his being.

Another condition is that he should not see his body parts so that he does not think that he is the aggregation of his organs. And its organs should not be in contact with each other so that it does not perceive them with the sense of touch. He should also suspend himself in the open air so that no disturbing qualities such as heat or cold will stimulate his feelings; generally, he will not feel his body or anything outside his body.

In such a condition, a person is unaware of everything such as external objects, his external and internal organs, his body dimensions, his sensations, and his powers, except for his self-awareness who finds it intact and actualized. Therefore, the first and most distinct perception for a person is the perception of his self-awareness. Such a perception cannot be achieved neither with a limited and formal explanation nor with reasoning (Avicenna, 1996 B: 292/2).

The result of this punitive argument by Avicenna is that: man perceives his "soul" through intrinsic reflection and knowledge by presence, and understands that his soul is different from his body.

It may be argued that the content of this argument cannot be actualized and it is not possible to keep a human being suspended in the air without sensory perception. The eyes, ears, nose, and mouth may be closed, but the sense of touch -which reacts with the least pressure and the lightest airflow- cannot be blocked. So, the conclusion of this argument is not valid.

In response, it is said: It is evident that a person's soul is different from his body and everyone can recognize it with inner reflection and knowledge by presence. For this reason, Avicenna considers this proof as a punitive proof - not an empirical proof.

That is, the situation that Avicenna describes in this argument does not need to be actualized in practice. As soon as a person assumes this state in his mind, it helps him to perceive his soul through internal reflection and knowledge by presence.

In other words, this argument helps man to design a situation in which he can find his soul through internal reflection and knowledge by presence. That is, for a person's knowledge of his soul by presence, only deliberate inattention and negligence of the body organs suffice, and there is no need for actual cutting off the body parts, just in the same way as the judicial court orders the presumptive and factitive reconstruction of the crime scene, to better understand the settings of the crime scene.

In addition, it is possible to temporarily disable the sense of touch by injecting an anesthetic medicine without making a person unconscious. In such a situation, if the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth are

closed and the senses of sight, hearing, smell, and taste are not stimulated, a person can be aware of his reality and understand the contradiction between his body and his soul.

Regarding this, one of the contemporary researchers has expressed another argument. He explains that every human being has self-awareness and observes that this "self" cannot be applied to any organ or any organ's property. Because this "self" does not change with aging, deterioration of physical strength, or body defects. The whole body or some body parts can be forgotten, but not this "self".

Furthermore, man attributes his consecutive perceptions to himself. Just as he knows himself by presence, he also knows his consecutive perceptions by presence without any doubt. This "self" or "soul" is a single and durable being, that is, everyone recognizes that "he is" and "has been" one in the past and present and cannot be divided.

Therefore, this recognition -that man is what he has been before, and is a durable being without any change, and that man attributes all his perceptions to himself- is achieved through knowledge by presence. Through this knowledge by presence, he observes that the soul is different from the physical body and material properties (Tabatabaei, 1985: 123-124).

1. It may be argued that the material cause of all physical properties of man has been discovered by scientific advances of man, and there is no spiritual predicate that does not conform to physical laws.

In response, it can be said that the domain of empirical sciences is matter and material rules; and immaterial issues are beyond the scope of empirical sciences. Therefore, the immateriality of the soul, which has been proven through various rational arguments, cannot be denied through empirical sciences. The only statement that this argument can prove is that experimental science has not yet 'found' proof regarding the immateriality of the soul. There is no doubt that "not finding" does not indicate "not being" (Tabatabaei, 1985: 366/1).

Those who have raised these issues may have thought that the proponents of the immateriality of the soul attribute the things for which they cannot find a reason or explanation through empirical science, to an immaterial concept, i.e. "soul". But this assumption is wrong. Proponents of the immateriality of the soul attribute human actions "to the human body without any mediation" and "to the human soul with the mediation of human body". Also, they attribute self-awareness and the observation of one's true being to the soul. These cannot be attributed to the human body.

2. Some others believe that the human nervous system conveys perceptions quickly and sequentially to the central system in the brain. As a result, there is a single integrated set of perceptions in this central organ, whose components are not different from each other; and in case some of these components are missing, others will be replaced. This single set is the "self" that is always present to us and it refers to "I".

Therefore, a person being the "I", is the perceptions of the nerve chain that enter the central organ in the brain consecutively and quickly, and we consider it a single durable reality, and this unity is actually a collective unity, not a true real one. It is like a pond in which water continuously enters from one side and leaves from the other side, and the water level looks constant and intact, whereas the water level in the pond is neither intact nor constant.

It is also said that the self that the supporters of self-existence consider to be immaterial and prove it through inner observation and provide arguments for it, is not immaterial in reality. Rather, it is a set of natural properties of the body; i.e. neural perceptions. These perceptions are the result of interactions between body organs and nerve cells (Tabatabaei, 1993: 378/1).

In response, it can be said that this statement by the deniers of the immateriality of the soul is not compatible with what man knows about his self through intuitive knowledge. That is, the collective unity that deniers of the immateriality of the soul believe in, is actually plurality; and its unity is not intrinsic. This kind of unity is imagined by the power of sensation or the power of imagination, while what is perceived by intuitive knowledge is essentially one (Tabatabaei, 1993: 368/1).

In addition, it seems that the deniers of the immateriality of the soul have ignored their self-intuition and have adverted to the sensory observations that enter the brain through the senses continuously. It also seems that this group of deniers has confused "not finding" with "not being". Because the only result of what they have obtained through sensation and experience is "not finding", while their claim is "not being". Therefore, their reason does not match their claim.

Also, someone may argue that: when all the senses are cut off, what is thought of as the self is the imaginary body image that the power of imagination has obtained from the sensational form of the body that it had observed, before cutting off the senses.

In response, it is said that this claim is not acceptable; because Avicenna assumed an infant who is at the beginning of birth and has not yet formed any sensory, imaginary, or intellectual understanding of his body and extrinsic objects in his mind. In addition, the distinction between the imaginary form of the body or its general form, with what is perceived as "I" by internal reflection and knowledge by presence, is obvious for humans.

In the criticism of the seventh and eighth arguments, it can be said that what these claims seek to prove is the total intellectual immateriality of the soul, while it seems that what these claims can prove is that the rational soul is something rather than the body; however, they cannot prove total intellectual immateriality of the soul.

9. If the intellectual power is in a physical tool, as such the power of vision is in the eye, or the power of taste is in the tongue, then the intellectual power must either always perceive or never perceive that tool. However, we see that the intellectual power sometimes perceives that tool and sometimes does not (Avicenna, 1996 B: 186, Sha'rani, no date: 251).

Al-Tusi -the commentator of Avicenna's Book of Al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat (Remarks and Admonitions) - considers this argument to be based on four premises:

1. Perception is attained only through obtaining and accompanying the form of the perceived object (the percipi) with the one that is perceiving (the perceiver).
2. If the one that is perceiving (the perceiver) perceives something without the need for any tool, the form of that thing is attended to the perceiver, and if the perceiver perceives something utilizing a tool, the face of that thing is obtained by that tool.
3. Since physical affairs are dissolved in the material issues, they act only through their tools.
4. Things that are united in nature are different from things that are associated with their nature. Like people of the same ethnicity whose differences are in their characteristics (Avicenna, 1996 B: 3/276-277).

Therefore, if the intellectual power has physical tools, it must either always or never understand it. Since human body organs are sometimes taken into consideration by the intellectual soul and sometimes not, then none of the body organs is a tool for intellectual power. That is, intellectual power is not intrinsic in any body organ, but rather something separated from matter.

In refuting and criticizing this argument, it can be said that it is based on the premise of intellect being the achievement of the intellect to the intelligible. But if someone does not accept this premise, this argument will not be acceptable to him. As Fakhr al-Din al-Razi considers intellect to be the establishment of addition between the intellectual and the known face (Razi, 1990: 2/363).

10. Those powers that perceive through physical tools get tired by continuous perception, and intense perceptions make them weak in such a way that after intense perception, they are not able to perceive simple issues. But the intellectual power is not like this. Because one who understands a complex and difficult issue, can also understand a simple issue right after that, and the continuation of intellection does not cause fatigue. The fact that sometimes the continuation of intellect causes fatigue is because the intellect seeks help from imagination, and actually, that's the continuation of imagination that has caused fatigue (Avicenna, 1983: 2/194).

In other words, if the soul is physical and dependent on the body, it is necessary that what causes the weakness and demise of the body, also causes the weakness and demise of the soul. However, intellection causes the weakness of the body along with the evolution and development of the rational soul. Therefore, the soul is immaterial.

In refuting and criticizing this argument, it can be said that the corporeality of physical powers does not mean that all physical powers share all properties, rather they may be contradictory to each other. In addition, the reasoning method in this argument is an inductive generalization, that is, the observation obtained from a few samples is projected onto the broader population. As Al-Ghazali has mentioned before, this method of reasoning in the system of logic is not absolute certainty (Ghazali, 2003:253).

It can also be said that if two contradictory actions derive from a single object, it is impossible for both of them to be derived in the same way. In case the validity and way are not the same, there is no problem in the initiation of two contradictory acts from a single object, as Mulla Sadra has mentioned before (Mulla Sadra, 1981:295/8). Therefore, it can be said that this reasoning, like the previous ones, is inductive and cannot prove the total immateriality of the soul.

Given the above-mentioned objections and criticisms, it seems that other views - including the viewpoint of Mulla Sadra which indicates the soul is corporeal in origination and spiritual in subsistence - should be considered as a substitute for the theory of total immateriality of the soul by Muslim thinkers.

Mulla Sadra's Philosophical Ideas

Mulla Sadra believes that the soul is a physical entity at the beginning of its creation, and an immaterial and spiritual entity during its subsistence. According to his philosophical principles, such as the authenticity of existence, the gradation of existence, the Substantial Motion, and existential intensity, he considers the nature of the human soul to be corporeal at the beginning of its creation which leaves the lower orders of the soul utilizing Substantial Motion, towards the higher orders and immateriality of the soul. In his view, the soul is an existence as reality, which has stream orders and we abstract a name from each order. In other words, the soul is a durable intense reality with stream orders, and the distinction between the previous and the next order is based on the rationality of the mind. In this concept, not only the immateriality of the soul is proved in three orders of sensation, imagination, and intellection, but also the order of post-intellectual immateriality is proved for the soul, based on substantial motion and believing in the immutability of existence of the soul. Also, in this viewpoint, the soul and the body are not considered as two separate realities that have a reciprocal relationship with each other, rather, the reality of man from the monstrous order to immateriality and higher is a single entity, in which the body

is the lower order of the soul and the soul is the higher order of the body. Further details regarding this viewpoint and its principles are beyond the capacity of this article.

Conclusion

The arguments that Avicenna has raised to prove the immateriality of the rational soul are not capable of proving the total and intellectual immateriality of the rational soul. Some arguments are reasonable from the point of indivisibility of intelligible form, while the non-divisibility of intelligible forms can be due to their place in the brain. If experimental scientists succeed in proving the divisibility of that place in the brain, the divisibility of intelligible forms is also proven. Some other logical proofs are based on the facts of not having a spatial position and lack of sensibility of intelligible forms, whereas imaginary forms are not sensible either. Some other logical proofs are based on the infinite nature of actions of an immaterial being, and the limited actions of corporeal and material objects; Although the latter (the limited actions of corporeal and material objects) cannot be proven, sometimes in philosophy, the property of infinity of actions is attributed to matter and body, as they say, the first monster can take unlimited forms. Other logical proofs are based on the soul not necessitating physical tools in some of its actions, some are based on the soul not being exhausted when the physical tools are drained, some are based on the rational soul not ignoring its essence despite neglecting the sensations, and others are based on the concept of the floating man. However, these arguments are more specific than the claim and cannot prove that. In other words, what these arguments “seek” to prove is the total immateriality of the rational soul, but what they “can” prove is that the rational soul is a separate entity from the body, and they “cannot” prove its total intellectual immateriality. Also, physical abilities may not have uniform properties. In addition, a body of observations obtained from a few samples cannot be generalized to the broader population, and the system of logic considers this action as inductive reasoning without truth value. Also, as it was said in the proof of the soul being based on the essence: if something does not need a place for its actions, does not indicate that it does not need a place in its essence. In addition to the above-mentioned arguments, it can be said that the arguments given by Avicenna for proving the intellectual immateriality of the rational soul can also be used for the power of imagination. Avicenna considers the power of imagination to be material, and imagination to be physical and corporeal. Therefore, it can be said that these proofs are more general than the claim and cannot prove the total intellectual immateriality of the rational soul, and As an alternative, other viewpoints such as those of mulla sadramulla sadra's viewpoint or imaginary immateriality of soul and etc can be used

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