

Dualism of the Soul and the Body in the Philosophical System of Ibn Sīnā and Descartes

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Abstract

The problem of human's two domains has a significant influence on human knowledge, and since the human privilege in the universe to the other beings as well as the immateriality of the soul and so on is based on proving the soul's substance separately, it worths to search in this issue about the ideas of two Western and Islamic philosophers. Ibn Sīnā with arguments such as the "suspending man" proves this matter; Descartes also proves this matter with "Cogito argument". In this paper, after explaining the views of these two philosophers, we have tried to compare these two perspectives. Ibn Sīnā considers the soul as "the first perfection of the natural body" and Descartes defines it as a "thinking substance". Both of them are dualists with two truly separate substances. In each of their proofs, simultaneously, they prove the soul's immateriality and its distinction from body and its self-consciousness. Their important difference is that the Ibn Sīnā's proof is a hypothetical state, while Descartes' Cogito is a personal experience which can be attained by a little meditation. Both of them believe in the mutual influence of the soul and body.

Keywords:

Distinction of the mind from the body, Ibn Sīnā, Descartes

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Introduction

The soul is an important philosophical subject discussed by ancient Greek philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle and also the giants of Islamic philosophy such as Al-Kindī, Al-Fārābī, and Ibn Sīnā in particular; as well as Western philosophers such as Descartes. The subject has been widely discussed because the problem of human nature or the realms of human existence is among the main problems of philosophy. Monism and dualism are the most debated and controversial answers to this question. According to the proponents of monism, human beings consist of a single realm or substance while dualists maintain that the distinction between the two realms is not merely apparent and that one realm can never be reduced to another. This article explores the views of three dualist philosophers, namely Plato, Ibn Sīnā, and Descartes, who are among the major figures of Western and Islamic philosophy.

Plato and his followers are proponents of dualism, a doctrine that more or less persisted in the Middle Ages. Descartes defined the soul as a substance independent from and contrary to the body. When proving the existence and discussing the essence of the soul, Descartes raised issues that created the greatest school of dualism in Western philosophy after Plato. Spinoza and Leibniz, two of his disciples, then formulated theories on the subjects discussed by Descartes. Even after Descartes and his disciples, the discussion remained open, and new theories were proposed including Malebranche's Occasionalism, Leibniz's pre-established harmony, Brad's epiphenomenalism, and Spinoza's double aspect naturalism.

The Definition of the Soul from the Ibn Sīnā's and Descartes' views

Ibn Sīnā adopts the Aristotelian definition of the soul and remarks, "The soul is the first perfection of a natural organic body potentially alive."¹ (Ibn Sīnā, 1379: vol. 1, 194) (He, 1375: vol. 3, 290)

¹ . النفس كمالُ الأوَّل لجسمٍ طبيعيٍّ آليٍّ ذي حياتٍ بالقوه "

When explaining the terms of this definition, he divides perfection into two kinds: The first perfection generates the species. Species are realized in virtue of the first perfection, which is also called the form of the species. In contrast to the first perfection, the second perfection is not specific. However, it is a quality corresponding to the first perfection. In the above definition, the soul is a first perfection. The term "body" excludes immaterials. The term "natural" excludes the form of artificial as well as mathematical bodies. Mathematical bodies are among the accidental properties of natural bodies and subsist in them. The qualification "organic" excludes the forms of minerals, the functions of which are not performed by bodily instruments. By "potentially alive," Ibn Sīnā does not intend to exclude what is actually alive. He intends to explain that it is not necessary for the soul to display all the signs of actual life. The signs of life are sometimes potential and sometimes actual and include ratio, perception, voluntary motion, nutrition, growth, reproduction, etc. (Ibn Sīnā, 1375: vol. 3, 290)

Descartes defines the human soul as that which thinks and asks, "What is a thing which thinks? It is a thing which doubts, understands, affirms, denies, wills, refuses, which also imagines and feels." (Mortimer j, v. 28, 1994:305). Therefore, the human soul is the same as thought because it exists as long as it thinks and if it ceases to think, there would be no reasons for thinking that it still exists.

Theories of Human Nature

There are various theories of human nature. Reductionist theories reduce human beings to a single constituent while non-reductionist theories refuse to do so. The second group of theories accommodates both the body and the mind and attempts to explain their interrelations. The theories of Aristotle, Ibn Sīnā, and Descartes can be classified as non-reductionist. Reductionist theories consider just the mind or the body as real. Some philosophers such as Fichte, Berkeley, and Hegel only consider the mind to be real and regard the existence of the body as meaningful only in the light of the mind. Mullā Ṣadrā can also be classified as a reductionist considering some of the theories he has proposed about the human soul. In contrast, some philosophers allow the existence of the body in their theories while denying the existence of any entity called "soul." Most such philosophers are materialist thinkers who deny the existence of the supernatural. Philosophers such

as Marx, Ryle, and Davidson can be classified as reductionists. Because they deny the existence of an immaterial entity called "soul," such philosophers have attempted to propose material explanations for mental phenomena such as behavior and nervous stimulation. (Akbarī, 1382: 71)

Monist Views

The following are among monist theories of the soul, most of which are physical theories and a kind of advanced materialism: 1) Type identity 2) Instance identity 3) The Gestalt school. (Ḥātāmī, 1383: 65)

Dualist Views

According to dualism, human beings consist of two substances: mind and body. A view qualifies as dualistic even if both substances are considered material. (Birinjār, 1389: 5) Accordingly, belief in the spirituality of the soul is not a necessary condition of dualism. Therefore, there are two kinds of dualistic theories: Those regarding both the soul and the body as material substances and those regarding the soul as a spiritual substance while admitting that the body is material. However, if dualism is interpreted as a theory that allows the existence of both material and spiritual substances, theories that consider the soul and the body to be distinct material substances cannot be classified as dualistic and should be viewed as a type of monism. However, compared to the theories viewing the body and the soul as identical, such theories are considered dualistic. Maybe the Wilhelm Vent can be included in this group. (Misiak and Sexton, 1378: 16)

The prevailing view among Islamic scholars is that the soul is a spiritual substance while the body is material. Early Islamic philosophers such as al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, and Ibn Sīnā shared this view, which was highly influenced by ancient Greek philosophers as well as religious sources. Their specification of the soul's immateriality and its unimpression in the body, at least at some stages, indicates Platonic tendencies. Plotinus and his Neo-Platonic ideas might have been the medium through which Plato's ideas were transferred to Islamic philosophy, to the extent that even peripatetic philosophy has been influenced by the teachings of the Neo-Platonic school.

The overall views of dualists suggest that proving the distinction of the soul from the body is based on demonstrating the spirituality of the

soul, that is, once the spirituality of the soul is established, it implies the distinction of the soul from the body. This is why most dualists provide a single argument for both the spirituality of the soul and the distinction of the soul from the body.

The Distinction of the Soul from the Body from the Ibn Sīnā's and Descartes' views

Under the influence of Plato, Neoplatonism, and in the light of Islam, Ibn Sīnā modified Aristotle's doctrine significantly. He stressed the unity of the soul and the body considering that via the body, the soul performs actions that have a material aspect. However, considering the soul to be distinct from the body because it can be the source of some actions without the body (such as the perception of the intelligible), he regarded the soul as superior to and distinct from the body. (seasi, 1333:25)

In The Book of Healing, Ibn Sīnā remarks, "There can be no doubt that there are indivisible separate intellects that are created with the creation of the bodies but do not become corrupt. They persist as we demonstrated in natural science. These indivisible separate intellects are not generated by the first cause because despite their multiplicity, they are one species and because they are temporary, they are the first cause's mediating effect."¹(Ibn Sīnā, 1376:441) Here, Ibn Sīnā is explicitly saying that when first created, the human soul is an indivisible intellect separate from the body generated when the body comes into existence. It is prudentially attached to the body while lasting forever without being corrupted with the corruption of the body.

However, by "intellect," Ibn Sīnā is referring to the material intellect, which distinguishes the human soul from that of other animals. Ibn Sīnā has provided around thirteen reasons for the spirituality of the rational well.human soul, which implicitly prove the distinction of the soul from the material body (Ibn Sīnā, Epistles (essay gift), 194-214; Altbyyat healing, vol. 2, 192-195, hints and punishment, vol. 3, design 7, 373)

The "suspending man" is Ibn Sīnā's most important argument for

¹ . و مما لا نشك فيه أن ههنا عقولاً بسيطة مفارقة، نحدث مع حدوث ابدان الناس و لا تفسد بل تبقى و قد تبين ذلك في العلوم الطبيعية و ليست صادرة عن العله الاولى لأنها كثيرة مع وحدة النوع و لانها حادثه فهي اذن معلولات الاولى بتوسط

the distinction of the soul from the body. Ibn Sīnā himself seems to have paid particular attention to this argument. This is why he has presented the argument twice in *The Book of Healing* and once in *The Book of Directives and Remarks*.

"... A human being is suddenly created with organs that are separated while not being able to see, touch, or hear anything and while the organs cannot touch each other and he is unaware of their existence. However, despite his unawareness of the existence of all the other things, he is aware of his own existence as a unique being, the known is not the same as the unknown and, in fact, our organs are like clothes that look like our constituents because they have been our constant concomitants." (Ibn Sīnā, 1379, Vol. 2, 292)¹

This argument emphasizes that humans are aware of their own existence in all states while being oblivious to their bodies and their organs. This awareness demonstrates that the unique human nature is distinct from all body organs. The qualifications and conditions presented in the above argument are intended to demonstrate this conclusion. According to the argument, body organs are not connected because if they were, they would be conscious of each other. The human being is suspending in open air because otherwise, he would be aware of the object on which he is lying. If the air in which he is suspending were hot, cold, in motion, etc. the suspending organs would be conscious of those qualities. Therefore, the qualifications Ibn Sīnā introduces are meant to demonstrate that even if humans are oblivious to their organs, they are aware of their own existence in all states.

It is, therefore, clear that the object perceived is distinct from body organs and is not perceptible or similar to the perceptible (such as what is imaginary or illusionary) itself. It is an intellectual substance and these organs, whether considered individually or collectively, have no relevance to human nature. In this argument, Ibn Sīnā regards consciousness as the substance of the soul and considers the "self" and the "ego" as identical with consciousness. This means that the soul is in a state of being in which it is present to itself. Elsewhere, Ibn Sīnā

¹ ... لَوْ خُلِقَ إِنْسَانٌ دَفْعَةً وَاحِدَةً وَ خُلِقَ مُتَبَايِنَ الْأَطْرَافِ وَ لَمْ يُبْصِرْ أَطْرَافَهُ وَ اتَّفَقَ أَنْ لَمْ يَمَسَّهَا وَ لَا تَمَسَّتْ وَ لَمْ يَسْمَعْ صَوْتًا، جَهْلًا وَجُودَ جَمِيعِ أَعْضَائِهِ وَ عِلْمَ وَجُودِ إِنْتِبِهِ شَيْئًا مَعَ جَهْلِ جَمِيعِ ذَلِكَ وَ لَيْسَ الْمَنْجُوهُولُ بِعَيْنِهِ هُوَ الْمَعْلُومُ وَ لَيْسَتْ هَذِهِ الْأَعْضَاءُ لَنَا فِي الْحَقِيقَةِ إِلَّا كَالْتِيَابِ الَّتِي صَارَتْ لِدَوَامِ لُزُومِهَا إِيَّانَا كَأَجْزَاءِ مِنَّا عِنْدَنَا...

emphasizes that "our consciousness is identical with our very being and this is known by presential knowledge, not by instinct." (Ibn Sīnā, 1411: 160)

In The Book of Directives and Remarks, Ibn Sīnā comments, "When you are healthy, or even when you are not, but you are still in your right mind, to return to yourself and see whether you are unaware of and oblivious to your own existence? Don't you prove your own existence? I don't believe that a sensible person would not prove his own existence [by doing so] and would be oblivious to his own existence. Even a sleeping person, when he is asleep and drunk, is not oblivious to himself even if he neglects to perceive his own essence. If you assume that you are created with a proper intellect and form in your first creation, and it is assumed that you are in such a condition that you cannot see or touch your organs while they are suspending in open air, you will find yourself oblivious to everything except your existence."¹ By studying and reflecting on four different states of the soul, Ibn Sīnā here concludes that human beings are never oblivious to their own essence. The fourth assumption is the "suspending man" argument. This state is Ibn Sīnā's most precise empirical and philosophical hypothesis to argue for the existence of the soul and its distinction from the body. (Ibn Sīnā, 1379, Vol. 2:292)

Although many scholars identify Platonism as the foundation of Descartes' philosophy, his reflections on the subject (the soul), the object (the body), and the knowing subject were a turning point in intellectual history.

Descartes dedicated the sixth meditation titled "Of the existence of material things, and of the real distinction between the soul and body of man" (Mortimer j, v. 28, 1994:322) to this topic.

According to Descartes, "...my soul, by which I am what I am, is entirely and absolutely distinct from my body and can exist without it. (ibid, 324)

¹ ارجع الى نفسك و تأمل هل اذا كنت صحيحاً بل و على بعض احوالك غيرها بحيث تظن للشيء فظنه صحيحاً هل تغفل عن وجود ذاتك و لا تثبت نفسك؟ ما عندى ان هذا يكون للمستبصر حتى ان النائم في نومه و السكران في سكره لا يعزب ذاته عن ذاته و ان لم يثبت تمثله لذاته في ذكره و لو توهمت ان ذاتك قد خلقت اول خلقها صحيحه العقل و الهيئه و قد فرض أنها على جمله من الوضع و الهيئه لا تبصر اجزائها و لا تتلمس اعضاؤها بل هي منفرجه و معلقه لحظه ما في هواء طلق وجدتها قد غفلت عن كل شيء الا عن ثبوت اينتها

By "distinction," Descartes means real distinction, which means the distinction between two or more substances that are "capable of existing independently." (Descartes, 1997:255) This distinction is identified by the knowing subject, which can imagine one substance clearly and distinctly without another.

Descartes' Reasons for the Substantial Distinction of the Soul from the Body

Descartes provides several arguments for the distinction of the soul from the body: 1) via the negation of corporeal properties and, 2) via the distinction between certain and doubtful matters.

Argument via the Negation of Corporeal Properties

Descartes' first argument for the spirituality of the soul, and thereby the distinction of the soul from the body, proceeds, as usual, by identifying main properties. He claims that even if we remove all the properties of corporeal bodies from the soul, the soul persists. "I am not a set of accidents which is called a human body. I am not even some thin vapor which permeates the limbs - a wind, fire, air, breath, or whatever I depict in my imagination; for these are things which I have supposed to be nothing. Let this supposition stand; for all that I am still something." (Descartes, 2003:18)

We now add Spinoza's axiom: "If it is possible to negate something from an object while the object remains the same, the thing, therefore, does not constitute the object's essence." (Spinoza, 1382:112)

We can now conclude that the soul is not corporeal and is, therefore, distinct from the body.

Descartes himself has formulated this argument geometrically in response to the second objection under the title of "The fourth proposition":

- 1) God can create anything we imagine clearly, as we imagine it.
- 2) We can clearly imagine the soul as distinct from the body.
- 3) Therefore, by divine power, the soul and the body can exist without each other.
- 4) Substances capable of coming into existence distinctly are truly distinct.
- 5) The soul and the body are substances capable of coming into existence distinctly.

- 6) *Therefore, the soul and the body are truly distinct. (Descartes:1997:260)*

In his commentary on the Principles of Philosophy, Spinoza reformulates the same argument under the title of "The eighth proposition" as follows:

- 1) *It is possible for anything we perceive clearly to have been created by God in the way we perceive it.*
- 2) *We perceive the soul clearly as a thinking substance independent from the body, that is, we perceive the body as distinct from the soul.*
- 3) *Therefore, at least by divine power, it is possible for the soul to exist without the body and vice versa.*
- 4) *Substances capable of existing separately are truly distinct.*
- 5) *It is possible for the soul and the body to exist separately.*
- 6) *Therefore, the soul and the body are truly distinct. (Spinoza, 1382:89)*

The Second Argument via the Distinction between the Certain and the Doubtful

Descartes' second argument invokes the certainty of the existence of the soul, the doubtfulness of the existence of the body as well as the distinction between the certain and the doubtful, which is a philosophical principle. "I have now realized certainly that I exist, and that it is quite probable for these images and for everything related to the nature of the body, to be a dream." (Descartes, 2003:71) Now by adding the premise that the certain are distinct from the doubtful, we can conclude that the soul is distinct from the body.

Another version of this argument, which results from the cogito, is as follows: We doubt everything except ourselves and, at the same time, we realize that we think. (Descartes1997:279) We cannot imagine that we do not doubt. "I think, therefore, I exist" is the first and the most certain conclusion anyone doing philosophy regularly can reach. Since the certain and the doubtful are not the same, the soul is, therefore, distinct from the body. (Ibid)

Descartes considers this the best method for proving the existence of the soul and its distinction from the body because "I," assuming everything to be false except my own existence, clearly perceive that no extension, shape, motion or anything that can be attributed to the body belongs to our nature. It is only thought, not anything else. (Ibid)

In Discourse on Method, Descartes remarks, "Then, examining with attention what I was, and seeing that I could pretend that I had no body and that there was no world nor any place where I was, I could not pretend, on that account, that I did not exist at all, and that, on the contrary, from the very fact that I thought of doubting the truth of other things, it followed very evidently and very certainly that I existed; whereas on the other hand, had I simply stopped thinking, even if all the rest of what I had ever imagined had been true, I would have had no reason to believe that I had existed. From this, I knew that I was a substance the whole essence or nature of which is simply to think, and which, in order to exist, has no need of any place nor depends on any material thing. Thus this "I," that is to say, the soul through which I am what I am, is entirely distinct from the body and is even easier to know than the body, and even if there were no bodies at all, it would not cease to be all that it is." (Descartes, 1998:18)

Criticism of Dualism

The fundamental problem with dualism is explaining the interaction of mind and body while considering them distinct substances. In other words, the problem is in explaining how a spiritual substance can interact with a material one?

Ibn Sīnā has discussed the subject in detail and has claimed that it is in fact through this "vapor soul" that the soul and the body interact so much. (Ibn Sīnā, 1404: 232) In response to the above question, Descartes claims that it is through the pineal gland that the soul and the body affect each other. Princess Elizabeth asked Descartes this question. In a letter to her when he was old, Descartes responded, "how the soul interacts with the body is better understood by not thinking, and it is one of the mysteries that should be accepted without understanding". (Richard H. Popkin & Avrum Stroll, 1373: 153).

But this Ibn Sīnā and Descartes' justification creates another problem. How does this vapor soul or pineal gland make the mutual relationship between the soul and the body? Another problem is neglecting the position of body especially brain, in spite of the soul unity with the body because soul's activity is related to the brain and body's health. By brain's damage, some part of soul's activity stops or goes on hard. So, soul without body cannot have any evolution and body in some

situations can prevent soul's activity. Ibn Sīnā answers this problem. He says the brain is just a condition and preparing cause for soul's acts, but the perception is just related to the soul. (*Ishārāt and Altanbīhāt, namat7, tabṣirih* 2). Descartes stresses, " As long as the relationship between the body and the soul, the soul uses the body as an instrument ... but it does not mean that the body relatively evolves the soul ... because the soul acts separately of the body".(M.D. ,1978:179)

The Most Important Philosophical Requirements for Dualism

According to Physicalism, human nature consists of nothing more than this sophisticated evolved body and supernatural principles do not apply to humans. Any effect manifested in humans is, therefore, always caused by matter. Thus, mind-body dualism is meaningless when it comes to human beings. This belief implies that humans will not survive after death because matter is obviously corruptible. However, a dualist can still discuss hereafter life and the Resurrection, which are present in the tenets of all divine religions. According to Ibn Sīnā, death consists of the separation of the soul from the body in which bodily organs decompose whereas the soul survives and the substance of the soul, which is the essence of human beings, persists. (*Ibn Sīnā, 1385: 292*). In his Dedicatory letter to the Sorbonne, printed at the beginning of the first publication of *Meditations*, Descartes reminds us that faith requires us to believe that the human soul does not die with the death of the body and adds that proving this claim using natural reason helps the religious cause while battling atheism. A decade ago, by proving the existence of the soul after separation from the body, Descartes had demonstrated his intentions to confront arrogant individuals who fight God. This confrontation can be carried out by showing that the soul is independent of the body, which results in the survival of the soul. (*Cottingham, 1390: 273*) Accordingly, in the same way that proving the survival of the soul depends on proving the spirituality of the soul as a substance distinct from the body, proving the existence of life after death and the Resurrection depends on proving the survival of the soul.

The Relation between the Soul and the Body

Unlike Aristotle who considers the soul and the body as totally united and views their relation as the relation between matter and form, Ibn Sīnā does not believe in such a unity and maintains that the soul is an entirely spiritual, separate, and indivisible substance that is created

with and embedded in the body. In this world, it is prudentially attached to the body for a while, which is its tool. Since Ibn Sīnā does not view the relation between the soul and the body as the relation between matter and form, he believes that the definition of the soul as a perfection is superior to the definition of the soul as form. The soul is attached to the body while forms are imprinted in matter. If we view the soul as imprinted in the body, every part of the soul should correspond to every part of the body, and the soul will be divided as the body divides while the soul is spiritual and indivisible. (Ibn Sīnā, 1404: 6). On the other hand, the attachment of the soul to the body is accidental, not essential. Therefore, the definition of the soul as the "perfection of the body" expresses a relative aspect of the soul, not its essence. This is why the study of this spiritual substance with regard to its attachment to the body is the task of natural sciences while the study of this substance with regard to its spiritual essence is the task of theology (Ibid, 9). It is evident from Ibn Sīnā's remarks that he considers the soul and the body as two contrary substances. He compares the relation between the soul and the body to the relationship between a king and a country, that of a captain and a ship, and in some other cases, to that of a bird and a nest. "Consider God's wisdom, how He has created different temperaments based on the principles of different tempers and has provided each temperament with one species. He has assigned the lowest of temperaments to the lowest species and the best of the temperaments, which is the most moderate, to the human soul so that the rational soul is nested." (Ibn Sīnā, 1381:229). When explaining this remark, Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī says, "There is a subtle metaphor in the statement 'the rational soul is nested' which means that the soul is spiritual and its relation to temperament is like that of a bird to its nest." (Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, 1383:365)

Although Ibn Sīnā considers the soul and the body to be contraries, not only does he not deny the interaction between the two but he also stresses the interaction between the soul and the body. According to Ibn Sīnā, the rational human soul connects and is attached to the body and starts to manipulate it via a vapor soul, which consists of a gas with a complex composition and special temperament. This gas is capable of soul creation and is a place for its manipulation. (Ibn Sīnā, 1363:274-273). Ibn Sīnā classifies the actions and states of the soul into several types, related to the body: Some states are related to the body primarily and essentially but only because the body has a soul. Sleep,

wakefulness, health and illness are among such states. Some states are related to the soul primarily and essentially but only because the soul is in a body and belongs to it. Imagination, lust, anger, sadness, and grief are among such states. Some states are equally related to the soul as well as the body. These states are attributed to either the soul or the body essentially while being attributed accidentally to one of them via the other one. Ibn Sīnā classifies pleasure and pain as states shared by the soul and the body. (Ibn Sīnā, 1404: 175)

Descartes believed that the body of a living human being has no need for a soul and specifies that the body is a machine existing independently from the soul. (Copleston, N.k., 1380: vol. 4: 175) Accordingly, we can say that the difference between the body of a living and a dead human being is like the difference between a watch, or another machine, that contains all the material requirements and principles for motion, to a broken watch. This belief explains why Descartes, unlike Ibn Sīnā, considers the body self-sustaining, not sustained by the soul. The differences between these two substances are that the body is intrinsically extended while the soul is inherently thinking.

This is Descartes' Dualism at its fullest. The independence of the soul and the body before the corruption of the body and the separation of the soul from the body have no significant result for humans unless the two are joined and united. This is because the soul can only achieve spiritual virtues and obtain its worthy perfection via the body, and the corporeal body can survive until it is separated from the spiritual soul. It is, therefore, necessary for the soul and the body to be united if they are to achieve their special goals.

Descartes maintains that the soul is united with the whole body and its organs, not with a particular organ. However, this does not mean that the soul can perform all of its actions via any organ. On the contrary, there is a particular organ in the human body where the soul particularly performs its actions more than in other organs. It is the small pineal gland in the middle part of the brain suspended above a canal through which animal souls present in the front cavities of the canal contact animal souls present in the back cavities. The slightest motion in the gland can cause tremendous changes in the routes of animal souls and the slightest change in the motion of the animal souls can change the motion of the pineal gland. (Descartes, 1376:331-332)

We can now ask if there are any empirical reasons for thinking that

the soul is located in the pineal gland. Descartes responds by saying that firstly, unlike other brain parts, the pineal gland is not one of a matching pair. Secondly, since we always have an indivisible impression of a single particular object, there must be a single thing so that the two impressions entering the mind through the eyes are united and two sense impressions are prevented from entering the soul. This is because there is no other organ in our body through which our impressions are united before entering the soul. Therefore, the location of the soul and the point at which the soul communicates with the body is the pineal gland. (Raḥmānī, 1389: 378)

However, since the pineal gland is itself corporeal, the problem of how a spiritual substance relates to the corporeal body remains unresolved in Descartes philosophy.

Conclusion

Ibn Sīnā considers the soul “the first perfection for the natural organic body” and Descartes defines the soul as “the thinking substance.” Both two philosophers regard the soul as distinct from the body. Ibn Sīnā has attempted to prove the distinction of the soul from the body using arguments particular to him. “The suspending man” is among his most famous arguments. Descartes provides several reasons for the distinction of the soul from the body including “the distinction between the certain and the doubtful” in the proposition, “I think, therefore, I exist.” Both Ibn Sīnā and Descartes, in their “suspending man” and “Cogito” arguments, prove the existence of the soul but also its spirituality and distinction from the body simultaneously. Both philosophers stress the self-consciousness and the thinking element of the soul. However, Ibn Sīnā’s “suspending man” argument is a hypothetical state while Descartes Cogito can be conceived by personal experience and meditation.

The discussion concerning the relation of the soul to the body follows the discussion about the distinction of the soul from the body. Plato views the relation between the soul and the body as the relation between a bird and a nest, with no attachments involved. Ibn Sīnā considers the attachment of the soul to the body to be accidental, not essential. Descartes believes that the soul and the body are really distinct substances. One substance does not necessitate the other, and one can exist independently of the other. This leads to the problem of explaining the interaction of these completely distinct substances. Ibn Sīnā

explains the interaction by his "vapor soul" while Descartes invokes the "pineal gland." All philosophers believe in the mutual influence of the soul and the body on each other. They stress that the soul is distinct from the body and that the soul transcends matter and is essentially contrary to the body, which, from a philosophical viewpoint, lays the groundwork for the survival of the soul, and paves the way for raising the question of life after death.

Notes:

(1) Occasionalism: Malebranche is the most famous person among the theorists of Occasionalism. He believes the vast distinction between the realm of the spirit and matter prevents any one-way or mutual communication between them. (Fūrūghī, 1385: 289)

(2) Pre-established Harmony: According to this theory, mental and physical events are closely connected with each other without having any direct or indirect causal effect on each other. This theory, first proposed by the German philosopher Gottfried Leibniz, is an objection to Descartes. (Ibid: 345-349)

(3) Epiphenomenalism; Proponents of this theory believe that the soul is separate and distinct from the body, but at the same time stress that the soul is causally related to the body in the sense that whatever happens in the soul is the result of bodily events, but the soul is unable of influencing the body in any way. (E-magazine, Riḍā Akbarī, the fundamental source of Islamic thought)

(4) Double Aspect Naturalism: According to Spinoza, humans are only one manifestation of God or nature, and the mind and the body cannot be separated. The mind and the body are merely different manifestations of the same substance or essence. Spinoza identified a common essence that reveals itself in dual aspects in God. Mental states do not affect bodily processes. Physical states do not affect mental states either. This lack of a causal relation is because they are merely different manifestations of the same substance. The type of relationship between the mind and the body is called Psycho-physical Parallelism. (Fūrūghī, 1385:314-323) `

(5) Type Identity: According to this theory, the relation between neural stimulation and mental phenomena is identical, not causal. This

theory states that any kind of mind has the relation of identity with a physical type. For example, the "pain" type is identical with nerve c. (E-magazine, *Ridā Akbarī*, the fundamental source of Islamic thought)

(6) Instance Identity: Davidson believed that in addition to things such as desks, books, walls, etc., there are also things called "events" in our ontological structure. He believed that the only events in the world are physical ones, but these events are such that, in addition to physical properties, they possess mental properties as well. (Ibid)

(7) Gestalt: A school of thought in psychology and the name of a small group of German psychologists of the twentieth century who were followers of this school. They based their study of learning on Max Wertheimer's ideas. Its founders were Max Wertheimer and two of his colleagues called Wolfgang Kohler and Kurt Koffka. (<https://fa.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gestalt>)

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