

UDC: 1 (091).; 159.9.; 297.

LBC: 88.1; 88.2; 87.3; 87.21

DOI: 10.33864/2617-751X.2024.v7.i2.112-131

MJ № 214

Comparative Analysis of the Unity of Existence (*Wahdat al Wujud*) in Hikmah Mutā'āliyah (*Transcendental philosophy of Molla Sadra*) and Advaita Vedanta Philosophy

Syed Mohammad Jaun Abdi*

Abstract. The concept of the unity of existence finds resonance in both Islamic philosophy, particularly in the Transcendental philosophy of Molla Sadra, and the Advaita Vedanta school of Indian philosophy, notably championed by the mystic philosopher Sankara. Molla Sadra's philosophical framework is rooted in the intertwining principles of Multiplicity within Unity and Unity within Multiplicity, (Kathrat fil Wahdat, Wahdat fil Kathrat) elucidated through two key theories:

(I) Gradational unity of existence, (Al Wujud Al Tashkiki) and

(II) Individual unity of existence. (Wahadat al Shkaksi)

Sankara, a mystic philosopher within the Vedanta tradition, expounds upon the unity of existence through non-dualism, positing that Atman (individual soul) is identical to Brahman (universal consciousness). His philosophical stance involves dismantling the perceived realm of multiplicity by invoking the concept of cosmic illusion, referred to as the doctrine of Maya.

This paper delves into an exploration of the perspectives of Molla Sadra and Sankara regarding the unity of existence. While both thinkers share the notion that a singular reality is concealed by a metaphorical veil, they each draw inspiration from their respective sacred texts—the Quran for Molla Sadra and the Vedas for Sankara. Consequently, they have formulated comprehensive systems of thought grounded in principles and assertions that invite scrutiny.

* Ph.D student in the Al-Mustafa International University (MIU); Iran

E-mail: smjabdi82@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-7449-2906>

To cite this article: Jaun Abdi, S. M. [2024]. Comparative Analysis of the Unity of Existence (*Wahdat al Wujud*) in Hikmah Mutā'āliyah (*Transcendental philosophy of Molla Sadra*) and Advaita Vedanta Philosophy. *"Metafizika" journal*, 7(2), pp.112-131.

<https://doi.org/10.33864/2617-751X.2024.v7.i2.112-131>

Article history:
Received: 20.02.2024
Accepted: 29.04.2024

However, it is essential to note that some disparities exist in their ideas. This paper aims to elucidate the commonalities and divergences between Molla Sadra's and Sankara's philosophies, shedding light on the similarities and polarities inherent in their conceptualizations of the unity of existence.

Keywords: Unity of Existence, Islamic philosophy, Advaita Vedanta, Molla Sadra, Sankara, Gradational unity, Individual unity, Non-dualism, Atman, Brahman, Cosmic illusion, Doctrine of Maya, Quran, Vedas, Mystic philosophy, Similarities, Polarities

1.Introduction

The doctrine of the unity of existence serves as a foundational principle in Islamic mysticism and features prominently in the philosophical framework of the Indian school known as Vedanta. Within the Islamic tradition, Ibn-Arabi stands as the pioneering figure who delved into the concept of unity of existence. This theory posits that only a singular existence can be regarded as the true reality encompassing all aspects of the world. According to this perspective, all phenomena and the diverse manifestations in the world emanate from a single truth that encompasses them all, effectively consolidating the entire world into a unified whole.

In the context of Indian philosophy, the inception of the unity of existence can be traced to a period when people, disillusioned with the powers of gods, ritual ceremonies, and sacrificial rituals, sought a more unified perspective. This shift in focus led to the creation of the Upanishads, wherein the emphasis moved from external practices to an exploration of the internal realm, with a focus on the interconnectedness of Atman (individual soul) and Brahman (universal consciousness). The school of Vedanta further developed this philosophy grounded in the unity of existence, with notable thinkers such as Sankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva. Among them, Sankara gained widespread recognition for his contributions. Additionally, the materialistic Charvaka philosophy in Indian thought also exhibits traces of the unity of existence, marking a transition from polytheism to pantheism in the history of Indian philosophy.

While Ibn-Arabi introduced the term "unity of existence" in Islamic philosophy and based his mystical philosophy on it, it was Molla Sadra who paved the way for mystical thinkers to substantiate the unity of existence. Molla Sadra achieved this by delving into the concepts of gradual unity of existence and individual unity of existence. The term "unity of existence" prompts a fundamental question concerning the nature of reality-whether plurality is genuine or illusory. Philosophically, the answer to this question

leads to three distinct ideas: pure unity, pure plurality, and unity in plurality itself.

Both Sankara and Molla Sadra constructed their philosophical frameworks on the principles of pure unity and unity within plurality. Their contemplations on the unity of existence offer profound insights into the nature of reality, presenting a nuanced exploration of pure unity as well as the intricate interplay between unity and plurality.

2.Molla Sadra's Concept of the Unity of Existence (Wahdat Al wujud)

Molla Sadra's philosophical journey commences with the primacy of existence over essence, a foundational principle recognized as the cognitive limit for understanding existence. Existence, in his view, eludes definition due to its boundless and self-evident nature. As articulated by Molla Sadra "The truth of existence is the clearest thing in appearance and presence; and its essence is the most hidden thing in grasping and understanding the depth of its reality" [Molla Sadra, 1987].

In Molla Sadra's philosophy, the external world is enveloped by existence, while *Quiddity* (Al-Mahiyah),(the inherent nature or essence of a thing) exists solely within the realm of the mind. Here, Quiddity is elucidated as the limitation of existence, derived from the intrinsic nature of a thing. Quiddity, or whatness, is sourced from the essence of something, whereas existence emanates from the being of the thing. Alternatively, Quiddity can be perceived as the constraint of the mind in comprehending unity. Molla Sadra posits that the mind functions in a way that when it seeks to comprehend existence, Quiddity simultaneously imposes itself on existence, hindering a true realization of reality. For instance, the commonality in the phrase "man is," "tree is," "table is" lies in the word "is," serving as the representative of existence shared among them. This essential commonality is integral to their existence; without it, they cannot exist. This shared concept of existence also explains the multiplicity observed in the external world, emphasizing the external correspondence of the concept of existence.

In Molla Sadra's philosophy, the external world, dominated by unity, is considered the realm of existence. Accepting existence as possessing external correspondence implies recognizing it as the original event in the external world, prioritizing it over Quiddity. An illustrative example highlights the precedence of existence: encountering an unfamiliar creature from a distance prompts an immediate recognition of its existence, while its identity (Quiddity) remains unknown. As the creature approaches, its identity becomes apparent, demonstrating that existence is independent of Quiddity.

Molla Sadra elucidates his doctrine of the unity of existence through two key theories: Gradational Unity of Existence and Individual Unity of

Existence. These theories offer a framework for understanding the intricate relationship between existence and essence, providing insights into the fundamental nature of reality in Molla Sadra's philosophical system.

3.1. Gradational Unity of Existence in Molla Sadra's System

Within this framework, Molla Sadra endeavors to establish the proposition that existence constitutes a singular reality with diverse degrees. In this conceptualization, being is comprised of individual entities that exhibit distinctions in their existence. The crux lies in recognizing that the variations among these entities stem from both their shared attributes and the factors that render them dissimilar or unified. The differentiation between these individuals is contingent upon the intensity of existence, spanning from lower levels to higher echelons.

For instance, consider the degrees of numbers, which encompass an infinite plurality. Simultaneously, what distinguishes these numerical degrees is precisely what they share in common. Analogously, contemplate the diverse intensities of light—strong and weak. The distinguishing factor between these variations is, again, the commonality inherent in both. The underlying principle articulated by Molla Sadra is that existence finds its foundation in unity, and the existence of entities is a consequence of the varying degrees of intensity within existence itself.

Molla Sadra posits that unity manifests in multiplicity, and conversely, multiplicity is inherent in unity. This nuanced perspective captures the intricate interplay between unity and diversity within the philosophical framework. [Hamidreza Ayatollahi, 2005].

Thus, Molla Sadra's Gradational Unity of Existence offers a profound exploration of how the varying degrees of existence contribute to the rich tapestry of reality, illustrating the dynamic relationship between unity and multiplicity in the fabric of existence.

The doctrine of gradation not only supports the reality of diversity, but also points out the all-encompassing simplicity of being qua being. Hence the famous dictum that is frequently repeated in Mulla Sadra's works, “the Simple Reality (*basit al-haqiqa*) is all things but none of those things in particular” [*al-Asfar* VI 111]. [Metafizika Journal- Clid, Say, 2, 2018]

3.2. Individual Unity of Existence in Molla Sadra's Philosophy

In this theoretical framework, Molla Sadra posits that existence is singular, representing the being of the supreme God. In the ultimate reality, nothing exists except existence itself, distinct from the sacred divine essence. All objective entities in the realm of creation are perceived as manifestations and shadows, with God being the sole exception. Consequently, the terms

"existence" and "existent" are deemed unitary, leading to the profound realization that only unity is genuinely real.

To substantiate the unity of existence within this theory, Molla Sadra initiates his discourse with the *Theory of causation*. (Qanoon al Elliyat) He proceeds to explore the necessity of being and invisible entities, addressing each aspect sequentially. According to this perspective, the effect is nothing more than the manifestation and emanation of the cause. Thus, the authentic existence resides in the cause, while the existence of the effect is merely a radiated ray from it.

Within the framework of individual unity of existence, the core assertion is that the essential, real existence is exclusive to the sacred Divine Essence. All contingent beings, ranging from pure existence to primordial matter, are considered manifestations and rays of this Unitary Real Existent. In this theory, absolute multiplicity is not negated; rather, it is absorbed into the Real Existence and attributed to

manifestations and appearances. Molla Sadra asserts that by transferring multiplicity from existence to manifestation, the commencement is also transferred from existence to the manifestation. The appearances of existence, as per Molla Sadra, exhibit gradational levels based on their proximity to the Real Existence. The closer they are to the sacred Divine Essence, the more intense and powerful they become, while those farther away are weaker. Importantly, these variations in intensity do not compromise the unity, purity, and simplicity of the Real Essence.

Molla Sadra concludes this line of reasoning by asserting that the world, as perceived, is nothing more than an illusion lacking any genuine existence. [Ibid., p.294] He emphasizes that the reality of existence lies solely in the sacred Divine Essence. In the final section of his discussion on causality, Molla Sadra underscores that contingent entities do not possess real existence in their essences. Instead, their existence is derived from the light of existence, and their intelligibility is acquired through various manifestations of existence. The contingent quiddities, such as the meaning of man and animal, are viewed as superficial aspects and not fundamental elements of existence. According to Molla Sadra, the reality of existence is the Necessary Existence, and it is indivisibly one, with apparent multiple beings being mere shadows of this singular existence. Contingent beings exist incidentally, not essentially or genuinely, according to Molla Sadra's viewpoint.

In the individual unity of existence, Molla Sadra establishes the existence of God through the *Theory of causation* and emphasizes the simplicity or non-compositeness of God to demonstrate His encompassing nature. This stands in contrast to the gradational unity of existence, where Molla Sadra explores

the intensity of existence to establish the idea of multiplicity within unity. These two perspectives collectively contribute to Molla Sadra's comprehensive understanding of the unity of existence within his philosophical framework.

4.Sankara's Concept of the Unity of Existence

Drawing upon the revered triple texts-*the Bhagavad-Gita, the Vedanta Sutras, and the Upanishads* - Sankara anchors his philosophical system in the foundational idea of the non-difference between the individual soul and Brahman. [Molla Sadra, 1987]. The central tenet of Sankara's philosophy asserts the identity of Brahman with Atman, emphasizing that there exists only one indivisible and indefinable entity in existence, referred to as Brahman. This reality, according to Sankara, is indescribable and transcends comprehension through intellect or teaching alone.

Sankara employs negation to describe Brahman, asserting what it is not rather than prescribing positive attributes. For example, Brahman is declared as not *Acit* or unreal, not *Asat* or ignorance, and not *Dukkha* or suffering. This leads to the characterization of Sankara's philosophy as non-dualism rather than monism. [Masih Yakub, 1987]

Brahman, in Sankara's philosophy, is delineated as changeless and indivisible, encapsulated by the Upanishadic declaration of "one without a second." Defined as knowledge, consciousness, and bliss, Brahman is considered the only reality, as nonexistence is inconceivable [Ibid., pp.69-70]. Sankara states that Atman, the individual self, is identical with Brahman, representing pure consciousness or an unchanging essence [Ibid., p.66]. The world, in Sankara's perspective, is regarded as *Maya*-an illusion that cannot be accepted as real. The question regarding the relationship between the real Brahman and the illusory world is, for Sankara, deemed unauthorized and thus unanswerable. When one intuitively apprehends the absolute Brahman, questions concerning the nature of the world become irrelevant, as the ultimate truth is perceived as a self-evident fact. [Radhakrishnan, Volume: 2, 2008]

Maya is characterized as illusion or false appearance, and *Avidya* is termed ignorance. *Maya*, according to Sankara, is neither real nor unreal, existing in a realm beyond such distinctions. *Avidya* is described as the innate obscuration of knowledge, representing the finite self's mental deformity that fragments the divine into myriad aspects. Duessen know *Avidya* as "The innate obscuration of our knowledge" [Paul Deussen, 1906]. "Avidya is the fall from intuition the mental deformity of the finite self that distinction the divine into a thousand different fragments" [Radhakrishnan, Volume: 2, 2008].

Realizing oneself as Brahman becomes challenging due to *Avidya*, and liberation (*Moksa*) is achieved when Maya's influence ceases, leading to ultimate enlightenment. Maya is considered neither different from Brahman nor an attribute; it is the inherent nature of Brahman, indivisible from it. [Masih Yakub, 1987]. As Radhakrishnan asserts “It is neither real as Brahman nor unreal as flower of sky” [Radhakrishnan, Volume: 2, 2008].

Despite debates over whether Maya is real or illusory, its essential role is acknowledged in creating multiplicity in the world. Sankara posits that Brahman serves as the material cause of the universe through the intervention of Maya, which is viewed as the essential operating condition. This intricate interplay between *Brahman*, *Maya*, and *Avidya* forms a key component of Sankara's philosophical discourse on the unity of existence. Pasariraka says “Brahman is the material cause of universe through the intervention of Maya, which is the essential operating condition” [Ibid., p.571].

5.Sankara and Molla Sadra: A Comparative Analysis on the Nature of Absolute

Sankara and Molla Sadra, two eminent philosophers from distinct cultural and philosophical traditions, share a recognition of an ultimate reality—the *Nirguna Brahman* in Sankara's philosophy and the *Necessary Existence* (Wujud al Wajib or Wajib Al Wujud) in Molla Sadra's thought. While these concepts exhibit similarities, they also diverge, and their connections with intellect contribute to the nuanced understanding of the absolute.

In Molla Sadra's philosophical framework, the Intellect (Aql) holds a paramount position, representing the first and highest division among Essential-Substantive and Instaurated-Beings. (al-maj'ulāt al- jawhariyyah) Notably, the Intellect is characterized by its independence from any need, except for God. This intrinsic connection between Intellect and the divine underscores Molla Sadra's emphasis on the role of intellect in grasping the ultimate reality.

Sankara, on the other hand, introduces the concept of Nirguna Brahman, acknowledging an innate knowledge of Brahman within the human intellect. The human experience, according to Sankara, involves a state of consciousness where the personal atman transcends its limiting adjuncts and expands into Pure Consciousness. This aligns with Molla Sadra's recognition of Intellect as a means to access deeper truths.

Examining Sankara's categories of consciousness adds further depth to the comparison. The waking state of consciousness, in Sankara's view, is marked by nescience and an illusory 'I' notion. This state involves continuous mental impositions and limiting adjuncts, perpetuating an erroneous cognition that creates the illusion of a separate self. *Alston*, in describing this situation,

emphasizes the self-perpetuating nature of the illusory 'I' notion within the waking state. [A.J,Alstoni , (Trans.), 2004a]

In essence, both philosophers acknowledge an ultimate reality, with Sankara using the term Nirguna Brahman and Molla Sadra referring to it as Necessary Existence. The role of intellect is crucial in both systems, whether as the first and highest division among Essential-Substantive and Instaurated-Beings in Molla Sadra's philosophy or as the medium through which innate knowledge of Brahman is realized in Sankara's thought.

While the similarities highlight common ground in their recognition of an ultimate reality and the significance of intellect, the differences in terminology and contextual nuances reflect the distinct cultural and philosophical backgrounds from which Sankara and Molla Sadra emerged. This juxtaposition illuminates the richness of their respective contributions to metaphysical inquiry.

6.Unity in Multiplicity and Multiplicity in Unity and Unity of Non-Dualism

A Comparative Analysis of Sankara and Molla Sadra's Philosophies

The philosophies of Sankara and Molla Sadra offer distinct perspectives on the nature of existence, unity, and multiplicity. While Sankara advocates for the non-dualism of Brahman and Atman, Molla Sadra posits the coexistence of unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity. This comparison explores the nuanced differences between their approaches and their implications for the understanding of reality

6.1.Sankara's Non-Dualism

Sankara's philosophy centers around the concept of non-dualism, wherein he seeks to identify Atman with Brahman. His endeavor is to transcend multiplicity and achieve pure unity through the doctrine of Maya. According to Sankara, the phenomenal world is an illusion created by Maya, and true unity lies in recognizing the oneness of Brahman. In this framework, Sankara emphasizes the non-dual nature of reality and asserts the illusory nature of the material world. The goal is to dismantle the structure of multiplicity and unveil the singular reality of Brahman.

Sankara declares, "I am one alone; No other than that (Brahman) is thought to be mine... I do not need you nor your work since I am non-dual". [Sengaku Mayeda, 1992]

6.2.Molla Sadra's Unity in Multiplicity and Multiplicity in Unity

Molla Sadra, on the other hand, acknowledges the reality of multiplicity and asserts that unity is derived from the varying intensities of existence. In his system, multiplicity is not an illusion to be dispelled but a real state arising from the different levels of existence. Molla Sadra introduces the

theories of gradational unity of existence and individual unity of existence to explain the interconnectedness of unity and multiplicity. Unity is not achieved by negating multiplicity but by understanding the gradation of existences leading to a necessary existence.

According to Molla Sadra, the unity (Wahdat. وحدت) of God is not akin to the specific (shakhsiyyah. شخصیه) unity found in an individual (Fard فرد) of a particular nature, nor is it the generic (Jinsiyyah جنسیه) or specific (naw'iyyah نوعیه) unity present in any general notion (ma'na معنی) or quiddity (Mahiyyah ماهیه). It doesn't align with the unity that arises when various things are assembled into a single entity (Ijtemaiyyah اجتماعیه), or the unity of contiguity (Ittisaliyyah اتصالیه) observed in quantities and measurable things. In essence, it doesn't fall into the categories of relative (Nisbiyyah نسبیه) unities such as unity of resemblance (tamathul تماثل), homogeneity (Tajanus تجانس), analogy (tashabuh تشابه), correspondence, (tatabuq تطابق) reduplication, (tadayuf تضایف) or any other types of unity that aren't the true unity, even though some philosophers have acknowledged certain forms of congruence.

Molla Sadra emphasizes that God's unity is distinct from these relative forms, and its essence remains unknowable, (majhulat مجهولات) much like His innermost root (kunnه کنه). His unity serves as the origin of all other unities, just as His being is the source of all individual beings. It is crucial to note that God has no counterpart or second entity.

In Molla Sadra's words, "His unity is the source of all unities... He has no second" [Molla Sadra, 1962].

7.Points of Comparison

7.1.Nature of Multiplicity

- Sankara sees multiplicity as an illusion created by Maya, a cosmic illusion that obscures the true unity of Brahman.
- Molla Sadra views multiplicity as a real state, arising from the varying intensities of existence, emphasizing unity in this diversity.

7.2.Approach to Unity

- Sankara strives to attain pure unity by dispelling the illusion of multiplicity through the recognition of the non-dual nature of Atman and Brahman.
- Molla Sadra recognizes unity in the midst of multiplicity, with his theories highlighting the interconnectedness and gradation of existences.

7.3.Role of Cosmic Illusion or Maya

- For Sankara, Maya is the cosmic illusion that veils the true nature of Brahman, creating the illusion of a diverse and separate world.
- Molla Sadra does not attribute the cause of multiplicity to an illusion; instead, he focuses on the different intensities of existence.

7.4.Emphasis on Transcendence and Immanence

- Sankara maintains a balance between immanence and transcendence, using Maya to explain the immanent aspect of Brahman while asserting its ultimate transcendence.
- Molla Sadra also incorporates both immanent and transcendent views but does not rely on an illusion to balance these perspectives.

In conclusion, while Sankara and Molla Sadra share the goal of understanding the nature of existence and the relationship between unity and multiplicity, their approaches diverge significantly. Sankara's *NonTheory of Causationdualism* seeks to dispel the illusion of multiplicity, while Molla Sadra's philosophy embraces the reality of multiplicity and finds unity within it through the gradation of existences.

8.The Role of Intellect in Realizing the Absolute

8.1.Comparative Perspective of Sankara and Molla Sadra

Both Sankara and Molla Sadra acknowledge the significance of revelation in understanding the absolute reality-Brahman in Sankara's philosophy and Necessity Existence (Al Wujud al wajib) in Molla Sadra's thought. While there are parallels in the principle of incorporating revelation into their mystical systems, there are also nuanced differences, especially in their views on the role of intellect and the methods of realization.

8.1.1.Sankara's Perspective

Sankara emphasizes the importance of Vedic revelation and asserts that true knowledge of Brahman cannot be conceived without the light of Vedic revelation. However, he takes a somewhat dismissive view of the intellect's ability to comprehend the absolute reality directly. According to Sankara, Brahman, being transcendent and devoid of perceptible qualities, cannot be the object of direct perception or inference. Instead, Sankara believes that the knowledge derived from the Vedas serves as the guiding force for the intellect to understand Brahman.

Sankara states, "Having no color or other perceptible quality, [Brahman] is not an object of perception. And because it can have no inferential signs... it cannot be the object of inference or of other indirect means of cognition". [A.J,Alston, (Trans.), 2004d].

Sankara's approach is characterized by the rejection of independent intellectual thought as a means to liberation. He asserts that knowledge

obtained without Vedic revelation is akin to speculative knowledge about the future. [Ibid.,p.200]

8.1.2.Molla Sadra's Perspective

Molla Sadra shares the idea that revelation plays a crucial role in understanding the absolute reality (Necessity Existence), but he takes a more nuanced approach regarding the role of intellect. While Molla Sadra acknowledges the role of intellect in proving the unity of existence, he posits that true realization of God must come through intuition (Shuhood) rather than intellect alone.

In Molla Sadra's system, the intellect is instrumental in establishing the logical foundations and proving the unity of existence, but the deeper understanding and realization of God require intuitive insight. Molla Sadra distinguishes between proving the unity of existence by intellect and comprehending God, which he asserts can only be achieved through intuition.

8.2.Methodological Paths

Both philosophers employ a methodological path that involves using theological statements, which may initially seem dualistic. However, they balance this duality by referencing a transcendent existence that encompasses all realms of dualism. Sankara, for instance, uses theological statements to provide a Nondualistic foundation in his philosophy, even when discussing Brahman's role as the ruler and controller of manifest existence.

Sankara recognizes theistic elements within the non-dualistic system, asserting that the individual is identical to Brahman. The theological statements in Sankara's philosophy serve as a means to convey Nonduality. Molla Sadra's monotheistic perspective in Islam also involves the use of divine names and relationships. While Molla Sadra acknowledges the ability to prove the unity of existence through intellect, he reserves the understanding of God for intuition.

9.Conclusion

In conclusion, both Sankara and Molla Sadra agree on the importance of revelation in grasping the absolute reality. Sankara tends to diminish the role of intellect in directly comprehending Brahman, relying on Vedic knowledge as a guide. Molla Sadra, while acknowledging the intellect's role in proving the unity of existence, emphasizes the necessity of intuition for a profound understanding of God. Both philosophers navigate the intersection of intellect and intuition in their respective paths to realizing the absolute reality.

Theory of Transmigration: A Comparative Analysis

The theological differences between Sankara and Molla Sadra become evident in their perspectives on the *Theory of Transmigration*, which encompasses concepts such as Karma and Samsara.

1.5. Sankara's Perspective

Karma and Samsara

Sankara integrates the concepts of Karma (action) and Samsara (cycle of birth and rebirth) from Hindu Darshanas into his philosophy. He contends that in the present life, merit and demerit accumulate, and their fruits are experienced through attachment and aversion arising from false identification with the mind-body organism. Sankara asserts that transmigration is a beginning-less and endless process rooted in nescience. According to him, the cessation of transmigratory experience is achievable through the path of knowledge and the renunciation of all actions. The resolution lies in ending self-identification with the body, leading to the cessation of transmigration.

Brahman and Transmigration:

Sankara, in his interpretation, views the extension from the absolute (Brahman) as indistinguishable from Brahman itself. He suggests that the idea of transmigration is inseparable from the inherent nature of Brahman, and the transmigratory cycle continues until nescience is eradicated. [A.J.,Alston, (Trans.), 2004f]

2.5. Molla Sadra's Perspective

Rejection of Transmigration

Molla Sadra, aligned with Ibn Sina, rejects the theory of transmigration. He views the connection between the soul and body as intimate, akin to the relationship between *Form* (Al-Surah) and *Matter* (A-Maddah). For Molla Sadra, the removal of one necessitates the removal of the other. He argues against the notion that a Form (soul) can transmigrate into another Matter, especially for developed souls that have become pure intellects. In such cases, the concept of Metempsychosis becomes absurd.

Connection of Soul and Body

Molla Sadra emphasizes the interdependence of the soul and body, negating the possibility of transmigration. He contends that a developed human soul, having reached the state of a pure intellect, no longer requires a body. The dissolution of the soul and its connection with a new body is considered nonsensical.” [Molla Sadra, 1958].

Intellect and Revelation

Similar to Sankara, Molla Sadra rejects the idea that intellect alone can explain metaphysical truths. He advocates the need for divine revelation alongside intellectual inquiry. This aligns with his emphasis on the role of intuition in realizing the absolute reality.

Comparative Analysis

Divergence on Transmigration:

While Sankara integrates the Hindu concepts of Karma and Samsara into his philosophy, Molla Sadra firmly rejects the theory of Transmigration. Their perspectives diverge on the continuity of the soul's journey across different bodies.

Intellect and Revelation

Both philosophers share a common stance in recognizing the limitations of intellect alone in explaining metaphysical truths. They advocate the integration of divine revelation (Vedas for Sankara and Islamic sources for Molla Sadra) with intellectual inquiry.

Interconnectedness of Soul and Body

Sankara's acceptance of Transmigration implies a certain independence between the soul and body, whereas Molla Sadra stresses the inseparability of the soul and body, leading to the rejection of transmigration.

In conclusion, the theory of transmigration serves as a significant point of divergence between Sankara and Molla Sadra. Sankara incorporates Hindu concepts, while Molla Sadra vehemently rejects the idea, emphasizing the intimate connection between the soul and body. Both philosophers, however, concur on the necessity of integrating intellect with divine revelation to grasp the deeper truths of metaphysics.

1. Theory of Causation:

Both Sankara and Molla Sadra delved into the theory of causation with the aim of establishing the unity of existence.

1.6. Sankara's perspective

According to Sankara, the notion of causation cannot be deemed prior and tangible because cause and effect are essentially one. There exists no distinction between cause and effect, as the effect doesn't possess anything more than the cause. It's comparable to a jug that lacks more clay than its cause. In this perspective, the effect is merely the manifestation of the cause.

2.6. Molla Sadra's perspective

Molla Sadra posits that the effect is contingent on the cause. The effect is akin to quiddity, involving a psychological process, and is not inherently real. Hence, a relationship in which one side is deemed real (Cause) and the other unreal (Effect) cannot be acknowledged as genuine. Therefore, the causation relationship is not truly real. According to Molla Sadra, all contingent beings necessitate a cause, which tips the balance between existence and non-existence in favor of the former. Nothing can come into existence without a cause. The world, being contingent on this First Act, not only necessitates the existence of God but also attributes the responsibility for this First Act of creation to God.

Molla Sadra also dismissed the possibility of a causal regress, asserting that the causal chain can only function in a framework with a distinct beginning, middle, and end - a pure cause at the beginning, pure effect at the end, and a nexus of cause and effect.

Furthermore, the text delves into the simplicity of the effect and the cause when considered in isolation. When we abstract the cause from elements unrelated to its causation and influence, and similarly abstract the effect from factors unrelated to its causedness, it becomes evident that the so-called effect has no reality beyond the reality of its originating cause. The intellect cannot refer to the essence of the effect without considering the entity of its originator. Thus, the effect, in isolation, lacks reality in its causedness except for being dependent, relational, and devoid of meaning other than being an effect - a subordinate without an essence. This parallels the absolute originating cause being principle, source, origin, and followed, all encapsulated in its essence [Molla Sadra, 1958].

Radhakrishnan notes that Sankara perceives cause and effect as undifferentiated. He simplifies the transitions from causes to effects, which underlie the dynamic evolution of reality, into a static relation of sequence akin to certain types of logical and theoretical connections [Radhakrishnan, Volume: 2, 2008]. Both mystic philosophers strive to elucidate the first cause as the ultimate reality, acknowledging only the cause as truly real.

2. Spiritual Texts: A Common Ground in Mystical Realization

Sankara and Molla Sadra, while rooted in distinct religious traditions, share a common foundation in their acceptance of classical spiritual texts—namely, the Vedas for Sankara in Hinduism and the Quran for Molla Sadra in Islam. Their philosophical systems are built upon the premises and assertions derived from these sacred texts, emphasizing the importance of spiritual wisdom and mystical realization.

1.7. Sankara's Relationship with Vedas:

1. **Vedas as the Eternal Source:** Sankara, as a key figure in Advaita Vedanta, acknowledges the Vedas as the eternal and authoritative source of knowledge. The Vedas, comprising texts like the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, and Vedanta Sutras, form the basis for understanding Brahman and Atman.
2. **Integration of Spiritual Wisdom:** Sankara's philosophy is deeply intertwined with the spiritual wisdom found in the Vedas. He uses the Vedas to elucidate the non-dualistic nature of reality, emphasizing the identity of Atman with Brahman.
3. **Intellect and Divine Revelation:** While Sankara recognizes the role of intellect, he underscores the significance of divine revelation in

comprehending the ultimate reality. The Vedas, for him, serve as a guide to realizing the non-dual essence of Brahman.

2.7. Molla Sadra's Reliance on Quranic Wisdom:

1. **Quran as Divine Guidance:** Molla Sadra, within the Islamic philosophical tradition, places great importance on the Quran as the ultimate source of divine guidance. The Quranic verses become foundational for his exploration of existence, unity, and the nature of God.
2. **Incorporation of Mystical Insights:** Molla Sadra incorporates mystical insights from the Quran into his philosophical framework. His engagement with Sufi mysticism and the teachings of the Imams contributes to the development of the school of Transcendent Philosophy (Hikmat al-Muta'aliyah).
3. **Role of Intuition:** Similar to Sankara, Molla Sadra emphasizes the limitations of intellect and the necessity of intuition in realizing the deeper truths of existence. The Quran serves not only as a scriptural guide but also as a source of mystical intuition.

Common Ground in Mystical Realization

1. **Intuition over Pure Logic:** Both philosophers, despite their intellectual rigor, emphasize the role of intuition in mystical realization. The direct experiential understanding of ultimate reality transcends the limitations of pure logic and intellectual discourse.
2. **Secondary Importance of Philosophy:** Sankara and Molla Sadra share the perspective that philosophy, while significant, takes a secondary role compared to mystical realization. The experiential journey towards understanding the divine essence holds primary importance.
3. **Reverence for Spiritual Traditions:** Both thinkers show deep reverence for their respective spiritual traditions. The Vedas and the Quran are not only sources of wisdom but also guides for the spiritual journey and the realization of the ultimate truth.

In essence, Sankara and Molla Sadra, each within their cultural and religious contexts, find common ground in their reliance on classical spiritual texts for developing profound philosophical systems. The Vedas and the Quran serve as foundational sources that guide their mystical explorations and shape their perspectives on the ultimate reality.

Conclusion: Unveiling Unity in Diversity

In this comparative exploration of the Unity of Existence in the philosophies of Sankara and Molla Sadra, we have discovered both shared themes and nuanced distinctions in their mystical perspectives.

Shared Themes

1. **One Reality and Unity:** Both philosophers concur on the existence of a stable essence, a singular reality that forms the foundation of their philosophical frameworks. Unity of existence is a central theme in both Sankara's non-dualism and Molla Sadra's multiplicity in unity.
2. **Spiritual Texts as Foundations:** Sankara and Molla Sadra rely on classical spiritual texts—the Vedas for Sankara and the Quran for Molla Sadra—as foundational sources of wisdom. These texts guide their philosophical inquiries and serve as gateways to mystical realization.
3. **Importance of Mystical Realization:** The mystic philosophers prioritize mystical realization over pure philosophical speculation. They emphasize the experiential journey and intuitive understanding of the ultimate reality, transcending the limitations of intellect.
4. **Rejection of Pure Logic:** Both thinkers express skepticism about the sufficiency of pure logic and intellect in grasping the profound truths of existence. Intuition, revelation, and direct experience play pivotal roles in their paths to understanding.

Nuanced

1. Nature of unity

- Sankara: Non-dualism; Unity achieved by recognizing the illusory nature of multiplicity through Maya.
- Molla Sadra: Unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity; Reality derived from different intensities of existence.

2. Veiling Reality

- Sankara: Veiling through Maya—cosmic illusion and individual ignorance.
- Molla Sadra: Veiling through Quiddity—the boundary of mind postulating on existence.

3. Theories of Causation

- Sankara: Uses theory of causation to explain unity; Atman identified with Brahman.
- Molla Sadra: Links causation to intensity of existence; rejects causation as unreal.

4. Transmigration

- Sankara: Accepts the theory of Karma and Samsara, emphasizing liberation through knowledge.
- Molla Sadra: Rejects transmigration, asserting an intimate connection between soul and body.

The Unveiling of Unity in Diversity

Sankara and Molla Sadra, rooted in Hinduism and Islam respectively, share a common quest for understanding the ultimate reality. While Sankara's non-dualism seeks to dissolve multiplicity through cosmic illusion, Molla Sadra's multiplicity in unity embraces the diverse intensities of existence. Both philosophers navigate the intricate balance between immanent and transcendent views, leveraging spiritual texts as guiding lights in their mystical journeys.

In essence, the Unity of Existence in the philosophies of Sankara and Molla Sadra represents an unfolding tapestry where unity harmonizes with diversity, and the veils of illusion and Quiddity are lifted to reveal the profound reality that underlies the multifaceted nature of existence.

REFERENCES

1. Alston, A. J. (Trans.), (2004a). *Sankara, "Texts on Going beyond the Mind,"*. in A Sankara Source Book volume: 1, London: Shanti Sadan, p.163. (in English)
2. Alston, A. J. (Trans.), (2004b). *The Self and the Not-Self.* in A Sankara Source Book volume: 1, London: Shanti Sadan, 2004, p. 90. (in English)
3. Alston, A. J. (Trans.), (2004c). *Texts on the Absolute as Already Known in a General Way.* In A Sankara Source Book volume: 1, London: Shanti Sadan, pp. 82, 122-130. (in English)
4. Alston, A. J. (Trans.), (2004d). *Sankara, "Texts on: The Self Can Only Be Known through the Veda,"*. in A Sankara Source Book volume: 5, London: Shanti Sadan, pp. 200-202. (in English)
5. Alston, A. J. (Trans.), (2004e). *Sankara, "Texts on: The Absolute as Creator and Controller,"*. in A Sankara Source Book volume: 2, London: Shanti Sadan, p. 6. (in English)
6. Alston, A. J. (Trans.), (2004f). *Sankara, "Texts on the Wheel of Transmigration,"*. in A Sankara Source Book volume: 5, p. 9. (in English)
7. Chittick, (1989). *The Sufi Path of Knowledge.* Albany NY: State University of New York Press, p. 179. (in English)
8. Schuon, F. (1975). *Logic and Transcendence.* New York: Harper & Row, p. 89. (in English)
9. Fazlul Rahman, (1975), *The Philosophy of Molla Sadra.* State University of New York Press, p. 247. (in English)
10. Hamidreza Ayatollahy, (2005). *The existence of God Molla Sadra's Seddiqin Argument versus Criticism of Kant and Hume.* Siprin Publication, Tehran, pp. 6, 294. (in Persian)
11. Masih Yakub, (1987), *Sankara's Universal Philosophy of Religion.* Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, pp.66, 67-70, 84. (in English)

12. Imanov, E. (2018). The comparative study of the idea of "simplicity of existence" in Peripatetic Philosophy and Transcendental Theosophy. *Metafizika Journal*, 1(2), pp. 111-125. <https://doi.org/10.33864/mtfzk.2019.12> <http://metafizikajurnali.az/yukle/files/Vol.2-111.pdf> (in Persian)
13. Mull Sadra, (1962). *Al-Arshiyah*. Isfahan: Shahriyar Books, pp. 96-98. (in Arabic)
14. Molla Sadra, (1958). *Asfar*. (Al-Asfar; Al-Hikmat Al-Muta'Aliyah Al-Arba'ah), Volume: 2, pp. 40, 299-230. (in Arabic)
15. Molla Sadra, (1981). *Al-Hikmat Al-Muta'aliya fil asfar Al-Aqliyya Al-Arba'a*. Beirut, p. 110. (in Arabic)
16. Molla Sadra, (1987). *Al-Shavahid Al-Rububiyyah*. Tehran, pp. 7-8. (in Arabic)
17. Nagaraja Rao, P. (1943). *The Schools of Vedanta*. Bharatiya Vidya Studies No. 2, Bharatiya. Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, p. 27 (in English)
18. Deussen, P. (1906). *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*. Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, p. 302. (in English)
19. Radhakrishnan, S. (2008). *Indian Philosophy, Volume: 2*, Oxford University Press, pp. 497, 527, 571, 575, 577. ISBN: 978-0195698428 (in English)
20. Sabzevari, M.H.H. (1977). *Sharh-I Manzumah*. (Trans. by M. Mohaghegh and T. Izutsu), The Metaphysics of Sabzevari, Delmar: Caravan books, p. 29. (in Arabic)
21. Sengaku Mayeda, (1992). (Trans.), *A Thousand Teachings: The Upadesahasri of Sankara*. Albany: State University of New York Press, p. 120. (in English)

Varlıq vəhdətinin (vəhdət əl-vücuda) hikməti mütəaliyə (Molla Sədrəddin Şirazinin transsendental fəlsəfəsi) və Şankaranın Advayta Vedanta fəlsəfəsi ilə müqayisəli təhlili

Seyd Mohammad Cun Abedi*

* Beynəlxalq əl-Mustafa Universitetinin doktorantı; İran

E-mail: smjabdi82@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-7449-2906>

Məqaləyə istinad: Abedi, Seyd Mohammad Cun. [2024]. Varlığın vəhdətinin (vəhdət əl vücuda) Hikməti Mütəaliyə (Molla Sədrəddin Şirazinin transsendental fəlsəfəsi) və Şankaranın Advayta Vedanta fəlsəfəsi ilə müqayisəli təhlili. "Metafizika" jurnalı. 7(2), səh.112-131.

<https://doi.org/10.33864/2617-751X.2024.v7.i2.112-131>

Məqalənin tarixçəsi:

Məqalə redaksiyaya daxil olmuşdur: 20.02.2024

Təkrar işlənməyə göndərilmişdir: 18.03.2024

Çapa qəbul edilmişdir: 29.04.2024

Abstrakt. Varlığın vəhdəti anlayışı xüsusilə Molla Sədranın Transsendental fəlsəfəsində olmaqla həm islam fəlsəfəsində, həm də mistik filosof Şankara tərəfindən müdafiə olunan Hind fəlsəfəsinin Advayta-vedanta məktəbində əksini tapmışdır. Molla Sədranın fəlsəfi sistemi “vəhdətdə çoxluq və çoxluqda vəhdət” (Kəsrət fil vəhdət, vəhdət fil kəsrət) olaraq bilinən prinsipə əsaslanır. Bu prinsip aşağıdakı iki əsas nəzəriyyə vasitəsilə işıqlandırılır:

1. Varlığın dərəcəli vəhdəti (əl-vucud ət-təşkiki)
2. Varlığın individual/şəxsi vəhdəti (vəhdət əş-şəxsi).

Vedanta ənənəsinə aid mistik filosof olan Şankara, Atmanın (fərdi ruh) Brahman (universal şüur) ilə eyni olduğunu irəli sürərək, varlığın birliyini qeyri-dualist aspektdən şərh edir. Onun fəlsəfi dünya görüşündə idrak edilən çoxluq dünyası “maya” doktrinası olaraq adlandırılan kosmik illüziya anlayışı əsasında rədd edilir.

Bu məqalə varlığın birliyi anlayışına dair Molla Sədra və Sankaranın yanaşmasını öyrənir. Hər iki mütəfəkkirin yeganə gerçəkliyin metaforik pərdə ilə gizlədilməsi fikrini bölüşməsinə baxmayaraq, onların hər biri öz müqəddəs mətnlərindən – Molla Sədra Qurandan, Şankara isə Vedalardan ilham alır. Nəticə etibarilə, onların formalaşdırdığı düşüncə sistemlərinin əsaslandığı prinsip və düşüncələr tədqiqata cəlb edilmək baxımından ciddi maraq oyandırır.

Lakin, qeyd etmək lazımdır ki, onların görüşlərində müəyyən fərqliliklər mövcuddur. Bu məqalənin hədəfi Molla Sədra və Şankaranın varlığın vəhdəti anlayışları arasında mövcud olan bənzər və ayrılan nöqtələr üzərinə işıq salmaqla onların fəlsəfələri arasında mövcud olan oxşar və fərqli cəhətləri müəyyən etməkdir.

Açar sözlər: varlığın vəhdəti, islam fəlsəfəsi, Advayta-vedanta, Molla Sədra, Şankara, dərəcəli vəhdət, individual vəhdət, qeyri-dualizm, Atman, Brahman, Kosmik illüziya, Maya doktrinası, Quran, Vedalar, mistik fəlsəfə, bənzərliklər, qütblülük

Сравнительный анализ единства бытия (вахдат аль-вуджуд) с трансцендентальной теософией (хикмат аль-мутаалийя) моллы Садрадина Ширази и философией адвайтой ведантой Шанкары Сайед Мухаммед Джун Абеди*

* Докторант Международного университета Аль-Мустафа; Иран

E-mail: smjabdi82@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-7449-2906>

Цитировать статью: Абеди, С.М.Дж. [2024]. Сравнительный анализ единства бытия (вахдат аль-вуджуд) с трансцендентальной теософией (хикмат аль-мутаалийя) моллы Садрадина Ширази и философией адвайтой ведантой Шанкары. *Журнал «Метафизика»*, 7(2), с.112-131.

Абстракт. Понятие Единства бытия особо проявлено путем трансцендентальной теософии (хикмат аль-мутаалийя) моллы Садрадина Ширази в исламской философии, а также в индийской философии посредством школы Адванта-веданта философа-мистика Шанкары. Философская система моллы Садра основывалась на принцип «единство во множестве и множество в единстве» (касрат фил вахдат, вахдат фил касрат»). Данный принцип освещен двумя основными теориями:

1. Градационного единства бытия (аль-вуджуд ат-ташкики);
2. Индивидуальное/личное единство бытия (вахдат аш-шахси).

Мистик философ Шанкара, предоставляющий обычаи Веданты, утверждал о сходстве Атмы (индивидуальный дух) с Брахманом (универсальное мышление) и единство бытия разъяснял согласно анти-дуалистическому аспекту. Мир множества, именованный доктриной «Майя» отражает его философское воззрение, но опровергается понятием космической иллюзии.

В статье исследованы взгляды Моллы Садра и Шанкары о понятии единство бытия. Оба философа согласны в мысли о единой правде, скрытой метафорической занавесью, но каждый из них вдохновлен своим святым текстом: Молла Садра Кораном, а Шанкара – Ведами. В итоге отмечены выводы о важности привлечения к исследованию принципов и замыслов системы мышления, сформированного этими учеными.

Особо следует отметить определенную разницу в воззрениях этих ученых. Целью статьи является определить единые и отличительные пункты о понятии единого бытия моллы Садры и Шанкары и осветить итоги их философии.

Ключевые слова: единство бытия, исламская философия, Адвайта-веданта, Молла Садра, Шанкара, градационное единство, индивидуальное единство, анти-дуализм, Атман, Брахман, космическая иллюзия, доктрина Майя, Коран, Веды, мистическая философия, схождения, полюсы