

# Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī on the Soul: A Critical Approach to Ibn Sīnā

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In a recent paper, I showed that Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, at least in his *al-Mabāḥiṭh al-mashriqiyya*, underwent many Avicennian influences, and this in spite of severe criticisms he directs against Ibn Sīnā.<sup>1</sup> However, I there concentrated especially on the third, metaphysical part of the work. In the present study, I will focus on two major sections of the chapter on the soul in the second part, namely the section dealing with the study of the soul's generalities and the section on proving its immaterial nature. Although I will follow the order of the exposé of the *Mabāḥiṭh*, whenever there is a significant parallel, I also consider *al-Maṭālib al-‘āliya min al-‘ilm al-ilāhī*, another of al-Rāzī's major writings. Whereas the *Mabāḥiṭh* figures as the starting point of al-Rāzī's "new synthesis" between *kalām* and *falsafa*, the *Maṭālib* offers its major expression (including in the synthesis as well elements of Sufism).<sup>2</sup> Unsurprisingly, compared to the *Mabāḥiṭh* one finds doctrinal modifications as well as important changes in emphasis in the *Maṭālib*. In the present study, I will limit myself to indicate them without any indepth analysis. In fact, a thorough investigation of the differences between the two writings would require a systematic comparison with other of al-Rāzī's works as e.g., the *Mulakhkhaṣ* and the *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*. Moreover, an overall contextualisation, i.e., one that not only deals with the comparison with Ibn Sīnā but also with kalāmīc and Sufi influences, would be needed. Such an investigation, however interesting, clearly exceeds the limits of a paper. My aim in writing this paper is therefore much more humble, namely to show which precise Avicennian texts al-Rāzī uses, when discussing the soul and the proofs for its immateriality, primarily in the *Mabāḥiṭh* (but with an eye on the *Maṭālib*).

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<sup>1</sup> See my "Ibn Sīnā's Impact on Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's *Mabāḥiṭh al-mashriqiyya*, with Particular Regard to the Section Entitled *al-Ilābiyyāt al-mahḍa*: An Essay of Critical Evaluation," in *Documenti e Studi sulla Tradizione Filosofica Medievale*, 21 (2010), pp. 259–85.

<sup>2</sup> The elaboration of a new synthesis by al-Rāzī has been masterly described by Ayman Shihadeh, "From al-Ghazālī to al-Rāzī: 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Century Developments in Muslim Philosophical Theology", in *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 15 (2005), pp. 141–179, 170–77.

## A. The soul: general considerations

Al-Rāzī, in the *Mabāḥith* (II.2.2.1), starts his investigation of the soul with what he qualifies as general opinions.<sup>3</sup> He develops them in no less than five chapters.

### A1. Definition of the soul

The first chapter has as its main object the definition of the soul. It offers a patchwork of fragments derived from *K. al-naḥs* of the *Shifā'* (I.1), i.e. pp. 4.5–10; 11.1–2; 6.1–10; 6.12–8.3 (summarized); 10.17–18 (elaborated); 11.7–12.7; 12.2–3 and 9–15 (fundamentally reformulated); 12.17–13.2, 14.8–16 (slightly reformulated) and 15.9–14.<sup>4</sup> They explicate respectively the following major ideas:

1. Animated bodies need a principle other than their body to explain their actions.
2. Since the soul, as that principle, is related to the body, its study belongs to the natural sciences.
3. According to different perspectives, one can qualify the soul as *quwwa*, power (as principle of motion), form (compared to the matter in which it exists) or perfection (with respect to a genus).
4. The priority of the definition of the soul as perfection over its definitions as form or power. The appellation (*ism*) denotes, not the soul's essence, but its relation with the body. In a personal note, al-Rāzī highlights this relational character. In addition, he states that the Ancients (*al-awā'il*) referred to the Soul and the Intellect of the Universe, while asserting that the Universe is a living Being.<sup>5</sup>
5. Having distinguished between first and second perfections, the soul is defined as "the first perfection of a natural, instrumental body possessing life in potency". This is not exactly the definition given in the *Shifā'*, where instead of "possessing life in potency", Ibn Sīnā writes, "to which the exercise of the actions of life must be ascribed". Nevertheless, the definition given by al-Rāzī is present in Ibn Sīnā's *Najāt*.<sup>6</sup>
6. The impossibility to limit the definition of the soul to a perfection of a natural body, to the exclusion of an artificial one, since this would render any distinction between the celestial, animal and vegetative souls impossible.

<sup>3</sup> Here, and in what follows, I will always refer to the Hyderabad, 1924 edition, reprinted at Qom, M. Bīdār, 1411 H.

<sup>4</sup> I refer to Rahman's edition, see Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *K. al-naḥs*, ed. F. Rahman. London, Oxford University Press, 1970 (all further references to the *K. al-naḥs* are to this edition).

<sup>5</sup> This addition constitutes a reformulation of Ibn Sīnā's *K. al-Mabdā' wa l-mā'ād*, ed. A. Nūrānī. Tehran, McGill, Institute of Islamic Studies in Collaboration with Tehran University, 1984, Treatise 1, chapter 52, pp. 74, 1–6. This idea has its ultimate source in the Plotiniana Arabica, see e.g., *Pseudo-Theology*, ed. A. Badawi, in *Aflūṭīn 'ind al-'Arab*, pp. 77, 18–9.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāt*, ed. Dānesh-Pazhuh, Tehran, Tehran University, 1985, p. 194.13–4. This definition is present as such in pseudo-Plutarch, see Hans Daiber, *Aetius Arabus. Die Vorsokratiker in arabischer Überlieferung*. Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner Verlag, 1980, p. 190.12–3, and ultimately stems from a combination of Aristotle's *De Anima*, II, 1, 412a27 and 412b5.

7. Against a possible objection contending that life could be the first perfection of a natural, instrumental body, it is argued that this would only be true if life means the proper principles by which a body exercises its activities, not the very being itself of the body from which these principles proceed.

Hence, al-Rāzī almost completely takes over the entire first chapter of Ibn Sīnā's *K. al-naḥs* of the *Shifā'*. Certainly, the famous "Flying Man" argument at the end of the chapter has not yet been mentioned, but it will immediately be presented at the beginnings of chapter two. Only one important omission comes to the fore: the insistence, present in the *Shifā'*, that the soul can still be a substance notwithstanding its inhering in a body, and thus qualified as a perfection of that body. But this omission can simply result from the fact that Ibn Sīnā's discussion involves serious logical considerations such that al-Rāzī judged that they were not worthy of being reproduced or summarized.

## A2. *The soul's quiddity*

In the second chapter al-Rāzī deals with the quiddity of soul.

He first stresses the complete identity in meaning between the three expressions *naḥsī* (my self, or my soul), *dhātī* (my essence) and *anā* (I). I have looked in vain for an identical affirmation in Ibn Sīnā, but have found the following statement at the beginning of the first "reminder" of the third *Namaṭ* of the *Ishārāt*: "Return to yourself (or your soul) (*ilā naḥsika*) and examine [. . .] whether you can ignore your own essence (*dhātuka*), i.e. (*wa-*), not affirm yourself (or your soul) (*naḥsaka*)".<sup>7</sup> This passage unambiguously identifies one's self (or soul) with one's essence. The identification with the "I", although not explicitly expressed, is almost naturally implied. This did not escape the eye of such a careful reader as al-Rāzī.

To show that the soul is not this sensible, perceptible being, al-Rāzī presents three arguments:

1. The first is the well-known "Flying Man" argument.<sup>8</sup> He offers it according to its wording in *Shifā'*, *K. al-naḥs*, I, 1, pp. 16, 3–15. This argument, however, is no longer present in the *Maṭālib*.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. J. Forget. Leiden, Brill, 1892, p. 119.2–4.

<sup>8</sup> In Ibn Sīnā's writings one finds different versions of this argument; for a good survey, see D. N. Hasse, *Avicenna's De Anima in the Latin West* (Warburg Institute Studies and Texts, 1). London, The Warburg Institute; Torino, Nino Aragno Editore, 2000, pp. 80–7. Although al-Rāzī wrote a systematic commentary on the *Ishārāt*, and thus was familiar with the version present there, he prefers to use that of the *K. al-naḥs*, I, 1, undoubtedly because it gives the most comprehensive version. The omission of the argument in the *Maṭālib* might result from a different appreciation, al-Rāzī having realized that it primarily shows the independence of the soul from the body, and only intends in a secondary way to prove the existence of the soul (see Hasse, *ibid.*). I hope to deal with this issue in a more systematic way in a later publication. Note that the historical significance of the "Flying Man" argument is great, as can be shown by the case of the Jewish 13th Century thinker Ibn Kammūna, see Lukas Muehlethaler, 'Ibn Kammūna (D. 683/1284) on the Argument of the Flying Man in Avicenna's *Ishārāt* and al-Suhrawardī's

2. The second argument states that the knowledge of one's ipseity is not acquired, contrary to one's knowledge of one's outer or inner bodily organs, which results from sensation. Hence, the knowledge of one's self is different from that of one's organs. Although this formulation is in all likelihood specific to al-Rāzī, it has ultimately been inspired by the third "reminder" of the third *Namaṭ* of the *Isbārāt*.<sup>9</sup>
3. According to the third argument, a body is always subject to change, whereas this is never the case with the "I". This last "proof" is presented as the first and most powerful argument for the existence of the human soul in the *Maṭālib*. It is worthwhile to note that the basic outline of the argument in the *Maṭālib* is somewhat similar to that of a similar proof in (pseudo?) Ibn Sīnā's *R. fī l-naḥs al-nāṭiqa wa-aḥwālībā*.<sup>10</sup> It strikes me that the proof in this latter writing is presented (as is the case in the *Maṭālib*) as "first", but, above all, most powerful argument. This later idea is expressed in the *Risāla* through the qualification of the proof as "great, (and) opening for us the door of the World of Mystery". But let us go back to the exposé of the *Mabāḥith*.

Having presented the three arguments, al-Rāzī stresses that they only show that the very essence of man (in other words, his soul) is different from the bodily organs, but that they do not necessarily entail that the soul is incorporeal.<sup>11</sup> For this, other proofs are needed. Hereafter six arguments are offered against the idea that the soul is identical with the temperament, i.e. bodily mixture (*mizāj*). With the exception of the last two, they have been inspired by a passage in the first "pointer", i.e., the fifth "part", of the third *Namaṭ* of the *Isbārāt*, even if al-Rāzī only refers explicitly to it when setting out the third argument.<sup>12</sup>

The first argument points to the fact that the composite body consists of conflicting elements that tend to separate from each other; but what exists before the existence of the mixture (in other words the principle maintaining its coherence, i.e. the soul) cannot be identical with what exists after the mixture comes into being.<sup>13</sup>

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*Talwīḥāt*, in Y. Tzvi Langermann (ed), *Avicenna and his Legacy. A Golden Age of Science and Philosophy* (Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 8). Trunhout, Brepols, 2009, pp. 179–203.

<sup>9</sup> Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Isbārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, pp. 119.18–120.10.

<sup>10</sup> (Pseudo?) Ibn Sīnā, *R. fī l-naḥs al-nāṭiqa wa-aḥwālībā*, in *Aḥwāl al-naḥs*, ed. A.F. el-Ehwany. Cairo, 1952. Reprint Paris, Dar Biblion, 2007, pp. 179–92, 183–84.

<sup>11</sup> This remark of al-Rāzī somehow confirms the basic interpretation of the argument as given by D.N. Hasse, *Avicenna's De Anima in the Latin West*. London: The Warburg Institute; R-Torino, Nino Aragno, 2000, pp. 80–7, where it is claimed that its basic objective is the thesis of its independence from the body, not the incorporeality of the soul.

<sup>12</sup> Ibn Sīnā, *al-Isbārāt*, pp. 120.19–121.10. However, al-Rāzī offers detailed developments, which exceed considerably the summary affirmations of Ibn Sīnā. Moreover, he modifies the order of the original exposé, namely, pp. 121.3–6 (arg. 1); 120.19 (arg. 2); 120.20–121.1 (arg. 3); and 121.1–2 (arg. 4).

<sup>13</sup> After the basic argument, al-Rāzī presents six "doubts", while formulating a response for each. A detailed analysis of them exceeds the limits of the present paper. Let me simply note that they appear never to contradict Ibn Sīnā's main thought, and evidently include explicit Avicennian ideas, e.g., that the soul only originates in a well-prepared matter.

The second argument states that plants and animals move spontaneously to their quantitative and qualitative perfection on the basis of their temperament, which is consequently subject to change and cannot be identical with the motive principle.

As to the third argument, it stresses that the principle of change cannot be the bodily mixture, otherwise how could one explain the phenomenon of fatigue? Al-Rāzī quotes verbatim two lines of the pointer of the *Ishārāt* referred to above, to which he adds a brief commentary. In these two lines, Ibn Sīnā affirms that an animal cannot move by means of its temperament, because this hinders many of its motions, and even its very motion itself.

According to the fourth argument, the principle of the perception of tactile (and, by extension, of all sensitive) qualities cannot be the temperament, since it lacks auto-perception and stability.

The fifth argument is that an animal moves from weakness to strength, or vice versa, implying a change in the temperament, which cannot be both the subject and object of motion.<sup>14</sup>

The sixth and final argument asserts that the human soul is neither a body nor something of the temperament.<sup>15</sup>

### **A3. Substantiality of the soul**

When exposing his view on the substantiality of the soul in chapter three of the *Mabāḥith*, al-Rāzī borrows heavily from *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-naḥs*, I.3.

Having noticed that the human soul is not a body, nor a state in a body, and thus is a substance, al-Rāzī wonders whether this is also valid regarding the vegetative and the animal soul. Using *K. al-naḥs*, pp. 27.17–28.2 and 29.7–8, he emphasizes that plants and animals need for their coming into being a principle that does not exist in a subject. Hence it cannot be a corporeal substance, but it has to be a “formal substance” (*jawbar ṣūrī*), namely the soul. The very expression of “formal substance” is not present as such in Ibn Sīnā’s exposé. But it is said there that the soul is a substance because it is a form not (existing) in a subject. In other words, although the soul is linked with a body, this does not mean that it is inhering in the body in a way that an accident is inhering in its subject; on the contrary, the soul constitutes its own subject.

<sup>14</sup> I looked in vain for a precise source in Ibn Sīnā, but it is obvious that the argument remains in line with Ibn Sīnā’s basic refusal of identifying the soul with the temperament. It is worthwhile to note that a similar argument is present in Bahmanyār ibn Marzubān, *K. al-Taḥṣīl*, ed. M. Muṭahharī. Tehran, 1375 H., pp. 729–730.

<sup>15</sup> The affirmation that the (human) soul is not a body, is explicitly present in *al-Shifāʾ*, *K. al-naḥs*, I, 3, p. 27.15. As for the idea that it is not something of the temperament, see *ibid.*, V, 4, pp. 228.19–20, where it is stated that the body and the temperament are accidental causes of the soul. After this argument, al-Rāzī mentions yet another argument, which he qualifies as tentative, and which claims that a change in the temperament of a part cannot be identical with that of the change in the temperament of the totality to which that part belongs. I do not know the source of this last argument.

Hereafter, al-Rāzī presents four possible arguments against the substantiality of the soul and refutes them one by one:

1. The first states that what inheres in something cannot be the cause of that in which it inheres. For its refutation al-Rāzī refers to the first chapter (in all likelihood to the idea that the soul is perfection, form or power).
2. As to the second argument, it claims that the soul cannot be the cause of the temperament since it is only originated after the origination of the convenient temperament. Here, al-Rāzī objects that the realization of the temperament as a harmonious totality is due to the power of the two parents, but, above all, that this totality is in need of a principle of conservation, i.e., the soul. This latter idea is emphasized by Ibn Sīnā in the *K. al-naḥs* of the *Shifā'*, p. 31.13–5.
3. According to the third argument, if one accepts the substantiality of the vegetative soul, the latter will necessarily be the proximate cause for the subsistence of its matter, so that the animal soul can only be imprinted afterwards in that already subsisting matter, hence must be an accident.<sup>16</sup> In his reply to this last argument, al-Rāzī distinguishes between three conceptions of the vegetative soul: specific, which is strictly proper to plants; general, which is common to plants and animals and has as such a universal meaning, although the faculties of perception and motion are excluded; and, finally, as a faculty among the faculties of the soul, in which case the soul would form a unity that directs the whole body. He derives this triple distinction directly from *Shifā'*, *K. al-naḥs*, pp. 30.5–32.10, a passage that he summarizes and slightly reformulates.
4. In the fourth argument, it is argued that since the soul is a substance, and since moreover a substance is a genus for what is beneath it, the soul, in its substantiality, has to be known intuitively, not by acquisition<sup>17</sup>. Since this consequence is false, the antecedent will also be false. Against this reasoning, al-Rāzī explicitly refers to the fact that according to Ibn Sīnā we only know that the soul directs the body, but do not know (at least, intuitively) its very quiddity. The reference is in all likelihood to *Shifā'*, *K. al-naḥs*, I. 1, p. 10.15–18.

Against a possible further objection, namely that self-perception seems to imply a direct intuition of one's own soul, al-Rāzī observes that substantiality is not an essential attribute of the soul. In a genuine Avicennian spirit, he adds that one has to be conscious that the soul is not just the sum of its different, separate faculties, hence clearly suggesting that it possesses a profound unity.

#### **A4. The soul and its faculties**

An even more evident Avicennian influence comes to the fore in the fourth chapter, where we find a basic enumeration of the faculties of the soul. Copying almost *verbatim* *Shifā'*, *K. al-naḥs* (I.5, pp. 39.14–43.1), al-Rāzī gives the basic definitions of the three

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<sup>16</sup> In the argument it is tacitly implied that the animal soul always includes a vegetative soul and, as such, comes after it.

<sup>17</sup> The argument assumes that the knowledge of something generic cannot be acquired from something specific. It tacitly considers it impossible that based on a grasp of specific things, one would be able to arrive at a full knowledge of their encompassing genus.

souls (vegetative, animal and rational), deals with the three basic faculties of the vegetative soul (namely nutrition, growth and reproduction), and discusses the motive and five external perceptive faculties of the soul. He only omits a small passage (p. 40.4–13) where Ibn Sīnā insists that the perfection of a lower soul is always included in that of a higher one, even if this is not mentioned in the conventional definitions. Then al-Rāzī concentrates on the five inner senses. Though he continues to use the same chapter (I.5, more specifically pp. 43.1–45.16), he now only keeps the most essential affirmations but also slightly restructures the exposé. He makes a sharp distinction between two kinds of inner senses: perceptive and operative (*mutaṣarrif*) ones. No less than four faculties belong to the former category, namely the common sense and estimation, and their respective memory faculties, i.e., the “image-conserving” faculty (*al-khayāl*) and the “retentive faculty” (*al-ḥāfiẓa*). Only the faculty called imaginary (*mutakbayyila*) with respect to the animals and “cogitative” (*mufakkira*) with respect to man, is characterized as operative. But, all in all, al-Rāzī represents faithfully Ibn Sīnā’s doctrine on the inner senses. Note that he pays no attention to the rational soul in this context, contrary to what is the case in the *K. al-naḥs*, but he remarks that he will discuss it elsewhere.

#### **A5. The soul and its actions**

The actions of the soul constitute the subject of the fifth chapter. Once again, one easily detects the influence of *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-naḥs*, more specifically I.4. In sharp contrast with what precedes, one now encounters at several occasions severe criticisms of Ibn Sīnā’s point of view.

Al-Rāzī, in full agreement with Ibn Sīnā, distinguishes between four modes of action by way of opposition: being (*wujūd*) vs. privation (*adam*), strength vs. weakness, speed vs. slowness, and, finally, related to specific differences vs. related to generic differences. None of the first three opposites is in need of two powers. As to the fourth, it requires — at least according to Ibn Sīnā’s preference, as al-Rāzī (p. 240.4) points out — the presence of more than one power, insofar as each genre of perception requires a specific faculty, as also does motion. So far, al-Rāzī has only summarized *K. al-naḥs* (I.4, pp. 33.7–34.16).<sup>18</sup> Still on basis of the same chapter (but now pp. 35.1–4; 34.12–15 and 35.4–14), he wonders whether all faculties, e.g., the perceptive and the motive, inner and outer perception, or the three vegetative ones, can be ultimately reduced to one single faculty.

In what follows, he presents four arguments of Ibn Sīnā against such a possibility. He qualifies the first as a general argument, and considers the remaining three as particular arguments.

<sup>18</sup> The formulation of the four modes is rather close to the one given by Ibn Sīnā, although there is a switch in the order; moreover, regarding the first mode, it has to be observed that Ibn Sīnā uses *malaka*, “habitus”, instead of *wujūd*, “being”.

The first, general proof claims that a faculty, because of its being a simple thing, cannot, according to primary intention, but produce one kind of action. This argument has its immediate source in *K. al-nafs* (pp. 36.3–37.1, slightly modified and abbreviated). Al-Rāzī, however, objects that this view is a direct consequence of the *Ex uno non fit nisi unum* principle (a principle based on Aristotle’s faculties-psychology which requires that each specific kind of action, e.g., hearing, feeling, etc. needs its own specific faculty<sup>19</sup>), which he considers invalid. But he adds that even if one grants that principle hypothetically, several counterarguments remain. Indeed, if it is valid at the level of genre and species, why would it be invalid at the level of the individual? Nobody thinks that different instances of perception, e.g. of sight, have to be linked with different faculties. Moreover, the common sense, as is agreed by all, receives different perceptions although it is a single faculty. Furthermore, the sole faculty of sight perceives, not only different colours, but different shapes as well.<sup>20</sup> Finally, the scholars agree that the principle in question is not absolutely, but only conditionally, true. In this sense, nature, although in itself a single principle, can cause rest and motion in things insofar as they are, or are not, in their natural place.<sup>21</sup> But why could the five external senses then not be reduced to a single faculty?

For al-Rāzī, it is obvious that the *Ex uno non fit nisi unum* -principle is not at all convincing. Hence, it comes as no surprise that he, in a similar vein, rejects the three “particular” proofs as follows.

First, rational souls, which are essentially separate from matter and all material characteristics, only deal with universals, and hence cannot perceive particulars (inspired by *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-nafs*, p. 36.11–8). To this, al-Rāzī objects that when I perceive a particular man I perceive him at once as an instance of “universal man” and not as an instance of “universal horse”; hence, both particular and universal are present in my perception.

Second, there cannot be an identity between a bodily organ and one of the faculties of sensation, since the lack of sensation in such an organ will be due to a privation of the latter, not to an absence of receptivity in the organ itself (based on *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-nafs*, pp. 37.18–38.7). Against this, al-Rāzī states that not all that is present (e.g., the quality of

<sup>19</sup> This is the principle based on Aristotle’s faculties-psychology, which he expresses in his *De Anima*, I, 1, 402b13–15. Ibn Sīnā has further developed this principle in his *K. al-nafs*, I, 4. A clear formulation of the principle “Ex uno . . .” regarding the powers of the soul is present in the (pseudo-)Avicennian treatise *Risāla fī bayān al-muʾjizāt wa-l-karamāt wa-l-ʾajāʾib*, in Ḥasan ʿAṣī, *Al-Taḥsīn al-Qurʾānī wa-l-lughbat al-ṣūfiyya fī falsafat Ibn Sīnā*. Beirut, al-Muʾassasat al-jāmiʿiyyat li-l-dirāsāt wa-l-nashr wa-l-tawzīʿ, 1983, p. 227.3–4. I most sincerely thank Meryem Sebti for these references.

<sup>20</sup> Al-Rāzī adds that those who think like Ibn Sīnā cannot state that these differences are uniquely linked with the objects perceived, not with the act of perception, insofar as for them the realization of the (perceived) form is equal to the quiddity of the perceived object in the perceiver. For this latter idea, see *infra*.

<sup>21</sup> This reflects of course the classical, well-known Aristotelian view that things possess a natural place.

touching) in a perceiving faculty (e.g., the faculty of touch) is perceived. In other words, the simultaneous presence of the sensitive faculty and the perceived object not always requires the realization of the act of perception.

Third, the vegetative soul cannot be identical with the animal soul because it cannot move itself voluntarily (inspired by *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-nafs*, p. 38.7–12). Regarding this, al-Rāzī remarks that from the absence of a power in the faculty of a thing, e.g., the absence of the power of voluntary motion in the faculty of nourishment in trees, one cannot deduce the absence of that same power in the same faculty in something else, e.g., in the faculty of nourishment in animals.

In a general concluding remark, al-Rāzī insists that the soul is the principle of perception and motion, as well as of vegetative actions. However, as such it makes instrumental use of the bodily organs. It is clear that al-Rāzī wants to stress the unity of the soul, but this is also the case with Ibn Sīnā, as is well known. From his criticisms it emerges, however, that his view on perception differs fundamentally from Ibn Sīnā's, especially where it accepts the possibility for it to grasp a universal. Of course, much more could, and even must be, said about this difference, but this clearly exceeds the limits of the present paper.

## B. Proofs for the immateriality of the soul

Let us now turn to the proofs, the goal of which is to show that the soul is neither a body nor impressed in a body. First, however, it is worth noting that the majority of them are repeated in the *Maṭālib* (VII, *Maqāla* 2). However, in the latter work al-Rāzī distinguishes between two types of proofs in favour of the soul's immateriality; hence, the details are spread over two chapters. Worthy of special attention is the title of the first, that is, chapter four (p. 69): "Report of the proofs provided by the Shaykh [Ibn Sīnā] regarding the establishment of the soul as being separate". It makes clear that al-Rāzī considered these proofs as profoundly Avicennian.<sup>22</sup> But it has to be stressed at once that al-Rāzī does not agree with them; rather, he expresses severe criticisms. Having said this, we can start to survey the different proofs one by one. We will do this in the order as given in the *Mabāḥith*, II.2.2.5.1.

The **first** proof (pp. 345–354) emphasizes that the place of inherence of universal, intellected forms cannot be the body. Indeed, it cannot be something indivisible in the body, since then it would be a limit, in the very same way as a point is the limit of the line. But this will exclude its being a receptacle. Al-Rāzī reformulates in a succinct way

<sup>22</sup> Al-Rāzī recognizes that the other proofs are also present in Ibn Sīnā, but, according to him, the latter has taken them from the Ancients, see *Maṭālib*, VII, *Maqāla* 2, chapter 5, p. 91. The reference here, and in what follows, is to the edition in nine volumes by Aḥmad Ḥ. al-Saqqā (Beirut, Dār al-kitāb al-ʿarabī, 1987).

*Shifā'*, *K. al-naḥs*, V.2, pp. 209.16–211.13.<sup>23</sup> Nor can it be something divisible in the body, since this would imply that the intelligible form is always divisible. In fact, this is impossible from three points of view.

First, al-Rāzī discusses the hypothetical case of the similarity or non-similarity of the parts of the intelligible resulting from division, a discussion directly based on *Shifā'*, *K. al-naḥs*, 21,18–9. He extensively deals with the former of the two. Reformulating the same *K. al-naḥs*, but now pp. 211.19–212.8, he stresses that out of the union of two such parts no totality can arise that is similar to each of the parts, given the formal character of the intelligible. Then, employing *Isbārāt*, pp. 130.16–131.12, al-Rāzī shows that whether or not one considers the part to be a condition of the realization of the intelligible form, there is no implication of the possible divisibility of the intelligible form. Once again inspired by the *Isbārāt*, pp. 131.13–132.6, he thereafter poses a critical question: Could the intelligible form not be divided into similar parts as the genre is divided into different species? In his reply he stresses that although this is possible in a certain respect, there does exist a clear distinction between a division into parts and a division into different particular things, as is the case with that of the genre.<sup>24</sup> But a division into dissimilar parts is equally impossible. These parts cannot be other than the genera and the specific differences. They would be divisible in potency into infinity as bodies are, but this is impossible. Several other impossibilities are related to this fact, which I do not detail here, because al-Rāzī takes them literally over from *Shifā'*, *K. al-naḥs*, pp. 212.9–213.18, although he reformulates and changes the order.

Secondly, given that the reality (*ḥaqīqa*) of a thing is what it is, and is hence one,<sup>25</sup> the science related to the abstracted reality that is supposed to be divisible either needs or needs not include the knowledge of each of the parts as a (separate) science. If it needs not include it, then the concerned knowledge will not constitute a compilation of

<sup>23</sup> Al-Rāzī adds a possible objection, namely: “Why could the extremities that are inhering in the extension (*miqdār*) of which the point is the limit, not inhere in the point itself?” He replies that this would necessitate a permanent realization of these extremities. Regarding the issue of the impression of the intelligibles in the body, this would mean that the body must be able to continue to grasp the intelligibles even after its death, which is obviously absurd. I looked in vain for a source in Ibn Sīnā. But even if the objection and the reply are al-Rāzī’s own, the final conclusion remains genuinely Avicennian.

<sup>24</sup> Once more, a further objection is added for which I have not found a direct source (although it might have been somewhat inspired by *K. al-naḥs*, pp. 211.19–212.2, but the construction is by al-Rāzī). It claims that it is impossible that one of the similar parts would be different in form or measure from the totality. In the reply, it is stressed that if the intelligible form were inherent in the body, a specific measure or form would be realized for it due to its subject of inherence — and this is impossible.

<sup>25</sup> Al-Rāzī insists that ten-ness, *qua* ten-ness, is only one form. For the Avicennian inspiration of this idea, see Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Ilābiyyāt*, vol. I, eds. G.C. Anawati and S. Zayed. Cairo, 1960, III, 5, p. 120.1–8. The objection formulated at the end (p. 360.6–11) (i.e., how the division in the knowledge of ten-ness can follow from the division in his subject of inherence, when the division of ten-ness is not due to his subject?) seems also to have its origin in the very same passage of the *Metaphysics*.

the parts. When, on the contrary, it does include it, there would inevitably be an identity between each part and the totality. I looked in vain for a direct parallel text in Ibn Sīnā.

Finally, in all composed things there exists a unity, the knowledge related to its division either implies, or does not imply, the knowledge of each single part, as has already been discussed. This idea is also certainly genuinely Avicennian, but I did not find a formulation close to the present one in the writings of the Shaykh al-Ra'īs.

Having outlined the proof, al-Rāzī (pp. 350.19–352.17) presents two major criticisms:

First, notwithstanding their being fundamentally indivisible, points, relations, as well as objects of estimation (e.g., enmity) do exist in bodies, hence the existence in a body of an indivisible knowledge is possible.

Second, knowledge can divide with the division of the subject of its inherence, insofar as the receptacle in which the objects of knowledge are received is divisible in potency (although not in act).

Al-Rāzī then outlines two counter-objections: First, a point can have an external existence, but never becomes an existential part of the body. Second, knowledge is not purely relative, but requires the realisation of the form equal to the quiddity of the known object.

Al-Rāzī replies that knowledge is not particularized through what it is inhering in; for example, a continuous unity can be divided in the imagination. If the criticisms in the *Mabāḥith* are formulated in a rather complex way, this is no longer the case in the *Maṭālib*, where he (VII, pp. 73.7–74.14) categorically rejects the idea that knowledge implies the occurrence of the form equal to the quiddity of the known object<sup>26</sup>. Here he also stresses the logical weakness of Ibn Sīnā's proof, since it is positing many unnecessary, hence superfluous divisions. Al-Rāzī observes that this later remark remains valid, even if one would accept the correctness of the proof.<sup>27</sup>

The **second** proof, which appears as the fifth proof in the *Maṭālib* is based on the phenomenon of self-perception or self-awareness, and is explicitly related by al-Rāzī to Ibn Sīnā's *Mubāḥathāt* (both *Mubāḥathāt* and *Tā'līqāt*, according to the *Maṭālib*). Although the notion of self-perception occupies an important place in the *Mubāḥathāt* (and is indeed also present in the *Tā'līqāt*), I have not found corresponding discussions

<sup>26</sup> Regarding the outspoken rejection by al-Rāzī of “mental existence” in his *Mulakḥḥaṣ*, a work that is intermediate between the *Mabāḥith* and the *Maṭālib*, see Heidrun Eichner, “Knowledge by Presence”, Apperception and the Mind-Body Relationship: Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and al-Suhrawardī as Representatives and Precursors of a Thirteenth-Century Discussion, in Peter Adamson (ed), *In the Age of Averroes: Arabic Philosophy in the Sixth/Twelfth Century* (Warburg Institute Colloquia, 16). London, The Warburg Institute; Turin, Nino Aragno Editore, 2011, pp. 117–40, 119–26 (immediately afterwards, pp. 126–27, she quotes, and briefly comments on a fragment of the *Mabāḥith* which is highly critical of Ibn Sīnā's explanation(s) of knowledge).

<sup>27</sup> Especially the former of these two criticism deserves a detailed analysis. Given its complexity, and the fact that al-Rāzī refers to an earlier part of his exposé, I cannot deal with it in detail here, but I hope that I will be able to do so in a later publication.

in the available editions of these two Avicennan texts.<sup>28</sup> The argument runs as follows: everyone perceives oneself. This self-perception is due either to the presence of our essence, i.e., our soul, to us, or to some other form equivalent to our essence. Since the latter is impossible (it presupposes already that one knows one's own essence), the former must be true. What is present to itself, must exist by itself; hence our essence, i.e., our soul, is existing by itself; and therefore it is radically distinct from the body that does not exist by itself.<sup>29</sup> Afterwards in the *Mabāḥiṭh*, he offers six objections mainly formulated as questions and accompanied by Ibn Sīnā's answers (introduced by *qāla al-mujīb*). It has to be noted that he (II, p. 352.19–21) explicitly qualifies them as disciples' objections to which Ibn Sīnā had answered, and, moreover, remarks that they had been scattered, but that he has reordered them.<sup>30</sup> I will now survey the objections, and give, whenever possible, their source.

Objection 1: a) Why can the perception of ourselves (*idrāk dbawātinā*) not be another kind of perception different from intellection? In fact, the intellection of ourselves would imply a vicious circle, namely the presence of ourselves to ourselves (cf. *Mubāḥaṭhāt*, p. 158 § 435, somewhat modified)<sup>31</sup>. Answer: One has to distinguish between intellection and perception, as the latter implies the realisation of the quiddity of the perceived object in the perceiver (cf. *Mubāḥaṭhāt*, p. 158 § 436.1; the qualification of perception as given by al-Rāzī is not present in this paragraph):

b) Why cannot the perception of ourselves result from an effect, which is out of our own essence (or: of ourselves)? (cf. *Mubāḥaṭhāt*, pp. 160–1, § 444, slightly modified, especially in the beginnings). Answer: perception is the verification of the reality of a thing, hence the affirmation that we perceive by means of an effect cannot be interpreted in a coherent way - cp. *Mubāḥaṭhāt*, p. 161 §§ 445–46 (almost *verbatim*).

Objection 2: a) If we intellect ourselves, then in intellecting God and the Higher Intelligences we have to realize their realities within us (cf. *Mubāḥaṭhāt*, pp. 157–8, § 433, slightly modified). Answer: We do not understand these higher entities as individuals, contrary to the way we understand ourselves (cf. *Mubāḥaṭhāt*, pp. 172–73, § 493, *verbatim*, but omits the last three lines).

<sup>28</sup> In view of the different existing recensions of both works (see David Reisman, *The Making of the Avicennian Tradition*. Leiden, Brill, 2002, *passim*; see also my "Mullā Sadrā's use of Ibn Sīnā's *Tāliqāt* in the *Asfār*", in *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 13 (2002), pp. 1–13, especially pp. 10–13), it is possible that al-Rāzī had access to passages not available in the actual editions. Regarding the great significance of the notion of self-perception in both writings, see Meryem Sebt, *Avicenne. L'âme humaine*. Paris: PUF, 2000, 103–117, and Jari Kaukua, *Avicenna on Subjectivity. A Philosophical Study*. Jyväskylä, University of Jyväskylä, 2007, chapter V, especially pp. 118–31.

<sup>29</sup> The wording in the *Maṭālib* (p. 85.4–20) is more extensive, but contains no essential differences on the doctrinal level.

<sup>30</sup> This view has been confirmed by the seminal study of the late David Reisman, *The Making of the Avicennian Tradition* (see *supra*, note 27). I here wish to express my appreciation of the superb work of this scholar, who died far too young.

<sup>31</sup> In what follows, the references to the *Mubāḥaṭhāt* are always to the edition of Bīdārfar. Qom, Intishārāt Bīdārfar, 1372 H.S.

b) If we intellect God's form equally to His quiddity, there would be a numerical plurality in God. Answer: We do not speak of external, but rather mental existents (no correspondence found).

Objection 3: a) Is it not possible that the estimative faculty perceives the self? (Cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, pp. 159, § 438, slightly modified). Answer: Self-perception is immediate, not by mediation of any faculty or the body (cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, pp. 159–60, §§ 440–42, slightly modified and a few sentences omitted).

b) Why could the receptacle of our self-perception not be related to our essence in the same way that the mirror is related to vision? (Cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, p. 173, § 494, *verbatim*, but omits the last two words). Answer: Representation in the mirror, if one accepts it, requires a second representation, e.g. in the pupil, and likewise it would be with that “something” in which the self-perception is realized (cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, pp. 173, § 495, the beginning is slightly modified, but the end is totally different).

Objection 4: Why could our self-perception not be due to the occurrence of another form in us? In intellecting the self (or soul, *naḥs*) of Zayd, I also necessarily intellect myself; hence, there have to be two forms, otherwise I would be identical with someone else, e.g., Zayd. (Cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, p. 211, § 623, modified). Answer: One has to distinguish between an absolute conception of the self, as present in self-perception, and a common conception of the self (soul), where the notion of “self” is something that is partaken by many (cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, p. 318, § 892 (answer), slightly modified, and p. 212 § 625 (answer), slightly modified).

Objection 5: The division between two kinds of self is mistaken. Indeed, “what is existent by itself” can be understood in three ways: as not related to something else, as not inhering in a thing, and as relative to itself. The former two are negative and as such cannot be perceived. As to relative to itself, it is impossible since it requires a duality (cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, pp. 242–43, § 715, slightly modified). Answer: The essential reality, the individual determination, as well as the combination of both essential reality and individual determination, are three distinct things, and this irrespective of kind of relation that exists between the determination and the essential reality. The very possibility of this distinction is sufficient to enable the relative approach (cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, p. 174, § 499, substantially modified).

Objection 6: a) Animals, in spite of their having no separate souls, have self-perception, as evident in their seeking of what is pleasurable and avoiding what is harmful to them (no source found, but see nevertheless *Mubāḥathāt*, p. 178, §517). Answer: Animals have their self-perception by the instrumental means of their estimative faculty (cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, p. 179, § 519, almost *verbatim*).

b) What proves that our self-perception is different from that of animals? (Cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, p. 179, § 502.1–2, *verbatim*). Answer: We can perceive universal things so that we are able to distinguish ourselves from other things, contrary to animals (cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, p. 224, § 668.1–8, seriously modified).

c) Is it not the case that all that we distinguish mentally must correspond to something existing in the external reality? (No source found). What shows that our (human) self-perception is pure? (Cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, pp. 224–25, § 668.9–10). In fact, everything that perceives, hence also animals, possess what they perceive either in a particular manner or in a universal manner. Therefore, when they perceive in a general overlook their essence, they perceive it in a “abstracted”, i.e., pure way (cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, p. 223, § 665, slightly modified). Finally, to say that an animal has self-perception through the faculty of estimation, seems to imply the identification of estimation with the self (or soul) (no source found). Answer: The realisation of the form in the

faculty of estimation resembles a presence arriving by opposition (*in'ikās*), while its realisation in a specific organ resembles a presence by nature (cf. *Mubāḥathāt*, pp. 179–80, § 521, modified).

At the end, al-Rāzī adds that he has further objections, for which he refers to his exposé on knowledge. In the *Maṭālib*, he omits the objections as present in the *Mubāḥathāt* (except for objection 6), but instead articulates his own objections. He opposes the conception of knowledge as the presence of the intellected form in the knower's essence (he stresses very strongly that perception expresses a state of relationality), and he points out the logical weakness of Ibn Sīnā's proof.

The **third** proof claims that an intellectual power, contrary to a bodily one, can perform infinite acts. It is based on *Shifā'*, *K. al-naḥs*, V, 2, p. 216.3–6. Al-Rāzī offers basically the same objection as formulated in the first place with respect to the first argument, but adds three more objections:

- (1) An intellectual power has no perception *at once* of an infinity of things.
- (2) Even if an infinity of perceptions are granted, this does not imply an infinity of actions, since perceptions are not actions, but passions (directly inspired by *Shifā'*, *K. al-naḥs*, V, 2, p. 216.11–14).
- (3) Higher spheres have infinite motions, although their souls are corporeal forces. The *Isbārāt*, pp. 166.17–167.3, might have inspired al-Rāzī here.

For all three objections, he presents counter-objections, which he rejects in turn. The first counter-objection claims that it has been proven that bodily powers cannot have infinite actions. In this respect, one may refer to Ibn Sīnā's *Mabḥath 'an al-quwā al-naḥsāniyya*, ch. 9, p. 175.12–21. Al-Rāzī argues that bodily powers are possible in themselves, and, hence, cannot become impossible, but always remain possible so that there is no necessity of a finite terminus. The second counter-objection insists that the soul's activity is not entirely passive since the composition and analysis of premises is part of this activity. Al-Rāzī, however, points to the fact that for Ibn Sīnā a single faculty can only have one single activity and, hence, how can the soul be both open to action and passion (both being kinds of "activity")?<sup>32</sup> As to the third counter-objection, it emphasizes that the soul becomes infinitely powerful insofar as it receives lights from the Agent Intellect. To this, al-Rāzī answers with a question: Why then not allow that the soul has infinite actions due to the light of the Agent Intellect? Or, as said in the *Maṭālib*, why can the (human) soul then not be a corporeal force? It is striking that in all three cases he uses genuine Avicennian ideas in order to reject the counter-arguments, thus suggesting that there is a lack of coherence in Ibn Sīnā's thought.<sup>33</sup> In the *Maṭālib* (VII, 4, pp. 77.23–78.7), al-Rāzī adds a further objection, namely that the acts of imagination, cogitation and memory, although based on a corporeal faculty, seem to be infinite, just

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<sup>32</sup> For the idea of "one faculty-one action", see *supra*.

<sup>33</sup> Although I was unable to identify a precise source in Ibn Sīnā's writings, the overall thrust of the last two counter-arguments, and the related replies, is evidently Avicennian.

as the acts of intellection. Otherwise, why would the latter be infinite and the former finite? One easily recognizes the same basic strategy.

The **fourth** proof states that if the intellectual power is imprinted in a bodily organ, the latter has to be known either constantly or never.<sup>34</sup> This formulation is directly derived from the *Isbārāt*, p. 177.14–6. But both alternatives are absurd. In order to substantiate this fact, al-Rāzī, inspired by *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-naḥḥ*, V, 2, p. 217.5–11, states that intellection cannot be by the presence of the form of a bodily organ in the intellecting faculty, nor by that of any other form in it, but has to be by a separate form. Against the argument, al-Rāzī once again insists that knowledge is relative, not the presence of a known form in the knower. Moreover, if the proof is accepted, one has to admit that all concomitants and accidents that are actually realized in the soul must also always be intellected. In the *Maṭālib*, he repeats the fundamental objection, adding several further objections, which all remain in the same basic line and some of which have already been mentioned. Since they are not really relevant for our present purpose, I do not deal with them in detail.

The **fifth** proof (the second proof in the *Maṭālib*) states that a universal form is devoid of any particular shape or position, and, as such, cannot be corporeal. The sources of this is clearly *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-naḥḥ*, V, 2, p. 214.6–16. Al-Rāzī observes that universal forms either have or do not have existence. If they do not exist, why must their receptacle be “separate”? But if they do exist, they must exist in a particular soul, and hence appear as a particularized being that cannot be partaken. If one insists that they are not a partaken form, but precede the soul on which they exercise an influence, why would this not be possible as well in a bodily organ? If one furthermore objects that a universal form cannot be realized in a body, one has to reply that the same is true with regard to the individual soul, or one has to admit that what is for the latter, is also possible for the former. In summary, a form, be it inhering in soul or body, is never “partaken” in all respects. As to the *Maṭālib*, al-Rāzī objects there that by universal form one cannot understand the known object as realized in the knower’s essence, since otherwise each known object, including God’s essence, would be fully known. In fact, it can only be related to the realization of the knowledge of the known object in the knower’s essence so that there is no longer any connexion with the external object implied.

According to the **sixth** proof, which is the first proof in chapter five in the *Maṭālib*, the intellectual power, if bodily, would get more and more weakened with old age. However, the opposite is in fact the case. The direct source of this is *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-naḥḥ*, i.e., V, 2, p. 219.10–15, which in all likelihood was in turn inspired by Aristotle’s *de Anima*, I, 408b18–25.<sup>35</sup> For al-Rāzī there is no evidence that the intellect does not

<sup>34</sup> In the *Mabāḥith* al-Rāzī surprisingly adds: “or sometimes”, which makes no sense. I wonder therefore whether this addition does not result from a scribal (or printing) error.

<sup>35</sup> Besides the *K. al-Naḥḥ*, al-Rāzī seems also to have used (pseudo-) Ibn Sīnā, *R. fī l-naḥḥ al-nāṭiqā wa-aḥwālībā*, p. 175.6–12.

weaken with old age, e.g. even someone who is not old can get intellectually tired. Developing several counter-arguments and further replies, he insists especially on the fact that the soul inheres in the body, and thus undergoes its influences. In the *Maṭālib* he once more underlines that does not exceed the level of opinion (*ẓann*).

The **seventh** proof, which is absent in the *Maṭālib*, goes as follows. Since many thoughts perfect the soul but derange the brain, and given the principle that one thing, insofar it is related to another single thing, cannot be both cause of decline and perfection of this other thing, the soul has to be different from the body. Al-Rāzī objects that the principle is only true when it is added “at the same moment” and “in one and the same respect”, not at two different moments or in two respects.<sup>36</sup>

The **eighth** proof (the second in the fifth chapter of the *Maṭālib*) establishes that the soul is in no need of a receptacle for its actions. It invokes three facts for this assertion: (1) its self-perception, (2) together with the preception of other things, its perceiving itself, and (3) its direct perception of its instrument. This proof has a clear source in *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-naḥs*, V, 2, pp. 216.18–217.4. Even if these characteristics are true of the soul, al-Rāzī objects, and even if they are not true of the sensitive powers, this does not allow one to conclude that the soul is not a bodily power. Such a conclusion would be based on unsound logical reasoning, to wit *tamthīl*, “likening”.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, the fact that the effects of the soul are not related to a receptacle is not itself a sufficient proof that the soul does not need a receptacle or is self-sufficient.

In the **ninth** proof (the third in the fifth chapter of the *Maṭālib*), it is stressed that multiple actions weaken the bodily, but not the intellectual, powers; on the contrary, the latter are strengthened. This is based directly on *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-naḥs*, V, 2, pp. 218.15–219.9, inspired in turn by Aristotle’s *De Anima*, III, 4, 428a28b10. In answering this argument, al-Rāzī emphasizes that the imaginary power can imagine both small and large things, e.g., a ray of light as well as the sun. If one replies that this cannot happen at one and the same moment, as seems to be the case with the intellect, al-Rāzī counter-argues that this is not true. Indeed, when one intellects something great, i.e., God, one will not be able to intellect something small or to busy oneself with any other intelligible.

The **tenth** proof is related explicitly by al-Rāzī to Plato (and a few later thinkers). It is no longer present in the *Maṭālib*. Basically, it asserts that we imagine great forms. Hence, they cannot exist in our (smaller) bodies (especially insofar as they are existent in the external world) and, at once, be bodily. As far as I can see, this argument has no source in Ibn Sīnā. Al-Rāzī remarks that, according to the objection that an imagined form has to possess dimensions, one has to admit either that the soul must become as the imagined form, i.e., bodily, since provided with dimensions, or that the imagined form

<sup>36</sup> I looked in vain for a source in Ibn Sīnā. However, the affirmation that the soul does not die with the body is present in *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-naḥs*, V, 4, 227.13–14.

<sup>37</sup> It is worthwhile to note that this remark is already present in the *Mabāḥith*, p. 372.1.

does not exist. He also nullifies the hypothesis that the form would be imprinted in a small body prior to its imprint in what is neither body nor bodily.

As to the **eleventh** proof (the fourth argument in the fifth chapter of the *Maṭālib*), it demonstrates the incorporeality of the soul on the basis of the presence of (the quiddity of, adds the *Maṭālib*) two contraries in the mind, which cannot be present simultaneously in a body. Although the argument, at least in these terms, is not present there, *Shifāʾ*, *K. al-naḥs*, IV, 3, p. 193.13–19, is likely the source of this argument. Against it, al-Rāzī argues that the recognition of contrariety cannot depend upon the being inherent of the intellected ideas in a given receptacle. What is impressed in the mind is not their quiddity, but their forms. In the *Maṭālib* al-Rāzī, as he has already done before many times, once again states that the argument is fundamentally based on the (utterly) mistaken idea that the quiddity of the perceived object is realized in the essence of the perceiver.

Finally, the **twelfth** proof (the fifth argument in the fifth chapter of the *Maṭālib*) states that when the receptacle of (intellectual) perception is bodily, an individual can be simultaneously both ignorant and knowing. Al-Rāzī in the *Maṭālib* (p. 98.8) ascribes the proof to the *Mutakallimūn*. In his refutation, he insists on the fact that a similar reasoning has then to be applied to lower faculties, such as desire, implying that someone can be at once desiring something and shying away from it.<sup>38</sup>

Having surveyed all the proofs, it is clear that al-Rāzī shows a most detached attitude with respect to the above proofs, among which he qualifies five as typical of Ibn Sīnā. He considers them of no, or almost no value. His rejection is even more outspoken in his later work, the *Maṭālib*. Remarkably, he attacks some of them not only out of doctrinal considerations, but also based on logical grounds. Whether his criticisms in this respect are justified or not, they show that he has completely accepted philosophical logic and its rules. From the doctrinal point of view, one most very basic criticism comes to the fore: Ibn Sīnā's conception of knowledge as the realization of the known form in the essence of the knower. One cannot but agree with al-Rāzī that there is indeed a problem in Ibn Sīnā's theory, insofar as it clearly suggests that normal knowledge is by way of abstraction, but, on the other hand, seems to imply a radical rupture between sensation and intellection<sup>39</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> In the *Mabāḥith*, contrary to the *Maṭālib* (where it is limited to six lines), a long discussion follows this argument, namely pp. 376.14–382.16. Since it is of no real significance for this paper, I do not offer a detailed presentation.

<sup>39</sup> In recent times different papers have been devoted to Ibn Sīnā's theory, or aspects of it, see *inter alia* Peter Adamson, 'Non-Discursive Thought in Avicenna's Commentary on the *Theology of Aristotle*', in Jon McGinnis, with the assistance of David Reisman (ed), *Interpreting Avicenna: Science and Philosophy in Medieval Islam* (IPTA, 56). Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2004, pp. 87–111; Deborah Black, Avicenna and the Ontological and Epistemic Status of Fictional Beings, in *Documenti e Studi sulla Tradizione Filosofica Medievale*, 8 (1997), pp. 425–53; Dimitri Gutas, 'Intuition and Thinking: The Evolving Structure of Avicenna's Epistemology', in R. Wisnovsky (ed), *Aspects of Avicenna* (=Princeton

More generally, the above examination has shown how al-Rāzī accepts many of Ibn Sīnā's fundamental view on the soul, but, at the same time, does not hesitate to highly criticize some of them. In this sense, he clearly appears as an "opponent" inside mainstream Avicennism<sup>40</sup>.

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Papers. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 9). Princeton, Markus Wiener, 2001, pp. 1–38, and Dag Nikolaus Hasse, *Avicenna on Abstraction*, in *ibid.*, pp. 39–72.

<sup>40</sup> See Dimitri Gutas, "The Heritage of Avicenna: The Golden Age of Arabic Philosophy, 1000-ca. 1350", in Jules Janssens and Daniël de Smet (eds), *Avicenna and His Heritage*. Leuven, Leuven University Press, 2002, pp. 81–97, 97.