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A “Beatitude Paradox” for Certain Monotheists?

Adam Wood ¹

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This article discusses the apparent contradiction between the corporeal nature of human beings, which points to a bodily nature for their happiness, and the belief of many monotheists that happiness consists in the incorporeal state of union with God. The article focuses on the works of two important Muslim and Christian thinkers, Ibn Tufayl and Thomas Aquinas, and explores the solutions they provide in this regard.

Keywords: union with God, happiness, corporeal, Ibn Tufayl, Aquinas, resurrection.

Introduction

I have a vivid childhood memory of asking my father what heaven would be like, while riding in the front seat of the car on a cross-country road-trip. As I recall, he made it sound like heaven would be like a church service that went on and on with no end. At that point in my life I didn't much enjoy church-going. I burst into tears and declared I didn't want to go to heaven anymore. My father tried to reassure me that by the time we arrive in heaven our desires will be so thoroughly re-configured that an eternity worshipping God will be a blessed, joyful state, not a boring, dreary one. But my father's reassurance here, correct as it may be, poses a problem that I think many monotheists share.²

Many monotheists want to say that happiness, the ultimate good for us humans, consists in union with God. Given God's incorporeal nature, however, it is difficult to conceive of union with Him being accomplished through any sort of bodily activity. My father

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2. It may well be that certain polytheists face the same difficulty as I outline here. I restrict my attention to monotheists here partly just because I am more familiar with their views. It does seem to me, however, that part of the motivation for thinking that happiness consists in union with God stems from a regard for God as the “being than which no greater can be conceived,” as St. Anselm puts it, and it seems likely to me that there could only be one such being.

characterized it in terms of worship. Others describe it in terms of knowledge, together with the enjoyment that accompanies knowing the best possible thing there is to know. The problem is that even as grown-ups we can sympathize with my youthful horror at being told that any sort of spiritual or intellectual activity—even one as exalted as worshipping or knowing God—is our ultimate aim. Surely part of what makes us happy is bodily activity; not in a merely hedonistic sense, either. Part of what makes us happy is having certain jobs to do, including certain bodily duties to fulfill. It is hard to imagine being happy without having such tasks to perform.

To pose the problem more formally, it seems on the face of it that many monotheists are committed to the following:

- (1) Happiness consists in union with God.
- (2) Union with God is achieved in some incorporeal way.
- (3) Happiness consists at least in part in fulfilling certain bodily duties.

Propositions (1)–(3) form, on the face of it, an inconsistent set. So monotheists appear to face a sort of “beatitude paradox.”

Now, in order to show that the paradox is not an outright contradiction, monotheists have various options. They may find some way of explaining why the inconsistency of (1)–(3) is *merely* apparent. They may find some way of rejecting or relaxing one of these propositions. Below, I’ll consider several strategies along these lines. Before I do, however, I want to motivate each of (1)–(3) further by considering in the first section of this paper how they arise in one monotheistic philosophical treatise, the twelfth-century Andalusian Ibn Tufayl’s work *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*. In the second section of the paper, I’ll examine what solution Ibn Tufayl appears to favor in response to the paradox, together with the way a different medieval monotheist, Thomas Aquinas, adopts a very similar solution. I’ll conclude by sketching a different solution to the paradox also suggested by certain comments of Aquinas’s, which (I’ll argue) he should have preferred. Perhaps the same goes for other monotheists like Ibn Tufayl as well, although I won’t try to demonstrate this here.

1. The Beatitude Paradox in *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*

Ibn Tufayl’s version of Hayy’s story begins with two competing accounts of its protagonist’s appearance on the tropical island where he spends his first fifty years: one involving spontaneous generation, the other involving the product of a clandestine marriage being placed in a little ark to escape a proud tyrant. It doesn’t seem to matter much which of these we favor. In fact, however, both accounts are prefaced by

several pages in which Ibn Tufayl sets out his subject-matter, namely the "ecstasy" to which he was transported upon being requested to unfold the secrets of Ibn Sina's "oriental philosophy" by the work's addressee.¹ Though this ecstasy is an indescribably wonderful state of sublimity, it is nonetheless the sort of state that makes one desire to express it, hence the various attempts by Sufi mystics and philosophers alike to do so: Ibn Tufayl cites sayings of Bistami, Hallaj, and al-Ghazali to this effect. Rationalist philosophers like Ibn Bajja miss out on this state: the works of Aristotle, al-Farabi, or even Ibn Sina's philosophical treatises will leave you, as the latter himself warns, "far from perfection" (101/15). As for al-Ghazali, Ibn Tufayl notes the inconsistency between Ghazali's condemning the philosophers' denial of bodily resurrection at one point, but endorsing the Sufis' adherence to the same view at another. Perhaps the answer is contained in the "esoteric works" Ghazali wrote not for mass consumption that simply haven't made their way to Spain (102/18). At any rate, Ibn Tufayl says he can only hope to guide his addressee to the point where he is able to enjoy ecstasy for himself. The story of Hayy is his way of doing so.

I won't recite all the details of Hayy's upbringing by a doe, or the scientific, philosophical, and spiritual explorations her death initiates; I'll stick to noting a few features of his saga particularly relevant for our present purposes.

One realization Hayy reaches concerning her metaphysical make-up is that her deceased body has lost some component that previously gave it motion and direction (115/45). He eventually decides that this must be a sort of fiery vital spirit that uses the body's various organs as tools for accomplishing various vital operations (117/50–52). Still later, he determines that the same vital spirit present throughout all of an individual animal's bodily parts must in fact be present throughout the animal's whole species, and indeed throughout the whole animal kingdom, the entirety of the living world, and in fact all of physical reality. Hayy calls this spiritual component present throughout the physical world "soul" or "form" at various points depending on whether it is present in a living or non-living thing.² Dwelling on it makes him

1. Possibly Ibn Tufayl's patron, the Almohad sultan Abu Ya'qub Yusuf.

All parenthetical references to *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* (henceforth HIY) in this paper are to page numbers in Goodman's English translation (Ibn Tufayl and Goodman 2009), with page references to the edition from which Goodman translated (Gauthier 1936) following a slash.

2. Ibn Tufayl thinks of the spiritual component he calls "soul" or "form" as playing a sort of unifying function — within a given physical thing (119/56), within species and genera of physical things (120/57–58), and indeed within the entire physical world (122/61). In these regards it sounds like he has Aristotelian soul/form in mind. But Aristotle couldn't agree that soul or form was a fiery substance, as Hayy does.

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contemptuous of physicality (124/65), and prompts his first awareness of God, as the being from whom their actions in physical bodies must ultimately stem (128/74). The fifth seventh-year span of his life Hayy devotes to getting to know God better through arguments based upon his observations of the heavens and other bodies.¹ He becomes obsessed with God, detecting in every feature of creation signs of his workmanship. He realizes furthermore that because God is non-physical, it must be through some non-physical faculty that Hayy apprehends him (135/92). Indeed that non-physical feature whereby Hayy apprehends the Necessarily Existent (as he takes to calling God at this point in the text [137/95]) must be his true self, imperishable and separable from the body (136/92–93). Because God’s perfection is infinite, constant awareness of Him must be “joy without lapse, unending bliss, infinite rapture and delight,” whereas losing hold of God must be “infinite torture as long as He is not found” (137/95). Eschatologically speaking, however, Hayy also realizes that in order to secure unending joy after separation from his body, he must practice continuous concentration on God now, unmarred by the passions or “demands of the bodily powers” (138/96).

Continuous concentration on God proves difficult.² Hayy’s senses and bodily needs keep intruding. To solve this problem, Hayy decides he must model his life on the heavenly bodies, the one part of creation he’s fairly sure is able to contemplate the Necessarily Existent continuously (142/105). In fact, he decides he has three sets of duties: those whereby he imitates the heavenly bodies, those whereby he imitates God himself, and those whereby he cares for and preserves his own body, dull and dark and demanding though it is, since he reflects that it hadn’t been linked with him for nothing (142/106). The last set of duties are purely instrumental—necessary solely for the sake of preserving the vital spirit whereby he’s able to imitate the heavenly bodies. He therefore imposes strict restrictions on how much food, drink, clothing, shelter, etc. he’s willing to employ to protect the vital spirit. Beyond these tight negative constraints, however, Hayy also decides that imitating the heavenly bodies requires him positively to care for his own body, cleaning it, scenting it, etc., along with caring

Also confusing is Ibn Tufayl’s tendency to call this substance, at least as it is present in Hayy, the “vital spirit,” even though the same substance is apparently present in non-living things as well.

1. Ibn Tufayl seems to develop an extended Cosmological-style Argument from 128/75 to 133/86. Hayy is baffled by the question whether the universe is temporally finite or not (131/82) but eventually recognizes that either way, it is necessary for there to be a non-corporeal, good, intelligent first mover of the entire universe (131/83–133/85). At 134/88–90 he develops a Teleological-style Argument for God’s wisdom, perfection, goodness, and mercy based upon the wonders of the Maker’s craftsmanship.
2. Indeed, it occupies at least 15 years of Hayy’s life, from age 35–50.

for the bodies of the plants and other animals on his tropical island (146/114–116). He becomes quite proficient in this sort of lifestyle. Then, rather abruptly, he discards it. It turns out, he realizes, that caring for himself and other living beings at all is merely a hindrance to the unfettered contemplation of God. He begins instead to sit in his cave, blocking out all sense-experiences, focusing just on God, sometimes for days. He tries to die to himself.

And then, Ibn Tufayl tells us: "At last it came. From memory and mind all disappeared ... All that remained was the One, the True Being, Whose existence is eternal, who uttered words identical with himself: 'Whose is the Kingdom on this day? God's alone, One and Triumphant!'" (149/120, quoting Qur'an 40:16). Hayy has reached ecstasy. Ibn Tufayl goes on to describe Hayy's ecstatic vision for several pages. He "sees," first of all, that he has attained identity with God Himself, and indeed with all disembodied beings who know Him. This immediately tempts Hayy to suppose that the multitude of these beings has been obliterated, but God "mercifully" guides him back to the truth: such questions about "unity" or "multiplicity" stem only from "some shadows of the physical or taint of sensory things [that] still lurked within him" (150/124). Such quantitative predicates do not apply to the immaterial. It may be that Ibn Tufayl senses this isn't an entirely satisfactory thing to say. He reiterates the extreme difficulty of the task he is attempting. He quotes the hadith about witnessing "what no eye has seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive."¹ He also refers to Aristotle's famous saying about bats in the daytime (*Metaphysics* 2.1.993b10). He also falls back on imagery. Hayy sees a "being corresponding to the highest sphere" along with various other immaterial spheres of descending goodness, beauty, joy, and bliss. Below the sphere of the moon, he sees a being with seventy thousand faces praising God, one of which he recognizes as his own. He sees less fortunate beings too, with their backs turned to God, tarnished, dimmed, and unravelling. The last sight is so terrible as to jar him out of his vision. For while Hayy has succeeded in "dying to himself" in some metaphorical sense, he isn't actually dead. He's still alive, returning as often as he can to blissful contemplation, longing that God would "ease him altogether of his body" (155/135).

It is at this point that Absal arrives from a neighboring island whose inhabitants are "followers of a certain true religion, based on the teachings of a certain ancient prophet" (156/136). Absal comes seeking the solitude that the religious Law proposes as a means to salvation and

1. Attested in multiple collections of hadiths (Sahih Muslim, Sahih Bukhari, etc.) as related by Abu Hurayrah, who says the Prophet recited Qur'an 32:17: "No soul knows what comfort is laid up for them secretly, as a recompense for that they were doing." The hadith bears a noteworthy similarity to 1 Corinthians 2:9, which in turn quotes a scripture which may be a free translation of Isaiah 64:4.

spiritual triumph. What he finds, once he teaches Hayy how to talk, is someone who has seen directly precisely those matters the traditions of his religion speak about. Hayy, in turn, recognizes in the religious traditions of Absal's people a "faithful picture" of "what he had seen for himself from his supernal vantage point" (161/145). Hayy even decides to undertake observance of the prayer-life, poor tax, fasting, and pilgrimage that Absal describes as obligatory acts of worship. He is, nevertheless, confused as to why the prophet of Absal's faith would have relied so heavily on symbolism, allowed the amassing of property, indulging in pastimes, or eating of more than is strictly necessary for survival. It takes a failed attempt at preaching his own unadulterated approach to the Necessarily Existent to Absal's countrymen for Hayy to realize that not all humans are as gifted as he himself is: "He saw that most men are no better than unreasoning animals, and realized that all wisdom and guidance ... was contained already in the words of the prophets and religious traditions" (164/153). Hayy returns to his own island, with Absal in tow, and the two return to the pursuit of ecstasy. Together, they "served God on the island until man's certain fate overtook them" (165/155).

Now there are many mysterious aspects of the account I just related. Here are four:

(a) Regarding Hayy's duties to maintain his own body in existence, we might pose a question like Cebes' to Socrates in the *Phaedo* (53d): if having a body is such a burden to Hayy's contemplation of God, why doesn't he just kill himself, or allow his body to perish?

(b) What becomes of Hayy's duties to imitate the heavenly bodies by caring for his own physical appearance and for other living things on his island? Hayy's concern for these matters drops off rather abruptly, and doesn't appear to resume even when he returns to his island with Absal.

(c) How is Hayy's death of self and union with God compatible, ontologically speaking, with his fulfillment? If he exists no more, then it is hard to see how he can be fulfilled.¹

(d) Even though Ibn Tufayl urges us repeatedly not to bring this question up, why must he rely on such resolutely bodily imagery to relate Hayy's beatific vision? Why all the talk of zooming around, observing spheres and faces?

I would suggest that all four of the questions are closely related to the beatitude paradox I outlined above. Consider Ibn Tufayl *appears*, at least, to subscribe to each of the propositions I mentioned earlier. Describing Hayy's ecstatic vision, he writes that

1. Sami S. Hawi calls this problem "the Pantheistic Paradox" in his study of Hayy (Hawi 1974, 217).

His true self was the Truth. What he had once supposed to be himself, as distinct from the Truth, was really nothing in itself, but was in reality in no way distinct from the Truth. ... [T]he Truth, glorified and exalted be He, was not in any sense plural and His self-knowledge was himself. ... [W]hoever gains consciousness of His essence wins that essence itself. Hayy had attained his identity. That identity could be reached only by Himself; indeed this Self-awareness was His identity. If so, then Hayy must be identical with Him, and so must every disembodied being that knows Him. (150/123)

Here we see Ibn Tufayl confirming both that Hayy's fulfillment consists in union with God, as per (1) above, and that this union is achieved through a conscious act of knowledge or awareness and requires disembodiment as per (2) above. On the other hand, the disembodied aspect of Hayy's ecstatic state is somewhat diminished by what I mentioned at (d) above—namely, the bodily imagery Ibn Tufayl uses to describe Hayy's vision. In general, it is difficult to reconcile Hayy's ecstatic disembodiment with the fact that he appears to remain embodied, in his cave, while having his vision, or with his previous conviction that he is, indeed, an "ideally balanced animal, kindred spirit of the celestial bodies" (141/104). It is, after all, the fact that he is a living body, akin to the celestial bodies, that gives rise to various bodily duties for Hayy, as per (3) above. For instance, Hayy must feed himself rather than allowing himself to die, and he must care positively for his body, along with those of other living things. But the question, as at (a) and (b) above, is why, considering that Hayy's true self isn't embodied at all. It seems as though Ibn Tufayl wants Hayy's ecstatic vision to transform him into an entirely different sort of thing than he was previously. Not just a caterpillar-into-butterfly transformation either, but an "ideally balanced animal"-into-Necessarily Existent transformation. My question at (c) above, however, is whether this sort of transformation is a real ontological possibility.

Ibn Tufayl and Thomas Aquinas's Solution(s) to the Beatitude Paradox

So much for Ibn Tufayl's account of Hayy's life and times, together with some of the difficulties it presents the interpreter. Let me turn now to a couple of routes by which Ibn Tufayl might resolve the problems I have raised. The second of them, I'll argue, is quite similar to the strategy Thomas Aquinas employed against the Beatitude Paradox. The first, however, I call "the mystical solution": acknowledging that (1)–(3) are jointly true, and that this raises a perplexing puzzle, but then claiming that we shouldn't expect any theoretical solution to the puzzle given certain limitations inherent in our present state of being.

Ibn Tufayl declares before beginning to relate Hayy's saga that he intends to bring his reader along the paths he has travelled, and let the reader swim in seas he has crossed, that the reader might "undergo the

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same experience and see with the eyes of [the] soul all that [he himself has] seen” (103/19). This implies, I take it, that it requires a special sort of experience, acquired after a period of training, to apprehend ecstasy. In a similar vein, before describing Hayy’s ecstatic vision, Ibn Tufayl warns,

Now do not set your heart on a description of what has never been represented in the human heart. For many things that are articulate in the heart cannot be described. ... The ambition to put this into words is reaching for the impossible—like wanting to taste colors, expecting black as such to taste either sweet or sour. (149/121–22)

Again, it appears that Ibn Tufayl thinks the state of beatitude cannot be captured in language, and can only be accessed through a special faculty called (metaphorically) “the heart.” Statements like this might reasonably be taken to suggest that Ibn Tufayl never intends to deliver his considered theoretical stand on the matters he discusses. Instead, we might suppose, he intends to lead us along to the point where we, through some higher faculty than we currently possess or than language can convey, would be able to see clearly the solution to the puzzles I just set forth.

Calling this the “mystical solution” to the Beatitude Paradox isn’t, perhaps, quite right, since the strategy, as I see it, is essentially to acknowledge the impossibility of resolving the paradox. One might compare it profitably, I think, to the Colin McGinn’s “mysterian” position in the philosophy of mind.¹ Just as McGinn believes there is a good reason why we’ll never be able to solve the hard problem of consciousness, Ibn Tufayl may believe there’s a good reason why we cannot understand how Beatitude could involve both bodily duties and disembodied union with God. Ibn Tufayl appears to insist that many distinct individual humans, such as Hayy and Absal, are able simultaneously to become one with God. He acknowledges that this might appear to violate the “axiom of reason that a thing must be either one or many” (151/125). And he says no one can “know or fully understand” how his description could be so without “actually reaching [the divine world] and seeing for himself” (151/126). Perhaps, similarly, it might *appear* contradictory to say that human fulfillment involves both disembodiment and the fulfillment of bodily duties, but that this is merely owing to our limited present capacities for understanding such matters. Much has been written about Ibn Tufayl’s relationship to Sufi mysticism.² It may be that he indeed endorses the “mystical solution” to the Beatitude Paradox.

I tend, however, to suspect Ibn Tufayl favors a different solution. I suspect he resolves the paradox simply by dropping (3)—that is, the

1. See McGinn (1989).

2. See, for example, Cornell (1996) and Radtke (1996).

claim that happiness involves fulfilling bodily duties. When Hayy sees himself as "an ideally balanced animal," we might say, he is merely reflecting on the fact that he is currently conjoined to a body. After all, Hayy has already realized by this point that his "true self" is "non-corporeal and not qualifiable by any physical predicate" (136/92). From this interpretative standpoint, we might respond to (a)–(d) as follows:

(a) Hayy cannot simply kill himself because, as he recognizes, "[his] body had not been created for him idly. It had not been linked with him for nothing" (142/106). Indeed, it was linked with him for the purpose of training his true self to the point that it is able to apprehend God.

(b) Hayy's training period ends, however, when he achieves his ecstatic union, and henceforth he no longer has need for imitating the celestial bodies.

(c) Hayy's union with God isn't a matter of ontological identity, but rather of perfecting apprehending God's nature.

(d) The bodily descriptions are merely poetic contrivances. Hayy is accessing God with his mind, not his body, and after he and Absal have died, they will be perfectly united with God in a disembodied way.

Call this the "intellectualist solution" to the Beatitude Paradox. As an interpretation of *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, it may not be perfectly satisfying. Regarding (c) in particular, there are certain passages that seem rather insistent on Hayy's union with God being ontological, rather than merely intellectual or spiritual. On the other hand, as a philosophical position, it is strong enough to have been adopted, not just by Ibn Tufayl, but by Thomas Aquinas as well.

I can provide here only a thumbnail sketch of Aquinas's overall position on beatitude. Salient for our purposes are his claims that "final and perfect happiness can consist in nothing else than the vision of the Divine Essence," and that to see the divine essence, God himself must be "conjoined to our intellect as its form, so that it is both what is understood and that by which the understanding takes place" (Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* [ST] 1a2ae.3.8; *Scriptum super Sententiis* [In Sent.] 4.49.2.1).¹ Ordinarily, Aquinas thinks, we understand objects by means of a concept (or *species*, to use the Latin term) ontologically distinct from whatever it is that we are understanding.² In the case of the beatific vision, however, God himself becomes the concept whereby we are able to see his essence. Interestingly, Aquinas attributes the view he adopts here to Ibn Tufayl's philosophical successor at the Almohad Sultan Abu

1. All translations of Aquinas's works are my own, from the editions available online at www.corpusthomicum.org.

2. See ST 1a.85.2 for the details of Aquinas's view.

Ya'qub Yusuf's court: Ibn Rushd. Elsewhere Aquinas stands vehemently opposed to Ibn Rushd's views concerning, for instance, the temporal finitude of the created world or the unicity of the human intellect. Here, however, he adopts precisely Ibn Rushd's view concerning the relationship between the unified, separate intellect and individual human thinkers to describe how we are able to see God.¹ A further highly significant claim Aquinas makes concerning the beatific vision is what Christina Van Dyke has called "the all-sufficiency thesis"—namely, the view that seeing God satisfies us such that any and all of our natural desires are perfectly fulfilled, and any change from this state would represent a diminution in our happiness (Dyke 2015). As a by-product of the all-sufficiency thesis, Aquinas doesn't think we'll have any need for food or sex our beatified state, even though, as a Christian, he is committed to our regaining bodies at the day of resurrection.² We'll *have* bodies, to be sure. And indeed, following medieval tradition, Aquinas argues that resurrected bodies will possess marvelous qualities: agility, brightness, impassibility, and subtlety.³ Given the all-sufficiency thesis, however, our bodies won't be useful to us. We won't need bodily senses to see God or to provide for any of our needs, since beyond the vision of God, we'll have no needs. As Van Dyke aptly puts it, on this picture of beatitude, our bodies become "nothing more than glorious hood ornaments" (Dyke 2015, 290). As is the case with Ibn Tufayl, Aquinas's solution to the Beatitude Paradox is intellectualist. Ultimate human happiness will have nothing to do with bodily duties, or any sort of bodily activity at all.

Is this a problem? Perhaps not. Perhaps whatever repugnance we might feel towards the notion of a purely intellectual or spiritual characterization of beatitude is a product of our limited perspective. In the story with which I began, I hated going to church as a child, but don't mind it so much any more.

Still, by way of conclusion, let me briefly suggest what I take to be a better solution to the beatitude paradox than the intellectualist route favored by Ibn Tufayl and Aquinas alike. It stems, in fact, from a comment Aquinas makes late in his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, where the question is, given the "agility" of resurrected bodies, will resurrected human beings actually move around? (In Sent. 4.44.2.3 qc. 2) Aquinas lists various reasons one might have for supposing the answer to be no. For instance, every motion is undertaken on account of some need, but given the all-sufficiency thesis, resurrected humans will no longer have any needs. Interestingly,

1. See, for more on this interesting and somewhat ironic case of borrowing, Taylor (2012).

2. Cf. Aquinas (Summa contra gentiles [SCG], 4.83) for the claim about food and sex.

3. See SCG 4.86 and In Sent 4.49.4.5 qc. 3.

Aquinas says, they will move around nevertheless. They will do so

as they please, so that by actually exercising what is in their power, they may demonstrate the excellence of the divine wisdom, and that furthermore their vision may be refreshed by the beauty of the variety of creatures, in which God's wisdom will shine forth with great evidence. For sense can only perceive that which is present, although glorified bodies can perceive from a greater distance than non-glorified bodies. And yet movement will in no way diminish their happiness which consists in seeing God, for He will be everywhere present to them. (In Sent. 4.44.2.3 qc. 2)

This is an interesting account indeed. Aquinas acknowledges still that happiness consists in an intellectual vision of God. Yet he argues that resurrected humans will nonetheless engage in certain bodily activities for at least two reasons: to demonstrate the excellence of God's wisdom, and, frankly, because it's enjoyable to do so: it "refreshes their vision." The picture we get here is of resurrected humans beings zooming around a renewed creation employing their gifts of agility to investigate the beauty of all the things God has made. Will it be a *duty* to perform this sort of bodily activity? Perhaps not. It will be a "refreshing" experience, Thomas thinks. Yet for monotheists who believe in a resurrection state, such as Aquinas, this last approach to the Beatitude Paradox that I have sketched comes much closer to salvaging claim (3) than the Intellectualist Solution. Ibn Tufayl, for his part, seems somewhat ambivalent about the resurrection. He criticizes al-Ghazali for anathematizing the philosophers, on the one hand, for their denial of the resurrection of the flesh, but praising the Sufi masters, on the other hand, to whom he likewise attributes this view. But this is simply a charge of inconsistency in al-Ghazali's thinking. Ibn Tufayl doesn't make clear where he stands on the issue. What should be clear, I think, is that *if* he endorses the resurrection of the flesh, a more satisfying solution to the Beatitude Paradox may be available to him than the one he appears in fact to endorse.

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From Temporality to Eternity: Three Philosophical Approaches

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This article studies the problem of eternal life from a philosophical perspective. It focuses on the approaches of Bergson, Husserl, and Heidegger from contemporary philosophy, and shows that using these three philosophical approaches can better explain certain aspects of revealed theology, such as resurrection of flesh, eternity in a transcendent dimension, and eternal life as the angels in heaven. In this way, a point of interaction between philosophy and theology is highlighted.

Keywords: eternal life, contemporary philosophy, Bergson, Husserl, Heidegger, revealed theology.

Introduction

Questions about eternal life are *rational*, belonging to those questions that, as Kant says, human reason “cannot decline, as they are presented by its own nature, but which it cannot answer, as they transcend every faculty of the mind” (Kant 2000, 3). So, although thinking of eternal life can appear worthless because it transcends every power of reason, we cannot avoid thinking of it (Findlay 1978). These rational questions can be considered in two different ways that we need to distinguish.² We can consider the pure philosophical possibility of eternity (for example, as in Parmenides, Spinoza, Nietzsche, etc.); otherwise, we can consider the eternity in a theological way. According to revealed theology doctrine (Hebraism, Christianity, and Islam), God is transcendent and eternal life is also transcendent. Therefore, when we think of eternity within these theologies, we have to consider it as different from immanent temporality. Using an immanent approach, we could think through temporality without the problem of substantial differences from it: we can think of *eternity as eternal time*. A

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2. About this difference see Padgett (1992), Helm (1988), and Craig (2001).

transcendent approach to the question of eternity, instead, leads to the great problem of thinking of eternity as *different* from temporality, because it is investigated *through the difference between God and the world*. So we have a great difficulty: eternal life is different from temporal life, but temporal life is the only point of view from which we can think of eternal life (Harris 1987).

We have to begin from temporality, and so we have to decide *what definition* of temporality can be useful when thinking about eternity. We could consider many definitions of temporality that have been provided throughout the course of philosophy, from Plato to Heidegger. Many of these have been used by medieval philosophers when considering revealed theology, both in Hebrew and in Christian and Muslim contexts (Porro 2001).¹ Modern philosophy takes two general approaches to temporality, one idealistic (Hobbes, Leibniz, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, Kant) and the other realistic (Descartes, Galilei, Newton) (Melamed, forthcoming). Both are strongly linked to mechanical physics, and therefore contain a notion of time overcome and criticised by contemporary thought. When considering contemporary approaches to questions of temporality, it can be more useful to open new possibilities to think of eternal life. I propose three important philosophical approaches from contemporary philosophy: those of Bergson, Husserl, and Heidegger. Through these philosophies of time we may think of the transcendence of eternal life in terms of three possibilities.

Temporality as a Relationship between Memory and Matter

Bergson made one of the earlier attempts to define philosophy's irreducibility regarding positive sciences. Against the positivistic idea that science will explain everything progressively, and that philosophy's destiny is to become a philosophy of science, Bergson investigated the fields in which our experience cannot be described by scientific methods. From these investigations, he found an irreducible difference between the scientific approach and inner life experience, especially regarding the consideration of temporality. In his essays *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (1888) and *Matter and Memory* (1896), Bergson showed that there are two irreducible meanings of time, one by science and the other by life. The sciences give us a notion of time as objective, measurable, and, therefore, quantitative: every moment is a precise quantity of time (for example, one second or one minute), and this quantity is infinitely repeatable. This is the temporality we know through the clock and which we consider in scientific experiments. And yet, if we analyze this quantitative consideration of time, we understand that it is a *spatial consideration* of temporality. Every moment on the clock is a portion

1. About contemporary notions of time applied in theological contexts, see Ramige (1935).

of space. It is not time *tout court*; indeed, we can represent it as a line formed by points: every point is equal and juxtaposed with others.

If we consider our inner experience of time, however, we discover that

No two moments are identical in a conscious being. Take for example the simplest feeling, suppose it to be constant, absorb the whole personality in it: the consciousness which will accompany this feeling will not be able to remain identical with itself for two consecutive moments, since the following moment always contains, over and above the preceding one, the memory the latter has left it. A consciousness which had two identical moments would be a consciousness without memory. (Bergson 2007, 187)

I can make the same thing in two different moments, but the consciousness of those moments cannot be identical, because the latter is lived through the past experience of the former. I am not the same in two different moments, because my lived experience lasts in me; it is present in my memory. Every new moment of life adds new content to my memory. Therefore, it is impossible to have the same experience in two different moments; each moment of life is unique and unrepeatable.

Furthermore, two moments are different even if they are quantitatively identical; indeed, I may perceive one minute as an hour or as a second, according to the quality of my living. If I live that minute bored, it appears to me an hour; if I live it while happy, it may seem to last only a second. The moment's quality distinguishes it from the others.

Lastly, in the scientific consideration of time, the latter moment substitutes the former, so there is a juxtaposition of moments. In life's temporality, however, every moment adds itself to the others, so we can represent time as a ball of wool that grows constantly. The living time is the *duration* of the moments, one in the others. Each moment is present in the others; there is no exteriority between them, but a constant compenetration. The "pure duration excludes all idea of juxtaposition, reciprocal exteriority and extension" (Bergson 2007, 188). Because every moment is unique and adds itself to the whole of life, we cannot represent our time as a line. The time we live is irreducibly different from the time considered by science.

There are two possible conceptions of time, the one free from all alloy, the other surreptitiously bringing in the idea of space. Pure duration is the form which the succession of our conscious states assumes when our ego lets itself *live*, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former states. (Bergson 2001, 114)

The question of time is linked to the status of matter and memory. We cannot explain all the arguments about this relationship, but it is sufficient to remember that, according to Bergson, matter is a set of

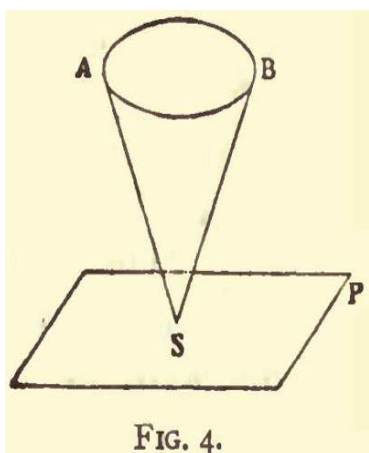
images (“images,” because material things are different from consciousness but are always perceived by consciousness). These moving images are ever-changing. All material realities change and leave their precedent status; therefore, they are always an “actual state.” If the matter is, time by time, an actual disposition, it cannot be its past. A piece of iron or wood cannot replace its past; it is just what it is. The matter cannot remember. But our brain is a kind of matter; therefore, if memory is not present in the matter, the brain cannot explain the possibility to remember. The brain, because it is a matter, is always an *actual disposition*. The brain disposes itself according to the actual moment, to think the actual events or actual images. By the brain, we can explain thoughts about actual (or recently present) objects. Where did it come from memory? My far memories are not present in the actual disposition of my brain, but I can represent them when I need to. If the matter can explain just the present thoughts, *the memory is immaterial*. The memory is a reality that *does not depend on the matter*, but at once *can change the matter’s disposition*. When we remember, it is not the brain that elaborates the memory, but it is the memory that changes the brain’s disposition. How could the brain produce the memories of whether the memories exist even when we do not remember? Our memories always exist, because they are always available. In each moment of our life we can remember, depending on the utility of memories in the actual moment.

But how can the past, which, by hypothesis, has ceased to be, preserve itself? Have we not here a real contradiction?—We reply that the question is just whether the past has ceased to exist or whether it has simply ceased to be useful. You define the present in an arbitrary manner as *that which is*, whereas the present is simply *what is being made*. (Bergson 2004, 193)

We carry with us our memory, a growing immaterial spirit that we cannot wholly, but only partially consider, every time. Bergson’s scheme representing the relationship between memory and matter is as follows:

The cone is the spirit, the plane is the matter. Their tangent point is the actual moment, in which we put only a little content of the memory that we possess.

We can use our spirit, or our inner life, only partially in the present time.



Every moment of life is made by this relationship between matter and memory: the past is the whole of the situations we have experienced; the present is the actual relationship between thought and matter, in which we choose our actions and memories; and the future is the prevision of future situations, or future dispositions of matter. The present, or the actual relationship between matter and memory, is the condition in which to choose memories and think of the future. We use our immaterial thoughts only through the matter.

Now, as we have shown, pure perception, which is the lowest degree of mind, – mind without memory – is really part of matter, as we understand matter. We may go further: memory does not intervene as a function of which matter has no presentiment and which it does not imitate in its own way. If matter does not remember the past, it is because it repeats the past unceasingly, because, subject to necessity, it unfolds a series of moments of which each is the equivalent of the preceding moment and may be deduced from it: thus its past is truly given in its present. But a being which evolves more or less freely creates something new every moment: in vain, then, should we seek to read its past in its present unless its past were deposited within it in the form of memory. Thus, to use again a metaphor which has more than once appeared in this book, it is necessary, and for similar reasons, that the past should be acted by matter, imagined by mind. (Bergson 2004, 273)

We can use this theory to reflect on the possibility of eternal life. We have to remove the limits of time according to this consideration. Time's limits concern the impossibility of thinking of all moments in our memory that represent all the contents of our spirit. We are constrained to think only of the contents we need in an actual moment. We may think of transcendence in two ways: (1) eliminating one element of immanent reality, that is, *eliminating the matter* to consider just the life as spirit, (2) or *eliminating the difference* between matter and memory, trying to think of them as being the same thing, for example a *spiritual matter*.

(1) By eliminating the matter, we can consider eternal life as *pure memory*. If there is only the memory, our thoughts are not conditioned by the actual disposition of matter. Because each disposition of matter requires a particular content and constrains our spirit not to consider all its other contents, we can represent the whole of our life's experiences out of the matter. Each thought could contain within itself all the memories of our life. Each truth of our memory *could contain every*

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truth. The absence of temporality could be the absence of juxtaposition among thoughts of our life, the possibility of grasping in each memory the truth of all the other memories. All the contents of the spirit would be given in each spirit's act. Out of temporality's limits the compenetration of moments becomes total: each moment is present in the others, all the moments are present in the same moment. Eternal life could be a purely spiritual life, in which each act of our spirit understands the whole of truth through a memory.

(2) By eliminating the difference between matter and memory, we can consider eternal life as a *spiritual matter*. To imagine a spiritual matter, we have to consider together the spirit's possibilities and the matter's possibilities: the spirit can represent the truth and can understand the reality, but it cannot produce the reality. The reality of representation is given through the matter; the spirit cannot give the reality by itself. It has to receive the reality. The matter can instil a representation of truth into the spirit. If the matter and spirit become the same thing, on the one hand, the spirit could materialise the reality through the representation; on the other hand, the matter may not be limited by juxtaposition and exclusion; it could be "duration," like the memory. Each disposition of the matter may not hide other possible dispositions, but they could appear in exactly the same way that each content of memory is compenetrated by all other contents. For example, in each disposition of our body, we could see all the other dispositions of our body, and all the history of our body by a particular disposition. Of course, we do not have to intend this "materialisation" as "creation" of reality, because only God can create the reality. The materialisable reality is the reality created only by God. Overcoming the limits of temporality does not mean overcoming the limits of God's creation.

Starting from Bergson's philosophy of temporality, we can therefore define two possibilities to think of eternal life in a transcendent way: as pure memory that understands the whole of knowledge in each content; or as spiritual matter that can replace the matter's dispositions by its representation, considering each disposition as capable of showing all created dispositions. By the former, we could think of the possibility of the *life of the soul* (without its body); by the latter, we could think of the *resurrection of flesh*.

Temporality as an Inner Flow of Consciousness

In 1905, Husserl delivered his lectures on the phenomenology of the inner consciousness of time. He began these lectures by recalling those of his master Franz Brentano, who described the consciousness of time as the result of the passage from impression (present) to imagination (past or future). According to Brentano, "impression" is produced by actual perception, but its content does not disappear with successive perceptions, because it becomes an image that remains temporally. This

modification *from* perception *to* image allows the object to be held in the consciousness; when we receive a successive impression of the same object, we associate the object's new impression and its precedent image. In this way, according to Brentano, we perceive the object's *duration*. The duration is constituted by this association between perceptions and imaginations. According to Husserl, this theory of "original association" is positive, because it grasps a phenomenological aspect: we have perception and imagination, present and not present, as a *unitary act of consciousness*. This theory, however, is problematic because it does not explain how we distinguish the present impression from a past image, since they are simultaneous in consciousness.

From a phenomenological point of view, we have to describe how we constitute the perception of time. Husserl points out that it is not just a perception of *temporal objects*, but also a *temporal perception*.

It is certainly evident that the perception of a temporal object itself has temporality, that the perception of duration itself presupposes the duration of perception, that the perception of any temporal form itself has its temporal form. (Husserl 1991, §7, p. 24)

To describe how we perceive the temporality, Husserl uses melody as an example. When we hear a melody, we perceive a sequence of tones as a unique sound that lasts: "'Throughout' this whole flow of consciousness, one and the same tone is intended as enduring" (Husserl 1991, §8, p. 26).

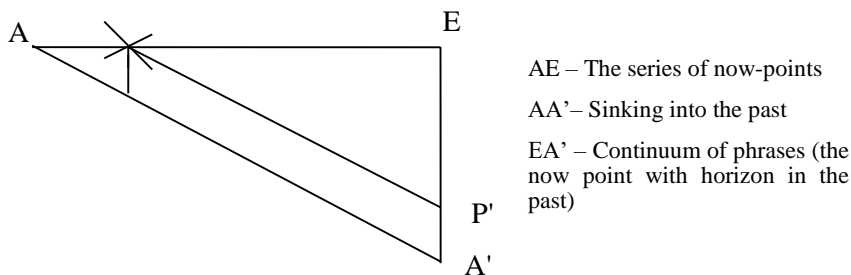
We perceive the present not as an atomic impression (as Brentano argues), but as a continuity of tones, as an extension. Because a new tone always enters into this continuity and other tones deep behind it, our present perception is a sequence in becoming. A new element enters in the "now," while others give way. Each new tone is clearer than the others that progressively vanish, but we cannot separate each tone from its predecessors.

We know that the running-off phenomenon is a continuity of constant changes. This continuity forms an inseparable unity, inseparable into extended sections that could exist by themselves and inseparable into phases that could exist by themselves, into points of the continuity. The parts that we single out by abstraction can exist only in the whole running-off; and this is equally true of the phases, the points that belong to the running-off continuity. (Husserl 1991, §10, p. 29)

To perceive this continuity, our consciousness has to maintain, or retain, each tone heard; otherwise, we perceive only a single tone. This act is called "retention," and goes with "original impression." So we perceive at once two continuities, one of impressions and one of retentions, in which we retain the tone in the same order: impressions are perceived as temporal sequences, thanks to retentions. The

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difference between impressions and retentions is that the sequence of retentions is more extended than that of impressions (because retentions last longer in the consciousness), but they are related and converge in the “now.” Husserl explains this double sequence through the following scheme:



Our intentions on impressions go with retentions, but also with waiting for a new impression. This openness is always present in our intention, and also when we focus our attention on a pure memory, far from an actual perception. This constant intention of openness, or “waiting for,” is called “protention” by Husserl. Therefore, our perception is temporal, because our consciousness is structurally temporal. Duration appears in our consciousness because we perceive like a flow, or like a field, and not like a point. This flow, or field, is finite and its extension is constant. In every perception we have a main intention, and around it we have a series of modifications, towards the past (retentions) and towards the future (protentions). Usually, we focus on impression, but main intention can be also a retention, or a protention, or a “secondary memory” (further from now). Independently from our aim of intention, our acts of apprehension implicate this flow, this extension between past and future. The flow appears through objects of apprehension, but it cannot be an object of apprehension. Husserl defines this flow as “absolute subjectivity”:

We can say nothing other than the following: this flow is something we speak of *in conformity with what is constituted*, but it is not “something in objective time.” It is *absolute subjectivity* and has the absolute properties of something to be designated metaphorically as “flow”; of something that originates in a point of actuality, in a primal source-point, “the now,” and so on. (Husserl 1991, §36, p. 79)¹

Now, we can try to define what could be eternal life starting with Husserl’s phenomenology of inner consciousness of time. In a passage of integrative texts of his lectures, there is a brief passage where Husserl

1. About this question, see Sandowsky (2006).

speaks about divine consciousness, as that *infinite consciousness* that represents temporal objects without temporality.

Perception is something universal in contrast to perception of the now, perception of the immediate past, and perception of the future. The now-perceptions belonging to different stages cannot be united into a collective now-perception, but in relation to each now-group there is a unity of memorial and expectational groups in which a different now-stage corresponds to each group. Or rather each group *is* a different now-stage. For *now* is something relative. It is relative to stages.

God's infinite consciousness embraces all time "at once". This infinite consciousness is nontemporal.

To each time-point corresponds the group belonging to the now of that time-point. These groups are ordered – ordered by the continuous mode of apperception. For him <for God> there is no past, present and future. But <even> for him there is a past, present and future relative to each point. Time is the form of the infinite consciousness, as infinite adequate perceptual series. From the position of a determinate now, a – n - b, a is past; in relation to a, n is future, just as b is.

The divine consciousness is the ideal correlate of objective time and of objective world and world evolution. (Husserl 1991, §15, p. 180)

In finite consciousness, the "now" is given through a series of adumbrations; in divine consciousness, each "now" is clearly perceived in its "relativity"; that is, its past and future moments without adumbrations, or progressive nebulosity. Divine consciousness is not a flow, because retentions, impressions, and protensions are all perceived in the same way. Husserl does not provide other clarifications about divine consciousness, but we can try to explain his ideas by an example. When we read a text, we can perceive only a phrase (sequence) at a time; continuing reading, we have no additional awareness of past phrases, and we are not aware of the successive phrases. We are good at retaining and foreseeing words in the current phrase, because our consciousness can perceive a finite flow of words. In a divine consciousness, however, it is possible to read a phrase and to be aware of the whole past and the whole future of the text. Each object is perceived without adumbration: the past of the object clearly appears, as does its present and its future. Divine consciousness does not need to follow the flow of perception to grasp the temporal object. It does not understand the object through adumbrations. Indeed, Husserl says that the temporality of divine consciousness is the ideal correlate of objective temporality.

In this digression, Husserl gives us an important indication of how to think of consciousness without temporality: he thinks of divine, or infinite consciousness. Husserl does not write about a finite consciousness in eternal life, but we can deduce this through his

writings about divine consciousness. A finite consciousness in eternal life can perceive all temporality of the objects without adumbrations, so it can understand all the temporal reality in the same moment. The difference between divine and human consciousness is not about the knowledge of reality, because both can understand all reality by eternity. But we can distinguish two kinds of knowledge, recalling the Aquinas' distinction between divine intellect and finite intellect: divine intellect is a practical one, because when it knows the reality, it is not passive but active; it creates what it knows. However, when finite intellect understands reality, it receives the reality. The finite mind is measured by reality; reality is measured by the divine mind.

Note, however, that a thing is referred differently to the practical intellect than it is to the speculative intellect. Since the practical intellect causes things, it is a measure of what it causes. But, since the speculative intellect is receptive in regard to things, it is, in a certain sense, moved by things and consequently measured by them. It is clear, therefore, that, as is said in the *Metaphysics*, natural things from which our intellect gets its scientific knowledge measure our intellect. (Aquinas 2008, 11 [*De Veritate*, q.1, a. 2])

Following this reasoning, we can deduce a way of thinking of finite consciousness in eternal life. We can define it as free from the flow of temporality, and therefore capable of perceiving objects without adumbrations. Without the inner temporality of a flow of consciousness, we could understand all the past and all the future by the now. But this consideration implicates a temporality of reality, because Husserl's phenomenology does not provide an ontology of reality out of consciousness. Furthermore, when Husserl speaks about divine consciousness, he considers only the perception to be different, but not the reality. Because here we find a phenomenology of consciousness without an ontology of time, Husserl's analysis is useful when considering the relationship of eternal life with this world; for example, the eternal life of a pure soul or of an angel. This philosophy is useful when thinking of the perception of temporality by an eternal consciousness.

Temporality as Potentiality-for-Being.

In Heidegger, we find an ontology of temporality in his analytics of existence and in his attempt to overcome the metaphysics. The Heideggerian definition of temporality is exposed in his opus magnum, *Being and Time* (1927), in which he attempts to understand the sense of Being through a phenomenology of existence. Western philosophy, Heidegger argues, has forgotten the question of Being, which is considered the most universal concept, or an indefinable concept, or an evident one. Nevertheless, thinking that Being is a universal, or an indefinable or a self-evident concept means that we do not understand what Being is. In this misunderstanding, western philosophy had

thought of Being as “Present” (Heidegger 2008, §7) or “presence-at-hand,” forgetting the ontological difference between Being and beings. To free philosophy from old categories linked with a notion of Being as “presence-at-hand,” Heidegger chose to call human existence *Dasein*. Through a phenomenology of *Dasein*, Heidegger tried to define a “fundamental ontology”:

We are ourselves the entities to be analyzed. The Being of any such entity is in each case mine. These entities, in their Being, comport themselves towards their Being. As entities with such Being, they are delivered over to their own Being. Being is that which is an issue for every such entity. (§9)

Heidegger’s phenomenology describes *Dasein* as being (*Seiende*) in a structural relationship with its Being (*Sein*). Since I always have to relate to my Being, in each moment I have to choose (or define) my existence. Therefore, my essence, or my definition, is not a given, but is always being defined by my existence (“priority of *existentia* over *essentia*” [Heidegger 2008, §9]). And, because this relationship with my being is constitutive, my existence is in each case mine (*Jemeinigkeit*).

Therefore, my existence is ever to define, and it is at most a possibility rather than an actuality (“Higher than actuality stands possibility” [Heidegger 2008, §7]). This structural relationship with my Being makes my existence a potentiality-for-Being: until I exist, I will not have a complete definition of myself; I cannot be a whole.

The ‘ahead-of-itself’, as an item in the structure of care, tells us unambiguously that in *Dasein* there is always something still outstanding, which, as a potentiality-for-Being for *Dasein* itself, has not yet become ‘actual’. It is essential to the basic constitution of *Dasein* that there is *constantly something still to be settled*. (Heidegger 2008, §46)

This “impossibility of Being-a-whole” can be overcome only by my death, which is my “own most possibility.”

Here, we cannot follow all the analytic passages relating to *Dasein*; therefore, we go directly to the definition of temporality. According to Heidegger, *Dasein* is structurally a potentiality-for-Being; until I exist, I am open: “This ‘not-yet’ ‘belongs’ to *Dasein* as long as it is” (Heidegger 2008, §48).

This structural openness constitutes *Dasein*’s “care”: I am towards (“ahead-of-myself”) to possibilities of the world, and, in this transcendence, I take my Being-already-thrown-into-a-world, and I have to do with something. This structure can be interpreted as temporality: I am open to the future (towards my possibilities with the world) and, in this openness, I take my past (my Being-in-the world); in this relationship between future and past I presently exist with worldly objects.

Coming back to itself futurally, resoluteness brings itself into the Situation by making present. The character of “having been” arises from the future, and in such a way that the future which “has been” (or better, which “is the process of having been”) releases from itself the Present. This phenomenon has the unity of a future which makes present in the process of having been; we designate it as “temporality”. Only in so far as Dasein has the definite character of temporality is the authentic potentiality-for-Being-a-whole of anticipatory resoluteness, as we have described it, made possible for Dasein itself. *Temporality reveals itself as the meaning of authentic care.* (Heidegger 2008, §65)

Dasein’s temporality reveals that Being is intrinsically temporality. To think of eternal life in terms of Heidegger’s philosophy seems impossible: if Being is temporality, without temporality there is no Being. It seems impossible to imagine my existence without temporality; this is the difficulty when thinking of a transcendent situation. We have to imagine a Being without the limits of time.

If we observe temporality as Heidegger describes, we note that it is a particular interpretation of Being as possibility. This is an assumption of Heidegger’s ontology, and by this assumption he can say that *existentia* precedes *essentia* and that temporality is open by potentiality-for-Being. To think of Being without temporality, therefore, we have to think of Being as actuality, and to invert the relationship between *existentia* and *essentia*. This is to say that my structural impossibility of Being-a-whole has to be overcome. In other words, I have to think of my existence as a defined totality in which I cannot change what I am. My possibilities, in eternal life, are chosen for eternity. Therefore, the eternal life is without possibilities to change my *essentia*. We have to imagine a kind of life, and therefore a kind of freedom, notwithstanding this impossibility to change ourselves. To imagine this, we can recall some doctrines about angels (for example, the angelology by Isidore of Seville [Carpin 2004, 99-101]), spiritual creatures who do not change their choices. Each angel had decided forever his position regarding God. In an analogical way, we can think of our eternal life “like the angels in heaven” (Matthew 22, 30): everybody lives according to his or her definitive choices, regarding God and regarding the others. In this way, we could say that the concept of existence as belonging to ourselves (existence as “in each case mine”) cannot be supported. If I have chosen for eternity, I have given my existence to God or to the others, and it is no longer mine.

This could lead to some questions about freedom in eternal life, because if I cannot change my defined *essentia*, my freedom seems to be limited. But freedom without any possibilities could still be described as freedom of a sort, because although it is not possible to choose everything, it is still possible to choose what belongs to one’s own *essentia*. We have to imagine eternal life as a life in which we

cannot change our choices, and our future choices follow our essence for eternity. So we can admit a future in eternal life, but it is a *future without contingency*. In some way, eternal life implicates effects, but these effects in eternity are not contingent: they become necessary. In this way, we can think of Being as an actuality that implicates possibilities, and therefore as a kind of future. This could seem limited, but if we consider our eternal life in relationships with other eternal lives and with God's infinite actuality, we have to imagine infinite possibilities.

Conclusion

We have attempted to think of eternal life as over-temporality through three approaches of contemporary philosophy. We have shown that some aspects of revealed theology (resurrection of flesh, eternity in a transcendent dimension, eternal life as the angels in heaven) can be more thinkable through philosophy. In this way, we show a point of mutuality between philosophy and theology, and we hope that this modest paper can be food for thought in this direction.

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Ayn Rand's Egoism: Theory and Analysis

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Ayn Rand was a Russian-born American philosopher, novelist, and playwright, whose interpretation of ethical egoism is one of the most important interpretations of this theory. Rand is a proponent of intellectual egoism, and rationalism is a fundamental element in her ethical theory. This article attempts to review, analyze, and criticize her interpretation of ethical egoism. Additionally, an ethical theory known as ego-altruism will be introduced in opposition to Rand's theory. Ego-altruism proposes that the pivot of ethics is to maintain balance and equilibrium between the self and others.

Key words: ego-altruism, ethical egoism, Ayn Rand, ethics.

Introduction

Ethical egoism is one of the most important ethical theories in the field of normative ethics. According to this theory, the sole ethical criterion is self-interest; that is, it is man's ethical duty to maximize his own benefit in any given situation.

Different interpretations have been offered for ethical egoism. Ayn Rand believes that man should not sacrifice himself for others, and should not sacrifice others for himself either. According to this interpretation, the primary and natural goal of any living creature is to protect itself. The ethical value of each deed is also defined based on the same goal. Of all living creatures, ethics only applies to man, since he has the ability to choose among valuable and invaluable goals.

When looking for a criterion to determine whether a given action is ethical, it seems that the most prominent issue we face is ethical egoism. Since in many cases, it is a difficult and painstaking task to determine the boundaries between ethical egoism and ethical altruism, it is

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crucially important to study ethical egoism. Since Rand provides strong arguments in favor of ethical egoism and presents most of her philosophical viewpoints in the form of novels—a psychologically influential and attractive medium—it is truly essential to study her theory of egoism in the field of ethics.

This article primarily tries to examine the extent to which Rand's ethical egoism can be defended. There is no doubt that her theory has a number of strengths, but do these strengths overcome its weaknesses? And if ethical egoism is refuted, then what is an appropriate alternative to this theory? Rand shoots serious criticisms at ethical altruism, which need to be considered. It seems that even by refuting ethical egoism, it is not easy to prove ethical altruism. Therefore, if ethical egoism is rejected, a suitable alternative needs to be presented.

To provide answers for the above investigation, we will provide a brief review of Rand's ethical egoism before studying and criticizing her theory.

1. Rand's Biography and Works

Ayn Rand was born on February 2nd, 1905 in Russia and passed away on March 6th, 1982. Her full name is Alissa Zinovievna Rosenbaum and Ayn Rand is its abbreviated form (Badhwar and Long 2012). Rand was a philosopher who wrote screenplays, plays, and novels, along with philosophical and academic works. She also published articles in the fields of politics, economics, and ethics in newspapers such as *The New York Times* (Burns 2009, 4-5).

It is important to take into account that a great deal of Rand's philosophy is based on her own experiences. Living in Russia and witnessing the revolution, as well as her immigrating to the US, greatly influenced her thoughts (Burns 2009, 33).

Rand's works have received a lot of attention and have become among best-selling literary works. Every year one hundred thousand copies of her works are sold; that is, more than twenty-five million copies thus far. Her unique interpretation of man and her philosophy for life have changed the lives of thousands of her readers and inspired philosophical movements that have influenced American culture. Rand has also influenced many other philosophers, economists, psychologists, and historians.

Besides her academic works, Rand wrote novels in which she implicitly expressed her philosophical and ethical ideas. Using the medium of the novel, which is more attractive than academic texts and is better understood by the readers, is an important strength for her ethical thought. High sales of Rand's novels throughout the world, and particularly in the US, is significant. In 2008, eight hundred thousand copies of her novels *Atlas Shrugged*, *We: The Living*, *Fountainhead*,

and *Anthem* were sold altogether (Burns 2009, 1-2). Among her novels, the most outstanding is *Atlas Shrugged*.

Her most important academic works are “For the New Intellectual,” “The Virtue of Selfishness,” “Capitalism: the Unknown Ideal,” “Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology,” “The Romantic Manifesto,” and “Return of the Primitive Anti-Industrial Revolution.”

2. Rand's Ethical Egoism

Rand is one of the most serious critics of ethical altruism. In her opinion, altruism is an ethical system in which man cannot follow his goals and wishes and only exists to serve others. Rand puts forth various criticisms of altruism before introducing her own ethical system.

2.1. Definition of Ethics and Criterion of Moral Value

Since Rand believes in freedom of choice for man, she maintains that ethics solely belongs to him (1984, 12). In her view, ethics is a system of values that directs our decisions and deeds and determines our goals in life (1964b, 10). The scope of ethics in Rand's literature is quite vast and in many cases she speaks of ethics as if it covers all aspects of life.

In her interviews, for instance, Rand defines politics as the study of humans' communications with each other, which is based on a specific ethical system (2009, 242). Elsewhere Rand mentions that ethics is applicable in all aspects of human life (1984, 12).

To determine the criterion of moral value, Rand studied the nature of living creatures. In her opinion, the concepts of values and good and evil are only applicable to living creatures (2008, 20). Rand considers the “life” of living creatures to be the main criterion in determining their moral value; that is, living creatures face choices which make possible the fulfillment of the concept of value. The most important dilemma faced by a living creature is that of life or death (1964b, 12). Therefore, in Rand's system of thought, the only thing that is valuable in itself is a creature's life—and other issues are valuable only if they are in line with the creature's life.

Rand believes that the concept of life is deeply connected to the concept of practice. In her opinion, there needs to be a sort of activity by each living creature to preserve its own life. Thus, the creature's life is a process of self-sustaining and self-generating; if it fails to perform appropriate actions to survive, it will die and its only remnants will be chemical elements (1961a, 97-98). Based on this, Rand defines value as something one endeavors to achieve and then preserve (1990, 77). The key point in understanding value is its connection with action. Rand believes that values are always the subject matter of deeds. One can introduce issues such as money, education, and family as values only if

these issues become practical goals, and actions are performed to achieve and preserve them (2008, 13).

As mentioned earlier, to determine the value of each living thing, Rand studies the nature of that living creature. It is therefore necessary to review her analysis of the nature of living creatures and their corresponding values.

2.2. The Criterion of the Value of Living Creatures

Rand believes that life is the criterion of value for all living creatures; therefore, any action taken to preserve one's life is good and any action leading to one's destruction is unacceptable. Plants are among the simplest living creatures. A plant has been created in such a way that it automatically and involuntarily performs actions to keep itself alive (1964a, 917). Compared to plants, animals have more complex mechanisms for survival.

Rand believes in a hierarchical scheme for consciousness only possessed by man and animals. The lowest level of consciousness is sensation. Sensation is exclusive to creatures that have five senses receiving external stimuli. A sensational response is an involuntary response to external stimuli and is invaluable for the living creature. Perception is a higher level of consciousness. Rand believes that perception takes place when a set of sensed affairs collected by the brain are analyzed. Perception helps the living creature to go beyond the senses and have a general awareness of single separate affairs. This level of consciousness exists in animals as well. The perceptive abilities of animals enable them to have particular skills such as hunting. Perception is similar to sensation in that it is an automatic form of cognition and consciousness (1965, 16). Therefore, although animals are not endowed with the power of will, they always act to survive and are unable to voluntarily destroy their own lives. According to Rand, this means that animals always do the right thing and all their actions are good.

Man is the most complex living creature and possesses the third and highest level of consciousness—that of conceptualization. Conceptualization does not exist in animals. The integration of perceptions into concepts and ideas is what Rand calls association or thinking. This process is not automatic or instinctive. Man can choose to think or not but he cannot escape the consequences of his choice (1961a, 11). Rand believes that man's nature is designed in such a way that he can choose to think and be aware or avoid it, but if he avoids thinking, he has stepped towards his own destruction and committed an immoral action (1985, 12-13). In this way, Rand thinks of rational living as a successful way of life.

Rand believes that one of the most important differences between man and animals is that man has a general understanding of the past, present, and future, while animals can only perceive the present (1961b, 19-21). This is due to the fact that animals do not have any degree of time-consciousness, and lack man's intellect. Animal life is composed of separate cycles that are constantly repeated; they begin new cycles of their lives without even a small relation to the past. On the contrary, man's life is a constant whole, where present, past, and future are all interconnected (1964b, 20).

2.3. The Relation between Egoism and Moral Values

In her book, *Ayn Rand's Normative Ethics*, Tara Smith describes Rand's ethical egoism and explains why it is egoistic. Based on Rand's egoism, man should act to realize his own desires and interests. In other words, it is every man's moral duty to achieve personal happiness and not sacrifice his own welfare and happiness for those of someone else. Based on this ethical theory, it is only self-preservation which would motivate man to apply moral values and principles in his life (Smith 2006, 23).

Smith mentions an important and remarkable point in Rand's ethical system. She believes that Rand's ethical system does not first present an argument for ethical values and principles and then provide an argument to support egoism. According to Smith, when Rand speaks of two options of life and death for man and considers the selection of one of them as the starting point for moral values and principles, in fact she explains her egoistic ethical system. A man who has chosen his life as having the highest value has implicitly accepted that he cannot put other people's lives before his own and cannot sacrifice his desires for others' desires. Thus, in order to preserve his own life, one must put his happiness at a higher priority than the happiness of others (Smith 24-25). According to Rand, the most important characteristic of an ideal man is that he considers existence to be an independent goal. In other words, an ideal man never uses his existence and desires as a means to achieve other things (Peikoff 1999, 301).

In every egoistic ethical system, the term *selfishness* is perceived in relation to the term *self*. Therefore, one of the most important questions ethical egoism is meant to answer is the meaning of man's self. Rand tries to fuse the meaning of this term with that of man's values and mind. One of her important works covering this issue is the novel *Fountainhead*. Here, Rand introduces the theory of egoism as one that has a pivotal role for man's intellect and values (Bernstein 1984, 14). She also creates a deep relation between fundamental rational moral values and ethical egoism.

3. Study and Criticism of Rand's Ethical Egoism

In this section, the most important weak points of Rand's ethical system will be studied. Many philosophers have criticized Rand's ethical egoism, but only prominent criticisms will be mentioned here.

3.1. Incorrect Image of Self

The most fundamental criticism of Rand's ethical egoism is her understanding of the concept of *self*. In her ethical system, since the self is superior to others, it is separate from others and separate from society. Thus, others and society do not play a role in the definition of an individual's self. However, an individual's dependence on society is not an epistemological dependence but an instrumental one. If others do not play a role in the definition of self and the self is superior to others, then obviously the role of others in an ethical system will fade or even disappear.

According to Rachels, the most important problem in Rand's ethical egoism is that she defines a false dilemma for us: Man has to either accept that his interests and values are not important and always sacrifice them for others or he has to recognize the importance of his values and desires and be indifferent to the interests and desires of others. Rachels believes that both the individual's desires and values and those of others can be appreciated and balanced (Rachels 1998, 71). Although it is important to pay attention to one's own desires and values, Rachels believes that our self will not be implemented and secured if we merely pay attention to our own goals and ignore those of others.

Aristotle's analysis of self is also inconsistent with Rand's definition. According to Aristotle, man is a social creature and a great portion of his human nature is formed in society. On the other hand, Rand thinks of humans as separate entities, each following their own interests. She believes that society is made up of individuals who are each supposed to follow their own good (Boss 2008, 248-49). In his work, *Nikomakhos*, Aristotle stipulates that man is unable to create his identity and reach happiness alone. He believes that man's self is created through friendship and interaction with others, and that man's personality is perfected through friendship with virtuous people (Aristotle 2004, 176-177). Thus, according to Aristotle, others and their goals and desires are valuable.

To have a better understanding of how the epistemological concept of self depends upon others and society, it is necessary to mention some examples of this dependence. Paying attention to subjects such as individuality, freedom, and self-independence also emphasized in Rand's philosophy, is positive. However, these values are only implemented through society and by participation in social activities. On the other hand, individuals are born in different historical,

cultural, economic, and social conditions which they have no control over and which form an important part of their personal identities (Burkitt 2000, 1).

Another issue that verifies the dependence of epistemology of self on others is the gratification of personal desires. Rand emphasizes that man must try to satisfy his own rational desires and interests. However, satisfaction of the simplest personal desire depends on others and society or at least requires a social ground. For example, a physician who would like a blue shirt cannot produce it independently—a tailor's workshop is required to achieve this goal (Seglow 2004, 56). That is, despite a physician's high social status, he requires others to satisfy his countless needs.

Ethical egoists may claim that our relation with others is a utilitarian interaction where we exchange services with each other. For example, although a physician depends on a baker for bread, the baker is also dependent on the physician for treatment; therefore, it is a give-and-take relationship which does not require value for others. However, much of our society is the product of previous generations with whom it is impossible to have a utilitarian interaction. Of course, previous generations have also benefitted from generations prior to them, but the point is that it is impossible to compensate the efforts of past generations in a utilitarian interaction (Barcalow 2007, 75).

We are indebted to others for a great deal of our being. Culture, science, history, art, and even language are created through interactions with other humans. Even our personal independence is influenced by others; in fact, the concepts of independence and dependence are meaningful only when we enter society and interact with others (Lafollette 2007, 272).

Another issue which verifies the dependence of the self on others is that of social goals – this is something Rand never mentions in her discussions. Along with personal goals, groups of people have collective goals, which are valuable for them regardless of their individual interests. For example, the victory of a sports team, realization of ethnic values, and triumph of a nation in war are collective goals which are important for every individual independent of his personal goals (Graham 2004, 58). A soccer player's personal goal may be to become the top goal-scorer, but to avoid losing the match, he will pass the ball to his teammate who has a better chance of scoring. There are many such situations where people would be willing to sacrifice their personal goals to achieve their collective goals. It is therefore clear that an important part of the self is created by society through interactions with other people.

3.2. To Consider Personal Life as the Criterion of Value

Rand believes that the life of a living creature is the foundation of all moral values and an ethical action is that which leads to survival. Man is supposed to preserve his own life and has no duty to preserve the lives of others. According to Rand, the most important indication that life has been implemented is the achievement of happiness. Although Rand accepts a utilitarian and instrumental approach towards other people, an important part of happiness and personal welfare is realized through interactions with others and considering them to be inherently valuable. Since man's happiness depends on the happiness of others, his life depends on the life of others, and he should work towards preserving their lives (Ryan 2003, 305-8).

Rand believes that the most important tool to preserve man's life is intellect. Man's rationality is portrayed in his ability to conceptualize and contemplate. Rand's interpretation of rationality is subject to discussion and has been questioned by critics. She describes the desire to help others (without utilitarian considerations) and to pay attention to their needs as irrational, but does not provide solid proof for her claim (Ryan 2003, 320-21). She also believes that to consider others without considering one's own self leads to self-destruction. Since the self is built through interaction with others and society, Rand's argument is unfounded.

3.3. Internal Paradox of Ethical Egoism

Based on ethical egoism, the goal of ethics is to achieve happiness. A major part of this happiness is achieved through friendship and interaction with other people. Based on this theory, man must seek happiness in solitude and friendship is only meaningful according to this rule. An important question arises here as to whether ethical egoism is compatible with intimacy and love. An intimate friendship calls at times for man to sacrifice his own interests and goals for the sake of his friend. Giving others a higher priority than the self is an altruistic action, which is in serious contrast to egoist ideas (Pojman 2005, 29). Thus, the paradox of egoism is to become altruist if we need to achieve an egoist goal (have an intimate friendship). Rand believes that in an intimate relationship, man sacrifices for someone else because that person plays a pivotal role in his life. This act of self-sacrifice, however, compromises the foundations of egoism.

There are many other cases where, although ethical egoism increases one's good, it decreases one's good as well. Suppose that two individuals have the same illness and both will perish if they do not receive a special vaccine. There is only a single dose of that vaccine available, and both individuals must try to obtain it. Based on the claims of ethical egoism, everyone is supposed to seek their own good; however, under these circumstances, the goods of these two individuals

are in contrast and it is impossible for both to be achieved (Palmer 1991, 41).

3.4. Necessities and Non-Practical Implications of Ethical Egoism

Rand's ethical system leads to challenges in practice. Her theory has implications which are not compatible with her earlier claims. Two important incompatibilities and their implications will be mentioned here.

3.4.1. Results of Field Studies

According to Rand, there is a direct connection between ethical egoism and the achievement of happiness. Thus, if seeking one's own desires and ignoring other people's inherent value do not lead to happiness, then Rand's ethical theory is in question.

Rand herself did not conduct any research to find out what makes a man happy (Boss 2008, 263-64). However, in 1984, a sociologist by the name of Ruut Veenhoven conducted an extensive meta-study about different expressions of happiness throughout the world. In this meta-study, the results of 245 studies concerning happiness in thirty-two countries were examined (Veenhoven 1991, 14). The conclusions of this study seem to negate Rand's ethical egoism. Based on Rand's ethical egoism, independent, intellectual, and egoist people are happier than other people. Also in her theory, which is dominant in the West, hard work and production are the two most important factors in achieving happiness (Boss 2008, 264). This is what Veenhoven's studies prove to be wrong. Based on his analysis, there is no significant difference between the happiness of employed people and non-employed people. These studies do not indicate that hard working people are happier. On the contrary, they suggest that people who participate in group activities and are sympathetic, generous, and helpful toward others, are happier compared to other people (Veenhoven 1991, 14). In conclusion, this meta-study indicates that the application of Rand's principles of ethical egoism will not lead to a person's happiness.

3.4.2. Incompatibility with Moral Intuitions

Another problem faced when practicing ethical egoism is its incompatibility with the most profound and clear moral intuitions. According to ethical egoism, helping other people, if it has no benefit for the helper, is not only inessential but also morally wrong, and therefore it should be avoided. Under these conditions, if you can solve Africa's problems at the push of a button, it is morally wrong to do so if it does not have any benefit for you (Pojman 2000, 562). These principles also apply to future generations. Based on ethical egoism, we have no responsibility toward future generations and there is no

obligation to preserve natural resources for their use. Since future generations do not exist at the time being and are unable to benefit us personally, based on ethical egoism, it is meaningless to pay attention to their needs. These ideas are in contrast with the intuitive responsibility that people feel towards future generations, and towards helping others (Pojman 2009, 94-95). Therefore, Rand's ethical egoism is an imperfect ethical theory which is in contrast with our moral intuitions and cannot be implemented practically.

Final Evaluation

Based on her analysis of the concept of self, Rand stresses the priority of the self over others and proposes ethical egoism to be the correct theory in the field of ethics. Ethical egoism is based on the fact that the self is pivotal and inherently valuable while others are not. In this ethical system, other people are instruments that become valuable only when they benefit the self. Rand's view of the self has many shortcomings and ignores remarkable facts concerning the role of society in developing the self.

Criticizing and refuting Rand's ethical egoism does not necessarily prove ethical altruism. Ethical altruism, in its moderate forms, puts others at the center of ethics. Although the self's goals, values, and needs are taken into consideration, it is finally others' goals and values which are given preference (Martin 2007, 9).

Rand's most fundamental problem is her belief that either absolute egoism or absolute altruism must be chosen. Since the value of both the self and others have been accepted in ethics, it has become clear that an efficient ethical theory is one which allows for balance between the self and others. The ethical theory which emphasizes the centrality of the self and others is known as "ethical ego-altruism."

In ethical ego-altruism, the self's dependence on other people is not an instrumental dependence, but an epistemological one. A major part of one's self-identity is formed in society through interaction with others. Since man is epistemologically dependent on others, ignoring their inherent value is equal to ignoring one's own inherent value. In ethical ego-altruism, both the self and others are inherently valuable, and paying attention to one while ignoring the other is morally wrong. Therefore, ego-altruism promotes a balance between the self and others such that no one is sacrificed for the other.

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The Drama of Divine Providence: Reflections on the Problem of Evil

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This article studies the problem of evil in Abrahamic religions and philosophical traditions, and tries to restate their solutions in a contemporary language. The author aims at affirming traditional Abrahamic approaches to theodicy that preserve divine omnipotence, benevolence, and omniscience, but without denying the reality of evil.

Keywords: Problem of evil, theodicy, Abrahamic religions.

Introduction

In addressing the question of the relation between providence and evil in the Abrahamic religious and philosophical traditions, I am not thereby assuming that other great world religious traditions have nothing valuable to teach in this regard; of course they do. But I simply focus on those traditions I happen to know a bit more about and upon their particular approaches to this question—approaches over which I have pondered for at least three decades now. My few modest conclusions add nothing new to the long history of *theodicy*, but attempt rather to state these conclusions in a contemporary language that makes sense to me existentially, and which I hope will make sense to others, as I continue to face the iniquity of evil in my own life and choices, in the structures of sin and evil worked into the very fabric of modern life,² and occasionally in what I can only describe as direct demonic attempts on the part of warped “personal” spiritual entities to disrupt genuine unity, destroy what is good, distort what is true, and pervert what is beautiful. My aim is to affirm, more or less, traditional Abrahamic approaches to theodicy that keep intact divine omnipotence, benevolence, and omniscience, but without downplaying the real horror of evil.

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2. These structures of sin are not new per se, but modern technology has enabled them to develop in such a way as to leave virtually no one untouched.

Needless to say, any robust theology of evil must necessarily include and begin with equally robust theologies of God and Creation that emphasize the following fundamental points. First, in the Abrahamic traditions, the word “God” does not simply refer to the highest thing or entity in the cosmos, but to something that is not a “thing” at all “in” the universe. God refers, rather, to that which is so completely other than, and radically transcendent to, the universe, that our language in *affirming* anything about God can only be analogical; the only time our language about God has univocal meaning is when we are denying. Something similar, perhaps, could be said about the *Tao* in Chinese tradition. Second, that which God freely brings out of nothing is therefore not necessary, strictly speaking—this is precisely what the term *creation* means. Third, if God had chosen not to create, God would still be God. All these points underscore how radically transcendent, unknowable, and unnameable God really is. Even when we state that God *is* or that God *exists*, the terms “is” and “exists” are mere analogies wherein unlikeness remains immensely greater than likeness. Thus, the *via negativa* or the *apophatic* ways to God are the appropriate starting points in the Abrahamic religious traditions for any robust theologies of God and God’s creative act when attempting to address the enormously problematic phenomenon we call evil.

Of course the central challenge for the Abrahamic religions is to reconcile the belief in an omniscient, omnipotent, and benevolent God with the “existence” of evil. The classical formulation is well known: either you give up omnipotence and hold on to benevolence, or you forgo benevolence and insist only on omnipotence; you simply can’t have it both ways. For if God were all-powerful and all-good simultaneously, then evil would not, could not, exist. But since evil “exists” it means that God is either not powerful enough to eliminate it although being all-good wants to, or is powerful enough but does not, because is not all-good.

The classical way out of this age-old dilemma is to simply say that evil is a “privation” of the good, and therefore does not really exist at all—not in any sort of ontological way at least. But this solution causes other philosophical problems, not the least of which is how to possibly explain to the one suffering evil, especially if that person is innocent, that what they are suffering does not really exist. Try explaining that to an innocent man who has been imprisoned for life because he was framed. Or try telling the mother of a little child who has been kidnapped and sold into sexual slavery that the evil she and her child suffer are only *apparent* because evil does not really exist ontologically. This classical approach can be traced back at least to Plotinus, and one finds neo-platonic variations on the theme throughout the Middle Ages in the West. Not surprisingly, however, this explanation becomes progressively less and less satisfying; those committed to it are

continually challenged to find new and improved ways of articulating it and giving it new life. Philosophers of the stature of Leibniz and Schelling, in spite of Immanuel Kant's formidable objections, are among those in modernity who manage to revitalize it in important ways, forging what could be called a new era in *theodicy*. I shall subsequently address in the broadest terms this new era only after exploring another dimension of this problem in the thought of two prominent medieval philosophers and thinkers, one Christian, the other Muslim, as their insights in this regard are most relevant and constitute an important part of the historical puzzle.

I refer to the 10th century Andalusian philosopher, theologian, poet, historian, Abū Muḥammad 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn Sa'īd ibn Ḥazm (known generally as Ibn Ḥazm)¹ and to the great 13th century Christian philosopher and theologian, Duns Scotus, whose thought may have been influenced by the work of Ibn Ḥazm. The one central point, so relevant in our context, upon which both of these thinkers agree, though each one develops and uses it differently, concerns God's radical transcendence—even above God's own creation. God is so profoundly above and independent from, creation, that God is not bound by anything whatsoever *in* creation. One contemporary Christian theologian of high repute formulates this in this way: "God's transcendence and otherness are so exalted that our reason, our sense of the true and good, are no longer an authentic mirror of God, whose deepest possibilities remain eternally unattainable and hidden behind [God's own] actual decisions" (Pope Benedict XVI 2006, §6). The implications for *theodicy* here are immense and in some ways a continuation of the neo-platonic theme of the non-existence of evil, since if our own human sense of what is good and evil, true and false, is not at all analogous to God's—since God is so radically above creation—then what we call evil may in fact be good and vice versa in God's eyes, or the very categories of good and evil, true and false, may not even exist in God's reality—a reality totally unpredictable, unknowable, and un-nameable to and for us.

While granting the relative value and truth of this insight, both the Christian and Islamic traditions over the ages tried to temper it, since if the undue stress on the radical transcendence of God as expressed in Ibn Ḥazm or Duns Scotus is not qualified by some doctrine of analogy, we could be left with a "God [who] is not even bound by his own word ... [wherein] nothing would oblige him to reveal the truth to us." This could mean, among other things, that "[w]ere it God's will, we would

1. Ibn Ḥazm was a leader in that school of Islamic thought known as the Zahiri school. He was incredibly prolific and addressed a wide range of logical, philosophical, theological, legal, historical, and comparative religion topic, including a work on the art of love titled *The Ring of the Dove*.

even have to practice idolatry” (Pope Benedict XVI 2006, §4). With an *analogy of being* doctrine, we can at least be sure that the term *evil* has univocal meaning when we *deny* something about God’s nature. When we say, for instance, that “rape is an evil action” and “there is no admixture of evil” in God’s being, we can be sure that the term *evil* has univocal, not mere analogical meaning. Nonetheless, since any balanced doctrine of analogy must always include the thesis that “unlikeness remains infinitely greater than likeness,” it is still therefore the case that, at times, God can explode our otherwise logically and even morally consistent judgments and pious positions, and there are many examples of this in the Abrahamic scriptures: in the book of Hosea, for instance, when He asks the prophet to marry a whore—and then to take her back even after she returns to her life of whoring; and more extreme than this, when He asks Abraham to slaughter his own beloved son. We are apt to miss just how excessively radical and almost contradictory this really is because we all know the happy ending, when God prevented the hand of Abraham from carrying out the act of slaughter, but again it underscores the point that in any healthy doctrine of analogy “unlikeness remains infinitely greater than likeness”—providing space *not* for contradiction, but for paradox and mystery. It is no accident that the biblical tradition speaks of the *mystery* of evil—by mystery, the biblical tradition does not refer to something we can’t know anything about, but simply to something that we cannot know everything about. Or to put it differently, we must aim for a faith which might transcend reason, without contradicting it.

Holding faith and reason together in the proper complementary tension has long been the fundamental goal of the greatest thinkers in the Abrahamic traditions; this is what gave birth to theology and its various branches, including, of course, the branch we call *theodicy*. This task is on-going and never something that once achieved, once understood, can then be captured in a static dogmatic formula, mechanically provided once and for all as a ready-made, one size fits all, water tight solution to a perplexing riddle. This is especially true in those looking for meaning to their own suffering and in the suffering of their loved ones. *Theodicy* and all healthy theology must be open to the ever changing relational dynamic between a living God and His creation, not just in the abstract, but in the messy, existential dilemmas into which we inevitably find ourselves plunged day after day, and which require us to make conscientious choices that have grave effects on our own well-being and on the well-being of others.

This realization, I suggest, was the main impetus in Leibniz’s *Essays on Theodicy* published in 1710. The full title of the essay, *Essays on Theodicy: On the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man, and the Origin of Evil*, shows the centrality of theodicy in Leibniz’s overall metaphysical project. But Leibniz’s attempt to rehabilitate the “non-existence” of evil

thesis is rejected by no one less than the great Immanuel Kant. He challenges Leibniz's equation of evil with lack of being and rejects all attempts to justify God's goodness and omnipotence by defining evil as pure privation, claiming rather that evil is some *thing* rooted in human nature. Kant even goes on to say that each and every human being *freely* chooses an evil moral orientation by choosing to give priority to sensual interests over intellectual and moral ones. All human beings, argues Kant, have an evil disposition, but some human beings can rise above this orientation if they cultivate their intellects and learn to think for themselves—this enables them to move from an evil disposition (subjection or submission) to a good disposition (autonomy). Whenever we freely choose to submit to the laws and dictates of others (without understanding) we reinforce our evil disposition, but whenever we freely choose to obey the universal moral law determined *a priori* by our own reason, we begin to develop a good disposition. Political subjection is when an entire state obeys the laws of others imposed from the outside; individual subjection is when individuals choose to obey the laws determined by their sensual and physical desires or wants.¹

One can see clearly why Kant is not interested in traditional *theodicy*; not only does he reject the notion that evil by definition is a privation (an idea that theodicy must somehow be based on if a traditional theology of God is to be maintained) but he identifies the greatest good with individual autonomy, and the greatest evil as subjection or submission to another.

As the philosophical discussion continues and develops in the West, yet another great German philosopher, Fredrick Schelling, gets into the conversation and makes what I take to be an invaluable contribution to the field by returning to Leibniz, but only after taking Kant's objections seriously. Schelling appreciates Kant's rejection of the "unreality of evil thesis" and admits that too many attempts to give an adequate account of the origin of evil fail because they are designed to fit neatly into the "noble" work of defending both God's benevolence and omnipotence. At the same time, however, he sees that to abandon *theodicy* is to separate metaphysics from morality and to give up on providing any ultimate account of good and evil as it relates to freedom and morality; in this we could say he sides more with Leibniz who makes theodicy central to metaphysics. But a more accurate way to say it is that he attempts to split the difference between Leibniz and Kant, not by reaching a compromise but by soaring higher than either one. His conclusions both save theodicy and introduce unique and (I would say) "mystical" insights into the nature of freedom and evil.

1. It is crucial to notice here the differences and similarities between Aristotle's approach to ethics and morality, which is virtue centered and Kant's approach which is more law and principle centered.

Ultimately, Schelling sees that to grapple adequately with the question of theodicy, we must necessarily seek to understand human freedom, and the first step in understanding human freedom comes when we begin to wrestle with the question of God's freedom—in particular, to attempt to understand how the notion of God's freedom can be reconciled with God's necessary nature. To do this, he introduces two different ways of being: (*ground*—the principle of contraction) and (*ex-istence*—the principle of expansion); these principles can be found everywhere in nature and capture the ways in which things “are” in the world. The balance in nature emerges when these two “opposing” principles maintain their proper relation. When *ground* (or contraction) remains the “condition for” *existence* (or expansion) then the whole remains balanced and harmonious, but when *ground* becomes that for which the whole is conditioned, evil emerges. Analogously, in God, according to Schelling, ground and existence, contraction and expansion, inwardness and out-wardness, hiding and revelation, always maintain their proper relation in what we could call a mystical divine struggle. This struggle is precisely where God's freedom is located, while His necessity lies in the fact that the result of this struggle is secure: *ground* never becomes absolute, but remains the condition for the self-revelation of the absolute. Although the two ways of being are in tension, they together form the unity of being where the true absolute (God) can be.

Nature, too, and everything in it, including (and especially) human beings, analogously enjoy these same two ways of being, but the outcome of the struggle is far from secure: evil often emerges because the contracting principle seeks to dominate the principle of expansion. In spite of Schopenhauer's scathing critique of Schelling, claiming, as he does, that Schelling is simply aping Kant while pretending to be original, I suggest that, on the contrary, Schelling goes much deeper than, and even reveals the inherent weaknesses in, Kant. Schelling identifies evil with a distortion of the *relation* between *ground* and *existence* whereby *ground* (or inwardness) becomes the perversely self-conscious, *rational* will of the *individual* no longer in real relation to anything but itself. In this, it is possible to read Schelling as criticizing a particular form of Kantian rationalism. Regrettably, Schelling does not, as far as I can tell, say why it is that the proper relation is maintained in God and not in nature or in human beings created by God. He does imply that this is simply because Creation is not necessary, but he does not explicitly develop this. In this, although his account of freedom and evil is weightier than virtually any other philosophical account in the nineteenth century, it is by no means the final word.¹

1. Schelling's work has always reminded me of certain trends in the mystical traditions of the Abrahamic religions. In particular, the Lurianic School of Kabbala with its

Of course, there can never be a “final” word when it comes to such a mystery. But by way of conclusion I do now offer my own provisional and modest “final” word in the light of all that has been said. First, regardless of the ontological weight we give to evil in terms of its existence, God’s omnipotence is not undermined in the face of evil while simultaneously insisting on His benevolence, because God did not have to create in the first place. If God does not create, then even the possibility of evil does not exist. Furthermore, God’s act of creating out of nothing is precisely that which demonstrates His omnipotence. And when it comes to God’s benevolence, it is not that God does not want to get rid of evil; what God does not want to do, rather, is to get rid of beings that are free like Him. The key term here is “like.” We are back to the point about analogy. Our freedom is *like* God’s freedom; it is not the same. Of course, God knows that we will abuse our freedom and He knows our acts before we commit them, but this does not mean that they are not free acts. As Boethius taught long ago, God foresees all our actions: the actions that are determined He foresees as determined; and the actions that are free, He foresees as free and therefore does not predetermine them. This tension in seeing our acts before we perform them, but not determining them, is precisely where the drama of God’s divine providence as an all-good, all-knowing, all-powerful being comes into play. In a way, then, God depends on His creation, not in an absolute sense, because He did not have to create, but nonetheless in a real sense, because He does decide to create free beings. It’s as if God has taken a risk, knowing all along that no matter what happens to His creation, He can bring it back on course. God’s providence means that He is even ready to be rejected, and knows how to use this very rejection to bring His creation back to Him at a deeper and more intimate level. This, in part, is the lesson He teaches Joseph and his brothers, Job, and the prophets, especially the prophet Hosea whom He asks to marry a prostitute; in this latter, especially, the drama of divine providence emerges most deeply. God keeps telling Hosea, take her back, take her back, until Hosea breaks down in anguish. And then God teaches Hosea the all-important truth about His love for His

emphasis on the teaching of *tsimtsum* (divine withdrawal), wherein God (in order to create out of nothing) becomes absent to himself in a kind of contraction so that “the void” or “nothingness” can come into existence, sounds a lot like Schelling’s ground/existence distinction, since this void (in the Lurianic School) then becomes the “place” where freedom originates. In Christian mysticism, too, one finds echoes of this in both the ancient and modern periods. One contemporary Spanish Christian mystic, Fernando Rielo, writes in terms strikingly close to what we find in the Lurianic School and his conclusions are somewhat commensurate with what Schelling proposes, though I cannot go into them here. All of this also reminds me of that incredibly pregnant statement by the great Russian thinker, Nicolas Berdyaev, when he stated in his *The Destiny of Man*, “Freedom is not determined by God; it is part of the nothing out of which God created the world” (Berdyaev 1937, 33).

people, for His creation, not His general love for all of humanity, but His particular love for each and every creature, when He says “Israel is my unfaithful whore; but I love her and I will take her back and redeem her from all her iniquities.” This is high drama indeed. God’s providence, in keeping with His omnipotence, benevolence, and omniscience, is not some sort of stoical, disconnected interaction, but one wherein God gets involved in the muddled and messy details. The ultimate answer to the mystery of iniquity would be for the very Creator to enter into the misery, not as the Creator God, but as a vulnerable, miserable, suffering creature of creation, in order to perfectly and completely identify with it and then, because God, save it. But such an answer might be too good to be true? Or perhaps not?

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Taking the Enemy as Medicine: Dialectic and Therapy in the Work of Two Early Indian Doxographers

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This article discusses the function of dialectic in religious history, focusing on the works of two major sixth century Indian intellectuals and doxographers Bhāviveka and Haribhadra Sūri, who belonged to the competing Madhyamaka Buddhist and Jaina traditions respectively. The article studies how these two figures used medical metaphors for their dialectic purposes.

Keywords: doxography, dialectic, Bhāviveka, Haribhadra Sūri.

Introduction

It is common knowledge that, throughout history, most religious traditions and philosophical schools have encouraged the study of their own canon of literature, oral or written, at least for a certain elite amongst their fold, if not for everyone. What appears to be more exceptional is to find intellectual developments within these movements which, for various motives, have encouraged the study of views foreign to their own sectarian position. But a careful examination of ancient religio-philosophical literature suggests that serious inquiries into competing ideological systems, sustaining various forms of dialogue and doctrinal developments, are nothing new. In India for example, a land known for its cultural diversity, we even find doctrinal developments wherein the dialectical study of competing views seems to have played a significant soteriological function, suggesting a therapeutic use of dialectic.

The function of dialectic is a central topic informing my ongoing doctoral research in Indian doxography. The present paper, limited in

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scope, aims at examining a single aspect of that theme, based on the work of two major sixth century Indian intellectual figures belonging to competing traditions: Bhāviveka, a proponent of Madhyamaka Buddhism, and Haribhadra Sūri, a Jaina scholar. I will briefly examine how both authors used medical metaphors in their dealings with opposite views. Let's clarify at the outset what *doxography* is. In brief, it is either a whole text, or a part of a text where competing views of philosophers or philosophical schools are presented following a division of topics. Examining such literature, I asked myself why would religious philosophers fully dedicated to their own religious commitment spend time studying and writing about the views of others. It is to be noted here that the term "view" translates the Sanskrit word "*darśana*," which became the most common term in Sanskrit to designate the various philosophical systems or sects. It is often present in the titles given to works of a doxographical nature, like the *Ṣaḍ-darśana-samuccaya* (the Collection of Six Views) of Haribhadra. Again, what could be the point of acquainting oneself with the views of others? How would such knowledge contribute to one's own "path" (Sk: *mārga*), or "religious journey"?

So far, the doxographical genre of ancient Indian philosophical literature has attracted little scholarly attention, although respectable pioneering work has been undertaken in the last decades.¹ However, to bridge the gap, one can find substantial research done in the field of logic and dialectic, a domain intimately related to doxography, as argued by Classicists like Mansfeld and Runia,² working on Greco-Roman doxography. Indologists interested in dialectic tend to inquire either about its forms and structure or about its application in debate, as witnessed for example within the rigorous argumentative structure of the philosophical treaties known as *śāstra*, a literary genre exploited by most Indian philosophical traditions, dedicated to the systematic exposition of particular doctrines, where a refutation of opposing views is a common feature, not unlike Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*. Research on the forms and structure of Indian dialectic have allowed for a deeper understanding of the argumentative apparatus developed by Indian thinkers and opened the door to a rich stream of comparative philosophy. Regarding the practice of debate in ancient India, much research is still needed in order to draw a better picture of its social and religious significance. As our sources indicate so far, it appears that debate was not only essential to a successful scholarly career, but that,

1. One thinks here of three main authors: Wilhem Halbfass (1988), Olle Qvarnström (1999), and A. J. Nicholson (2010).

2. The two scholars' revisionary project on doxography was initiated in Mansfeld and Runia (1997). Further volumes are now available. In the same vein, it is worth mentioning the work of André Laks and Han Baltussen, for example in Laks (2007) and Baltussen (2005).

as an important social phenomenon, it involved actors from various strata of society. At the time of our two doxographers, we hear reports of such public debates sponsored by prominent figures, if not by kings themselves, in the reports of the famous Chinese Buddhist monk and pilgrim, Xuanzang (602-664). On the subject, Eckel notes,

An effective debater had to be familiar not just with different Buddhist traditions, but also with non-Buddhist rivals, including the Lokāyatas, Jains, Śaivas, Sāṃkhyas, and Vaiśeṣikas. Scholars moved around the country, studying with experts in other traditions and debating with their opponents. Preparation was important. (Eckel 2008, 15)

A thousand years before Xuanzang, in the Buddha's days, engaging in debate with opponents was already an important activity mobilizing the time and energies of Indian thinkers, a tradition likely inherited from, or at least attested in, learned disputations on the means and meaning of Vedic rituals and liturgy, rudimentary traces of which can be found in the Upaniṣads or within the commentarial literature on the Vedas. The socio-political dimensions of debate in ancient Indian society is certainly a fascinating field of inquiry from which we still have much to learn. For the moment, however, I will focus my attention on the relevance of dialectic, the practice of critical inquiry and disputation, within the work of Bhāviveka and Haribhadra Sūri, two authors who have given much attention to the views of others within their own writings. Although I do not reject what has been said about the socio-political dimensions of debate, I am interested in exploring the possibility that a function of dialectic closer to the religious practices and aspirations of the two authors can be found. Indeed, it is my feeling that the soteriological relevance of dialectic as a debate within oneself, thus as a privileged means on the path to liberation, has not yet been fully acknowledged and examined.

It is well known that the followers of the Buddha and the Jina oriented their practices towards the achievement of a certain end, called either *nirvāṇa* or *mokṣa*, a state said to be free from pain, liberated from the bondage of karma, and breaking away from the chain of continuous rebirth known as *samsāra*. Within this context, the production and use of philosophical arguments, structuring a way of life oriented towards the release of pain, could be said to be therapeutic. Martha C. Nussbaum has given a substantial account of the notions of "therapeutic arguments" and "medical philosophy" in the context of Hellenistic philosophy. She observed that "[t]he diseases this philosophy brings to light are, above all, diseases of belief and judgment" (Nussbaum 1994, 34). In other words, medical philosophy deals with rational or cognitive "diseases." The therapeutic virtues professed by some Hellenistic philosophies reveal an acute concern for mental health, or hygiene, directly linked with a mode of conduct aiming at being in tune with

reality, where truth, or at least the various perceptions of it, is understood as shaping one's behavior. Thus, in this therapeutic perspective, misinformed judgement eventually leads to harmful behavior and poor health, affecting both the mental and physical equilibrium, an imbalanced state which needs to be redressed through philosophical practice—in other words, through dialectical reasoning. This therapeutic dimension of philosophy, where the cultivation of valid cognition is said to neutralize pain at its very source, a pain understood in the subtler context of mental impairment but not necessarily excluding grosser bodily ailments, might be one of the most fascinating features shared by Hellenistic and Indian thought systems.

The medical analogy is indeed a trope common to both Bhāviveka's and Haribhadra's traditions. In fact, it might very well be said to be Pan-Indian, if we agree that most religio-philosophical systems of India are articulating a palliative response to what is commonly perceived as the nature of transitory existence, the alleged fact that "everything is suffering" (Sk.: *sarvaṃ duḥkham*). This intuition into the nature of existence led the Buddha to profess his four Noble Truths, crowned by a diagnosis insisting on the all-pervasiveness of suffering (*duḥkha*). It motivated a similar fourfold etiology in Gautama's *Nyāya Sūtras*, the foundation of a realistic system of thought dedicated essentially to the art of dialectic. It also informs the famous Jaina commitment to *ahiṃsā*, or non-violence, and in general all endeavours towards final liberation, or *mokṣa*. A general overview of the topic in both Buddhism and Jainism would require far more time and space than what is allowed here. What I am interested in examining at the moment is much humbler, a few pebbles in the vast ocean of literature produced by both traditions, a short selection of passages from Bhāviveka and Haribhadra which suggests that they were also concerned about "diseases of belief and judgment," and aspired for their cure.

Compared to other Indian thinkers, Bhāviveka's life can be fairly well situated in time, around 490-570 CE or 500-570 CE. His origins are more debatable, varying between South India and Magadha. He is known for having written three treatises, two of which will be referred to in the next few pages. His magnum opus, the *Madhyamakahr̥daya* was written in verses and is accompanied by an auto-commentary in prose, the *Tarkajvālā*. The commentary is lost in Sanskrit but preserved in Tibetan. The text covers a wide range of doctrinal topics and includes a substantial doxographical section. It is thus far the first Indian texts that we know to present a systematic overview of competing views, right before Haribhadra's *Ṣaḍ-darśana-samuccaya*. This doxographical scheme possibly inspired the later tradition of philosophical compendia. Another source to be mentioned here is the *Karatalaratna* (*Zhangzhen lun*), preserved only in Chinese. Bhāviveka was a staunch proponent of a new stream of Mahāyāna Buddhism masterfully established by

Nāgārjuna in the second century CE. This Madhyamaka philosophy purportedly sets forth a middle way between the extreme of eternalism and the extreme of annihilationism and is known for its insistence on debate, challenging different scholars or schools in both Buddhism and beyond to defend their doctrinal claims while having itself no particular position to assert, focusing instead on a kind of *reductio ad absurdum* debunking their opponent's statements one by one. It therefore comes as no surprise if Bhāviveka attributed a special virtue to the practice of critical inquiry, or dialectic.

In both the *Mahāyāna Karatalaratna (The Great-Vehicle's Jewel in the Palm of the Hand)* and the *Madhyamakahr̥daya (The Heart of the Middle-Way)*, Bhāviveka makes use of medical metaphors and analogies when referring either to views or to the process by which truth is revealed. This soteriological process, in Bhāviveka, can be divided into three stages, where wisdom is gained from hearing (*śruta-mayī-prajñā*), reflecting (*cintā-mayī-prajñā*), and meditating (*bhāvanā-mayī-prajñā*) on the teachings of the Buddha, a scheme that he did not invent but borrowed from the well-known *Yogācārabhūmi*, the first Buddhist *śāstra* that associated logical argumentation with the wisdom gained from hearing the teachings. This wisdom is the cornerstone on which rest the other two and, together with the second, "reflecting," it involves assiduous scrutiny, evaluation, and familiarization with the doctrine of the Buddha, testing the Buddha's words like a goldsmith with the hammer and flame of critical inquiry and logical reasoning. Thus, although the Buddha's words are the actual medicine, in Bhāviveka's view, the dialectical process involved in assimilating their meaning is part and parcel of the therapeutic process leading to *nirvāṇa*. And, like a good doctor confident in his means, yet ever looking for new cures adapted to different diseases, Bhāviveka puts the "medicine" of others, their various views, to test. Is it medicine or is it poison? This paradoxical nature of philosophical arguments and medicinal drugs, known to Plato and well captured in the Greek term "*pharmakon*" (φάρμακον), did not escape Indian thinkers, at least not Bhāviveka. In evaluating the toxicity of the various substances composing the mixtures of opposing views, he engages these doctrines in the same dialectical process with which he tested the Buddha's words. While he obviously finds no competing views superseding his own Buddhist convictions, as is to be expected of any seasoned *vādin*—a Sanskrit term which can interestingly refer both to a disputant or to an alchemist (a person dedicated to the production of medicinal elixirs)—yet their involvement in the dialectical process of scrutiny seems nonetheless to serve as a potent therapy, as a kind of "vaccination" against the "symptoms" that Bhāviveka identifies in each defective view. In this way, a defective "view," a philosophical position that does not withstand scrutiny, is dealt with and considered as a kind of disease, a

doṣa, which requires a proportionate remedy, a counter argument. This Sanskrit term, “*doṣa*,” carries the connotation of both fault and disease and is exactly what Bhāviveka sets himself at task to expose and cure, wherever he encounters it. In fact, as will be seen, Bhāviveka evocatively suggests that this healing task is the leitmotiv of the Buddhist saint career, where the would-be Bodhisattvas are called upon to go around the world and cure the endless sufferings of sentient beings, renouncing everything for the cause, even final liberation, after having been duly initiated in the craft of the cosmic physician, the perfectly enlightened Buddha.

Let’s now have a brief look at Bhāviveka’s writing, through a selection of verses where medical similes are clearly visible. Both his *Mahāyāna Karatalaratna* and *Madhyamakahrdaya* open with obvious medical overtones. His introductory verses to the *Karatalaratna*, for example, says:

In order to generally benefit all sentient beings, one should aspire after a great vow for awakening. To commonly observe the mortal world, [those mortals] are disturbed by various false thoughts and thus, the mental disorders and windstorms continue. They are netted by the net of false views, caged by the cage of the cycle of life and death, shot by the poison arrows of immense sorrows. Hence, whatever they do is separated from wisdom.¹

Loyal to the Mahāyāna tradition, Bhāviveka states that one should take on the Bodhisattva vow to obtain great awakening in order to benefit all beings. This motivation is sustained by a sharp view on the world of mortals, a world where people are “mentally disturbed” by false cognition, a contagious disease which binds them in an endless pattern of misery. This “mental sickness” is clearly linked to “false views” which appear to be legions, all different traps and nets, inviting the arrows of pain. Misguided by such erroneous cognition, whatever mortals do is devoid of wisdom. To escape such a state and get a healthier view, one needs a special and potent medicine. This is what Bhāviveka explains a few verses later:

However, to directly realize super-mundane non-conceptual wisdom, one has to constantly apply the eye medicine of the unmistakable view of emptiness which is able to completely remove the eye-disease of false views. In order to accumulate the eye medicine of unmistakable view of emptiness, one should rely on the wisdom obtained from hearing (*śrutamayī*) remove the self-nature of all perceived objects which is able to remove the self-nature of all perceived objects. (Hsu 2013, 168)

1. The KTR was translated into Chinese by Xuanzang around 647 or 649 CE, eighty years after Bhāviveka’s death. This translation from Chinese, and the information provided on the text, was recently put together by Chien Y. Hsu, in her doctoral thesis; see Hsu (2013, 166).

Here, the therapeutic remedy to be applied is said to be the “unmistaken view of emptiness,” which alone leads to full recovery from sickness and pain, a state of health known as “super-mundane non-conceptual wisdom.” The “eye medicine” is a brew obtained from macerating the teachings of the Buddha in a thorough critical analysis, as we explained before. It is not enough to only hear and repeat the teachings, one must engage with them in a kind of dialectical joust. This process uncovers hidden assumptions and beliefs in oneself, exposes them to scrutiny, and reveals their true nature. They are empty, explains Bhāviveka:

When the eye-disease passes away, one whose eye become completely clean and pure does not see the hair (keśa), mosquito (maśaka), two moons (dvicandra) and the eye in a peacock’s plumage (śikhicandraka). ||251|| Likewise, when the eye-disease of darkness which envelopes what is to be known and defilement passes away, a wise man whose eye has become pure by means of proper knowledge does not see anything ||252|| (Watanabe 1994, 85)

Interestingly, it appears that once the eye disease is completely cleansed, there remain no views at all—thus, nothing to be seen. Hence, in this perspective, reality is not a thing to be seen, a mark to be indicated somehow. Clearly, in Bhāviveka’s understanding, any view of any “thing” is a mental defect of some sort, preventing reality from being seen as what it is, in its naked and pure radiance. Erroneous views act as infections or imperfections in the eyes. They continuously project false values on the world, values on which an infected mind clings, ignoring that he is craving after mirages, like the eye in a peacock’s plumage, illusory projections which can only torment the mind endlessly. Empty dreams can never be fulfilled and are thus bound to be unsatisfactory. As Paul Fuller explained about the notion of *ditṭhi* (view) in early Pāli Buddhism, what essentially constitute a wrong view is not only a wrong proposition, but it is also a form of craving: “It combines both what is untrue and harmful” (Fuller 2005, 11). Clearly, Bhāviveka perpetuates this understanding. But one might object that Bhāviveka’s view is also a mere view, like the opponents objecting to Nāgārjuna, his leading predecessor and inspiration, that his emptiness (*sūnyatā*) doctrine has to be empty as well, if everything is to be empty. And so it is, and has to be, as long as it remains mere words or intellectual perspective. For reality cannot be reduced to a view, to a single perspective.

Just as, one sees inexistent demons (bhūta) in the darkness at night. As one whose eyes are open when the sun rises, he does not see [those demons]. ||255|| Likewise, one whose inclinations (*vāsanā*) of all ignorance (*samastajñāna*) are destroyed by the sun (*ravi*) of the proper knowledge does not see the object-sphere of the mind and the function of mind (*citta-caitanya-gocara*). (Watanabe 1994, 86)

Once the sun of knowledge arises in the wise one, no shadow of ignorance remains, the mind does not project any subject-object dualism nor is there anything distinct happening, known as the mind. There is nothing to be seen, no sight, no seer, in Madhyamaka's ultimate reality. Views, any of them, can only be conventional, hence empty as Nāgārjuna himself noted: "Since all phenomena are empty (*śūnyatva*), about what and out of whom could such views (*dr̥ṣṭi*) come to be?"¹ Thus, the "unmistaken view of emptiness," though pointing out the ultimate, is both the realization of the conventional for what it is and a view resting on conventional means of exposition, logic, and dialectic. This dialectical inquiry into views, using the levers of ultimate and conventional realities, as if two truths mutually coexisted side by side, is the therapeutic process to which Bhāviveka is conveying suffering mortals. The "red-pill," hard to swallow, by which one can empty oneself from all cognitive diseases.

In his opening chapter to the *Madhyamakahr̥daya*, Bhāviveka makes it clear that it is the duty of the Bodhisattva, the Buddhist saint, to distribute this medicine and to heal the sick. After a few words of praise to the Buddha, Bhāviveka begins:

A little should be said, as far as one can, concerning the descent of the immortal nectar of truth in the intellect made perfect in great wisdom through dedicatedly cultivating the benefit of others. (4)²

This "immortal nectar of truth" (*tattva-amṛta*) or ambrosia revealing the true nature of things, the "that-ness" (*tat-tva*) of reality, is the medicine brewed by the Bodhisattvas, ever caring after others. Just as in the *Karatalaratna*, Bhāviveka explains how the noble one is moved by the misery of the world:

The learned one of profound goodness, cannot endure the suffering of others. This mighty being, imbued with a heroism verging towards perfection, (7) as he observes that the world entirely conceals the eye of wisdom, voluntarily crosses it through, to save it from the polluted subterranean hell of the continuous flow of existence (*samsāra*). (8)³

1. *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, chapter 27, verse 29:

atha vā sarva-bhāvānām śūnyatvāc-chāśvata-ādayaḥ |
kva kasya katamāḥ kasmāt-sambhaviṣyanti dr̥ṣṭayaḥ ||

2. All following translations from the *Madhyamakahr̥daya* are my own. I will give all Sanskrit verses in the footnotes. Here: Mahābodhau kṛta-dhiyām para-artha-udaya-dīkṣayā |

Tattva-amṛta-avatārāya śaktiḥ kiṃ-cid-ucyate || 4 ||

3. Dhīmatā sattva-mahatā paradukhe'sahiṣṇunā |

Samyag-ārabdha-vīryeṇa yuktam śaktimatā satā ||7||

Lokam-ālokyā sakalam prajñā-āloka-tiraskṛtam |

Samsārā-amedhya-pātālāt tīrtvā tārayitum svayam ||8||

Here again, Bhāviveka takes on the metaphor of the obstructed eye. It is the world (*loka*) itself, by its very illusory nature, that “conceals the eye of wisdom” (*prajñā-āloka-tiraskṛtam*), binding beings to suffering. In these melodious Sanskrit verses, one is reminded of the compassionate Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, the “Lord who looks down” at the world with compassion, said to have taken the vow to never rest till all sentient beings are freed from the cycle of existence, one of the most revered Bodhisattva of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Bhāviveka conveys the learned to emulate the great Bodhisattva, and to dwell in hell among the sick and destitute, like a self-sacrificing doctor able to heal those in need. But, he warns, this precious medicine, this immortal nectar, is not easy to obtain:

Again, what could be more difficult to obtain, even for a world-emperor, for Indra or for a Brahmin, than the universal mean to quench endless thirst? (13)

Which overcomes suffering and so on, completely quelling quarrels; the nectar from which truth is obtained, completely soothing pain. (14) ¹

Even a king who manages to become the emperor of the world, or the king of gods, Indra, or one of privileged birth, like a Brahmin, god among men, must strive to obtain this “hard-to-get” (*durlabha*) ambrosia—let alone the common mortal who seeks liberation. Here, Bhāviveka plays a duplicitous trick on Indian mythology, as he will do often again, throughout the text. Indeed, in ancient Indian cosmology, the gods (*deva*), at the head of which sits Indra, obtain the nectar (*amṛta*) of immortality after churning the cosmic ocean using mount Mandara as a rode, a godlike effort requiring even the cooperation of their archenemies, the demonic *Asuras*. But even this divine nectar pales in comparison to the one possessed by the great Bodhisattvas, able to quench endless thirst (*atyanta-tṛṣṇā-vicchedi*). This thirst (*tṛṣṇā*) is the subject of the second Noble Truth of the Buddha. It is the cause of all suffering. It is “craving,” the effect and defect of “erroneous views,” as mentioned by Fuller. The medicine of Bhāviveka, by quelling thirst, quells suffering and strife. Here, the quelling of “quarrel” or “dispute” (*vigraha*) refers to debate, where a proper medicinal argument “heals” or “rectifies” logical fallacies (*doṣa*). Thus, the immortal nectar of truth pacifies everything and even allows one to silence debaters.

And this treatment is like a down pouring of medicinal salt on the wounds of those pained by sorrow, a pain previously caused by an arrogant perseverance in afflictions. (15)²

1. kiṃ punas-cakravartī-indra-brahmaṇām-api durlabham |
atyanta-tṛṣṇā-vicchedi sādharmaṇam-upāyataḥ ||13||
Vigraha-kṣaya-paryanta-duḥkha-ādy-anabhibhāvitam |
Niḥśeṣa-duḥkha-sāmanam tattva-artha-adhigama-amṛtam ||14||
2. kiṃ ca kleśa-graha-āveśād duḥkham duḥkhātūreṣv-api
kṛtam yeṣu mayā pūrvam kṣata-kṣāra-upahāravat ||15||

The medicinal or therapeutic analogy could not be more explicit here: the nectar of the Bodhisattva is to be applied directly on the wounds of the afflicted, a wound that they created by themselves, by stubbornly persevering in afflicted views. In order to do so, the Bodhisattva must be able to identify the proper remedy, to avoid employing a disproportionate one. The therapy must fit the disease; thus, the Bodhisattva must know its very cause. He must know the views of others if he is to successfully perform his therapeutic craft. This might explain the need for doxographical endeavors. But, most of all, the Bodhisattva must rid himself of any possible afflicted views by purifying his own vision of reality:

By training in the view of the void, afflicted dispositions are destroyed, along with wicked deeds, the bondage of which is the doorway to all miseries. (18)¹

This verse has the severity and authority of an unamused physician, facing a recalcitrant drug addict. One must train in being sober, not cultivating any views on reality. This is the only way to put an end to craving and to get rid of the cohort of misery pathetically following any addiction.

And, while not becoming nor ceasing, explaining diseases out of compassion, they remain firm in existence, dedicated to the service of others. (20)²

Somewhat like modern-day Doctors without Borders, Bhāviveka stresses that the career of a Bodhisattva is to remain in the world to “explain” the diseases (*doṣa*) or cognitive mistakes afflicting the people. For, like therapists, they cannot remove the wounds of others by themselves; they can only explain how to engage in the therapeutic process by teaching how to dialectically engage with one’s own mental afflictions.

Before concluding this brief exploration of the therapeutic theme in Indian dialectic, I now suggest to turn to Haribhadra Sūri, one of the finest literary figures of early medieval times. Living about two centuries after Bhāviveka, probably from 725 to 825 CE (Shukla 1989), or slightly earlier, the tradition attributes to him an exaggerated number of 1444 literary works, though about twenty-six of them are almost unanimously accepted as his. He was recognized as an authority on logic, and he also composed several treatises on yoga, one of which will be quoted here, the *Yoga-drṣṭi-samuccaya*, doxographical in nature. The Jaina attitude towards the views of others is guided by their moral precept of “non-violence” (*ahiṃsā*). The Jaina monk should be very cautious about his

1. Dauṣṭīyā-kriyayā sarva-durgati-dvāra-bandhanāt |
 Śūnyatā-darśana-abhyāsāt kleśa-vṛṭty-upaghātataḥ ||18||

2. Na bhave doṣa-darśitvāt kṛpālutvān-na nirvṛtau |
 Sthitās-tiṣṭhanti ca bhave parārtha-udaya-dīkṣitāḥ ||20||

use of speech, as is mentioned in the *Sūtra-kṛtāṅga*: “A wise man should not joke, nor should he explain without resort to conditional expressions.”¹ This non-violent approach to critical inquiry, where one is extremely cautious not to make absolute claims, thus the use of conditional expressions, came to be known as the *non-absolutist* (*anekānta-vāda*) or the *quodammodo* (*syād-vāda*) doctrine of the Jaina followers. This captures the Jaina’s understanding that views can only reflect a certain perspective on reality. It may have something relevant to highlight, but it cannot in itself be absolute truth. To believe any view to be otherwise, for a Jaina, would amount to a kind of intellectual hubris, disrespectful to opposing views and disregarding the utter sanctity and non-mundane character of truth.

In his *Yoga-dṛṣṭi-samuccaya*, Haribhadra also uses various medical similes to refer to dialectical practice. As we shall see, in a similar way as with Bhāviveka, the dialectical therapy promoted by Haribhadra can only be successful when it is supported by careful examination of the teachings, in this case of the Jina. But there is no doubt that a therapy is needed, for existence itself is qualified by the master logician as a disease:

Existence, indeed, is a great illness, comprised of birth, death, and disease. It produces various forms of delusion and causes the sensation of excessive desire and so forth. (188)

This is the chief (ailment) of the soul: giving birth without beginning to the cause of various karmas. All living beings understand this experience. (189)²

Haribhadra insists that desires—in other words, “grasping” at phenomena—are a side effect of various “delusions,” producing karma and thus binding one to the mundane cycle of rebirth. This unhealthy cooperation of wrong cognition and grasping can be compared to the meaning of “wrong view” in Buddhism discussed by Fuller. Earlier in the text, Haribhadra made it clear that fallacious arguments, the support of false views, are a disease of the mind:

Fallacious argument produces in the mind sickness of intellect, destruction of equanimity, disturbance of faith and cultivation of pride. In many ways, it is the enemy of existence. (87)³

1. *Sūtra-kṛtāṅga* I.14.19 :

Na yā’vi panne parihāsa kujjā na yā’siyāvāya viyāgarejjā |

2. All translations of the *Yoga-dṛṣṭi-samuccaya* are taken from Chapple (2003).

bhava eva mahāvyaḍir janmamṛtyuvikāravān|

vicitramohajananas tūvraṅgādivedanah ||188||

mukhyo’yam ātmano’nādicitrakarmanidānajaḥ|

tathānubhavasiddhatvāt sarvaprāṅabhṛtām iti ||189||

3. bodharogaḥ śamāpayah śraddhābhaṅgo’bhimānakṛt |

kutarkaś cetaso vyaktaṃ bhāvaśatrur anekadhā ||87||

This verse singles out erroneous reasoning, not only an illogical claim but also one not directed by any scriptures, for polluting the mind. It is not that reasoning in itself is an obstacle, but like any medicine, it has the potential to be poisonous if not duly used. Then, how is one to engage in dialectic according to Haribhadra, if one seeks the ultimate end suffering, lasting health?

Through scriptures, inferences, and the essence of yoga practice, they succeed at the threefold wisdom and obtain the highest reality (*tattva*). (101)¹

This method of approach looks like a posology: one needs to hear the scriptures (*āgama*), then to reflect upon them through inferences (*anumāna*), and finally to engage in yogic contemplation (*yoga-abhyāsa*) based upon them—a threefold component of a therapy carefully balanced, highly reminiscent of Bhāviveka’s wisdom gained from hearing (*śruta-mayī-prajñā*), reflecting (*cintā-mayī-prajñā*), and meditating (*bhāvanā-mayī-prajñā*) on the teachings of the Buddha. Like Bhāviveka and his medicinal immortal nectar of truth (*tattva-amṛta*), the threefold wisdom of Haribhadra brings about the universal panacea, truth (*tattva*). But, as a physician interested in every possible cure for any disease, Haribhadra goes further than Bhāviveka:

The variety of teaching is suited according to who is being taught. These great souls are the best healers of the sickness known as “worldly existence.” (134)²

Not only should one inquire about the cures professed by other doctors, “these great souls” which are “the best healers,” says Haribhadra, legitimating his doxographical endeavours, but one should recognize the healing properties in all of them, adapted to the numerous diseases afflicting worldly beings. Like Bhāviveka, Haribhadra strongly believes the teaching of his guru, the Jina, to be the most powerful medicine, else he would not defend his path. But unlike Bhāviveka, he does not make any absolute claim regarding his medicine. In fact, the dialectical therapy that he professes (*anekānta-vāda*) prohibits him from such excess, cultivating sobriety and kindness even in matters of debate.

In both Bhāviveka and Haribhadra, views are qualified as “mental diseases” posing a radical challenge to peace. Views do not only affect outer peace, but the inner one as well. Bhāviveka suggested the adoption of a posture of “no-view,” where any view is cured and dispelled by a dialectical therapy resting on the teachings of the Buddha. Haribhadra

1. āgamenānumānena yogābhyāsarasena ca |
tridhā prakalpyam prajñām labhate tattvam uttamam ||101||
2. citrā tu deśanaitēṣām syāḥ vineyānugūnyataḥ |
yasmād ete mahātmāno bhavyādhibhiṣagvarāḥ ||134||

promoted the approach of “no-single-view,” where every view is perceived as a one-sided limited perspective, unable to capture the whole of reality. Both therapeutic approaches aimed at cutting through any form of grasping. Grasping at anything, in a Pan-Asian philosophical context, came to be seen as the root of all misery, a product of ignorance. As these few selected verses have suggested, and as history showed us, grasping at a view can be a particularly virulent form of contagious disease. There is no paradox in the fact that both authors insisted on the need for a proper dialectical therapy to be guided by valid scriptures. Every medical treatise rests on some authority supposed to have experimented the cure first handedly. But, there are different ways to look at scriptures. The attitude towards a medical treatise, for example, a practical guide compiled for a well-defined purpose, differs from the one towards a set of “sacred” scriptures said to be above reasoning. One not only allows for investigation, but invites it as essential, whereas the other one calls for subservience and, in the wrong hands, becomes liable to every kind of abuse and misery. The attitude of a doctor engaged in healing others, devoting his life to developing new cures is also very different from that of a theologian going around preaching obedience and fear. A doctor must respect his trade, and even if he is invested in fighting diseases, he spends time in their company, learning their tricks and lifestyle. As far as it is possible to respect a viral infection, one must at least come to understand that it has a cause and that only once this cause has been well understood can any medicinal process be undertaken to stop its contagion. In the end, the aim is recovery, and one would see no benefit in bluntly slaying the victim of a contagion as a means to cure its disease. More often than not, the enemy, the viral element, has to be involved in the process of his own removal, at least in a diminished form. This seems to be what doxographical writings, a literary genre introduced in India by our two philosophers, are aiming at, by immunizing a “mental host” against potential “viral” infections, by familiarizing it with various arguments and counter-arguments. Hence, doxographical writings can be seen as a form of dialectical therapy, inoculating abridged versions of “defective” views in their audience, as in a vaccination campaign. In any case, such medical metaphors, though recovered from ancient days, where science and medicine were far less advanced, evoke a lofty ideal of civilization far remove from the fanatical events of daily news.

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A Study of the Views of Farabi and Ibn Sina on the Definition of Happiness and Its Relation to the Faculties of the Soul

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This research is an attempt to compare the views of Farabi and Ibn Sina on the question of happiness, which is discussed in two parts: the definition of happiness and its relation to the faculties of the soul. Farabi has suggested five definitions and Ibn Sina one definition for happiness. It will be shown that in some respects the definition of Ibn Sina and in some others those of Farabi are more to the point. In regard to semantics, Farabi uses a few terms such as *good*, *joy*, and *true wisdom*, while Ibn Sina employs such terms as *joy*, *perfection*, *good*, *reward*, and *achievement* as equal to happiness. In regard to the relationship between happiness and the faculties of the soul, Farabi holds that experiencing happiness is confined to the theoretical rational faculty of the soul and the other faculties cannot understand happiness, whereas Ibn Sina argues that all the faculties of the soul have the ability to acquire happiness, and the happiness of each faculty lies in the actuality of its potentials.

Key Words: happiness, faculties of soul, rational soul, Farabi, Ibn Sina.

The Question

The question of happiness is one of the fundamental, old, and interesting questions that has occupied the minds of thinkers in various fields, such as literature, ethics, philosophy of ethics, *hadith*, exegesis, theology, and philosophy. In philosophy, this question has occupied not only the minds of ancient philosophers—such Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle—but also the minds of other philosophers in different ages in various schools of philosophy. Abu Nasr Farabi (873-950), known in Latin as Alfarabius or Avenasar, and Abu Ali al-Husayn ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Sina (980-1037), or Avicenna, are known to be the most important philosophers in the Muslim world and highly influential on Christian

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thought during the Middle Ages. These two philosophers have discussed happiness in its different dimensions, and it is not possible to have a comprehensive discussion of their views in one article. Therefore, this article will focus only on comparing the views of these two great thinkers as to the definition of happiness and on the relationship between happiness and the faculties of the soul.

1. Definition of Happiness

In his different works, Farabi gives various definitions for happiness:

a. In his *Admonition on the Way of Happiness (al-Tanbih ala sabil al-sa'adah)*, he offers the following two definitions. Happiness is the aim which every person desires and attempts to achieve; for happiness, according to him, is a kind of perfection (Farabi 1992, 228).

b. According to his second definition, happiness is the most useful and valuable effective good. In his first classification, he divides the effective good into the *good by itself* and the *good by others*. By the former, he means the good that is not the medium to reach other ends and is desired for itself. On the other hand, the good by others—such as ascetic practices and medicine—is that which acts as the medium to achieve other purposes.

In another classification, Farabi divides the good by itself into two kinds. The first kind comprises those things that are good by themselves but sometimes become the medium to achieve other things; for example, knowledge sometimes becomes the medium to attain other ends, such as wealth and fame. The second kind includes those things that are good by themselves and never become the medium for achieving other purposes. This kind of good is the best of good things. Happiness is an instance of this kind of good, which is the greatest and most perfect (Farabi 1992, 228-29).

c. In *Civil Politics (al-Siyasat al-madaniyyah)* Farabi defines happiness as the absolute good and adds that although all things that lead to happiness are good, they are not good in themselves but good by others. In other words, they are good in respect of being useful in reaching happiness. On the other hand, all things which in one way or another impede the attainment of happiness are absolutely evil (Farabi 1992, 72).

d. Farabi defines happiness as good and desired by itself and believes that there is nothing greater and more desired than happiness. Therefore, happiness never becomes a medium to reach other ends; rather, other things or deeds become good and virtuous if they lead to happiness (Farabi 1999, 46).

e. Happiness is the development and perfection of the soul, and it is due to this development that the soul becomes independent of matter in its subsistence and reaches the level of immaterial intellects and the Active Intellect (Farabi 1999, 46).

In his treatise *On Happiness (Fi al-sa'adah)* Ibn Sina defines happiness as that which is desired for itself and is the goal by itself (Ibn Sina 1400AH, 260).

2. Critique of Definitions

Looking closely into the definitions given by Farabi and Ibn Sina we may infer the following points:

a. Offering a Definition on the Basis of Purpose

Looking into the first definition of Farabi, we understand that he defines happiness on the basis of purpose. However, he has not mentioned any condition for the purpose. This indicates the weakness of his definition, for we know that philosophers divide purpose into two kinds: by itself and by others. By the latter they mean the purpose that becomes the medium to achieve other purposes, such as wealth, eating, drinking, accommodation, and so forth; but the former is that which never becomes a medium for reaching other purposes. Indeed, this kind of purpose is the ultimate purpose and the best and the most perfect of purposes. On the basis of Farabi's accepted philosophical system, and looking closely at his second, third, and fourth definitions, we understand that happiness cannot be a purpose by others; rather, happiness is an instance of a purpose by itself.

Accordingly, it would be better and more accurate if Farabi, in his first definition, added a condition to the purpose and clarified that what he meant by purpose was purpose by itself and not purpose by others. Unlike Farabi, Ibn Sina adds this condition to his definition and defines happiness as purpose by itself, which makes his definition more accurate than that of Farabi.

b. Definition of Happiness on the Basis of the Concept of Good

Farabi bases his second, third, and fourth definitions on the concept of good. In his second definition, he argues that happiness is the most useful and the most valuable effective good. He first divides good into by itself and by other, and then divides good by itself into good by itself that becomes the medium for reaching other ends, and good by itself which never becomes the medium to achieve other things. He asserts that happiness is the greatest and most perfect instance of the latter kind of good.

In his third definition, Farabi defines happiness as the absolute good, and in a part of the fourth definition, he defines it as good by itself.

In these definitions, Farabi is influenced, to some extent, by Aristotle, who in his invaluable *Nicomachean Ethics* divides good in respect of being relative or absolute into partial (relative) and the highest good. Aristotle argues that the highest good is happiness, and

claims that all people—whether common or elite—call the highest good happiness (Aristotle 1999, 10-11). Aristotle divides good into three types:

1. External goods, by which he means things such as money, properties, influential friends, good children, a noble family, and fame.
2. Goods of the body, such as health, physical beauty, and bodily power.
3. Goods of the soul. Aristotle believes this type is an instance of the true and noble good and is superior to the other two types mentioned. He also claims that happiness is an instance of this type of good (Aristotle 1999, 34).

Considering the explanation of Aristotle, we understand that in the first division he considers happiness as an instance of the highest good and in the second division he considers happiness as a good of the soul. In this sense, Farabi is influenced by Aristotle, as he uses this concept of good in his definition of happiness. Moreover, in his definition of happiness as the absolute good, he is also influenced by Aristotle, for absolute good corresponds with the highest virtue. Moreover, in his reconstruction of the definition of happiness, he also benefits from such terms as effective good by itself and good by itself. However, he is not a mere imitator of the ancient philosophers. Rather, he is a selective philosopher who takes the materials for his view from different sources but develops the structure of his thought innovatively.

The other point which shows Farabi is not a mere imitator of others is that he knowingly goes beyond Aristotle's definition of happiness and gives other definitions.

c. Definition on the Basis of Desirability

In his fourth definition, Farabi states that happiness is that which is good by itself and is desired for itself. Ibn Sina is influenced by this definition of Farabi. Happiness is desired by itself in the sense that man does not seek happiness for the sake of anything else.

d. The Complete Immateriality

The fifth definition is very much different from the other four definitions, for in Farabi's first definition based on the concept of purpose and in his other three definitions—i.e., the second, third, and fourth definitions—based on the concept of good and in the fourth definition, he benefits from both the concept of good and the concept of desirability. However, in the fifth definition, he argues that the happiness of the soul is in its abstraction from the world of matter. In other words, the human soul in the first stages is immaterial on the side of the essence but related to the world of matter on the side of action. However, if the soul reaches the high levels of perfection and attains the ranks of immaterial intellects and particularly the Active Intellect,

it becomes completely independent of matter. Farabi calls the attainment of such position as happiness.

In Farabi's thought, the fifth definition refers to the highest level of happiness (the greatest happiness), rather than the absolute happiness, for most of the people are unable to attain such a level of happiness. However, we can consider the fourth definitions a definition of the general or absolute happiness, for this kind of happiness is restricted to a few people.

Ibn Sina discusses this definition in relation to the soul. He states that we can consider happiness in two ways: with respect to the different faculties of the soul and with respect to the soul itself. In the latter case, the happiness of the human soul is its complete detachment from the matter and its corollaries, attainment of complete immateriality or intellect (Ibn Sina 1363Sh, 109).

e. A Semantic Analysis

Farabi divides pleasure into different kinds: sensible and conceptual (intellectual), immediate and mediated, more known and more truthful pleasures (Farabi, 1992, 69-72). He believes that pleasure is a many-sided and graded reality, and its highest rank is achieved when man ascends to the rank of the *Peaceful Soul*, and with all his existence perceives the Real intuitively (Farabi 1405AH, 65). Attaining such a rank is attaining happiness.

In Farabi's thought, the term true philosophy is sometimes considered as equal to happiness, for in his viewpoint, happiness is a many-sided reality, and in order to reach the highest rank of happiness, one needs to attain the true wisdom—that is, becoming aware of the Real, who is the source of all actualities and perfections and know to what extent beings and especially man can attain the virtue and perfection of the Real (Farabi 1405AH, 65).

As was explained in the second point, in his definitions of happiness, Farabi mostly uses the term good, and three of his definitions—the second, the third, and the fourth definitions—are founded upon the concept of good.

Ibn Sina, in *Treatise on Happiness (Risala fi al-sa'ada)*, sometimes holds that happiness and pleasure and joy are equal. As an example, he maintains that the highest rank of happiness is when all the veils between the lover and the beloved are removed and the lover is united with the beloved. In such a state the soul attains such a joy and pleasure that is matched by no other joy or pleasure (Ibn Sina 1400AH, 276).

Of course, it should be noted that some think that happiness is the attainment of sensible pleasures and worldly positions. However, this is not true, for he who knows the truth of things knows that happiness cannot be the attainment of worldly, temporal pleasures, for all these pleasures are accompanied with deficiencies and pain (Ibn Sina 1400AH, 261).

The term perfection is another term which is used for happiness in the philosophical system of Ibn Sina. Sometimes perfection is used for the immediate actuality and is divided into first perfection and second perfection; by first perfection is meant that to which the specificity* of the species belongs (such as rationality for man), and second perfection is the perfection attained following the formation of the species (such as bravery for man).

Perfection in the discussion of happiness is a second perfection with positive value, in the sense that man has many potential tendencies and abilities, and the change of these potential tendencies and abilities into actuality in the domain of moral acts is called happiness and in the domain of the immoral acts wretchedness (Ibn Sina 1420AH, 43:91; 1403AH, 289-92).

In regard to the relationship between perfection and happiness, Ibn Sina differentiates between the faculties of the soul and the soul itself. He maintains that for every faculty there is an actuality which is its perfection. When the potential changes into actual, that potential reaches its perfection and happiness. For example, the perfection and happiness of lust is pleasure; the perfection and happiness of wrath is in dominance; and the perfection and happiness of fancy is in desire and wishes. However, the perfection of the human soul is its detachment from the matter and its corollaries and reaching total immateriality or intellect. The human soul is not restricted to understanding the intelligible; with the body, it can perform other deeds, and each of these deeds has a particular happiness. Therefore, the soul has different kinds of happiness, and these kinds of happiness are realized when the faculties attain what is appropriate to them and the direction of all deeds is towards justice (Ibn Sina 1363Sh, 109).

In order to explain the meaning of happiness, Ibn Sina sometimes uses the term good. For otherworldly happiness, he uses the term “the coming good,” and for worldly happiness, he employs the term “the present good.” In his *Treatise on Happiness*, he suggests the pure and refined people to “hear this admonition by the depth of your soul and all measures you should take in the direction of attaining *the coming good* and hear this advice with all your being and tend to acquire *the present good* and do whatever deed that brings you closer to the life with eternal happiness” (Ibn Sina 1400AH, 263).

In his *A treatise on Revealing the Essence of Prayer (Risalat al-kashf 'an mahiyyat al-salat)*, which was written with a mystical tendency, Ibn Sina states that otherworldly happiness is equal to reward, death is the separation of the human soul from the body, and the resurrection is the union of man with the spiritual substances. The reward and happiness of man after death is connected to his deeds. If his deeds are perfect, his reward and happiness will be perfect; and if his deeds are imperfect, his reward and happiness will be imperfect on the Day of Judgment, and he may even be despised and scorned. On the basis of this analysis, he adds that prayer makes the human soul similar to heavenly bodies, who in their constant worship of the Real attempt to get the eternal reward (happiness). Accordingly, the Prophet of Islam (s) states: "Prayer is the pillar of religion" (Ibn Sina 1420AH, 35:303).

In order to explain happiness, Ibn Sina sometimes uses the term *salvation (fawz)*. He believes that if man knows the Hereafter and the First Creator truly, he will achieve happiness and salvation in the Hereafter (Ibn Sina 1400AH, 278). It is not hidden from those who are familiar with the Quran that the terms reward and salvation are Quranic, and using such terms to explain happiness indicates the influence of the holy Quran on Ibn Sina.

Comparing the views of Farabi and Ibn Sina in regard to the meaning of happiness, we see that Farabi uses the terms pleasure, good, and wisdom as synonyms to happiness, and of these three terms, he uses the term good most frequently. Obviously, these three terms are taken from ancient philosophers, especially Greek philosophers in their writings.

Like Farabi, Ibn Sina employs the terms pleasure and good as synonyms to happiness, but these two terms, and especially the term good, are less frequently used. Besides these two terms, Ibn Sina uses some other terms such as perfection, reward, and salvation. The term perfection is used by ancient philosophers, but the two terms reward and salvation are clearly taken from the Islamic tradition.

3. The Relationship between Happiness and the Faculties of the Soul

Muslim philosophers speak of different souls—vegetative, animal, rational, and spherical—and for each of these souls, they mention certain faculties. For the vegetative soul, they mention the three faculties of feeding (which itself contains the four faculties of absorbing, holding, digesting, and repelling), growing, and procreating. For the animal soul they speak of the two faculties of acting and perceiving, and they mention two faculties for the former faculty: the instigator of motion (which itself comprises the two faculties of lust and ire) and the agent of motion (which has the three states of absorption, rest, and contraction). For the faculty of perception, they speak of the

two apparent and hidden senses, and then they divide the apparent sense into five kinds: seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching. The hidden sense is also divided into five types: common sense, imagination, fancy, memory, and manipulator.

Muslim philosophers hold that besides these faculties, the human soul has a rational faculty, which they divide into theoretical and practical reasons. In other words, the human soul has two aspects: an essence or a position by itself, and a managing aspect or an attachment to the body. The soul, in respect of essence (the position by itself), is the theoretical and practical reasons, but from its managing aspect or the position of attachment to the body, it depends on its relation to the body and using it as an instrument. The soul on the basis of the second aspect has the vegetative and animal faculties (Farabi 1366Sh, 73-74; Ibn Sina 1403AH, 2:404-5; Bahmanyar 1375Sh, 757, 782, 806; Mulla Sadra n.d., 8:53-87).

It is interesting to note that Muslim philosophers do not speak of these faculties of the soul in detail always, but depending on the occasion and the necessity called by the discussion they refer to some of the faculties. Accordingly, Farabi in his invaluable book *Civil Politics (al-Siyasat al-madaniyyah)* speaks of theoretical and practical reasons, abstracting faculty, imagination, and sensible faculty and discusses all those as the faculties of the human soul, stating that only the theoretical reason can perceive happiness, and the other faculties of the human soul—namely, the sensible faculty, imagination, and abstracting faculties—have no such ability. It is interesting to know that Farabi believes that even the practical reason, which in comparison to other faculties has a higher position and rank, cannot perceive happiness. It is more important to know that the theoretical reason does not possess such ability either except when it turns to happiness with all its being, which is not always the case.

Accordingly, Farabi reminds us that if man shows any laxity in perfecting his theoretical reason, he cannot perceive happiness as it should be or cannot be aware of it and pursue it. As a result, he may go astray and consider issues such as pleasures, dominance over people, or honor which it gains through abstracting faculty as his purpose and happiness, and consequently perpetrate evil deeds by means of his abstracting faculty, imagination, and sensible faculty.

Farabi insists on the point that knowing happiness by the theoretical reason is a necessary condition, but it is not sufficient. He maintains that besides knowing happiness by the theoretical reason, man should make it the purpose of his life and be very eager to achieve it. Otherwise, he will take things that are illusory happiness as the goal of his life, and this incorrect choice will no doubt lead him to evil deeds (Farabi 1366Sh, 73-74).

In his discussion of free will, Farabi restates his claim regarding happiness as being exclusive to the rational faculty of human soul in another way. Following this discussion, he speaks of the soul's sensible, imagination, and rational faculties and notes that each of these three faculties has its own abstracting faculty. Accordingly, there are three kinds of will:

1. The first will. Farabi holds that the sensible faculty has its own desire, resulting from sensation and is called the first will.

2. The second will. The faculty of imagination, like the sensible faculty, has its own desire, originating from the imagination and is called the second will.

3. The third will. The rational faculty, like the first two faculties, has its own craving, resulting from reasoning and is called the third will.

Farabi maintains that the term free will applies only to the third will, which is exclusive to man and not the other animals. It is because of the third will that man can do good or bad deeds, and it is in the light of this will that the reward and punishment become meaningful in the other world. He adds that unless the third faculty is realized in man, speaking of happiness or misery is absurd. It is only on the basis of this will that man becomes the agent of his good and bad deeds, attributed with beautiful or ill dispositions, and known as happy or miserable (Farabi 1366Sh, 72; 1999, 45-47).

It seems that Farabi is influenced by Aristotle here, for the latter maintains that no living creature has a share of happiness other than man. From the viewpoint of Aristotle, this is due to the fact that other creatures have no reason, and this means that happiness is directly related to the rational faculty of man.

Moreover, from the perspective of Aristotle, the whole divine life is happiness, and so far as humans have a portion in this activity, they can be happy. However, no other living creature can be happy, for they have no share in contemplation or rational speculation (Aristotle 1999, 393).

In another place, Aristotle states that it is natural that we do not call a cow or a horse or any other animal happy, for none of them can do any of the activities we have in mind. Similarly, a child cannot be happy as it is not capable of such deeds—that is, the virtuous activities of the soul. Therefore, when we call a child happy, this indicates our hope that it will be so in future (Aristotle 1999, 139).

4. Critique and Analysis

The main reason for the difference between the views of Farabi and Ibn Sina seems to be that Ibn Sina differentiates between the two aspects—happiness in regard to the different faculties of the soul and happiness

in respect of the soul itself—whereas Farabi does not make such a distinction.

From what was said above, we realize that from the viewpoints of Farabi and Ibn Sina, happiness is the good and the end which is desired by itself and forms the highest good. Accordingly, if we do not differentiate between the two aspects of the soul, we should, on the basis of Peripatetic philosophy, consider happiness in relation to the theoretical rational soul, for, according to the views of Farabi and Ibn Sina, the highest faculty of the soul is its theoretical faculty, and the true happiness of the soul is the intellectual happiness. Accordingly, all other faculties of the soul should serve the theoretical rational faculty.

Now if we consider the actuality of each faculty of the soul as its happiness, which is the view of Ibn Sina, since all the faculties of the soul serve the theoretical rational faculty, and, on the other hand, happiness according to Farabi and Ibn Sina is the purpose and good that are desired for themselves and not for others, then happiness would not be the purpose and the good desired for themselves; rather, it would be the purpose and the good desired for others, for all the faculties of the soul are subservient to the theoretical rational faculty.

Being aware of this sophisticated point, Ibn Sina discusses happiness from two respects. When we consider the happiness of the soul in regard to each faculty, the happiness of the faculty would be the actuality of its potentials, and, this would be its purpose and good desired for itself. However, when we change our perspective and consider happiness in regard to the soul itself, the actuality of each faculty would not be the purpose and the good desired for itself and, therefore, cannot be considered as the soul's happiness.

Conclusion

Farabi and Ibn Sina are the two great philosophers in the Islamic philosophical tradition, who are counted as Peripatetic philosophers. Like other great thinkers of the world, they have used the works of their predecessors, but analyzed them independently. They have adopted the ideas they agreed with, and rejected what they considered to be incorrect. They also developed their own original views and ideas.

Moreover, by comparing the views of Farabi and Ibn Sina we find out that, unlike some thinkers, Ibn Sina is not merely an imitator of Farabi; rather, he is an original philosopher who sometimes knowingly leaves Farabi's views for some other views. As an example, he abandons the definition of happiness given by Farabi and offers his own definition. In the same way, in regard to the relation between happiness and the faculties of the soul, he rejects the view of Farabi and suggests his own idea. In this article the ideas of both thinkers were discussed and analyzed.

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Farsi Abstracts

پارادوکس برکت برای گروهی از یکتاپرستان؟

آدام وود*

این مقاله درباره تناقض آشکار بین ماهیت جسمانی انسان (که برای شادمانی به ماهیت جسمانی او اشاره دارد) و اعتقاد بسیاری از یکتا پرستان است که شادی در حالت غیرجسمانی است که انسان با خداوند متحد می شود. این مقاله بر روی آثار دو متفکر مهم مسلمان و مسیحی تمرکز می کند، ابن طفیل و توماس آکویناس؛ و راه حل های آنها در این زمینه را ارائه می دهد.

واژگان کلیدی: اتحاد با خداوند، شادی، ابن طفیل، آکویناس، رستاخیز.

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از زمانمندی تا ابدیت: سه رویکرد فلسفی

وینسنزو لوموسیو*

این مقاله مسئله زندگی ابدی را با استفاده از سه رویکرد بررسی می کند. تمرکز آن بر روی رویکردهای برگسون، هوسرل، هایدگر از فلسفه معاصر است، و نشان می دهد که استفاده از این سه روش فلسفی بهتر می تواند جنبه های اصلی الهیات و حیانی را نشان دهد، هم چون زنده شدن جسم، ابدیت در بعد متعالی، و زندگی ابدی به عنوان فرشته در بهشت. این گونه، نقطه تعاملی بین فلسفه و الهیات به وجود می آید.

واژگان کلیدی: زندگی ابدی، فلسفه معاصر، برگسون، هایدگر، هوسرل، الهیات و حیانی.

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خودگرایی آین رند: نظریه و تحلیل

رهام شرف*

سید حسن اسلامی**

آین رند فیلسوف، رمان نویس و نمایش نامه نویس روسی الاصل و بزرگ شده آمریکا است که تفسیر وی از خودگرایی اخلاقی یکی از مهم ترین تفسیرها از این نظریه است. در این مقاله به گزارش، تحلیل و نقد خودگرایی اخلاقی وی خواهیم پرداخت. رند مدافع خودگرایی عقلانی است و مقوله عقلانیت عنصری بنیادی در نظریه اخلاقی او است. پس از گزارش و تحلیل خودگرایی اخلاقی رند، به نقد و بررسی این نظریه می پردازیم. نقد تصور رند از مفهوم خود، بنیادی ترین نقدی است که به نظام اخلاقی وی وارد است. این نقد تا حد زیادی مبنای سایر نقدهایی است که به خودگرایی اخلاقی رند وارد است. در پایان به ارائه نظریه اخلاقی با عنوان خود-دیگرگرایی خواهیم پرداخت. در این نظریه تعادل و بالانس میان خود و دیگری محور اخلاق قرار می گیرد.

واژگان کلیدی: خودگرایی، آین رند، دیگرگرایی، خود-دیگرگرایی.

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مشیت الهی: تأملاتی بر مسئله شر

ادوارد الام *

این مقاله مسئله شر در دین های ابراهیمی و سنت های فلسفی را بررسی می کند و سعی بر آن دارد که راه حل آنها را به زبان امروزی ارائه دهد. نویسنده این مقاله سعی دارد بدون رد واقعیت شر روش های سنتی ابراهیمی را تایید کند که به قدرت مطلق، خیرخواهی و علم مطلق الهی می پردازد.

واژگان کلیدی: مسأله شر، تئودیهسه، ادیان ابراهیمی.

استفاده از دشمن به عنوان درمان: دیالکتیک و درمان در آثار دو تاریخدان اولیه هندی

کارل استفان بوتیل *

این مقاله درباره نقش منطق در تاریخ مذهبی است و بر روی آثار دو متفکر و تاریخدان اصلی قرن ششم هند، یعنی بهاویوکا و هاری بهادرا سوری تمرکز می کند که به ترتیب عضو سنت بودای مدهایاماکا و جینتا هستند. این مقاله بررسی می کند که چگونه این دو شخصیت از استعاره های درمانی برای اهداف مناظره خود استفاده کردند.

واژگان کلیدی: تاریخ نگاری، دیالکتیک، بهاویوکا، هاری بهادرا سوری.

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بررسی تطبیقی دیدگاه فارابی و ابن سینا در باره تعریف سعادت و ارتباطش با قوای نفس

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این پژوهش در صدد بررسی تطبیقی دیدگاه فارابی و ابن سینا درباره تعریف سعادت و ارتباطش با قوای نفس است. فارابی پنج تعریف و ابن سینا تنها یک تعریف برای سعادت ارائه داده است. هر یک از این دو متفکر در تعاریف خود از کلید واژه‌های خاصی بهره گرفته‌اند. فارابی از واژه‌های مثل خیر، لذت و غایت و ابن سینا از واژه‌هایی مثل لذت، خیر و کمال بهره گرفته است. هر کدام از تعاریف فارابی و ابن سینا دارای ویژگی‌های خاص خود هستند. در باره مساله دوم فارابی بر این باور است که سعادت محدود به قوای عقلی نفس است و سایر قوا بهره‌ای از سعادت ندارند، اما ابن سینا معتقد است نفس دارای قوای مختلفی است و همه قوا می‌توانند به سعادت برسند و هر قوه‌ای که به فعلیت و کمال خودش برسد، به سعادت خود دست می‌یابد.

واژگان کلیدی: سعادت، قوای نفس، فارابی، ابن سینا.

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