

Classical Arabic Philosophy

An Anthology of Sources

Translated with Introduction,
Notes, and Glossary by

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faculties it has in regard to the body. The faculties below that are dispersed from it on account of the body's predisposition to receive them and make use of them. The moral temperaments belong to the soul from the direction of this faculty [i.e., the practical intellect], as we pointed out.⁵¹ Each one of the two faculties has a predisposition and a perfection. The simple predisposition of both is called the material intellect, whether taken to be theoretical or practical. After that, it is only through the principles that happen to come to each of them, by which its actions are perfected. In the case of the theoretical intellect, [these principles are] the primary premises and whatever follows from them; in the case of the practical intellect, they are the commonly held premises and other formulations. At that point, each one of them is a dispositional intellect. Then each one of them has an acquired perfection, which we have explained before. The first thing we must explain [now] is that this soul, predisposed as it is to receive intelligibles by way of the material intellect, is neither a body nor something that subsists as a form in any body.

4. From "The Soul," V.2^c

ESTABLISHING THAT THE RATIONAL SOUL DOES NOT SUBSIST AS SOMETHING IMPRINTED IN CORPOREAL MATTER

1. [209] One thing about which there can be no doubt is that in the human is a thing and a certain substance that encounters the intelligibles through reception. We say next that the substance, which is the receptacle of the intelligibles, [210] is neither a body nor something that subsists in a body in the sense of being a faculty in it or a form belonging to it in some way. If the receptacle of the intelligibles is a body or a particular magnitude, then the part of it that the intelligible form inheres in is either (1) a single, indivisible thing, or (2) a divisible thing, where the indivisible part of the body is unquestionably a limit akin to a point.

2. Let us first examine whether (1) it is possible for the receptacle [of the intelligible forms] to be an indivisible limit. We say that this is absurd, because the point is a certain terminus that is not distinct from the line with respect to position nor from the magnitude terminating at it, such that the point would belong to it as something in which something could reside without being in some part of that magnitude. Quite the contrary, just as the point is not essentially independent, but is an essential limit precisely of what is itself a magnitude, so too one can say in a certain way only that a limit of something inheres in [the point] as something inhering in the magnitude of which [the point] is its limit, and so [the inhering thing] accidentally possesses a magnitude by that magnitude. Just as [the inhering thing] accidentally possesses a magnitude by [that magnitude], so too it accidentally has a terminus with the [magnitude's essential] point. Thus, its being an accidental terminus

⁵¹ See "The Soul," V.3, pars. 1–2, pp. 192–93. I.5, par. 13, p. 183.

with an essential terminus is just like its being an accidental extension [i.e., a magnitude] together with an essential extension.⁵²

3. If the point were some independent thing that could receive any given thing, it would be a distinct individual and so the point would possess two sides. One side would be the part touching the line from which it is distinguished, and one side would be the part that is different from and opposite it. In that case, [the point] would subsist by itself as something separate from the line, and the line that is separate from [the point, x], would inevitably have a terminus, y , other than x , which touches x . Thus, point y would be the terminus of the line, not x . But the discussion about x and y is identical. [211] This would lead to points that could be attachable to one another in the line, whether finitely or infinitely—the impossibility of this became clear to us in other places.⁵³ It is also clear that no body is composed by points being attachable to one another. It is clear also that no particular position can be distinguished for the point.

4. A gesture in the direction of a little bit of these arguments wouldn't hurt.⁵⁴ So we say that [if] two points touch one point on its two sides, then either the middle point separates them and so they do not touch, in which case it would follow that the middle point would be divisible, according to the axioms you have learned, and this is absurd. Or the middle point does not keep the sides of the two points from touching. In that case, the intelligible form would be present in all the points, and all the points would be like one single point, but we have posited that *this one point* is separate from the line. So, the line, due to its being separate from [the point], has a limit other than the point by which it is separate from the point; and so that [first] point is distinct from this [other point that is the line's limit] in terms of position. It has also been posited, however, that all points are the same in terms of position. This is a contradiction. It is therefore invalid to argue that the receptacle of the intelligibles is an indivisible part of the body.

5. The remaining option is (2) that their receptacle in the body⁵⁵ is a divisible thing—if in fact their receptacle is in the body. So let us posit an intelligible form in a divisible thing. When we posit an intelligible form in something that is divisible in some way, the form is then accidentally divisible. In that case, the result must be either (2a) that the two parts [of the form] are similar, or (2b) they are dissimilar.

6. If (2a) they are similar, then how is the combination of the two different from them [212]—given that the whole, as a whole, is not the part—unless the whole

⁵² Cf. "Physics," III.3, par. I, position (3), p. 164, and "Physics," III.4, all, pp. 166–70.

⁵³ Cf. the arguments of "Physics," III.4, pars. 2–5, pp. 167–68, where Ibn Sīnā refutes the idea that magnitudes can be composed of indivisibles.

⁵⁴ Ibn Sīnā's use of "little bit" (*taraf*) is a pun on the Arabic for "limit," (*taraf*) which he has been using.

⁵⁵ The second of the two options was enumerated at the beginning of this chapter (par. 1).

resulting from the two is not due to the form but to an increase in magnitude or number? In that case, the intelligible form would be a particular shape or number; but no intelligible form is a shape or number, since then the form would be a form represented in the imagery [faculty] not an intelligible form. Next, you know it cannot be argued that each of the two parts is itself the whole. How could this be, given that the second one is included in what is meant by the whole while extraneous to what is meant by the other part, when it is more than obvious that one of them alone cannot indicate the same thing as what is meant by the complete whole?

7. If (2b) the two parts are dissimilar, let us investigate how that could be and how the intelligible form could have dissimilar parts. There cannot be dissimilar parts unless they are parts of a definition, namely, the genera and the differences, but a number of absurdities result from this.

7.1. Each part of the body would also be subject to potentially infinite division, and then the genera and the differences would have to be subject to potentially infinite division. This is absurd. It is an established fact that the essential genera and differences of one thing are not *potentially* infinite.

7.2. And [another absurdity is] because it is absolutely impossible that imagining the division would separate the genus and the difference; rather, there is no question that, when there is a genus and difference that can be made distinct in the receptacle, such distinction need not stop at the imagined division; so the genera and differences must also *actually* be infinite. [213] But it is an established fact that the genera and differences and the parts of the definition of one thing are finite in every way. If the genera and differences could have been actually infinite, they could not have been combined in the body in this form, for that would require that one body be divided actually into infinite parts.

7.3. Furthermore, suppose that the division had been something that happened in some way, and it separated a genus on one side and a difference on another side. If we were [again] to subdivide the division, it would have to result in either a half-genus on one side and a half-difference on the other, or it would require the transfer of the genus and the difference to one of the two divisions, but the genus and the difference are both equally inclined to any part of the division. Thus, [from] our imagined supposition, or our posited division, the genus and the difference run around in circles, and either one of them could be put on any side, at the whim of any external individual. Even that is not enough, for we could subdivide [ad infinitum].

7.4. Finally, not every intelligible can be divided into simpler intelligibles. There are intelligibles that are the simplest, and they are the principles for the composition of the rest of the intelligibles; and they neither have genera or differences nor can they be divided by quantity or account.

8. Therefore, the posited parts can neither be similar—each one of them being included in what is meant by the whole, when the whole results only by combination—nor can they be dissimilar. So the intelligible form cannot be divided.

9. [214] Since the intelligible form cannot be divided nor can it inhere in some indivisible limit of magnitude, but there must be something in us that receives it, we have to conclude that the receptacle of the intelligibles is a substance that is not a body, nor is whatever that is in us that encounters them a faculty in a body. For then all of the divisions that attach to the body would attach to it, with all the attendant absurdities. Rather, that part of us that encounters the intelligible form must be an incorporeal substance.

10. Let us provide another demonstration of this by stating first that the intellecting faculty is that [incorporeal substance] that abstracts the intelligibles from delimited quantity, place, position, and everything else said before. Then we have to investigate this form itself that is abstracted from position: How is it something abstracted? Is it in comparison to the thing from which it was taken or to the thing that does the taking? I mean: Does the existence of this truly intelligible thing that was abstracted from position exist externally or does it exist conceptually in the intellecting substance? It would be absurd of us to say that it is like the external existence, so our remaining option is to say that it is separate from place and position only when it exists in the intellect. When it exists in the intellect, it does not possess any position, where it would be such that pointing, being particular, divisible and other similar things would apply to it. So it cannot be in a body.

11. Furthermore, when the singular, indivisible form that belongs to certain conceptually indivisible things is impressed in a divisible matter possessing sides, then either (1) none [215] of the parts posited as in [the matter] due to its sides has a relation to the singular indivisible intelligible thing as abstracted from the matter; or (2) each one of those posited parts does; or (3) some do and some do not. If (1) none do, then neither does the whole; for anything made up of discrete parts is itself discrete. If (3) some do and some do not, then those having no relation are not a part of its account at all. If (2) each posited part has a given relation, then every posited part either (2a) has a relation to the thing as it is, or (2b) to a part of the thing. If (2a) each posited part has a relation to the thing as it is, then the parts are not parts of the account of the intelligible; rather each of them is itself an intelligible as something independent. If each part has a relation different from the other part's relation to the thing, then it is known that the thing is divisible in terms of the intelligible, but we posited that it is indivisible. This is a contradiction. If (2b) the relation of each part is to a part of the thing that is different from the other, then the division of the thing is even more obvious. It is clear from this that the forms imprinted in corporeal matter are merely exterior shapes of the particular divisible parts, where each part has a relation, potentially or actually, to any other part.

12. Moreover, the thing that has multiple parts in its definition is nonetheless an indivisible single thing from the perspective of the entirety [of the parts]. So we may investigate how that singular existence, as some one thing, [216] is impressed in something divisible. But what can be said about it is the same as what was said about what is indivisible in definition as a singular thing.

13. It is also correct for us to state that the posited intelligibles, each one of which the rational faculty can actually intellect, are potentially infinite. Moreover, it is correct for us to state that something that has a capability for a potential infinity of things cannot be a body nor a faculty in a body. We have demonstrated this in the preceding sections. Therefore, it is impossible for the thing itself that forms concepts of the intelligibles to subsist in a body in any way, or for its action to be generated out of a body or by means of a body. [. . .]

5. From "The Soul," V.3^f

TWO ISSUES: (1) HOW THE HUMAN SOUL MAKES USE OF THE SENSES; (2) ESTABLISHING THE TEMPORAL ORIGINATION OF THE SOUL

1. [221] The faculties of the animal soul aid the rational soul in some things. For example, from them as a whole the senses convey to it the particulars [of the external world]. Four things happen to it as a result of the particulars. (1) One is that the mind extracts the simple universals from the particulars [222] by abstracting their connotational attributes (*ma'nā*) from matter and its associative and consequential accidents, and noting what is common and what different, what is essential and what accidental. As a result of this, principles of conceptualization are produced for the soul, and that [takes place] with the aid of the imagery and estimative [faculties]. (2) The second is that the soul occasions certain relationships among these simple universals through, for example, negation and affirmation. Any combination through negation or affirmation that is primary and evident in itself, the soul takes; and anything that is not like that, it leaves alone until it comes across a middle term. (3) The third is the acquisition of premises derived from methodic experience. This is identifying by sensory perception a predicate that must be applied to a given subject, affirmatively or negatively, or a consequential property necessarily connected to the predicate (or its denial) or necessarily opposed to the predicate (or its denial), where that does not apply to just some instances and not others, nor half of the time but rather always. [In that case] the soul is confident that there is such a relationship between the nature of this predicate and this subject, and that the nature of this consequence necessarily entailing or precluding that this [predicate] belongs to [the predicate] essentially and not accidentally. Thus, that is a conviction resulting from sensory perception and a syllogism, as is explained in the "logic" sections.⁵⁶ (4) The fourth is the assent resulting from reports because they are so widespread.

2. So the soul seeks the aid of the body to obtain these basic principles for the purpose of conceptualization and assent. Once it obtains them, it turns back to itself. If one of the faculties below it happens to distract it with one of its [bodily] associated states that distracted it [223] from its activity, the soul abandons what it was doing. If [a faculty] does not distract it, then [the soul] does not subsequently need it for any

⁵⁶ "Book of Demonstration," III.5, pars. 8.2–4, pp. 155–56.

of its own activities, unless it concerns something for which it has a specific need to consult the imagery faculties another time. That would be for the purpose of acquiring a principle other than the one obtained, or to seek the help of the imagery [faculty] in forming an image of the goal [of its activity], so that with its help the version in the intellect is reinforced. This is something that happens in the beginning but less often thereafter. When the soul reaches a certain perfection and is strong, however, it performs its activities completely on its own, while the senses, the imagery, and the other bodily faculties distract it from its task the way that, for example, a person may need a mount and other aids to arrive at some destination, but when he arrives and one of the means of his arrival happens to hinder his setting them aside, the means of his arrival themselves become a hindrance.

3. We say that the human souls did not subsist separately from their bodies and then arrived in their bodies, because the human souls are of the same species and account. If one posits that they have an existence that does not originate temporally in conjunction with the origination of their bodies, but rather [they have] a separate existence, then in that existence the soul cannot be many. [This is so] because things are many either because of the essence and form or because of the relation to the constituent and matter. [The constituent and the matter] are themselves made many by the places that contain each matter in a given area as well as the times specific to the origination of each thing and the causes that divide them. Now, [souls] are not distinct from one another by essence [224] and form, because their form is one. Therefore, they could be distinct from one another only on account of what receives the essence or that to which the essence is properly related, and this is the body. If the soul could exist without any body, then one soul could not be distinct in number from another soul. This is an absolute fact in every case: multiplying things that are themselves purely formal, even when the fact of their being species has been made many by their individuals, occurs only through the things that bear them, receive them, and are affected by them, or through a certain relation to [those things] or to their times. Since, however, [the souls] are absolutely separate and are not divided in the ways we said, it is impossible for there to be any mutual distinction and multiplicity among them. So, it is false to maintain that before arriving in bodies the souls are numerically many things.

4. I say it is also impossible for them to be numerically one, because when two bodies come into existence, two souls come into existence in the two bodies. Either these two souls are two parts of that one soul, in which case the single thing that has neither bulk nor volume is potentially divisible, but this is patently false according to the principles established in natural philosophy and elsewhere. Or the numerically one soul is in two bodies, but this also does not require much effort to refute.

5. To express it differently, we say that these souls would be identified as one individual soul out of the whole of their species only through certain conditions associated with them but not essential to them as a soul (since otherwise they would be common to all of them) and through the consequential accidents associated with

them from some beginning that has to be temporal (because they come after some cause that happened to some of them but not others). [If this is the case], then the individual identification of these souls is also something that originates temporally. So they are not pre-eternal and their temporal origination occurs together with a body.

6. It is therefore true [225] that the souls originate in the same manner that a bodily matter suited for its use originates. The originated body is the domain and instrument of the soul, when the substance of the soul that is originated with a given body, [that is], the body suitable for the soul's origination from the first principles is configured with a natural inclination to take an interest in it, to make use of it, to concern itself with its conditions, and to be attracted to it, such configuration being specific to it and turning it away from all other bodies. When it comes into existence as individuated, (1) the principle of its individuation attaches to it the configurations that are indispensable to singling it out as an individual; and (2) those configurations must be what determine its sole possession of that body and establish the relationship of mutual benefit [of the soul and body] (even if that exclusive condition and relationship is obscure to us); and (3) the principles of its self-perfection are occasioned by means of [the body] once there is its body.

7. Someone could say, however, that this problem forces you to address the issue of the souls when they separate from the body. Either (1) [the souls] pass away—but you do not maintain this; or (2) they become one—but this is the very thing you found repugnant; or (3) they continue to be many individual souls when they are separated from their matter, as you think—but then how could they continue to be many? We say that after the souls are separated from the bodies, there is no question that each one will have existed as a singular thing by reason of the difference of the matters they were in, by reason of the difference of the times of their origination, and by reason of the difference of the configurations belonging to them as a result of their different bodies. Next, we are certain that what makes the universal account exist as an identifiable individual cannot make it exist as an individual unless it adds⁸ to it (over and above what species it is) one of the individual factors (*ma'nā*) that attaches to it at its origination by [226] which it becomes an individual and which our knowledge of it requires or we do not know.

8. We do know, however, that the soul is not a singular thing that is in all bodies. For if it were singular but many relatively, [the soul] would have the same knowledge or ignorance in all [the individuals], and what is in the soul of 'Amr would not be unknown to Zayd. [This is so] because, while a singular thing related to many may be different by consideration of the relation, it cannot be different in terms of the things it possesses in itself such that if there is a father of many sons and he is young, he is only young all things considered, since his being young belongs to him in himself and then subsequently he enters into each relation. Equally, knowledge, ignorance, assumption, etc., are precisely in the soul itself, and it is with the soul that they enter into each relation.

9. Therefore the soul is not singular, so it is many in number—but its species is singular—and is temporally originated, as we explained. There is no doubt that it

is through something that they are individuated and that this thing with respect to the human soul is not its being imprinted in matter—the falsehood of that doctrine has been learned—rather that thing belonging to the soul^h is a certain configuration, or a certain potentiality, or a certain accidental incorporeal quality, or the sum of them together [that] collectively individuates the soul, even if we do not know what it is.

10. After its individuation as a single thing, it and another soul cannot be numerically one thing—we have already argued the impossibility of this in a number of places. We are certain, however, that (1) when the soul comes into existence in conjunction with the origination of a certain humoral temperament, it next may come to have a certain configuration of rational actions and affections that, collectively, is distinct from the comparable configuration it would have in another, [227] the way that two humoral temperaments in two different bodies are distinct from one another. We are also certain that (2) the acquired configuration, called an actual intellect, is, to a certain degree, also something by which it is distinct from another soul. Finally, we are certain that (3) an awareness of its particular self occurs to the soul, where that awareness is also a certain configuration in it and is also unique to it alone.

11. It may also be the case that it has another unique configuration due to the bodily faculties. That configuration is related to the configurations of its moral temperaments, or those *are* that configuration. There may still be other unique attributes unknown to us that adhere to the souls when it comes into existence and afterwards in the way that, just as some such [unique attributes] adhere to the individuals of the corporeal species and make them distinct from one another as long as they endure, so too the souls are made distinct by the things in them that make them particular in the bodies, whether the bodies exist or no bodies exist, whether we know about those states or not, or know but some of them.

6. From “The Soul,” V.4ⁱ

HUMAN SOULS DO NOT SUFFER CORRUPTION

1. [227] The soul does not die with the death of the body; for anything that corrupts by virtue of something else’s corrupting has some type of connection with it. Either (1) it is connected with it as something posterior to it in existence, or (2) as something prior to it in existence (that is, it precedes it essentially, not temporally), or (3) as something coexistent with it.

2. If (3) the soul is connected with the body in the manner of something coexistent with it, and (3a) that [coexistence] is essential, not accidental, to it, then each one would be related essentially to the other, and neither the soul nor the body would be a substance, but they *are* both substances. If (3b) that [coexistence] is [228] accidental, not essential, then if one of them is corrupted, the other accidental thing would be removed from the relation, but the thing itself would not be corrupted through the corruption [of the other], inasmuch as this is the connection.

3. If (1) it is connected with it as something posterior to it in existence, then the body would be a cause for the soul with respect to existence. Now there are four

causes. Either the body would be (a) an efficient cause of the soul, giving it existence; or (b) it would be a receptive cause⁵⁷ of it, whether by means of composition, like the elements for bodies, or by means of simplicity, like copper for a statue; or (c) it would be a formal cause; or (d) it would be a perfecting cause.⁵⁸ It is absurd that [the body] would be (a) an efficient cause; for the body, as body, does not act on anything—it acts only through a faculty. Were it to act by itself and not by a faculty, then every body would do that action, and then all of the faculties of the body would be either accidents or material forms, but it is impossible for accidents or forms subsisting through matter to provide the very existence of something subsisting through itself, not in matter, [as it is] an existence of an absolute substance. It is also impossible for it to be (b) a receptive cause, since we have already demonstratively explained that the soul is not imprinted in the body in any way.⁵⁹ So the body, then, does not bear the form of the soul—according to either simplicity or combination—where the parts of the body would combine and mix in a certain combination and mixture and then the soul would be imprinted in them. Finally, it is absurd for the body to be either (c) a formal or (d) a perfecting cause of the body, for the opposite is more appropriate. The connection of the soul to the body, then, is not that of an effect to an essential cause.

4. Now, if the humoral temperament and the body are [jointly] an accidental cause of the soul, then when there comes into existence the matter of a body suitable to be an instrument and a domain of the soul, then [either] the separate causes originate [229] a particular soul, or [the soul] originates “out of” [the matter].⁶⁰ Otherwise, originating [the soul] without a reason that specifies one such act over another is absurd. That notwithstanding, [if the soul were to come to be without matter], the occurrence of numerically many souls would be prevented, because of what we have already explained.⁶¹ Also, [matter must be an accidental cause for the soul’s coming to be], because anything that is generated after not existing must be preceded by a matter that is configured to receive it or is configured to bear some relation to it, as is explained in the other sciences.⁶² Again, [matter must be an accidental cause of the soul], because if it were possible for a particular soul to come into existence without there also coming into existence an instrument through which it perfects itself and performs its actions, then [the soul’s] existence would be vain, but “nature does nothing in vain,”⁶³ and when that [instrument] is prevented [from existing, then the

⁵⁷ That is, a material cause.

⁵⁸ That is, a final cause.

⁵⁹ See “The Soul,” V.2, all, pp. 188–92.

⁶⁰ The position that the soul originates out of the matter seems to be that of Alexander of Aphrodisias, *De anima* I.14–19, 8.13–11.5. Also see Ibn Sīnā’s discussion of “out of” and “from” in “Physics,” I.2, pars. 17–19, pp. 161–62.

⁶¹ See “The Soul,” V.3, pars. 3–11, pp. 193–95.

⁶² See “Metaphysics,” IV.2, pars. 1–10, pp. 219–22.

soul] is incapable of [perfecting itself and performing its actions]. When being configured for the relation and being disposed to serve as instrument come into being, however, then it necessarily follows that something, that is, the soul, comes into existence from the separate causes. This is not the case with the soul only. It also applies to any form that comes into existence after not existing. So it is precisely the disposition of the matter for [the soul] and its becoming suitable for [the soul] that makes the soul's existence more likely than its nonexistence.

5. Now, just because one thing must come into existence at the same time as another thing does not mean that it must perish when the other perishes. That is the case only when the being of the former subsists through and in the latter. There are various things, however, that come into existence from other things and survive the demise of the latter when their being does not subsist in them. [This is] especially the case when what bestows their existence is something different from the very thing in conjunction with whose existence there is prepared the bestowal of their existence. What bestows the existence of the soul is something that is neither a body nor a faculty in a body; rather, it is unquestionably a being that subsists free of all matter and magnitudes. So, since the existence of the soul is from that thing, while from the body there comes only the moment [230] suited to the existence of [the soul], then the soul has no connection, in its own existence, with the body, nor is the body a cause of it, except accidentally. Thus, one cannot say that the connection between the two is of a kind that requires the body to precede the soul in the way that an [essential] cause would.

6. The third type of connection we enumerated at the beginning is (2) that the connection of the soul with the body is as something prior in existence. Such priority is either (2a) temporal, but in that case the soul's existence cannot be connected with [the body]—it *preceded* it in time—or the priority is (2b) essential but not temporal. This second kind of priority means that just as soon as the prior thing exists, it necessarily follows that the posterior thing receives existence from it, and in that case, the thing that is prior in existence also does not exist when the posterior thing is posited as not having existed—not that positing the nonexistence of the posterior thing entails the nonexistence of the prior thing. Quite the contrary, the posterior thing cannot be nonexistent unless there has first naturally occurred in the prior thing something to make *it* nonexistent, and then the posterior thing will be nonexistent. So, positing the nonexistence of the posterior thing is not what entails the nonexistence of the prior thing, but rather positing the nonexistence of the prior thing itself. [This is so] because one cannot posit the posterior thing as not existing until after the posterior thing itself happens to be nonexistent. Consequently, (i) the cause of nonexistence must occur in the substance of the soul—and so together with [the substance of the soul] the body is corrupted—and (ii) the body must in no way be corrupted through a cause proper to it alone. But the body *is* corrupted by a cause proper to it alone, such as the change of the humoral temperament or composition. So it is simply incoherent to maintain that the soul is connected with the body as something essentially prior *and* that the body is corrupted by a cause unique to it. Therefore, this is not the connection

between the two. Now that this is the case, all the ways of connection are invalidated, [231] and all that remains is that the soul has no connection, with respect to existence, with the body; rather, it is connected with other principles that neither change nor cease.

7. I also say there is another reason that the soul does not pass into nonexistence in any way. Anything that can corrupt, due to whatever cause, has in it the potential to corrupt and, before corrupting, has the actuality of persisting, and its being configured to corrupt is not its actuality of persisting; for what is meant by “potentiality” is different from what is meant by “actuality,” and the relation of this potentiality is different from the relation of this actuality. [This is so] because the relation of the former is to corrupting and the relation of the latter is to persisting. Thus, these two meanings apply to two different states in the thing. So we say that in composite things, as well as in the simple things that subsist in the composite things, there can combine an actuality to persist and a potentiality to corrupt; but in the simple things that are essentially separate these two states cannot be combined.

8. I say categorically that these two states cannot be combined in something that is essentially one, because anything that persists and has the potentiality to corrupt has equally the potentiality to persist, because its persisting is not necessary and inevitable. If it is not necessary, it is possible, and the possibility that encompasses both sides is the very nature of potentiality. Thus, it has in its substance the potentiality of persisting as well as the actuality of persisting. Now, we have explained that its actuality of persisting is by no means the same as its potentiality to exist. This is obvious. So its actuality of persisting is a state that happens accidentally to the thing that has the potentiality of persisting. That potentiality does not belong to any given essence actually, but rather to the thing whose essence just so happens actually to persist. In other words, that does not belong to the real account of its essence. From this it follows that its essence is composed of something that, when *it* is, then *through* it [232] [the composite] itself actually exists—this is the form in anything—and something *out of* which this actuality occurs but that in itself is its potentiality—this is the matter. So, if the soul is absolutely simple, it is not divided into matter and form, whereas if it is composite—but let us set aside the composite and investigate the substance that is its matter with explicit reference to just that.

9. We say that either matter is divisible in this way perpetually, and the discussion then goes on perpetually (and this is absurd),⁶³ or the thing that is the substance and root does not perish. Our discussion is about this thing that is the root and foundation, that is what we call the soul; it is not about something that is a combination of it and some other thing. So, it is clear that anything that is simple and not composite, or is the foundation and root of something composite, in relation to itself does not combine in itself the actuality of persisting and the potentiality of not

⁶³ In other words, Ibn Sīnā has eliminated this option on the grounds of the impossibility of an infinite regress, here in the case of dividing matter.

existing. If there is the actuality of not existing in it, then it would be absurd for there to be the actuality of persisting in it, but when the actuality of persisting is in it, and it does in fact exist, the potentiality of not existing is not in it. It is clear, then, that the potentiality to corrupt is not in the substance of the soul. As for the generated things that do corrupt, that part of them that undergoes corruption is the composite combination. Now the potentiality to corrupt or to persist is not in the causal factor (*maʿnā*) whereby the composite thing is one [i.e., the form], but rather in the matter that potentially receives both contraries. Thus, there is not a potentiality to persist and to corrupt in [the form] of the composite corruptible thing, and so they are not combined in it. As for matter, it may be something that persists not by way of a potentiality through which it is disposed to persist, as one group assumes. Or it may be something that persists by way of a potentiality through which it persists, while not having the potentiality to corrupt; rather, the potentiality to corrupt is something else that comes about in it. With the simple things that are in matter, the potentiality to corrupt is in the substance of the matter, [233] not in their own substance. Now the demonstration that requires that every generated thing is corruptible due to the finitude of the two potentialities of subsistence and perishing applies in fact only to anything that is generated from matter and form, where it is with respect to its matter that there is simultaneously the potentiality for that form to persist and the potentiality for it to corrupt, as you have learned. It is then clear that the human soul does not corrupt at all, and it is to this [conclusion] that our discussion has led us.

7. From “The Soul,” V.5^k

CONCERNING THE INTELLECT THAT ACTS UPON OUR SOULS AND THE INTELLECT IN OUR SOULS THAT IS AFFECTED

1. [234] We say that the human soul is at one time something intellecting potentially and thereafter becomes something actually intellecting. Now whatever is brought from potency to act does so only on account of a cause in act that brings it out. So there is a cause that brings our souls from potency to act with regard to the intelligibles. Since it is the cause with respect to providing the intelligible forms, it is precisely but an actual intellect in whom the principles of the intellectual forms are separate (*mujarrada*) [from matter], and whose relation to our souls is the relation of the Sun to our vision. Just as the Sun is actually visible in itself [235] and through its light it makes actually visible what is not actually visible, so likewise is the state of this intellect vis-à-vis our souls; for when the intellecting faculty reviews the particulars that are in the imagery [faculty], and the Active Intellect sheds light onto us upon them (which we discussed), the things abstracted from matter and its associations are altered and impressed upon the rational soul. [“Being altered” is] not in the sense that [the particulars] themselves are transferred from the imagery to our intellect, nor [is “being impressed”] in the sense that the connotational attribute (*maʿnā*) immersed in the [material] associations (which in itself and with regard to its very being is separate (*mujarrada*) [from matter]) makes something like itself. Quite the contrary, [the

alteration and being impressed] is in the sense that reviewing [the things abstracted from matter and its associations] prepares the soul in order that the thing separate from matter [coming] from the Active Intellect [i.e., the intellectual forms] flows down upon them; for discursive thought and selective attention are certain motions that prepare the soul in a way to receive what flows down just as middle terms prepare [the soul] to receive the conclusion in the most convincing way, although the first is according to one way and the second according to another, as you will come to know.

2. So when a certain relation to this form happens to the rational soul by means of the light shed by the Active Intellect, then from [the relation to the form] there comes to be in [the soul] something that in one way is of its genus and in another way is not, just as when light falls on colored objects, in the seeing of them it produces an effect that is not in every way [reduced] to their sum. So the things in the imagery [faculty], which are potentially intelligible, become actually intelligible—not themselves but what is acquired from them. In fact, just as the effect resulting from the sensible forms by means of the light is not itself those forms, but rather something related to them that is engendered by means of the light in the recipient facing [the light], so likewise when the rational soul reviews those forms in the imagery [faculty] and the light of the Active Intellect comes into a type of conjunction with them, then they are prepared [236] so that from the light of the Active Intellect they come to be within [the rational soul] the abstract version of those forms [free] from [material] taints.

3. As soon as the essential aspects of [those forms] are distinguished from their accidental aspects on the part of the human intellect, and what makes them similar to the forms of the imagery is distinguished from what makes them different, the connotational attributes that show no difference from those become one in the intellect itself by comparison of similarity, but those connotational attributes that bear comparison to what is different become many connotational attributes and so the intellect has the ability both to consider one of the connotational attributes to be many and to consider the multiple connotational attributes to be one. There are two ways that the many can be considered one. The first is in that when the numerically many differing connotations related to the forms of the imagery do not differ in definition, they become a single connotational attribute. The second way is by combining the many different connotations of genera and differences into a connotational attribute that is singular in the definition. The way to make one connotational attribute many is the reverse of these two processes.

4. This is one of the properties of the human intellect. It does not belong to any of the other faculties; for they perceive the many as a many as it is and the one as one as it is, whereas they cannot perceive the simple one, but rather the one inasmuch as it is a whole combined of things and their accidents. Also they cannot separate out the accidental aspects and extract them from the essential aspects. So, when the senses present a given form to the imagery [faculty] and the imagery [faculty] presents it to the intellect, the intellect takes a single connotational attribute from it. Then if

another form of the same species is presented to it—"another" only in number—the intellect by no means takes any form different from what was taken, unless it is due to the accident that is particular to this inasmuch as it is that accident such that it takes it one time as separate [of all accidents] and another time with that accident. This is why it is said [237] that Zayd and ‘Amr have one connotational attribute in terms of "humanness," not on the basis of the fact that the humanness associated with the particular properties of ‘Amr is the very same humanness associated with the particular properties of Zayd, as though there were a single thing belonging to Zayd and ‘Amr, as is the case with friendship or property. Instead, "humanness" in terms of existence is many, and there is no existence belonging to some one common humanness in external reality unless it is that very humanness of Zayd and ‘Amr. We will endeavor to explain this in the discipline of philosophy [i.e., metaphysics]. What is intended [here] is that since the first of [the two forms, e.g., Zayd’s form of humanness] provided the soul with the form of "humanness," the second [form, e.g., ‘Amr’s form of humanness] does not provide anything at all. Instead, the connotational attribute imprinted in the soul by both is a single one, that is, the one from the first presentation of the imagery, while the second presentation has no influence, for either one of them could have preceded and left this very same imprint in the soul, not like the two individuals of a man and a horse.⁶⁴

5. This [is one point]. Next, it is characteristic of the intellect that, when it perceives things that have an earlier and later association with it, it intellects the time with them necessarily—but that is not over a period of time but in an instant, where the intellect intellects the time in an instant. Its construction of the syllogism and the definition is unquestionably in a period of time; however, its conception of the conclusion and the thing defined is instantaneous.

6. The inability of the intellect to conceptualize things that are at the upper limit of being intelligible and abstracted from matter is not on account of something in those things themselves, nor on account of something innate to the intellect, but rather on account of the fact that the soul is distracted while in the body by the body. It needs the body for many things, but the body keeps it at a remove from the most noble of its perfections. The eye cannot bear to gaze at the Sun, certainly not on account of something [238] in the Sun nor that it is not clearly visible, but rather on account of something about the natural makeup of the body [of the eye]. When this state of being immersed and impeded are removed from the soul we have, it will intellect these [extreme intelligibles] in the noblest, clearest, and most pleasurable ways. Our discussion here, however, concerns the soul only inasmuch as it is a soul, and that only inasmuch as it is associated with this matter. So we should not discuss the return of the soul when we are discussing nature, until we move on to the discipline of philosophy [i.e., metaphysics] and there investigate the things that are separate [from matter]. The investigation in the natural philosophy, however, is restricted to

⁶⁴ That is, the forms of two different species.

what is appropriate to natural things, and they are the things that bear relation to matter and motion.

7. So we say instead that the intellect conceptualizes differently depending upon the existence of things. So with very strong things, the intellect may not be able to perceive them because they overwhelm it, and with very weakly existing things, like motion, time, and matter, the soul may find it difficult to conceptualize them because of their weak existence. As for privations, the intellect does not conceptualize them when it is actual in an absolute sense, because privation is perceived insofar as possession is not perceived, so whatever is perceived of privation as a privation and evil as an evil is something potential and an absence of a perfection. Any intellect that perceives it does so only because it bears some relation to it potentially. So the intellects in which nothing potential is mixed do not intellect nor conceptualize privation and evil as a privation and an evil, given there is nothing in existence that is an absolute evil.

8. From “The Soul,” V.6¹

THE LEVELS OF THE INTELLECT'S ACTIONS

1. [239] We say that the soul intellects by taking into itself the form of the intelligibles as abstracted from matter. The form is so abstracted either by the intellect's abstraction of it or because that form is in itself abstracted from matter, in which case the soul is spared the trouble of abstracting it.

2. The soul conceptualizes itself and in doing so makes itself an intellect, something that intellects, and something that is intellect. Its conceptualization of these [intelligible] forms, however, does not make it such; for its substance in the body is always potentially an intellect, even though in some cases it is brought into act. What is said about the soul itself *becoming* the intelligible objects is one of those [statements] that to my mind is impossible;⁶⁵ for I do not understand their statement that something becomes something else, nor do I know how that would take place. If it is through “doffing” one form and “donning” another form, where [the soul's substance] is one thing with the first form and another thing with the other form, then in point of fact the first thing does *not* become the other thing.⁶⁶ Rather, the first thing had perished and all that remained was its [material] subject or part of that. If it does not happen like that, then we should investigate how it would. We say: when the first thing, *x*, becomes another thing, *y*, then—since it had been that first thing—*x* either exists or does not exist. If *x* exists, then the second thing, *y*, either exists also or does

⁶⁵ Cf. Aristotle, *De anima* III 4, 429a16, 430a14; and III 7, 431a1. Al-Fārābī makes this point as well, albeit in terms of the intellects' becoming the intelligible object; cf. al-Fārābī, *On the Intellect*, par. 12, pp. 71–72, and *The Principles of Existing Things*, par.18, p. 87.

⁶⁶ The “doffing” metaphor is a reference to the metaphor of Plotinus of the soul leaving the body behind, as it was translated into Arabic as part of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Theology*.

not exist. If y exists, then x and y are two existing things, not one. If y does not exist, then [since x has become y], x has become something that does not exist, not some other existing thing [240]—and this is unintelligible. If x was nonexistent, then it did not become *another* thing; rather, it is nonexistent and some other thing comes to be. So how does the soul become the forms of things?

3. The one who wrote the *Eisagōgē* [i.e., Porphyry] caused people the most confusion on this issue. He was so intent to maintain imaginative,^m poetic, and mystic⁶⁷ doctrines that he confined himself, and others, to the imagination—something that is obvious to discriminating people on the basis of his books *On the Intellect and the Intelligibles* and *On the Soul*.⁶⁸ To be sure, the forms do settle in the soul, “adorning” and “ornamenting” it, with the soul becoming like a place for them by means of the material intellect. Nevertheless, if the soul were actually to *become* a form of some existing thing, where the form is the actuality—since in itself it *is* an actuality and [thus] does not itself have any potentiality to receive anything (since any potentiality to receive is only in what receives something)—then the soul necessarily cannot have any potentiality to receive another form, or anything else for that matter. In point of fact, however, we do observe [that the soul] receives another form, that is, other than that form [by which it is an actuality]. Now, if that other form is also no different from this form [by which it is an actuality], this would be a strange situation indeed, since receiving and not receiving would be one and the same thing. If it is different, then there is no doubt that the soul, if it is now the intelligible form, has become something other than itself. But this is nonsense! It is rather the case that the soul is what is intellecting, and what is meant by the “intellect” is either [the soul’s] faculty through which it intellects, or the forms of the intelligibles in themselves. Now, it is because [the intelligible forms] are *in* the soul that they are intelligible, so the intellect, intellecting, and what is intellectured are *not* one and the same thing in our souls. (Certainly in something else this may be the case, [241] as you will catch sight of elsewhere.) Similarly, if “material intellect” means the absolute disposition belonging to the soul, then it is always in us as long we are in the body. If it means [a disposition to receive the form] of any given thing, however, then that ceases with the onset of actuality.

4. Now that this has been established, we say that there are three ways of conceptualizing intelligibles.

4.1. The first is the conceptualization that is actually [in the process of] differentiating and arranging [the forms] in the soul. Such manner of differentiating and arrangement need not be obligatory; in fact, it can be rearranged. For example, in your soul when you divide the meanings (*maʿnā*) of the terms indicated by your statement, “Every man is an animal,” you find that the meaning of each term

⁶⁷ Ibn Sīnā uses the term *ṣifīya* here, an adjective for mystical thought in the Islamic tradition.

⁶⁸ For a brief discussion of these works, see Peter Adamson, “Porphyrius Arabus on Nature and Art: 463F Smith in Context” in *Studies in Porphyry*, George Karamanolis and Anne Sheppard, eds., Appendix I.

is a universal that can be conceptualized only in an incorporeal substance, and you find that the conceptualization of them in it puts one thing first and another last. If you rearrange that in such a way that the order of the conceptualized meanings is the opposite order of your statement, “Animal is predicated of every man,” you have no doubt that this order, as an order of universal connotational attributes (*maʿnā*), can be so ordered only with regard to an incorporeal substance. While it is also ordered in a certain way in the imagery, there it is as something heard, not as something intellected. While the two acts of ordering are different, the simple intelligible is single.

4.2. The second is when conceptualizing [the intelligible] has taken place and [the intelligible] has been acquired, but the soul is turned away from it. It is no longer paying attention to that intelligible, but rather has been moved away from it to another intelligible, for example. For it is not within the capacity of our souls to intellect things together at one time.

4.3. Another type of conceptualization is like something [242] you have with regard to a question you are asked concerning something you learned or all but learned, and the response comes to you at the time and you are certain that you are responding to it on the basis of what you learned, without differentiating [out the intelligibles]. In fact, however, you start differentiating and ordering [them] in your soul just as you begin the response that arises from some certainty you have about knowing it before the differentiating and ordering.

5. The difference between the first and second conceptualizations is obvious; for the first is like something you took out of storage and put to use, whereas the second is like something that is stored for you [and] whenever you want, you put it to use. The third differs from the first by not being something ordered in the discursive thought process at all; rather, it is like some principle of that, given its close connection to certainty. [The third] differs from the second in that it is not overlooked; rather, it is actually being investigated as something that is certain, since with it there is a particular connection to something that verges on being like the stored [intelligible]. [. . .]

THE “SACRED” INTELLECT

6.ⁿ [248] The acquisition of knowledge, whether from someone else or on one’s own, varies in degrees. Some people who acquire knowledge more readily conceptualize because the disposition they have⁶⁹ that precedes the disposition we have mentioned⁷⁰ is more powerful. If that is the case for the person on his own, this powerful disposition is called “intuition.” In some people this disposition may be so intense that they need neither much effort, nor training, nor instruction to conjoin with the Active Intellect; rather, the disposition for that may be so intense that it is almost as

⁶⁹ That is, the material intellect.

⁷⁰ That is, the dispositional intellect; see “The Soul,” I.5, pars. 14–15, pp. 184–85.

though they actually possessed the second disposition—in fact, it is as though they know everything on their own. This is the highest degree of this disposition. In this state the material intellect has to be called a “sacred intellect,” and, though a part of the genus of dispositional intellect, it is so lofty that it is not common to everyone. It is not inconceivable [249] that some of these actions, which are attributed to the sacred spirit because of their powerful and overwhelming nature, deluge the imagination, which then reproduces imitations of them that can be perceived by the senses and heard as speech, in the manner we have previously indicated.

7. Something that verifies this is the obvious fact that the intelligible matters that can be acquired are acquired only by obtaining the middle term of a syllogism. This middle term may be acquired in two ways. Sometimes through intuition, which is an act whereby the mind discovers the middle term on its own (acumen being the power of intuition). Sometimes through instruction, the origins of which are intuition; for there is no doubt that things go back ultimately to acts of intuition discovered by those who had the intuitions and subsequently passed them on to their students.

8. Therefore, it is conceivable that intuition could occur to a person on his own and that he could construct the syllogism in his mind without a teacher. This is something that varies in quantity and quality: in quantity because some people have more intuitions of the middle terms; in quality because some people intuit faster. Now since this variation is not restricted to one particular level but rather is always susceptible to increase and decrease, and since at the lowest extreme it ends at someone who has no intuition whatsoever, its highest extreme must end at someone who has intuition about all or most objects of scientific investigation and who intuits in the quickest and least amount of time. It is possible, then, for there to be an individual whose soul is strengthened by such intense purity and such intense conjunction with the intellectual principles that he blazes with intuition. I mean [that he blazes with intuition] by receiving [the principles]^o concerning all matters from the Active Intellect, where the forms that are in the Active Intellect are imprinted in his soul either instantly or almost so. [This] does not occur by [250] blindly accepting them, but rather in an order containing the middle terms; for blindly accepted beliefs about things that are knowable really only through their causes do *not* constitute intellectual certainty. This is a type of prophethood—in fact, it is the highest faculty of prophethood—and it is most appropriate to call this faculty a “sacred” faculty, since it is the highest level of the human faculties.

9. From “The Soul,” V.7^P

A VERIFICATION OF THE TRUE ACCOUNT OF THE SOUL

[...]1. [252] It has become clear from what we have stated⁷¹ that the different actions of the soul are attributable to different faculties, and that each faculty, as such,⁷²

⁷¹ “The Soul,” I.5, pp. 179–85.

⁷² That is, different from another faculty.

is like that only inasmuch as the first action that belongs to it issues from it. So the irascible faculty is not affected by pleasures nor is the appetitive faculty affected by pains. The faculty of perception does not suffer the effects that these two suffer, and nothing about these two, as such,⁷³ [253] is receptive to the perceptible form and is in-formed by it.⁷⁴ This being an established fact, we say that these faculties must have a nexus that joins them all together and to which they are bound as a group, where the relation of that nexus to these faculties is the same as the relation of the common sense to the individual senses that are [like] nurslings. [There must be such a nexus], for we are certain that these faculties distract one another (as you have learned from what preceded).⁷⁵ If there were no such nexus employing these [faculties], such that [the nexus] would be distracted by one of them away from another, thus not employing the latter or managing it, then it would not be the case that one prevents another from its activity in some way nor is diverted from [its own activity]. [This is so] because when one faculty has no connection with another faculty, the activity of the first does not prevent the second from performing its own activity since the instrument is not common [to both], the location is not common, and there is nothing else in common to unite them. Now how can this be when we see that the act of sensing excites desire, but the appetitive faculty is not affected by the sensible object as a sensible object? If it is affected but not inasmuch as [the object] is a sensible object, then the affection cannot be attributable to the desire for that sensible object, so it would have to be [attributable to] what is doing the sensing. The two faculties, however, certainly cannot be a single faculty, and so the two faculties clearly belong to one thing. This is why we correctly say: “When we sense, we desire,” and “When we saw such-and-such, we became angry.”

2. Now this single thing with respect to which these faculties are joined as a whole is the thing that each of us sees as himself such that he says truly: “When we sense, we desire” [254]. This thing cannot be a body [for the following reasons]. First, it does not necessarily follow from being a body as such that it is a gathering place for these faculties. If that were the case, that would belong to every body rather than to some thing *by means of which* [every body] comes to be such, since that thing is what primarily does the gathering together, that is, it is the perfection of the body inasmuch as it is a gathering place, and it is something other than the body. So the gathering place, then, is something that is not a body, that is, [it is] the soul.

3. Second, it has already been made clear that these faculties include what cannot be a corporeal thing residing in a body.⁷⁶ So this could raise the following doubt: if it is conceivable for these faculties to belong to a single thing despite the

⁷³ That is, different from the perceptible faculty.

⁷⁴ See “The Soul,” I.5, pars. 8–9, p. 182.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, V.3, par. 2, pp. 192–93.

⁷⁶ See “The Soul,” V.2, pp. 188–92.

fact that they are not gathered together in it—since some do not inhere in bodies and others do—and, as corollary to their individual distinctions, they cannot have a single description that can be related to one thing, then why is that not the case now when all of them can be related to a body or a corporeal part? We say in response: Because this thing—the one that is not a body—can be a source of the faculties, and so some of them spread out from it to the instrument [i.e., the body], others are proper to itself, but all of them are traced back to it in a particular manner. The ones gathered together in the [bodily] instrument at a particular originating point are gathered in the instrument by that originating point when it spreads out from the thing [i.e., the soul] that is sufficient in itself without the instrument (. . .).⁷⁷ All of these faculties, however, cannot spread out from the body, for the relation of these faculties to the body is not by way of spreading out [from it] but by way of [its] receiving [them]. Spreading out can occur as a departure of the flow from the source, but receiving cannot occur in such a manner.

4. [255] Third, such a body⁷⁸ is either (a) the whole body or (b) it is not the whole body. If (a) it is the whole body, then if it lost some part of itself, what we perceive to be us would not exist. It is not like that, however; for I would be myself even if I did not know that I have a hand or a leg or some other bodily member (as was stated earlier in other places).⁷⁹ I suppose instead that they are my appendages, and I believe that they are instruments of mine that I use to fulfill certain needs. Were it not for those needs, I would have no use for them. I would also be myself when they did not exist. Let us return to what was stated earlier on our part. We say: If a human were created in a single instant such that his limbs were separated from one another and he could not see them, and it happened that he could not feel them and they did not touch one another and he could not hear a single sound, he would not know that any of his organs exist, but he would know that he exists as uniquely a single thing⁹ despite not knowing everything else. However, what is unknown is not the same as what is known! These bodily members that we have are really only just like clothes that, because they have always been associated with us, we have come to think of as parts of ourselves. When we imagine our selves, we do not imagine them bare; rather, we imagine [our selves] to have enveloping bodies. The reason for that is the permanent association [of the two]. The fact, however, is that we have become accustomed to stripping off and discarding clothes in a way we are not accustomed to doing with the bodily members, and so our belief that these are parts of us is more firmly entrenched than our belief that our garments are parts of us.

5. If it is (b) that such a body is not the whole body but rather one specific bodily organ, then that organ would be the thing that I believe to be me—unless^t what is intended in my believing that it is me [256] is not that organ, even if it must

⁷⁷ Omitted here is a reference to further treatment of this later in the chapter.

⁷⁸ That is, the body that is posited as being “the thing that each of us sees as himself,” par. 2, p. 206.

⁷⁹ See “The Soul,” I.I, par. 7, pp. 178–79.

have that organ.⁸⁰ If, however, what that organ is, namely, its being a heart, a brain, or some other organ or organs with this description, is identical to it or its totality is identical to the thing that I perceive to be myself, then my perception that I am must be my perception of that thing. But one thing from a single perspective cannot be both what is perceived and other than what is perceived.⁸¹ The situation is not like that anyway; for it is rather by sensing, listening, and experiential knowledge that I know that I have a heart and a brain, not because I know that I am I. Thus, that organ on its own would not be the thing that I perceive to be me essentially but only me accidentally, whereas the aim in knowing about myself that I am me (that is, the aim that I intend when I say “*I* sensed, *I* intellected, *I* acted, and *I*, as something different than these descriptions, joined them together”) is what I call “I.”

6. Now, if someone said, “You also do not know that [the ‘I’] is a soul,” I would say that I *always* know it as the thing intended by what I call the “soul.” I might not know it by the term “soul,” but once I understand what I mean by soul, I understand that it is that thing and that it is what uses [bodily] instruments such as the motive and perceptive faculties. It is only as long as I do not understand the meaning of “soul” that I do not recognize [that]. That is not the case with the heart or the brain; for I may understand what is meant by “heart” and “brain,” but I do not know that [they are the “I”]. When I mean by “soul” that it is the thing that is the principle of these motions and perceptions that I have and is what these [motions and perceptions] are traced back to in this whole, I recognize that either it is in actual fact the “I” or it is the “I” as something using this body. Then, it would be as though I now am unable to distinguish the perception of me as distinct from the mixed perception [257] that there is something that uses the body, and that there is something that is joined with the body.

7. As for whether it is a body or not a body, in my opinion it is by no means necessary that it be a body, nor that it appear to me in imagined form as any body whatsoever. Instead, its imagined form appears to me to be precisely *without* any corporeality. So I will have understood some part of the aspect of its not being a body when I do *not* understand it to have any corporeality at the very same time that I understand [what it is]. Then, when I undertake an independent verification, the more I add corporeality to this thing that is the principle of these acts, the less conceivable it will be for that thing to be a body. How much more fitting it would be for its first representation in my soul to be something that is different from these exterior aspects, and I am then misled by the association with bodily instruments, the sensory observation of those, and the issuance of actions from them, and I believe that [those exterior aspects] are like parts of me. It is not when an error has been made about something that a judgment must pertain to it, but rather when the judgment pertains to what it

⁸⁰ If it is the latter, then the organ would be just part, albeit an essential one, of what is identified as the self.

⁸¹ That is, what would be doing the perceiving.

is that has to be intellected. And it is not when I am investigating whether it exists and whether it is not a body that I am wholly ignorant of [these questions], but rather when I neglect [to consider these questions]. It is often the case that knowledge about something is close at hand but one overlooks it, and it becomes the very thing that is unknown and is investigated at the greatest remove. Sometimes knowledge that is close at hand is like the reminder, and despite the least amount of effort it was like something overlooked, and so awareness does not turn to pursue it because it weakly understands it, in which case one needs to take a remote position in relation to it. From [all of] this, it has become clear that these faculties have a gathering place to which all of them can be traced back, and that it is not a body, regardless of whether it is or is not joined with the body.

VII. THE SALVATION, "METAPHYSICS," I.12^a

I.12 The Division of the Causes and Their States⁸²

1. [518] "Principle" is said of anything that already has a completed existence in itself (whether from itself or another) and from which the existence of another thing occurs and subsists by it.

2. Next, the principle is either like part of its effect or it is not like a part. If it is like a part, then either one of two things must be the case. (1) It may be a part from whose actual occurrence its effect need not actually exist: this is matter. So you can imagine matter existing, but from its actual existence alone something [else] need not actually occur but rather may be potential. Or (2) it may be that from its actual existence the existence of its effect must be actual: [519] this is form. An example of the first is the wood of the bed; an example of the second is the shape and composition of the bed.⁸³

3. If it is not like the part, then it is something either extrinsic or intrinsic to the effect itself. If it is intrinsic, then either the effect is characterized by it—and this is like the form of the matter—or it is characterized by the effect—and this is like the subject of the accident. If it is extrinsic, then it is either that *from which* there is existence, but the existence is not *for the sake of* it—this is the agent; or the existence is not *from* it, but the existence is *for the sake of* it—this is the end. Thus, the causes are matter belonging to the composite, form belonging to the composite, a subject for the accident, a form for the matter, an agent, and an end.

4. The matter of the composite and the subject of the accident collapse together in that they are the thing in which there is the potentiality of something's existence.

⁸² For discussions of Ibn Sīnā's theory of causality see Amos Bertolacci, "The Doctrine of Material and Formal Causality in the *Ilahiyāt* of Avicenna's *Kitāb al-Shifā'*," 125–54; and Robert Wisnovsky, "Final and Deficient Causality in Avicenna's Cosmology and Theology," 97–123.

⁸³ Cf. the translation of "Physics," I.2, par. 2, pp. 156–57.