

A Critical Analysis of the Article: ‘A Study of the Silence Approach Against the Theory of Union of the Intelligent and Intelligible’

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Abstract

In a previous scholarly contribution (A1), a critical examination was conducted wherein the foremost arguments substantiating and challenging the theory of the "amalgamation of the intelligent and the intelligible" were scrutinized. Through a meticulous critique, I advanced the proposition that a stance of reticence should be adopted concerning this theory. The approach characterized by reticence has encountered critique in another scholarly investigation (A2), wherein the author endeavored to salvage the "mutual correlation" argument from the perceived challenges presented in my article. In the present article, upon scrutinizing A2, I have demonstrated: 1-A2 effectively abandons the "mutual correlation" argument and advances alternative contentions not articulated by Sadra himself; 2-these contentions prove inadequate in substantiating the postulated unity of matter and form integral to the theory of the "amalgamation of the intelligent and the intelligible"; 3-none of the objections posited by A2 find incorporation within A1. It has been clarified that being non-material is not a condition of being intellectualized, and this matter does not contradict being non-material of perceptual forms. It is also known that the condition of being actually intellectualized is being non-material substance.

Keywords: Union of the Intelligent and Intelligible, Union of Matter and Form, Argument of Mutual Correlation, Intuition.

Introduction

In an extensive article, twelve proofs advocating the theory of the union of the intelligent and the intelligible are examined, encompassing three arguments proposed by Ṣadrā, notably the argument of mutual correlation, along with seven arguments from Mullā Hādī Sabzevārī, one from Allāmah Tabātabā'ī, and another from Murtaḍā Muṭahharī. Given the absence of conclusive arguments both in favor and against the theory, the deduced imperative is to adopt a stance of reticence. This silence-oriented approach, however, has not escaped criticism, as evidenced by a subsequent article striving to uphold the argument of mutual correlation in opposition to the initial exposition. Through a critical evaluation of this second article and its endeavors to defend the mutual correlation argument, it becomes apparent that these efforts prove to be ineffectual and unavailing.

Research Findings

It has been cleared that the union of intelligent and intelligible, being the union of matter and form, according to Sadra, entails that perceptual forms must be substance, in his view,

because form is substance, and Sadrā's specific view about the perception of universals supports this claim.

The exposition of the argument of mutual correlation in such a way that in it, the principle of "the soul in its unity is all faculties" or the theory of "the unity of simple reality and copulative existence" is used, is actually giving up the argument of mutual correlation and establishing a new argument that Sadra did not even mention, and is unable to prove the claim (i.e. the union of matter and form).

Since the material effect is present with its immaterial cause, the cause has intuitive knowledge of its effect, and since in one case, the material entity is known, therefore it can be said: immateriality is not a condition for being known, and this matter does not contradict the principle of "all immaterial entities are intelligent" or "all intelligent entities are immaterial", because the discussion is about the condition of being intelligible, not the condition of being intelligent, and it also does not contradict with the immateriality of perceptual forms, because the discussion is about the intuitive knowledge of immaterial cause of the material effect, not about empirical knowledge.

The fact that material existence, itself is the knowledge of Allah the Exalted does not contradict the proof of divine knowledge by the principle of "simple reality", because this principle proves the essential knowledge of Allah the Exalted which is the same as the Essence of God, but our discussion is about the active knowledge of God, which is the same as His act.

The condition of being actual and essential intelligible is being immaterial substance. According to Sadra, accident is the copulative existence of substance, so it does not exist regardless of all objects (even its subject), so that it can be said that it is actually intelligible entity.

The fact that the accident has awareness of itself and of its cause, as much as its existence, removes the issue from the discussion, because the discussion is about the empirical knowledge, not about the intuitive knowledge of the accident to itself or to its cause.

Clinging to the fact that perceptual forms are manifestations of the soul, in order to prove the theory of union of the intelligent and intelligible is to give up the proof of mutual correlation and to establish a new proof that Sadra himself did not even mention and is unable to prove the unity of matter and form that is claimed.

Conclusion

It is evident that A2, in reality, forsakes the argument of mutual correlation and introduces alternative contentions not originally addressed by Sadra. These arguments, however, prove inadequate in substantiating the postulated union of matter and form as asserted by the theory of the union of the intelligent and intelligible. Furthermore, all criticisms put forth by the A2 against A1 have been systematically dismissed or expunged.

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