

Ibn Arabi's Unity and Its Relationship with the Problem of "the Other"

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Abstract

Although "the other" has not been discussed by Muslim thinkers as an independent topic, the potential of its discussion exists in all intellectual schools of the Muslim world in general, and in Islamic mysticism in particular. Accordingly, the question on "the other" can be applied to Ibn Arabi's works – as the representative sample of Islamic mysticism – to explore the foundations of his thought in this regard. As the most important basis of Ibn Arabi's worldview, the unity of being can be seen in each and every part of his mystic system, and is among the main principles that determine his treatment of the discussions on "the other". With regard to the ontological discussions, the right and the creation are the different interpretations of the same reality; when the unity aspect of this reality is intended, it turns to be the right, and when the multiplicity aspect is noted, it turns to be creation. However, the most comprehensive view to the world of being is the simultaneous consideration of unity and multiplicity. Despite the acceptance of multiplicity, this comprehensive view adopts a unity stance that surpasses those multiplicities. This way, this combined view sets the ground for the acceptance of "the other" despite all conflicts and disagreements. With its expansion to the domain of epistemology, this attitude elucidates the specific approach taken by Ibn Arabi to the epistemic conflicts.

Keywords: Ibn Arabi, Unity, Multiplicity, The other.

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A Reflection on the Nature of Volition from the Viewpoint of Compatibilism

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Abstract

While some philosophers believe that it is impossible for human acts to be volitional, some others rule for the possibility of it. The first group is called incompatibilist, and the second group is named compatibilist. The compatibilists should both reject the reasons given for incompatibility and provide a theory about the nature of volition which is compatible with determinism. They have given in various criteria for the volitional nature of the free act. The authors of the article at hand aim at first discussing their definitions for the terms volition and determinism and then classifying these criteria into six categories and evaluating them. Having potentiality and being free from constraint, having the ability to conduct reflective self-assessment, having the potential to choose based on one's valuation system, having the potential for comprehending truth and goodness, having a guiding control, and having an appropriate history are among criteria that have been examined in this article. Finally, it has been concluded that from the viewpoint of compatibilism, an appropriate theory about volition is one which entails all these criteria.

Keywords: Volition, Determination, Compatibilism, Incompatibilism, History.

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An Investigation of the Imagination and Affirmation of God

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Abstract

Theoretically speaking, agnosticists claim that we do not have any perception of God, just like Meno who said – in his discussion with Socrates – that the human cannot study something about which he does not have any knowledge and perception, and even if he comes to a result, it is not clear if it is the same thing he wanted to achieve or not. Therefore, based on the common and evident premise that asserts “If something is deemed unimaginable, undoubtedly its verification is impossible”, they have concluded that the unimaginable God is not affirmable or verifiable. Through the exploration and investigation of the concept of imagination and affirmation and the provision of a descriptive definition of God using affirmative qualities essential to being, the article at hand sets out to examine and verify the imagination and affirmation of God through empirical knowledge.

Keywords: Imagination, Affirmation, God, Concept, Definition, Premise.

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A Reflection on and Evaluation of the Role of Spirituality in Resolving the Environmental Crisis from the Viewpoint of Seyyed Hossein Nasr

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Abstract

The role of spirituality in resolving the environmental crisis is one of the most important issues emphasized by traditionalists like Seyyed Hossein Nasr. The main question of this study is that “What is the role of spirituality in resolving the environmental crisis from the viewpoint of Nasr?” The main purpose of this study is the explication of the foregoing claim and answering it based on the content analysis of the collected data. The findings of this research project reveal that from the viewpoint of Nasr, the crisis that exists in the relationship between human and nature in the West is the consequence of rationalism, pure scientism, and absolute humanism. To overcome this crisis, there is no way other than returning to religion, spirituality, and the development of ethical principles about environment within the framework of religion. In other words, the human’s consideration of his status as the divine vicegerent and his responsibility against nature has are crucial in solving this problem.

Keywords: Spirituality, Environmental crisis, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Religion, Human.

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The Epistemic Exploration of Adam's Residence in the Intermediate-World Paradise and His Fall from it from the Viewpoint of Neo-Sadrian Philosophers

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Abstract

The article at hand investigates the opinions and works of neo-Sadrian philosophers about “the necessity of Adam’s (a) early residence in Paradise” based on religious texts. The study is a document analysis which adopts content analysis and description method. The foregoing philosophers take the stance that the human should start his path from a descending status in the intermediate world, go through the multiplicity of the material world, and start the evolutionary life and ascending movement based on his own free will toward the unity of the world of intelligence. Therefore, according to the Qur’anic assertion, Adam (a) started his path to the material life from the intermediate-world paradise. During the time he was in that paradise, he learned the primary lessons such as the divine names, the reality of the divine vicegerent status, and the angels’ prostration to him so as to be able to live on the earth. Moreover, he got familiar with Satan’s temptations and harsh hostility toward the human status. It was after the adoption of these lessons and assets that the human was sent down to the earth. Therefore, the presence of Adam in paradise was due to a huge perfection-oriented benefit based on which he needed to be placed first in the celestial abode of this universe and then to be sent down to the earth. This view is nothing but an interpretation of the status of the human that involves the status of Adam as a prerequisite for humanness in all humans rather than Adam (a) alone. This view asserts that Adam’s presence in paradise has been a kind of self-discovery for him, while his fall from it is equal to the start of his perfection path, since any ascension follows a fall.

Keywords: Neo-Sadrian, Adam (a), First intermediate world, Fall of Adam (a).

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The Life Experience from the Viewpoints of Mullā Ṣadra and Dilthey

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Abstract

Dilthey is a philosopher of life who has investigated the context of life. His view to “life experience” has many similarities to the stance taken by Mullā Ṣadra toward life in his transcendental theosophy. The article does not take the life experience as the “lived experience” of the Dilthey’s philosophy, but rather, it defines the foregoing term as any temporal view to life that examines the human activities during a period of time. The examination of the goals and general path of these two philosophers and their stance toward the life experience reveals a kind of similarity and resemblance that helps us make a comparison between the thoughts of these two thinkers. History and temporality as well as feeling, experience, and the quality of understanding are issues that are addressed in this paper. The flow of life and its active, common, and direct understanding are the main common points of these two philosophers. That is to say, in its movement during the course of life, soul—which is accompanied by value profusion – defines its evolution direction through its volitional act and determines its ideal body.

Keywords: Life experience, Substantial motion, Principality of existence, Mullā Ṣadra, Dilthey.

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From Numerical Unity to the True and Real Unity of the Sublime God

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Abstract

After clarifying the concept of unity and oneness of God and referring to the different types of the One, the article at hand explicates the viewpoint of Muslim philosophers and the content of religious texts about the unity of the divine essence. All Muslim philosophers consider the necessary being as exclusive to one referent, and believe that no other referent is possible for the necessary being. However, their viewpoint to the theoretical referents of the necessary being has evolved from the numerical unity of the necessary being to the true and real unity. This way, their view has approached the specific definition of unity that exists in mysticism. In the Islamic narrations, too, the numerical unity of God has been openly rejected. By describing the unity of the sublime Allah as His omnipotence, The Noble Qur'ān asserts that the unity of the sublime Allah is in such a way that leaves no space for any other assumption.

Keywords: Unity of divine essence, True unity, Numerical unity, Particular unity of being.

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An Examination of the Relationship between Free-Will and Destiny in the World of Existence from the Viewpoint of Allameh Tabataba'i

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Abstract

The belief in the free-will of the human on the one hand and the divine decree's governing of the human life on the other hand appear paradoxical. Therefore, it seems that we should either accept the necessary governing of the divine decree and ignore the power of human free-will, or accept the existence of human volition in the world of contingency and reject any obligation in the world of existence. In order to remove this paradox, it is vital to specify and analyze the meaning of destiny, its necessity and regularity, its relationship with the concept of the world of command and the question on the knowledge of the divine God about the acts and rights of the human on the one hand and the meaning of freedom, free-will and choice of the human in relation to the bliss and affliction, and the examination of the nature of the human on the other hand. Such an analysis has a significant role in the understanding and comprehension of the foregoing question. Through his ontological and humanistic attitude, Allameh Tabataba'i believes that on the one hand, the human performs good acts or commits evil acts in this world based on his free will and establishes his existence and identity through the substantial motion of the soul, while on the other hand, God – in the world of command as the world of pure actualization and stability – knows the destiny and the final outcome of the human's life as either blissful or afflicted through His eternal knowledge (super-temporal and timeless knowledge), though he has destined the human to be free in this world. As this assertion seems paradoxical, the author of the present article has tried to solve this problem and remove the seeming paradox using the works of the honorable Allameh.

Keywords: Free-will, Destiny, Divine knowledge, Bliss, Affliction, World of divine command, World of creation.

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