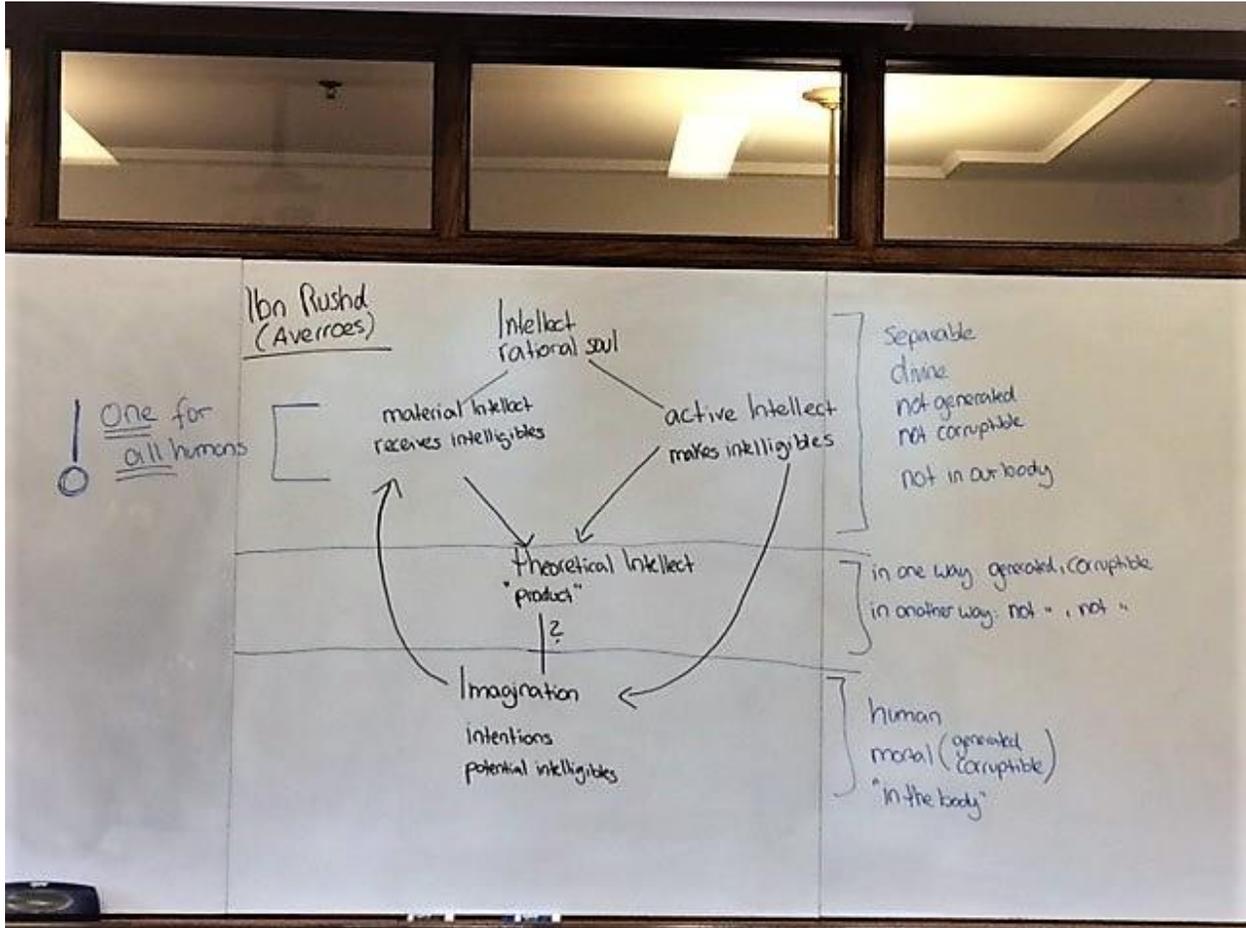

SUMMARY OF CLASSROOM DISCUSSION #4

FWS FALL 2018

Ibn Rushd's (Averroes) Interpretation of the separable intellect:



SUMMARY OF CLASSROOM DISCUSSION #3

FWS FALL 2018

Happiness – Thinking – Soul & Body

All humans desire happiness (EN 1095a15ff.); happiness is the good for man (EN 1094b8).

↓
Thinking makes us happy! (Contemplation makes us happiest! EN1178a6-8, 1178b21-23)

↓
Thinking is an activity of the soul, namely of the rational part of our soul (i.e., our intellect)! (EN1102a27)

Intellect is the best thing “*in us*” (EN X,7; 1177a14); “*intellect more than anything else is man*” (EN 1178a8). *Humans are rational animals*

↓
Soul is the form of the body (DA 412a20-22). Soul and body form a unity (DA 412a15)! Humans are compounds. Soul cannot be separated from body/cannot exist apart from body. (DA413a4)

↓
Soul is our essence (DA 412b11)

The Separable Intellect

1. Is the rational part of the soul (i.e., the intellect) separable from the human body?
2. If so, would that cause any problems for Aristotle’s account? Why or why not?

1) Yes! Intellect is separable!

Organ Argument:

- (1) If the soul (or a part of the soul) does not need the body (or a bodily organ) to realize its activity, then this soul (or part of the soul) can be separated from the body (DA 413a6, GA 736b23)
- (2) Thinking does not need the body (or a bodily organ). (GA 736b28)
- (3) Thinking is an activity of the rational (part of the) soul. (EN1102a27)
- (4) Therefore, the rational (part of the) soul *can* be separated from the body (DA 413b27).

Violent Impression Argument (Strong Stimulus Argument, DA 429a30-429b5):

- (1) All activities of the soul that need a bodily organ to be realized suffer if the stimulus is too violent.
- (2) The intellect does not suffer when the stimulus is too violent.
- (3) So, the intellect is not an activity of the soul that needs a bodily organ to be realized.
- (4) So, the intellect is separable from the body.

2) Problems and Questions for Aristotle:

- (a) Aristotle defines the soul as the form of a body (DA 412a15, 412b3!).
Since the rational soul is a *soul*, how can it be separable from the body?
- (b) Aristotle says that contemplation is self-sufficient (EN1177a27), but now it looks like the outside intellect needs to *enter* me so that I can think. But then, contemplation does not seem to be self-sufficient.
- (c) Aristotle says that the intellect is the best thing “*in us*” (EN X,7; 1177a14).
How can it be the best thing *in us* if it is *outside of us*?

How can an activity that's outside of me (or that needs something outside of me) be my function (my distinctive activity)?

- (d) Aristotle says that the intellect "enters us" (GA 736b26). Does that mean that I have to wait for it to enter me? I don't have access to it? If so, it seems that I cannot think whenever I want and that my happiness is not in my control.

Aristotle's Two Intellects (De Anima III,5)

- (a) productive (active) intellect: impassive, separable, unmixed, immortal, everlasting, makes all things, essentially active, like light
(b) receptive (passive) intellect: passive, becomes everything, perishable

Possible Interpretations:

1. Both intellects are inside of us.
2. Both intellects are outside of us.
3. One intellect is inside, the other is outside of us.
 - a. productive is outside, receptive is inside
 - b. receptive is outside, productive is inside

We discussed the following pros and cons for each interpretation:

1. Both intellects are inside of us.

Pros:

👍 👍 The "In The Soul" Argument:

- (i) The soul is the form of the body; soul and body form a unity (DA 412a15, 412b3!)
- (ii) Both intellects are "in the soul" (DA 430a12)
- (iii) So, both are inside of us (our bodies).

👍 The "Intellect is the best thing in us" claim (EN X,7: 1177a14).

👍 The "Control over Happiness" Argument

- (i) Thinking makes me happy.
- (ii) Thinking is an activity of the intellect.
- (iii) I need both intellects to think.
- (iv) If one intellect is outside of me, then I don't seem to have control over my happiness/realizing my human function.
- (v) But I do have control over my happiness/realizing my human function.
- (vi) So, it is false that one intellect is outside of me.

BUT: maybe Aristotle means that the passive intellect is the best thing in us. (ii) is compatible with the active intellect's being outside of us.

- (iv) $p \rightarrow q$
(v) not-q
(vi) So, not-p

Cons:

👎 The Separable Argument:

- (i) The intellect/mind is *separable from the body* (DA 429b5).
- (ii) If the intellects are inside of us, they are not separable from the body.
- (iii) So, the intellects are not inside of us.

BUT: maybe (ii) is false! Maybe the intellects can be inside of us while being separable. They *could* be separated – under which circumstances? When we die? Where do the intellects go?

Premise (i) is the conclusion of The Organ Argument:

The Organ Argument

- (i) If a soul (or a part of the soul) does not need the body (or a bodily organ) to realize its activity, then this soul (or part of the soul) can be separated from the body (DA 413a6, GA 736b23)
- (ii) Thinking does not need the body (or a bodily organ). (GA 736b28)
- (iii) Thinking is an activity of the intellect/rational (part of the) soul. (EN1102a27)
- (iv) Therefore, the intellect/rational (part of the) soul *can* be separated from the body (DA 413b27). It enters from the outside (GA 736b24-28); mind is separable (DA 429b6)

- ☞ The Immortal Argument:
 - (i) The productive intellect is immortal
 - (ii) I am mortal.
 - (iii) So, the productive intellect cannot be inside of me

BUT: maybe (iii) doesn't necessarily follow! Maybe I can have something immortal in me! But what happens to it when I die? Where is productive intellect before & after me?

☞ ☞ The “Intellect Enters from the Outside” Claim (GA 736b26)

2. Both intellects are outside of us.

Pros:

👍 👍 The “Intellect Enters from the Outside” Claim (GA 736b26)

👍 The Separable Argument

Cons:

☞ ☞ The “Intellect is the best thing in us” claim (EN X,7: 1177a14).
At least one of the intellects must be inside of us (?)

☞ ☞ The “In The Soul” Argument:

- (iv) The soul is the form of the body; soul and body form a unity (DA 412a15, 412b3!)
- (v) Both intellects are “in the soul” (DA 430a12)
- (vi) So, both are inside of us.

☞ Big question: what in us makes us capable of thinking? If both intellects are outside, and what makes me human is to have this relation to the outside intellects, then we still have to explain what makes this relation possible! There must be something in me that's different from other animals and that allows for this relation to the intellect to happen. What is that? Do we have to introduce a third intellect?

3. One intellect is inside, the other is outside:

Pros for both:

👍 👍 The “Intellect Enters from the Outside” Claim (GA 736b26)

👍 The Separable Argument

Cons for both:

- ☞ The “Control over Happiness” Argument
 - (i) Thinking makes me happy.
 - (ii) Thinking is an activity of the intellect.
 - (iii) I need both intellects to think.
 - (iv) If one intellect is outside of me, then I don't seem to have control over my happiness/realizing my human function.
 - (v) But I do have control over my happiness/realizing my human function.
 - (vi) So, it is false that one intellect is outside of me.

BUT: maybe Aristotle would reject (v)!

☞ ☞ The “In The Soul” Argument

a. Productive intellect is outside; receptive intellect is inside

Pros:

👍 The Immortal Argument

b. Receptive intellect is outside; productive intellect is inside

👎 The Immortal Argument (but maybe not a big problem)