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## Albert the Great and Two Momentous Interpretive Accounts of Averroes

Richard C. Taylor

Marquette University, richard.taylor@marquette.edu

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## Chapter 3. Albert the Great and Two Momentous Interpretive Accounts of Averroes\*

Several of the Arabic philosophical accounts of the human soul crafted by Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Rushd and others became available to thinkers of the European Christian Latin tradition via translations made in the second half of the twelfth century and in the thirteenth century. The German Dominican scholar Albert the Great displayed throughout his life an interest in and knowledge of the Arabic tradition in translation perhaps more intensive and comprehensive than that of any of his peers in the thirteenth century. Albert's student Thomas Aquinas shared his eagerness to benefit from the philosophical works of the two major Muslim philosophers Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Rushd, the few available works of al-Fārābī,<sup>1</sup> the short but monumentally important metaphysical work widely known among the Latins as the *Liber de causis*, and other available texts.<sup>2</sup> As a young Italian

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\* In composing this paper, I benefited greatly from advice and criticism by Henryk Anzulewicz, Fouad Ben Ahmed, Josep Puig Montada, Jules Janssens, and David Twetten, to whom I extend my sincere thanks.

1 On the importance of al-Fārābī's writings in the European Christian context, see de Libera, 'Existe-t-il une noétique "averroïste"?' and de Libera's discussion of acquired intellect (العقل المستفاد *al-'aql al-mustafād*, *intellectus adeptus*) in his 'Averroïsme éthique et philosophie mystique' and *Métaphysique et noétique*, pp. 265–328.

2 See Burnett, 'Arabic Philosophical Works Translated into Latin'. For al-Fārābī, see pp. 816–17. The Arabic *Kalām fi maḥḍ al-khair* (Discourse on the Pure Good) in a version apparently attributed to Aristotle (e.g., *Liber Aristotelis de expositione bonitatis purae* in Aosta, Seminario Maggiore 3-B-38) was translated into Latin by Gerard of Cremona before 1187 and was not unsuitably dubbed the *Book of Causes* for its account of the First Cause (God) and other transcendent entities. For a Latin text, see Pattin, 'Le *Liber de causis*'. For some suggested revisions, see Taylor, 'Remarks on the Latin Text'.

**Richard C. Taylor** (richard.taylor@marquette.edu) is professor of philosophy at Marquette University, annual visiting professor at the KU Leuven, and director of the 'Aquinas and "the Arabs" International Working Group'.

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student in Paris, where he arrived c. 1242, this aspiring theologian met Albert and later worked with him in 1248–52 at Cologne, where Albert had opened a new Dominican *studium*.<sup>3</sup> There, Albert made the unusual decision to begin by commenting on the works of Pseudo-Dionysius. In his commentary to *On the Divine Names*, he demonstrated particularly well for Thomas and his other students the value of using the *Metaphysics* of Avicenna and the *Liber de causis* from the Arabic tradition, as well as writings by Boethius, Anselm, and others from the Latin tradition, to explain the metaphysics both of creation and of being as a divine name in the writings of Dionysius.<sup>4</sup> In his commentary on Dionysius's *On the Divine Names*, Albert also discussed issues in philosophical psychology and even set out a brief account of monopsychism that was based largely on the philosopher 'Averroes'<sup>5</sup> — albeit without explicitly mentioning the name of his source.<sup>6</sup>

Among the very early works of Albert is the section of his *Summa de creaturis* named *De homine* (c. 1242), a work especially notable for its presentation of (i) a teaching on natural human knowing that Albert believed to be in full accord with the thinking of Averroes.<sup>7</sup> In his *Super Ethica* (1250–52), however, Albert set aside his earlier interpretation of Averroes regarding human soul and intellectual understanding.<sup>8</sup> In its place, he presented another (ii) interpretation destined to

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Recently three volumes of conference papers on Proclus and the *Liber de causis* were published by Dragos Calma: Calma, *Reading Proclus and the Book of Causes*.

3 On this and relevant contexts, see Mulchahey, 'The Studium at Cologne'. For dating of Albert's works, I follow generally the chronology provided on the website of the Albertus-Magnus-Institut: [https://institutionen.erzbistum-koeln.de/albertus-magnus-institut/albertus\\_magnus/leben/](https://institutionen.erzbistum-koeln.de/albertus-magnus-institut/albertus_magnus/leben/), but see Rigo, 'Zur Redaktionsfrage der Frühschriften des Albertus Magnus'. For dating the career and works of Thomas, I follow Porro, *Aquinas*, and Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, pp. 327–29.

4 See, for example, Albertus Magnus, *Super Dionysium De divinis nominibus*, ed. by Simon, cap. 5.

5 In this chapter, I try to maintain a distinction between the original Arabic teachings of Ibn Rushd and those attributed to Averroes in the Latin tradition. One should perhaps consider the same sort of distinction for the Arabic texts of Ibn Sīnā and the Latin texts of Avicenna and likewise for those of al-Fārābī and those of Alfarabius, but I will not do so here.

6 See note 8 below.

7 It is not clear whether he had fully realized the need to correct this attribution before or after crafting his commentaries on the works of Dionysius (begun c. 1248). Still, his mention of an Averroistic monopsychism suggests he had. See note 8. A dated account of Albert and Averroes is Miller, 'An Aspect of Averroes' Influence on St Albert'. Miller's understanding of the complex teaching of Ibn Rushd on the separate intellects is flawed — particularly regarding the Material Intellect — and leads to an unsound analysis of Albert's account of Averroes. Also see Hayoun and de Libera, *Averroès et Averroïsme*, p. 80. I discuss relevant texts, and also the early natural epistemology of Aquinas, which follows the account of Albert, in Taylor, 'Remarks on the Importance of Albert the Great's Analyses'.

8 Note, however, that in his question-commentary on Dionysius's *On Divine Names* (c. 1248–50), Albert provides a short account of monopsychism that attributes it to *plures philosophorum* without mention of Averroes. The editors of the critical edition note key passages of Averroes's *Long Commentary on the De anima* that appear to contribute at least in part to the view Albert sets out. See Albertus Magnus, *Super Dionysium De divinis nominibus*, ed. by Simon, p. 136, v. 57–p. 137, v. 11: 'remotis autem individuantiis non remaneret nisi id quod commune est, et ita ex omnibus animabus non remaneret nisi una anima, ita scilicet quod remaneret animae rationales solum in

be influential, premised on his own conception of the philosophical doctrine of Averroes on the post mortem existence of human soul (a point requisite for his explicit attribution to Averroes of a doctrine of monopsychism). Both of these interpretations played important roles in Albert's own understanding of the issues at stake and also in the development of philosophy in the Latin tradition of Christian Europe during the thirteenth century and beyond. The former interpretation (i) was momentous as a model for the foundational account of the natural epistemology of Thomas Aquinas in his *Commentary on the Sentences*. The latter interpretation (ii) was highly influential for its novel account of a doctrine of monopsychism, which Albert attributed to Averroes in his learned works dealing with this issue.

Although both interpretations by Albert were crucial in the development of European Christian thought, neither one of them is an authentic position of the Muslim philosopher Ibn Rushd. The two works by Ibn Rushd of chief importance for Albert were the *Long Commentary on the De anima of Aristotle*<sup>9</sup> and the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle*,<sup>10</sup> which offered challengingly complex philosophical teachings new even in the Arabic tradition, especially Ibn Rushd's doctrine on the separate eternal Material Intellect shared by human knowers and his doctrine on human fulfilment and happiness.

Albert and other Christian theologians and philosophical thinkers of the thirteenth century later received Michael Scot's Latin translations of these texts into the various contexts of their own religious and philosophical commitments and evolving understandings of the Aristotelian or Graeco-Arabic Peripatetic tradition in its diverse forms. Attributing their accounts of the reasoning of Averroes to the Cordoban philosopher himself, they conceived themselves to be engaging with the genuine teachings of Ibn Rushd, and not merely with what they were

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intelligentia influente huiusmodi actum corpori; et secundum hoc dicunt plures philosophorum intellectum separari et ponunt exemplum de candelis multis, quae illuminantur ex uno igne, quod extinctis candelis non remanet nisi ignis communis.' For the doctrine, see below at note 101.

Presumably this is the text to which Hayoun and de Libera, *Averroès et Averroïsme*, refer at p. 87. Cf. Albertus Magnus, *Super Ethica*, ed. by Kübel, p. 72, vv. 12–19, p. 79, vv. 76–80, p. 453, v. 40 ff.

<sup>9</sup> Averroes, *Commentarium magnum in Aristotelis De anima libros*, ed. by Crawford. Hereafter *Commentarium magnum De anima* for specific references. For an English translation with introduction, see Averroes, *Long Commentary on the 'De anima' of Aristotle*, ed. and trans. Taylor. Hereafter *Long Commentary on the De anima, English* for specific references; for general references to this I will simply use *Long Commentary on the De anima*. Surviving Arabic fragments of this work are included in the notes to the English translation. Regarding this work and more on the Arabic fragments, see Averroes, *L'original arabe du Grand Commentaire d'Averroès au 'De anima' d'Aristote*, ed. by Sirat and Geoffroy, and Averroes, *De la faculté rationnelle*, ed. by Sirat and Geoffroy. The complete project on the fragments remains to be realized.

<sup>10</sup> Averroès, *Tafsîr mâ bâ' d at-Ṭabî'at*, ed. by Bouyges, hereafter *Tafsîr mâ bâ' d at-Ṭabî'at*. The Latin is available in *Aristotelis opera cum Averrois commentariis*, Venice 1562–74, hereafter cited as *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics, Latin*. An English translation by Charles Genequand, *Ibn Rushd's Metaphysics*, will be cited as *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics, Arabic-English*. A critical edition of the Latin is in preparation by Dag Nikolaus Hasse and his team at Würzburg.

willing to consider rough and possibly inaccurate interpretations. In view of these considerations, four things are necessary: (i) clear accounts of the genuine teachings of Ibn Rushd on the issues, together with (ii) an explication of teachings attributed to Averroes, (iii) an account of Albert's changing views of the meaning of Averroic texts,<sup>11</sup> and (iv) an explanation of how these Latin interpretations came to be attributed to Averroes by Albert despite being incongruous or even simply incompatible with the teachings of the Cordoban. These points require us to delve deeply into the Commentaries of Ibn Rushd on Aristotle's *De anima* and *Metaphysics*, in order to understand the actual teachings of the Cordoban philosopher, before proceeding to the Latin texts of Averroes as read and interpreted by Albert.

In what follows, I first explicate the evolving teachings of Ibn Rushd on human soul and intellectual understanding, along with his neglect or even outright denial of post mortem existence of the human soul in his Short, Middle, and Long Commentaries on the *De anima* of Aristotle. I then turn to human happiness and related teachings in Ibn Rushd's *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*. Second, I recount a 'Tale of Two Averroisms' on the confusing and confused understandings of what have been called 'First Averroism' and 'Second Averroism'. Third, I explain in detail some of Albert's key interpretive misconstruals of Ibn Rushd's teachings in the Latin translations of the *Long Commentary on the De anima* and the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* and the impact these had on the formation of his understanding of doctrines of Averroes. This will make it clear that on the two issues discussed here, Albert was not properly in dialogue

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11 In his introduction to *Renaissance Averroism*, Giglioli is careful to distinguish the descriptive terms 'Averroan', 'Averroist', and 'Averroistic': 'In this volume, the name "Ibn Rushd" denotes the actual historical figure, whereas his literary incarnation in translations and philosophical treatises in the Latin West will be referred to as "Averroes"'. Giglioli goes on to explain that "Averroan" refers to any philosophical view that belongs directly to Ibn Rushd and is synonymous with "Rushdian". "Averroist" refers to opinions held by any follower of Ibn Rushd in the Latin West during the late Middle Ages, the Renaissance and — though less and less frequently — during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Finally, "Averroistic" refers to the generic cultural label denoting a pronounced rationalistic attitude, of a vaguely Aristotelian ilk, towards questions of philosophical psychology (in particular, the nature of the human mind and its survival after death of the body), natural determinism and, above all, the relationships between philosophical freedom and dogmatic truths, often of a religious kind. Averroistic thinkers looked (and still look) at Averroes as the philosopher who denied the personal identity of human beings, of course, but also as an incarnation of Machiavellian dissimulation in politics and religion, as one of the heroes of the *libertinage érudit*, as a precursor of seventeenth-century materialism, as a pantheist and even an atheist'. Giglioli, *Renaissance Averroism*, pp. 1–2. These proposed distinctions, however, do not capture the present case, in which Albert claims that his own understanding of key texts of the Latin Long Commentaries on the *De anima* and *Metaphysics* provides a sound interpretation of the thought of Ibn Rushd/Averroes. Hence, I follow the suggestion of my colleague Josep Puig Montada and use the term 'Averroic' to denote texts of the medieval Latin translations of Ibn Rushd's works and decline to use 'Averroan'.

with Ibn Rushd.<sup>12</sup> I supplement this section with brief remarks on the profound influence of Albert's interpretations on the teachings of his student, Thomas Aquinas. I conclude with summary remarks on the issues discussed in this chapter and their importance for understanding the influence of philosophy from the Arabic tradition in Latin translation. I also add a short appendix on the concept of 'acquired intellect'.

## Ibn Rushd on Human Intellect

Ibn Rushd's efforts to know the nature of human intellectual understanding were dynamic. At least three distinct stages can be discerned in his commentaries on the *De anima*, though one feature of his teaching on human soul remained constant throughout: the lack of an account of post mortem existence of human soul. The *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, a later work that refers to the teachings of the *Long Commentary on the De anima* and seems to be largely in accord with them, also maintains that same feature.<sup>13</sup>

In his early *Short Commentary on the De anima*, Ibn Rushd follows in part the thought of Alexander of Aphrodisias and in part that of Ibn Bājja,<sup>14</sup> by holding that the term *material intellect* denotes not a substance but a disposition or power of the human soul for understanding and receiving intelligibles. Such understanding and receiving takes place subsequent to the abstraction of those intelligibles from forms or intentions apprehended by the external and internal senses. These forms or intentions depend upon our activities to become what Ibn Rushd calls 'material intelligibles', that is, intelligibles formed through intellect on the basis of sensory experience of the world. Ibn Rushd specifically follows Ibn Bājja in describing this process as a disposition of the forms of the imagination. By that, he may have meant that there is a kind of certification of the forms in the imagination through an enhanced modality when the separate Agent Intellect is formally (albeit not ontologically) in the soul to bring about the abstraction or separation of intelligibles and the reception of the intelligibles in the soul's

12 At the beginning of Chapter 6 of his invaluable account of Albert's philosophical psychology and intellectual understanding, *Métaphysique et noétique*, Alain de Libera writes: 'La noétique d'Albert est le cœur vivant de sa pensée, le foyer de son système, le principal terrain de son engagement philosophique. À la fois réception du péripatétisme, dans le commentaire sur le *De anima*, et profession de foi péripatéticienne, dans le *De intellectu et intelligibili*, la psychologie albertinienne naît aussi d'un dialogue de pensée avec Averroès' (p. 265). The importance Albert's engagement or philosophical dialogue with Averroes has long been evident to scholars of medieval European philosophy. Yet for a sound knowledge of the history of philosophy, the question of his engagement with Ibn Rushd's actual teachings is even more important.

13 I address this issue directly in two articles: 'Personal Immortality in Averroes' Mature Philosophical Psychology' and 'Averroes on the Ontology of the Human Soul'.

14 See my discussions of these sources for Ibn Rushd in my introduction to *Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, pp. lxxxi–lxxxiii and lxxxix–xciii. On Ibn Bājja, see Genequand, 'Introduction'. Also see Wirmer, *Vom Denken der Natur zur Natur des Denkens*.

'material intellect'. Regarding this presence of the Agent Intellect in the soul as something that 'can belong to us', Ibn Rushd writes:

For this reason one can consider that its understanding<sup>15</sup> can be ours *ultimately* [*bi-ākhiratin*].<sup>16</sup> I mean insofar as it is *form for us* [*ṣūra la-nā*] and it is such that it has generated for us as necessary an eternal intelligible, since it is itself an intellect whether or not we have intellectual understanding of it without its existence as intellect being from our activity as is the case for the material intelligibles. This state is what is known as uniting or conjoining.<sup>17</sup>

The notion that the Agent Intellect becomes 'form for us' (*ṣūra la-nā*) should be understood not in the sense that essences or quiddities in the Agent Intellect come to be in us simply by its efficient or agent causality, but rather in the sense that, in some fashion, in our understanding of intelligibles the Agent Intellect is an external actualizing form that has a presence in us by way of the abstraction and understanding of an intelligible in our material intellect. This is the notion of an acquired intellect (العقل المستفاد, *intellectus adeptus*) belonging to the human soul, found in various forms in Alexander of Aphrodisias, Themistius, and al-Fārābī, elaborated and used by Ibn Sinā and Ibn Rushd, and later developed further by Albert. (More on the acquired intellect can be found in the appendix to this chapter).

Ibn Bājja held abstraction to be an exercise of intellect in virtue of which an individual human being may somehow, through abstractions, rise to the level of the Agent Intellect, and perhaps beyond, in a transcendent unity and a post mortem existence. Ibn Rushd did not assert any immortality for the individual human soul or intellect. He only provided an epistemological account that he deemed sufficient to answer the question of the nature of the human material

<sup>15</sup> *عقله aqla-hu*.

<sup>16</sup> Note that the phrase here, *بآخرة bi-ākhiratin*, 'afterwards', 'later', in manuscripts may be written identically with *بأخرة bi-akharatin*. Still, the two are here synonymous and distinct from *bi-l-ākhirati* 'in the afterlife', which will be discussed below.

<sup>17</sup> ولذلك يظن أن عقله ممكن لنا بآخرة. أعني من حيث هو صورة لنا. ويكون قد حصل لنا ضرورة معقول أزلي. إذ كان في نفسه عقلا سواء عقلناه نحن أو لم نعقله. لا أن وجوده عقلا من فعلنا كالحال في المعقولات الهولانية. وهذه الحال هي التي أزلي. إذ كان في نفسه عقلا سواء عقلناه نحن أو لم نعقله. لا أن وجوده عقلا من فعلنا كالحال في المعقولات الهولانية. تعرف بالاتحاد والاتصال. Averroes, *Short Commentary: Tālkhis Kitāb al-Nafs*, ed. by El-Ahwani, p. 89, vv. 3–7; *Epitome de Anima*, ed. by Gómez Nogales, p. 127, vv. 7–11 (reading *بآخرة bi-akharatin*, not *بأخرة bi-ākhiratin*; *La Psicología de Averroes*, ed. by Gómez Nogales. My translation and emphases. The new edition by David Wirmer with French translation by J.-B. Brenet, in *L'intellect*, (p. 157, vv. 6–13) has: >أمكن أن يظن < أن عقله ممكن لنا بآخرة. أعني من حيث هو صورة لنا. ويكون قد حصل لنا ضرورة معقول أزلي. إذ كان في نفسه عقلا سواء عقلناه نحن أو لم نعقله. لا أن وجوده عقلا من فعلنا كالحال في المعقولات الهولانية. > *C'est pourquoi l'on peut estimer que son intellection nous est possible à la fin, je veux dire en tant que forme pour nous, et il nous sera <alors> nécessairement <comme> un intelligible éternel, puisqu'il est en lui-même intellect, que nous l'ayons intelligé ou pas, <et qu'il n'est donc> pas <tel> que son existence comme intellect <découle> de notre acte, comme c'est le cas <en revanche> des intelligibles matériels. Cela, c'est l'état connu comme étant "l'union" or "la jonction"*). Regarding *بآخرة* 'ultimately', see Brenet's note 289, pp. 255–56, and his Introduction.

intellect,<sup>18</sup> an account which has the imagination as that through which a human being can rise to a level of intellectual understanding of universals above the apprehension of particulars. It should be noted that in this account, insofar as the imagination is for Ibn Rushd a power belonging to an individual human being composed of body and soul, the imagination, and the material intellect as a disposition of the imagination, those all remain perishable with the perishable nature of their subject, the human soul.<sup>19</sup>

In composing the *Middle Commentary*, Ibn Rushd appears to have become aware of a problem posed by his earlier teaching. If the imagination is essentially a power of a particular human being composed of body and soul, even if it is in some fashion not wholly identical with body, still the imagination is a bodily power and the power called material intellect dependent upon it is individuated by its relationship to the human being to which it belongs. Given that, the imagination cannot be the proper subject for intelligibles in act, that is, it cannot receive universal notions without drawing them into its own materiality and consequent particularity of subject, contrary to the very notion of the universal. As Marc Geoffroy has shown,<sup>20</sup> here Ibn Rushd draws on a celestial model according to which the permanent heavenly bodies are eternally moved by associated souls that are not composed hylomorphically with the heavenly bodies in the fashion of the natural hylomorphic composition of natural sublunar beings. In the *Middle Commentary*, Ibn Rushd now holds that the material intellect must be true intellect as an immaterial power associated with the individual human rational soul. This is so because human knowledge of universals requires an immaterial reception in order to avoid the problems of matter and particularity. In this way, the material intellect is now conceived as a separate but associated power, the existence of which depends upon the individual human being to whom it belongs. This satisfies the need for an immaterial subject capable of receiving abstracted intelligibles without particularizing them, an abstraction that again comes about thanks to the presence of the Agent Intellect in the soul:

It is clear that, in one respect, this intellect is an agent and, in another, it is a form for us [*šūra la-nā*], since the generation of intelligibles is a product

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18 Note that in his early *Epitome of Metaphysics*, Ibn Rushd indicated that the Agent Intellect emerges as ‘the last [mover] in the order of these moving [causes], which should be determined as the mover of the sphere of the moon.’ Averroes, *On Aristotle’s ‘Metaphysics’*, ed. by Arnzen, p. 170. In Ibn Rushd’s commentaries on *De anima* and *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, the Agent Intellect and later the Material Intellect are epistemological posits in the formation of accounts of human knowing. Certainly, in the *Middle Commentary on the De anima* and the *Long Commentary on the De anima* they have no cosmological role in the ontological constitution of sublunar or celestial worlds. Nevertheless, in the *Commentarium magnum De anima*, at p. 442 he calls the Material Intellect the lowest of separate substances.

19 See my introduction in *Long Commentary on the De anima*, English, pp. xxii–xxviii.

20 Averroes, *La béatitude de l’âme*, pp. 71 ff. Cf. Taylor, ‘The Agent Intellect as “Form for Us”’; and *Long Commentary on the De anima*, English, introduction, pp. lxix and lxxi. Also see Taylor, ‘Abstraction and Intellection’.



of our will. When we want to think something, we do so, our thinking it being nothing other than, first, bringing the intelligible forth and, second, receiving it. The individual intentions in the imaginative faculty are they that stand in relation to the intellect as potential colors do to light. That is, this intellect renders them actual intelligibles after their having been intelligible in potentiality. It is clear, from the nature of this intellect — which, in one respect, is a *form for us* [*ṣūra la-nā*] and, in another, is the agent for the intelligibles — that it is separable and neither generable nor corruptible, for that which acts is always superior to that which is acted upon, and the principle is superior to the matter. The intelligent and intelligible aspects of this intellect are essentially the same thing, since it does not think anything external to its essence. There must be an Agent Intellect here, since that which actualizes the intellect has to be an intellect, the agent endowing only that which resembles what is in its substance.<sup>21</sup>

Here Ibn Rushd clearly states again the two functions of the Agent Intellect: it is that which brings about the abstraction generating the intelligible known, and it is also ‘form for us’ (in a non-quidditative sense) as an actualizing power from outside but now present and available to us by our willing. Yet this conception of the material intellect as an associated power still entails the perishability of the material intellect, since the material intellect exists as a power of the perishable human soul. What is particularly noteworthy in the *Middle Commentary* is that in the course of sketching his new view, Ibn Rushd distinctly and very explicitly rejects the possibility that the material intellect could be a substance in its own right.<sup>22</sup> As it happens, that is precisely the teaching which will become his in the *Long Commentary*, as I will discuss below.

21 وبين أن هذا هو من جهة فاعل ومن جهة صورة لنا إذ كان توليد المعقولات إلى مشيئتنا ، وذلك أنه متى شننا أن نعقل شيئا ما عقلناه ، وليس عقلنا آياه شيئا غير تخليق المعقول أولا وقبوله ثانيا. والشئ الذى يتنزل من العقل منزلة الألوان التى بالقوة من الضوء هى المعانى الشخصية التى فى القوة الخيالية ، أعنى أن هذا العقل يصيرها بالفعل معقولات بعد أن كانت بالقوة . وهذا العقل الذى هو صورة لنا من جهة وفعال للمعقولات من جهة بين من أمره أنه مفارق وأنه غير كائن ولا فاسد وذلك أن الفاعل يجب أبدا أن يكون أشرف من المفعول والمبدأ أشرف من الهيلولى . وهذا العقل هو الذى العقل والمعقول منه شئ واحد بذاته إذ كان لا يعقل شيئا خارجا عن ذاته . وإنما كان واجبا أن يكون هاهنا عقل فعال لأن الفاعل للعقل يجب أن يكون عقلا إذ كان لا يعطى الفاعل إلا شبيهه ما فى جوهره

Averroës, *Middle Commentary on Aristotle's De anima*, ed. and trans. by Ivry, p. 116, vv. 10–21 (translation very slightly modified; emphasis added), hereafter cited as Averroës, *Middle Commentary on Aristotle's De anima*.

22 Averroës, *Middle Commentary on Aristotle's De anima*, p. 112, vv. 8–13 (translation very slightly modified):

وذلك أن بهذا الموضع الذى قلناه نتخلص من أن نضع شيئا مفارقا فى جوهره استعدادا ما. لوضعنا الاستعداد موجودا له لا من طبيعته بل من قبل اتصاله بالجوهر الذى فيه هذا الاستعداد بالذات وهو الإنسان. وبوضعنا أن هاهنا شيئا يلحقه هذا الاستعداد بنوع من العرض نتخلص من أن يكون العقل الذى بالقوة استعدادا فقط.

‘For, by our position as stated, we are saved from positing something separate in its substance as a certain disposition, positing [instead] that the disposition found in it is not due to its [own] nature but due to its conjunction with a substance which has this disposition essentially — namely, man — while, in positing that something here is associated incidentally with this disposition, we are saved from [considering] the intellect in potentiality as a disposition only.’

Although the focus of this section is on Ibn Rushd's commentaries on *De anima*, it is worthy of mention that in *Epistle 1 On Conjunction* — a work posterior to the *Middle Commentary* but prior to the *Long Commentary on De anima* — Ibn Rushd returns to the issue of the material intellect and, as noted by Geoffroy and Steel,<sup>23</sup> for the first time raises the question of what could prevent the conception of the material intellect as a separate substance (the view he definitively rejected in the *Middle Commentary*, as indicated above). Rather than providing a complete account of that issue, Ibn Rushd chooses merely to say that it is something requiring further study.

The teachings of the Greek and Arabic traditions on the intellect receive detailed study by Ibn Rushd in the *Long Commentary on the De anima* — this was the profound study referred to in *Epistle 1 On Conjunction*.<sup>24</sup> Careful consideration of his analysis and attention to his sources reveals what had previously prevented his acceptance of the conception of the material intellect as a separate substance shared by all human beings. Simply put, in the earlier commentaries Ibn Rushd had not accounted for the plurality of diverse human material intellects and the way in which science, knowledge, and discourse depend upon a common set of intelligibles. This consideration became evident to him in his third reading of the *Paraphrase* of Themistius,<sup>25</sup> which — in the sole extant Arabic version rendering the Greek — has the following:

وليس ينبغي أن يعجب من أن نكون كلنا معشر المركبين من الذي بالقوة والذي بالفعل وكل واحد منا إنما وجوده من قبل ذلك الواحد نرجع إلى واحد هو العقل الفعال فإنه لو لا ذلك من أين كانت تكون لنا العلوم المتعارفة مشتركة ومن أين كان يكون الفهم للحدود الأول وللقضايا الأول متمثلا بلا تعلم فإنه خالق أن يكون لو لم يكن لنا عقل واحد نشترك فيه كلنا لم نكن أيضا<sup>26</sup>

23 Averroes, *La béatitude de l'âme*, pp. 210 and 261.

24 See *Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, introduction, pp. xlii–xlix.

25 The *Paraphrase of the De anima* by Themistius is mentioned in each of the *De anima* commentaries, but its greatest influence on Ibn Rushd was in his reasoning in the *Long Commentary on the De anima*. Regarding the intellects, Themistius seems to write of four intellects: the common intellect, the imperishable potential intellect, the imperishable active intellect, and the Productive (Arabic العقل الفعال *al-'aql al-fa'āl*, Active Intellect). For Themistius, the potential intellect and the active intellect in the human being are the imperfect and perfect phases of the individual human intellect, while the Productive Intellect is the unique transcendent intellect that penetrates each human potential intellect and assists it in its transition to actual intellect. Since the Productive Intellect is wholly actual and thinks all the forms eternally, it too can be called an actual or active intellect though it is not identified with the individual human intellect. The perishable common intellect is passive and bodily, so it is not properly intellect. The four intellects mentioned by Themistius reduce to three, the human intellect as potential and as active and the Productive Intellect. See Themistius, *Paraphrasis in libros Aristotelis De anima*, ed. by Heinze (hereafter *De anima paraphrasis, Greek*), pp. 98–107; *An Arabic Translation of Themistius' Commentary on Aristoteles De anima*, ed. by Lyons (hereafter *Commentary on Aristotle's De anima, Arabic*), pp. 169–96; *On Aristotle's On the Soul*, trans. by Todd (hereafter *On Aristotle's On the Soul, English*), pp. 122–34.

26 Themistius, *Commentary on Aristotle's De anima, Arabic*, p. 188, v. 17–p. 189, v. 4.

There need be no wonder that we all are, as a group, composites of what is in potency and of what is in act. All of us whose existence is by virtue of this one are referred back to a one which is the Agent Intellect. For if not this, then whence is it that we possess known sciences in a shared way? And whence is it that the understanding of the primary definitions and primary propositions is alike [for us all] without learning? For it is right that, if we do not have one intellect in which we all share, then we also do not have understanding of one another.<sup>27</sup>

εἰ δὲ εἰς ἓνα ποιητικὸν νοῦν ἅπαντες ἀναγόμεθα οἱ συγκείμενοι ἐκ τοῦ δυνάμει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ, καὶ ἐκάστῳ ἡμῶν τὸ εἶναι παρὰ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἐκείνου ἐστίν, οὐ χρὴ θαυμάζειν. πόθεν γὰρ αἱ κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι; πόθεν δὲ ἡ ἀδίδακτος καὶ ὁμοία τῶν πρῶτων ὄρων σύνεσις καὶ τῶν πρῶτων ἀξιωματῶν; μήποτε γὰρ οὐδὲ τὸ συνιέναι ἀλλήλων ὑπήρχεν ἄν, εἰ μὴ τις ἦν εἰς νοῦς, οὗ πάντες ἐκοινωνοῦμεν.<sup>28</sup>

There is no need to be puzzled if we who are combined from the potential and the actual [intellects] are referred back to one productive intellect, and that what it is to be each of us is derived from that single [intellect]. Where otherwise do the notions that are shared [*koinoi ennoiai*] come from? Where is the untaught and identical understanding of the primary definitions and primary axioms derived from? For we would not understand one another unless there were a single intellect that we all shared.<sup>29</sup>

Ibn Rushd accepts this principle as an account of the unity of abstracted intelligibles in act in the Material Intellect.<sup>30</sup> But how can the Material Intellect receive those intelligibles without particularizing them? His response to this question is to assert that the Material Intellect is an immaterial entity unique in its species, not a determinate particular (المشار إليه *al-mushār ilai-hi, hoc aliquid*) which contracts what it receives to its own particularity.<sup>31</sup> For Ibn Rushd, the particularity

27 My translation from Taylor, 'Themistius and the Development of Averroes' Noetics', pp. 15–16, n. 44. Whether Ibn Rushd precisely follows the meaning of Themistius himself is a complex issue that cannot be pursued here. It is clear, however, that he studied the account of Themistius carefully but rejected it, albeit making use of some insights for his own different view.

28 Themistius, *De anima paraphrasis, Greek*, p. 103, v. 36–p. 104, v. 3.

29 Themistius, *On Aristotle's On the Soul, English*, p. 129.

30 See Taylor, 'Intelligibles in Act in Averroes'.

31 Ibn Rushd was well aware of the novel explanation he was crafting. See *Commentarium magnum De anima*, III.5, 656–77, pp. 409–10: 'Opinandum est enim quod iste est quartum genus esse. Quemadmodum enim sensibile esse dividitur in formam et materiam, sic intelligibile esse oportet dividi in consimilia hiis duobus, scilicet in aliquod simile forme et in aliquod simile materie. Et hoc necesse est in omni intelligentia abstracta que intelligit aliud; et si non, non esset multitudo in formis abstractis. Et iam declaratum est in Prima Philosophia quod nulla est forma liberata a potentia simpliciter, nisi prima forma, que nichil intelligit extra se sed essentia eius est quiditas eius; alie autem forme diversantur in quiditate et essentia quoquo modo' ('One should hold that it [i.e., the material intellect] is a fourth kind of being. For just as sensible being is divided into form and matter, so too intelligible being must be divided into things similar to these two, namely, into something similar to

engendered by materiality is what bars intelligibility. Since the Material Intellect is both a unique entity in its species and immaterial, it can be understood as receiving intelligibles in act without particularizing them. Those intelligibles in act come to be in the Material Intellect through the abstractive power of the Agent Intellect and through individual human efforts to abstract or transfer the form intelligible in potency apprehended by exterior and interior senses into a new mode of being as immaterial intelligible in act. This is done by will and individual effort on the part of particular human beings who employ sensed images received into the imagination and denude them of accidental features as much as possible by the cogitative power in order to reveal the form or intention of a thing — though what results still remains a particular.

In the *Long Commentary on De anima*, Ibn Rushd is quite explicit about the presence of the Agent Intellect ‘in the soul’. Regarding the text of Aristotle, he writes:

Now he gives the way on the basis of which it was necessary to assert *the agent intelligence to be in the soul*. For we cannot say that the relation of *the agent intellect in the soul* to the generated intelligible is just as the relation of the artistry to the art’s product in every way. For art imposes the form on the whole matter without it being the case that there was something of the intention of the form existing in the matter before the artistry made it. It is not so in the case of the intellect, for if it were so in the case of the intellect, then a human being would not need sense or imagination for apprehending intelligibles. Rather, the intelligibles would enter into the material intellect from the agent intellect, without the material intellect needing to behold sensible forms. And neither can we even say that the imagined intentions are solely what move the material intellect and draw it out from potency into act. For if it were so, then there would be no difference between the universal and the individual, and then the intellect would be of the genus of the imaginative power.<sup>32</sup>

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form and into something similar to matter. This is [something] necessarily present in every separate intelligence which understands something else. And if not, then there would be no multiplicity {410} in separate forms. It was already explained in First Philosophy that there is no form free of potency without qualification except the First Form which understands nothing outside itself. Its being is its quiddity. Other forms, however, are in some way different in quiddity and being’, *Long Commentary on the De anima*, English, pp. 326–27).

<sup>32</sup> *Long Commentary on the De anima*, English, pp. 350–51 (emphasis added); *Commentarium magnum De anima*, III.18, 34–51, p. 438: ‘Modo dat modum ex quo oportuit ponere in anima intelligentiam agentem. Non enim possumus dicere quod proportio intellectus agentis in anima ad intellectum generatum est sicut proportio artificii ad artificiatum omnibus modis. Ars enim imponit formam in tota materia absque eo quod in materia sit aliquid existens de intentione forme antequam artificium fecerit eam. Et non est ita in intellectu; quoniam, si ita esset in intellectu, tunc homo non indigeret, in comprehendendo intelligibilia, sensu neque ymaginatione; immo intellecta pervenirent in intellectum materialem ab intellectu agenti, absque eo quod intellectus materialis indigeret aspicere formas sensibiles. Neque etiam possumus dicere quod intentiones ymaginate sunt sole

Regarding the Material Intellect, the Agent Intellect and the theoretical intellect or intellect in a positive disposition (*intellectus in habitu*, العقل بالملكة, *al-'aql bi-l-malakati*), Ibn Rushd writes:

[T]here are three parts of the intellect in the soul, one is the receptive intellect, the second is that which makes [things], and the third is the product [of these]. Two of these three are eternal, namely, the agent and the recipient; the third is generable and corruptible in one way, eternal in another way.<sup>33</sup>

Thanks to the presence of the separate abstracting Agent Intellect and separate receptive Material Intellect 'in the soul', stated clearly by Ibn Rushd, the individual human being can by will achieve knowledge, that is, realize the theoretical intellect as a result of the transfer of the form or intention from the being of an intelligible in potency to that of an intelligible in act. However, the individual human soul is not eternal or immaterial or per se an intellect, but rather perishable with the perishing of the body.

Since the abstractive activity of the Agent Intellect brings about an intelligible in act in the receptive Material Intellect as the subject of intelligibles in act, there is a sense in which these two intellects are one in this activity while two in description and being. It is this which Ibn Rushd describes when he writes the following:

Generally, when someone will consider the material intellect with the agent intellect, {451} they will appear to be two in a way and one in another way. For they are two in virtue of the diversity of their activity, for the activity of the agent intellect is to generate while that of the former is to be informed. They are one, however, because the material intellect is actualized through the agent [intellect] and understands it. In this way we say that two powers appear in the intellect conjoined [*continuatus*] with us, of which one is active and the other is of the genus of passive powers.<sup>34</sup>

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moventes intellectum materiale et extrahentes eum de potentia in actum; quoniam, si ita esset, tunc nulla differentia esset inter universale et individuum, et tunc intellectus esset de genere virtutis ymaginative'. Note: *ibid.*, III.3.6, 34–51, pp. 499–500: 'Quoniam, quia illud per quod agit aliquid suam propriam actionem est forma, nos autem agimus per intellectum agentem nostram actionem propriam, necesse est ut intellectus agens sit forma in nobis' ('For, because that in virtue of which something carries out its proper activity is the form, while we carry out {500} our proper activity in virtue of the agent intellect, it is necessary that the agent intellect be form in us', *Long Commentary on the De anima*, English, p. 399).

33 *Long Commentary on the De anima*, English, pp. 321–22; *Commentarium magnum De anima*, 3.6.5, 570–74, p. 406: '[I]n anima sunt tres partes intellectus, quarum una est intellectus recipiens, secunda autem est efficiens, tertia autem factum. Et due istarum trium sunt eterne, scilicet agens et recipiens; tertia autem est generabilis et corruptibilis uno modo, eterna alio modo.'

34 *Long Commentary on the De anima*, English, p. 360; *Commentarium magnum De anima*, 3.20, 213–22, pp. 450–51: 'Et universaliter, quando quis intuebitur intellectum materiale cum intellectu agentis, apparebunt esse duo uno modo et unum alio modo. Sunt enim duo per diversitatem actionis eorum; actio enim intellectus agentis est generare, istius autem informari. Sunt autem unum quia intellectus materialis perficitur per agentem et intelligit ipsum. Et ex hoc modo dicimus quod intellectus

Nevertheless, the basis for distinguishing two distinct intellects is clearly stated:

[I]n view of our having asserted that the relation of the imagined intentions {439} to the material intellect is just as the relation of the sensibles to the senses (as Aristotle will say later), it is necessary to suppose that there is another mover which makes [the intentions] move the material intellect in act (and this is nothing but to make [the intentions] intelligible in act by separating them from matter).<sup>35</sup>

This reasoning, he continues, ‘forces the assertion of an agent intellect different from the material intellect and different from the forms of things which the material intellect apprehends.’<sup>36</sup> The Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect, then, are two distinct substances, with the Agent Intellect not knowing the world directly since it has no receptivity and the Material Intellect knowing only abstracted forms derived from the world thanks to its relationship with the Agent Intellect.<sup>37</sup>

In Book 3, Comment 36, Ibn Rushd explains further that the Agent Intellect is present in us such that we are ourselves knowers acting by will: ‘For because that in virtue of which something carries out its proper activity is the form while we carry out our proper activity in virtue of the Agent Intellect, it is necessary that the agent intellect be form in us.’<sup>38</sup> In this sense, then, the Agent Intellect is acting with and in us as we form the disposed intellect (العقل بالملكة *al-‘aql bi-l-malakati*, *intellectus in habitu*) as the theoretical intellect (العقل النظري *al-‘aql al-nazarī*, *intellectus speculativus*) in which we acquire intelligibles formed by abstraction in the Material Intellect. This is as much in us as the acquired intellect (العقل المستفاد *al-‘aql al-mustafād*, *intellectus adeptus*) insofar as we are connected via the theoretical intelligibles present both in the human theoretical intellect and in the Material Intellect by the activity of the Agent Intellect.<sup>39</sup>

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continuatus nobiscum, apparent in eo due virtutes, quarum una est activa et alia de genere virtutum passivarum.’

35 *Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, p. 451; *Commentarium magnum De anima*, 3.18, 51–57, pp. 438–39: ‘Unde necesse est, cum hoc quod posuimus quod proportio intentionum ymaginatarum ad intellectum materiale est sicut proportio sensibilibus ad sensus (ut Aristoteles post dicet), imponere alium motorem esse, qui facit eas movere in actu intellectum materiale (et hoc nichil est aliud quam facere eas intellectas in actu, abstrahendo eas a materia)’.

36 *Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, p. 451; *Commentarium magnum De anima*, 3.18, 58–60, p. 439: ‘[H]ec intentio cogens ad ponendum intellectum agentem alium a materiali et a formis rerum quas intellectus materialis comprehendit’.

37 ‘Intelligentia enim agens nichil intelligit ex eis que sunt hic’. *Commentarium magnum De anima*, 3.19, 15–16, p. 441 (*Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, p. 353: ‘The agent intelligence understands nothing of the things which are here’).

38 *Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, p. 399; *Commentarium magnum De anima*, 3.36, 586–90, pp. 499–500: ‘Quoniam, quia illud per quod agit aliquid suam propriam actionem est forma, nos autem agimus per intellectum agentem nostram actionem propriam, necesse est ut intellectus agens sit forma in nobis’.

39 To be clear, this does not mean humans have a personal immaterial intellect. Rather, it represents the function of individual human awareness of the intelligibles in act realized in the Material Intellect. Ibn Rushd seeks to characterize this as the Agent Intellect as ‘form for us’ as acquired intellect. The route

It is evident that when that motion [i.e., conjoining with the Agent Intellect through the theoretical intelligibles] will be complete, immediately that intellect will be conjoined with us in all ways. Then it is evident that its relation to us in that disposition is as the relation of the intellect which is in a positive disposition [i.e., العقل بالملكة *al-'aql bi-l-malakati, intellectus in habitu*] in relation to us. Since it is so, it is necessary that a human being understand all the intelligible beings through the intellect proper to him and that he carry out the activity proper to him in regard to all beings, just as he understands by his proper intellection all the beings through the intellect which is in a positive disposition [i.e., العقل بالملكة *al-'aql bi-l-malakati, intellectus in habitu*] when it has been conjoined [*continuatus*] with forms of the imagination.<sup>40</sup>

This is the way in which knowledge of intelligibles comes to be in, and to be proper to, an individual human being thanks to the assistance of the Agent and Material Intellects, which also have presence *in the soul*. Marvelling at this, Ibn Rushd recalls the view of Themistius:

In this way, therefore, human beings, as Themistius says, are made like unto God in that he is all beings in a way and one who knows these in a way, for beings are nothing but his knowledge and the cause of beings is nothing but his knowledge. How marvelous is that order and how mysterious is that mode of being!<sup>41</sup>

That is, through this process humans, unlike other mortal animals, are able to become intellectual knowers by way of coming to have intelligibles of all things in

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for this attribution is circuitous: the human individual provides particular images which the Agent Intellect abstracts and actualizes in another mode of being in the Material Intellect (as light actualizes the opaque medium of sight to be transparent and to receive colours); the Material Intellect (as subject of being) thereby has the theoretical intelligibles (unique intellectual forms) which it then makes available to the individual who provided the original images (the subject of truth); given that this process was made possible only thanks to the involvement of the Agent Intellect, an external source, the process can be traced back to the Agent Intellect and in the individual knower it can be called the acquired intellect (*intellectus adeptus, العقل المستفاد al-'aql al-mustafād*).

40 *Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, p. 399; *Commentarium magnum De anima*, 3.36, 607–16, p. 500: 'Et manifestum est quod, cum iste motus complebitur, quod statim iste intellectus copulabitur nobiscum omnibus modis. Et tunc manifestum est quod proportio eius ad nos in illa dispositione est sicut proportio intellectus qui est in habitu ad nos. Et cum ita sit, necesse est ut homo intelligat per intellectum sibi proprium omnia entia, et ut agat actionem sibi propriam in omnibus entibus, sicut intelligit per intellectum qui est in habitu, quando fuerit continuatus cum formis ymaginabilibus, eis omnia entia intellectione propria.'

41 *Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, p. 399; *Commentarium magnum De anima*, 3.36, 617–22, p. 501: 'Homo igitur secundum hunc modum, ut dicit Themistius, assimilatur Deo in hoc quod est omnia entia quoquo modo, et sciens ea quoquo modo; entia enim nichil aliud sunt nisi scientia eius, neque causa entium est aliud nisi scientia eius. Et quam mirabilis est iste ordo, et quam extranea est iste modus essendi!'

them, though for humans knowledge is posterior to the things known, while for God knowledge is causally prior to the things.<sup>42</sup>

For the sake of what follows, five conclusions from our study of the commentaries on *De anima* are important to note here. First, in the *Long Commentary* Ibn Rushd held the existence of the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect to be two distinct substances, not one substance under two different descriptions. Second, he held these to have existences of their own as separately existing immaterial substances and not to be essential, ontologically intrinsic powers belonging to each human soul. Third, in all three of his commentaries on *De anima*, Ibn Rushd holds that the Agent Intellect should be described as ‘form for us’, *صورة لنا*, *ṣura lanā*, *forma nobis*. In the *Long Commentary* he holds that these intellects — now understood as separately existing substances — can come to be present ‘in the soul’ with the Agent Intellect providing the power of intellectual abstraction and with the Material Intellect shared by all human knowers being the locus of the unique set of immaterial intelligibles in act common to all human knowers. Fourth, in none of the three commentaries is there provision for a life after death for the individual human soul. That is, there is no provision for the immortality of the human soul in Ibn Rushd’s commentaries on *De anima*. Fifth, though we are conjoined via the Material Intellect to the Agent Intellect in the process of attaining and possessing abstractive knowledge — something marvellous and, as it were, divine — there is no ontological or substantial unity with the Agent Intellect and no clearly established, reasoned grounds in support of an ascent to it via another different kind of knowing of it and other transcendent intellectual substances.<sup>43</sup>

42 See Kogan, *Averroes and the Metaphysics of Creation*, pp. 229–48.

43 This is in accord with the view of Herbert A. Davidson in *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes, on Intellect: ‘Conjunction with the active intellect occurs, in Averroes’ several accounts, during the life of the body and not in the hereafter. None of the accounts envisions anything ecstatic or properly mystical in the conjunction of the human intellect with the active intellect’* (p. 330). Furthermore, in addition to bodily faculties, “‘Practical intelligible thoughts’ likewise do not survive; they are tied to the “imaginative faculty” and perish together with it. Human theoretical thoughts that grow out of images presented by the imaginative faculty suffer an identical fate [...] individual human consciousness of theoretical thoughts perishes together with the faculties on which consciousness of such thoughts depends [...]. The *Long Commentary*, from which the last quotations are taken, has a unique conception of the material intellect and its relation to the human soul. But compositions belonging to other stages of Averroes’ career make equally plain that “theoretical intelligible thoughts”, that is to say, human scientific knowledge at the “mathematical”, “physical”, and even the “metaphysical” levels, all “perish” together with the human imaginative faculty. Metaphysical knowledge, no less than physical knowledge, is rooted in images furnished by the imaginative faculty, since it consists in abstractions made from propositions presented by the science of physics’. *Ibid.*, pp. 337–38. Nevertheless, Ibn Rushd does assert a uniting with the Agent Intellect when all potential intelligibles have been realized and the Material Intellect ceases to exist. This is discussed in more detail below.



## Ibn Rushd on the Afterlife and Human Fulfilment in his *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* of Aristotle

In his *Long Commentary* on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Book Lam, Ibn Rushd read in the Arabic text 17 of Aristotle,

واما إن كان شئ ما يبقى بأخرة فقد ينبغي ان نبحث عن ذلك و ذلك أن نبحث الأشياء فلا مانع يمنع مثال ذلك إن كانت النفس حالها هذه الحال لا كلها لاكن العقل وذلك أن كلها لعلة الا يمكن

As for whether something remains *afterwards* [*bi-akharatin*], it may be necessary that we investigate it, for regarding some things there may not be anything preventing it, for example, the situation for the soul though not the whole of it but rather for the intellect, since for the whole it is perhaps not possible.<sup>44</sup>

My translation of this text is quite similar to that of Charles Genequand, with the exception of the prepositional phrase 'afterwards' (بأخرة *bi-akharatin*), which he renders as 'in an afterlife'.<sup>45</sup> Here the Arabic renders the Greek ὕστερον. The context for Aristotle is the coexistence of formal causes with their effects, with an example of the shape as formal cause coming into being with a bronze sphere. Does the form or shape necessarily remain existing with the bronze taken away? Aristotle writes:

Whether any form remains also afterwards [*ὑστερόν*] is another question. In some cases there is nothing to prevent this, e.g. the soul may be of this nature (not all of it, but the intelligent part; for presumably all of it cannot be).<sup>46</sup>

To paraphrase Aristotle, the formal cause of something must remain with the effect so long as the effect is what it is as caused by the formal cause. The shape of the bronze sphere is there as essential to the thing as bronze sphere. The implication is that after the separation of the formal cause (the spherical shape) from the bronze, the *sphere* no longer exists. To expand, if soul is form of the body and the individual is the composite of the two, the composite human will not remain as such after the death of the body and neither will the soul remain, unless there is perhaps some other special consideration concerning 'the intelligent part'

44 *Tafsīr mā ba'd at-Ṭabī'at*, p. 1486, v. 13–p. 1487, v. 2. My translation and emphasis.

45 Genequand's translation is: 'We must inquire whether anything can last in an afterlife, for in certain things there is nothing to prevent it; for instance, if the soul is in that situation, it is not the whole soul, but the intellect only; for the whole it is perhaps impossible.' *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics, Arabic-English*, p. 103. My emphasis.

46 Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1070a24–26, ed. by Ross, English in *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, trans. by Tredennick, p. 131: (εἰ δὲ καὶ ὕστερόν τι ὑπομένει, σκεπτέον· ἐπ' ἐνίων γὰρ οὐδὲν κωλύει, οἷω εἰ ἢ ψυχὴ τοιοῦτον, μὴ πᾶσα, ἀλλ' ὁ νοῦς· πᾶσαν γὰρ ἀδύνατον ἴσως). Lindsay Judson's recent translation (*Metaphysics Book Λ*, trans. by Judson, p. 25) renders this passage as: '(Whether something remains afterwards too has to be considered, since in some cases nothing prevents it; for example whether the soul is of such a sort — not all soul but intellect; for perhaps it is impossible for all soul to remain).'

of soul. Such might be considered possible for the soul, though not all of it but only the intellect. But there is no assertion of an afterlife of individuals here. True, the context of Aristotle's discussion, which includes a reference to Plato and the Forms and mention of the soul, may lure one — in the present context, it is Albert in accord with his Christian commitments and a general understanding of the afterlife in the Abrahamic tradition of Islam — into reflective consideration of the notion of an afterlife and prompt that notion. Still, بأخرة *bi-akharatin* is not the proper Arabic phrase to indicate the afterlife; the correct phrase would be بالآخرة *bi-l-ākhirati* 'in the afterlife', that is, الدار الآخرة 'the ultimate abode'. Here the phrase بأخرة *bi-akharatin* is merely an expression with the more common meaning of 'afterwards', 'later', 'eventually', or 'ultimately'. The phrase occurs two more times in Ibn Rushd's Comment 17 on this text and is incorrectly rendered as 'in an afterlife' in the English translation by Genequand.<sup>47</sup>

The same phrase بأخرة *bi-akharatin* occurs repeatedly in the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* and is rendered by Michael Scot in his Latin translation — both there and apparently in his translation of the *Long Commentary on the De anima* — as *in postremo*, with the meanings of 'afterwards', 'later', 'eventually' or 'ultimately'. The phrase بالآخرة *bi-l-ākhirati* 'in the afterlife' is not found in the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*.

In Ibn Rushd's Comment 17 on this text of Aristotle's, he speaks in his own voice and declares that the Agent Intellect is like form in the Material Intellect bringing about (يفعل *yafalu*) intelligibles in act received into the Material Intellect. This latter is not truly matter but rather has the role as *the place* (كالمكان *ka-l-makān*) into which abstracted intelligibles are received. These Intellects are two distinct substances, both eternal without generation or corruption. In the case of the Material Intellect, which in the *Long Commentary on the De anima* Ibn Rushd (in a novel philosophical teaching) calls a unique fourth kind of being,<sup>48</sup> it is something eternal but can also apprehend things of the natural world of generation and corruption. Envisioning the ultimate achievement of all knowledge, towards the end of this Comment he imagines a time when human perfection is achieved with all knowledge attained, and the potentiality as well as the need for intellectual abstraction by way of the two separate Intellects is no longer present. Then, when all potentiality of intellect has been eliminated by being actualized

47 *Tafsīr mā ba'd at-Ṭabī'at*, pp. 1487–88; *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics, Arabic-English*, p. 103. The occurrence of 'after-life' in Genequand's translation may be a typographical error for 'afterlife'. In Genequand's case, the morphological differences in the two Arabic phrases provide a distinction that needed to be recognized but was not. As we shall see below, such was not the case for Albert, who took Michael Scot's sound Latin rendering of the Arabic as *in postremo* to mean 'in the afterlife' rather than 'afterwards' or 'later'. Further, note that Ibn Rushd's Comment 17 begins with a quotation from Alexander, who raises the question of the individual human soul or intellect persisting after death only to dismiss it altogether. After explaining this and mentioning that most commentators think an individual receptive (*scil.*, 'material') intellect survives (as in al-Farābī and Ibn Sīnā), Ibn Rushd sets out his own teaching.

48 *Commentarium magnum De anima*, p. 409; *Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, p. 326.

and intellect has been fully realized, this will be highest happiness for us through an intellection in which act and substance are one and the same:

Since [the Agent Intellect] conjoins [اتصل *ittaṣala*] with the Material Intellect, its act, insofar as [the Agent Intellect] unites with [the Material Intellect], is not its substance and what it acts on is a substance which belongs to another, not to itself. Owing to this it is possible that an eternal thing intellectually understands [يعقل *ya'qilu*] what is generated and corruptible. So if this intellect [i.e., the Material Intellect] is divested of potentiality when it reaches human perfection, then it is necessary that this act which is other than it also cease. Hence, in this state either we are not at all intellectually understanding by this intellect, or we are intellectually understanding insofar as its act is its substance and it is impossible that we should at any time not be intellectually understanding by it. Thus, it remains that when this intellect is free from potentiality, we are intellectually understanding by it insofar as its act is its substance, and this is ultimate happiness [السعادة القصوى *al-sa'āda al-quṣwā*].<sup>49</sup>

Here Ibn Rushd imagines a future when all intellectual abstraction by way of sense powers comes to perfection and completion in the realization of all intelligibles in act. Before then, abstraction and the attainment of intelligibles in act require sense powers and memory, the Agent Intellect's power of abstraction, and the Material Intellect's receptivity as the place (not matter) into which the abstracted intelligibles are received. When all intelligibles in potency have been garnered, there is no longer any use or need for the Material Intellect and its potentiality; as a consequence, it will cease to exist. Then either there is no human intellectual understanding, or we will be eternally understanding by the Agent Intellect alone. Such an imagined future is the moment of the attainment of ultimate happiness.

This hyperbolic imagined scenario is replete with complex issues and consequences and prompts a grand array of questions worthy of pursuit at another

49 I have made some significant changes to the translation of Genequand, *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics, Arabic-English*, pp. 104–05; *Tafsīr mā ba'd at-Ṭabī'at*, p. 1490, vv. 2–10:

لما اتصل بالعقل الهبولائي كان فعله من جهة ما يتصل به غير جوهره وكان ما يفعله هو جوهره هو لغيره لا لذاته ولذلك امكن ان يكون شيء ازلي يعقل ما هو كما ان فاسد فان كان هذا العقل يتعري عند بلوغ الكمال الانساني عن القوة فقد يجب ان يبطل منه هذا الفعل الذي هو غيره فاما ان نكون في تلك الحال غير عاقلين اصلا بهذا العقل او نكون به عاقلين من حيث فعله جوهره ومحال ان نكون في وقت من الاوقات غير عاقلين به فقد بقي ان نكون اذا برئ هذا العقل من القوة عاقلين به من حيث فعله جوهره وهي السعادة القصوى

The corresponding Latin translation has: 'Sed cum fuerit copulatus cum intellectu materiali erit actio eius secundum quod copulatur cum eo actio alia a substantia eius. et fuit aliud [corr: illud] quod agit substantia et est alii non sibi. et ideo possibile est ut aliquod aeternum intelligat aliquod generabile et corruptibile. Si igitur iste intellectus denudetur apud perfectionem humanam a potentia, necesse est ut destruat ab eo hec actio que est alia ab eo. et tunc aut non intelligimus omnino per hunc intellectum: aut intelligemus secundum quod actio eius est substantia eius. et impossibile est ut in aliqua hora non intelligamus per ipsum. Relinquetur igitur cum iste intellectus fuerit denudatus a potentia ut intelligamus per ipsum secundum quod actio est substantia eius et est ultima prosperitas' (*Long Commentary on the Metaphysics, Latin*, 303B–D). It is because of the use of 'prosperitas' here for السعادة *al-sa'ād* that I render *prosperitas* in the texts of Albert as 'happiness'.

opportunity. For present purposes, it should be noted that this conjoining with the Agent Intellect is by no means supposed to be a description of the experience of individual human beings before that final moment. For mortal human individuals, the highest happiness that can be achieved is in the attainment of intellectual knowledge in the present life through willed scientific study. (What precisely a human being would then be and what knowing would be is by no means clear in the event of perfection that Ibn Rushd fantastically imagines).

The phrase بأخرة *bi-akharatin* also occurs in Comment 38 of Book Lam. The context is a discussion of the cause of the eternal movement of the heavens, where Aristotle says in the Arabic:

Heaven and nature, then, are in agreement with such a principle; heaven and nature, then, depend [on it]. Its sojourn [*ḥulūl*] is in accordance with that which is most excellent, which belongs to us for a short time, but for it is eternally so.<sup>50</sup>

Citing a different translation — ‘it is on such a principle then, that the heaven and nature depend; we enjoy something like a happy state for a short time’ — Ibn Rushd explains,

He means: it is evident that the heavens and nature are conjoined [*ittaṣalat*] with a principle which is an intellect in the highest state of pleasure, happiness and bliss, similar to our own state of conjoining for a short time with the intellect which is our principle.<sup>51</sup>

Ibn Rushd understands this second version to indicate that our perishable souls can have intellectual understanding and fulfilled happiness for but a short time, whereas the heavens as incorruptible have unending intellectual happiness ultimately through the Unmoved Mover. In his teaching in the *Long Commentary on the De anima*, intellectual fulfilment for human knowers comes about through the external and internal sense powers and the abstractive power of the Agent Intellect, which moves intelligibles in potency to a new mode of being as intelligibles in act and ‘places’ them into the receptive Material Intellect. For us, these separate intellects together constitute our principle and are movers and ends. But our fulfilment and happiness comes about by the active principle bringing about intellectual abstraction and intelligibles in act in the receptive principle. Ibn Rushd writes:

<sup>50</sup> *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics, Arabic-English*, p. 155; *Tafsīr mā ba’d at-Ṭabī’at*, p. 1608, v. 8–p. 1609, v. 2:

فادا السماء والطبيعة متعلقتان والحلول على ما هو فاضل جدا الذي يكون لنا زمانا يسيرا هكذا لذلك دائما.

<sup>51</sup> *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics, Arabic-English*, p. 156 (I revise Genequand’s ‘in contact with’ to ‘conjoined with’ and ‘contact’ to ‘conjoining’); *Tafsīr mā ba’d at-Ṭabī’at*, pp. 1611, v. 15–1612, v. 3: يريد انه قد تبين ان السماء والطبيعة قد اتصلت بمبدأ هو عقل في غاية اللذة والسرور والغبطة كآلنا نحن في الاتصال بالعقل الذي هو مبدأنا زمانا يسيرا.

It clearly appears from that that Aristotle thinks that happiness for men *qua* men consists in their conjoining with the intellect which has been shown in the *De anima* to be principle, mover, and agent for us. This is because the separate intellects insofar as they are separate must be principle in both of two ways: insofar as they are mover and insofar as they are ends. Hence, the Agent Intellect, insofar as it is separate and principle for us, must move us in the way the lover moves the beloved [يحرك العاشق المعشوق *yuharriku al-‘āshiqu alma-shūqa*]. And, if every motion must be conjoined with the thing which moves it in the manner of the end, then we must be conjoined ultimately [بأخرة *bi-akharatin*] with this separate intellect,<sup>52</sup> so that we depend on the likes of this principle, on which the heavens depend, as Aristotle says, although this happens for us but for a short time.<sup>53</sup>

Here Ibn Rushd explains that, whereas finality is key in the cases of intellects, celestial souls, and ensouled celestial bodies, the Agent Intellect (lover) moves the receptive Material Intellect and us (the beloved) to the fulfilling realization of knowledge through conjoining.<sup>54</sup>

52 Note that the intellect referred to here is the Agent Intellect, not the Unmoved Mover.

53 *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics, Arabic-English*, p. 157 (Arabic added); *Tafsīr mā ba‘d at-Ṭabī‘at*, p. 1612, v. 8–p. 1613, v. 4: *ومن هنا يظهر كل الظهور ان ارسطاطاليس يرى ان السعادة للناس بما هم ناس انما هو: 4: 1613, v. 8–p. 1612, v. 8* اتصالهم بالعقل الذي تبين في كتاب النفس انه مبدا محرك وفاعل لنا و ذلك ان العقول المفارقة بما هي مفارقة يجب ان تكون مبدا لما هي له مبدا بالنحوين جميعا اعنى من جهة ما هي محرك ومن جهة ما هي غاية فالعقل الفعال من جهة ما هو مفارق ومبدا لنا قد يجب ان يحركنا على جهة ما يحرك العاشق المعشوق وان كانت كل حركة فقد يجب ان تتصل بالشيء الذي يحركها على جهة الغاية فواجب ان تتصل باخرة بهذا العقل المفارق حتى تكون قد علقنا بمثل هذا المبدأ الذي علق به الذي يحركها على جهة الغاية فواجب ان تتصل باخرة بهذا العقل المفارق حتى تكون قد علقنا بمثل هذا المبدأ الذي علق به *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics, Latin*, 321F–G: ‘Et ex hoc quidem apparet bene quod Aristoteles opinatur quod forma hominum in eo quod sunt homines non est nisi per continuationem eorum cum intellectu, qui declaratur in libro *De anima* esse principium agens et movens nos. Intelligentiae enim abstractae in eo quod sunt abstractae debent esse principia eorum quorum sunt principia duobus modis: secundum quod sunt moventes et secundum quod sunt finis. Intelligentia enim agens in quantum est abstracta et est principium nobis necesse est ut moveat nos secundum quod amatum amans. Et si omnis motus necesse est ut continuetur cum eo a quo fit secundum finem, necesse est ut in postremo continuetur cum hoc intellectu abstracto, ita quod erimus dependentes a tali principio a quo coelum dependet, quamvis hoc sit in nobis modico tempore, sicut dixit Aristoteles.’ I have substantially revised Genequand’s translation. Note in particular that I correct his ‘the beloved moves the lover’ into ‘the lover moves the beloved’. Also note that in the Latin *secundum quod amatum amans, amans* might tempt a reader to understand the phrase differently and out of context as ‘the beloved [moves] the lover’. See also note 54 below.

54 In 1984, the same year as the publication of Genequand’s translation, a French translation by Aubert Martin appeared, in Averroès, *Grand Commentaire de la ‘Métaphysique d’Aristote’* (*Tafsīr mā ba‘d at-Ṭabī‘at*). Both translations were based on the edition of Bouyges, and both worked to convey valuable translations of the work, but their methodological foci were different. While Genequand was largely concerned with the philosophical reasoning, Martin explicitly focused on lexical and philological considerations and somewhat less on the philosophical. For the passage considered here, Martin (pp. 233–34) presents a translation in accord with the one I have provided. In support of his reading, Martin (p. 234, n. 10) references a parallel passage in Ibn Rushd’s *Middle Commentary on the Metaphysics*, available in the 1947 printing of texts in *Rasā‘il Ibn Rushd*. There, Ibn Rushd explains that the existence of the motions of the heavens is due to separate immaterial intellects insofar as celestial

Three considerations should be noted here. First, the doctrine that Ibn Rushd provides in the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* is in accord with that of the *Long Commentary on the De anima*. Human happiness is found in the achievement of intellectual understanding through a conjoining with the separately existing substances, Agent Intellect and Material Intellect. For individual human knowers, however, such happiness takes place only during short earthly lives, since there is no post mortem existence for them in an afterlife. Second, the function of the Material Intellect is to be the shared immaterial locus of abstracted intelligibles attained through the apprehension of things of the world, which it receives thanks to the abstractive light of the Agent Intellect. In the *Long Commentary on the De anima*, Ibn Rushd also explains that the Material Intellect, as intellect, understands not only the abstracted intelligibles separated from matter but also the Agent Intellect itself, since the Material Intellect is intellect with entailed powers. He adds that its nature as intellect does not undermine its ability to understand other separate forms, namely, intellects. Note that he does not say that we, too, through our conjoining with the Material Intellect, come to know separate intellectual substances.<sup>55</sup> Third, Ibn Rushd multiple times uses the phrase بأخرة *bi-akharatin*, which in one case is correctly translated by Genequand as ‘ultimately’, though his other translations as ‘in an afterlife’ are incorrect. This is important since, in the discussion of Albertus Magnus below, translation, interpretation, and meaning will again be a major focus, simply because the phrase بأخرة *bi-akharatin* is rendered into Latin by Michael Scot as *in postremo*. In Latin, unlike in Arabic, this phrase more easily allows for two very different meanings: one as ‘later’, ‘ultimately’, and the like, and another as ‘in the afterlife’.

## A Tale of Two Averroisms

In his 1982 paper ‘Notes sur les débuts (1225–1240) du premier “averroïsme”’, René Antoine Gauthier provides a valuable multifaceted study of the initial entry of the translated works of Averroes into Latin Europe.<sup>56</sup> This includes an account

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bodies conceive them (*‘alā jihati t-taṣawwuri bi-l-‘aqli*) so as to cause desire in the celestial bodies, ‘just as the form of the lover moves the beloved’ (*kamā yuḥarrīku ṣūratu al-‘āshīqi al-mā’shūqa*). Ibn Rushd, *Middle Commentary on the Metaphysics, Rasā’il Ibn Rushd* ed., p. 141. Note that Genequand provides a translation of the entirety of Ibn Rushd’s commentary on Book Lam / Lambda, whereas Martin does not translate Texts and Comments 42–50. A critical edition by Marouf Aouad of the Middle Commentary with French translation and English introduction appeared in late 2023, after the present article went to print, as volume 11 of the Brill series *Islamicate Intellectual History*. See <https://brill.com/edcollbook/title/62324?language=en>.

<sup>55</sup> See *Commentarium magnum De anima*, 3.5.679–83, p. 410; *Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, pp. 327–28. Some years ago, Steven Menn valuably brought to my attention that my translation of *intellectibus simplicibus* at *Commentarium magnum De anima*, 3.20, 277, p. 453 as ‘with the simple intelligibles’ (*Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, p. 362) should be emended to ‘with the simple intellects’.

<sup>56</sup> Parts of this section draw on my introduction to the *Long Commentary on the De anima*, pp. xcix–cv.

of what he holds to be a common reading of those works regarding the nature of the human intellect. With extraordinary attention to detail and a critical eye to sources and their interpretation by other scholars, Gauthier examines the letter of King Manfred of Sicily to the scholars of Paris and determines that the works Manfred mentions sending to Paris could not have been those of Averroes, since, as Gauthier demonstrates, the letter turns out to have been written for Parisian scholars around 1263. The major works of Averroes were widely available well before that date. This may seem inconsequential, but it is clear that only when misconceptions and the misreading of documents are pointed out in detail can we correctly understand important issues such as the one at stake here: the dating of the entry of the works of Averroes into the scholarly world of the thirteenth-century theologians.<sup>57</sup>

Having dealt with the challenging issue of the letter of Manfred, Gauthier proceeds to examine in detail R. de Vaux's account of Roland of Cremona regarding the first entry of the works of Averroes.<sup>58</sup> Again, Gauthier applies meticulous care and a wide and deep knowledge of secondary literature to the question of whether Roland's *Summa*, presumed to be written around 1230, indicates by absence of reference to Averroes that the works of Averroes were not yet available at that date. I will not rehearse here all the details of Gauthier's analyses, but just indicate that he traces the scholarship that gradually moved the date of this work from 1230 to 1233 and then to 1236, then finally to 1244. It is certain that the works of Averroes were widely circulating by that date. Hence, the *Summa* of Roland has no value with regard to the dating of the entry of the translated works of Averroes — another misconception that came to be set aside through the accumulated work of scholars such as Lottin, Doucet, and Cremascoli and the critical analyses of Gauthier.<sup>59</sup>

Next, with an account too brief, Gauthier turns to a valuable consideration of the biography and work of Michael Scot, the presumed translator of all Averroes's Long Commentaries,<sup>60</sup> concluding that Michael was in service to Frederick II from September 1220 up to his death in 1235. Gauthier goes on to argue that Michael's first translations of Averroes were made between 1220 and 1224: those of the *Long Commentary on the De anima* and the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, which came to be known from 1225.<sup>61</sup>

Before the availability of Averroes's works, the dominant account of the soul in the Arabic tradition available to Latin readers was that found in the translated works of Avicenna — in his *De anima* and relevant passages of his *Metaphysics* — as well as the abbreviated account of his teachings in Algazel's *Summa theoreticae*

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57 Gauthier, 'Notes sur les débuts', pp. 322–30.

58 De Vaux, 'La première entrée d'Averroès chez les latins'.

59 Gauthier, 'Notes sur les débuts', pp. 330–31.

60 For a recent discussion of the translations of Michael Scot and others, see Hasse, *Latin Averroes Translations*.

61 Gauthier, 'Notes sur les débuts', pp. 331–34.

*philosophiae*.<sup>62</sup> In those works, Ibn Sinā/Avicenna taught that the rational soul makes instrumental use of the body, yet is not properly form of the body but transcends the body, since the rational soul is an immaterial substance in its own right.<sup>63</sup> The intellectual development of the soul in the natural world takes place thanks to its exercise of powers resident in the physical brain in relation to abstracted or separated images obtained through perception of the world and things in it. However, the activity that brings about intelligibles in act in the rational soul, that is, the final level of abstraction, is not that of a power in the brain or even in the soul itself alone, but rather an activity of the rational soul in relation to the Agent Intellect. For at that stage of the rational soul's preparation, the Agent Intellect connects with the soul and emanates upon the soul a flow of intelligibles which the soul retains so long as it is in contact with the Agent Intellect.<sup>64</sup> This doctrine of Avicenna seems very clear in the Latin translations and proved to be widely influential in Europe, with some theologians venturing to hold that the Agent Intellect is God. Other works were available and studied, such as the *De intellectu* of al-Fārābī and the *De intellectu* of Alexander of Aphrodisias,<sup>65</sup> along with works authored by the translator Domingo Gundisalvi.<sup>66</sup> Various interpretations of Avicenna's accounts were available and a dominant explanation of the Peripatetic thought that he presented generated controversy, even condemnation.<sup>67</sup> For the Latins, the arrival of translations of Ibn Rushd's *Long Commentary on the De anima* and *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* — with complete texts of Aristotle and Averroes's detailed commentary with critical explanations — was welcomed as a challenging alternative to what Avicenna presented.

Also in 1982, Gauthier published a treatise written by a master of arts around 1225, entitled *De anima et potenciis eius*.<sup>68</sup> The author of this work cites Averroes's *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* as well as the *Long Commentary on the De*

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62 This is al-Ghazālī's *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifa*, sometimes rendered as *The Intentions of the Philosophers*, translated by Gundissalvinus and John of Spain. For further information on this work in its Latin translation, see Minnema, 'Algazel Latinus'. For a brief account of the text, its source and its use, see Janssens, 'Al-Ghazālī's *Maqāṣid al-falāsifa*', cited by Minnema, p. 154, n. 5.

63 See Janssens, 'Ibn Sinā's Ideas of Ultimate Realities', p. 255.

64 In the Latin tradition, the interpretation of Avicenna largely involves this emanative account. Among modern scholars of the Arabic writings of Ibn Sinā there has been a lively controversy about how to reconcile his various accounts, including discussion of a naturalistic understanding in which the Agent Intellect is absent. I review some of the literature on intellectual understanding in Ibn Sinā and provide my own account in Taylor, 'Avicenna and the Issue of the Intellectual Abstraction of Intelligibles'. For a substantial recent treatment, see Alpina, *Subject, Definition, Activity*; for a succinct account of Ibn Sinā's metaphysics of human soul, see Gutas, 'Ibn Sina [Avicenna]'.

65 On the importance of Alexander and al-Fārābī in Latin translation for the European Christian tradition, see de Libera, *Métaphysique et noétique*, pp. 264–328.

66 See Polloni, *The Twelfth-Century Renewal of Latin Metaphysics*. See Burnett, 'Arabic Philosophical Works Translated into Latin', for a list of translations and translators with dates.

67 Perhaps the most valuable account of Avicenna on soul and intellect in Latin remains Hasse, *Avicenna's 'De anima' in the Latin West*.

68 Gauthier, 'Le traité *De anima et de potenciis eius*'.



*anima* and presents Averroes as holding, in contrast to Avicenna, that the agent intellect is a power of the human soul — the doctrine that Gauthier calls ‘First Averroism.’<sup>69</sup> To be specific, he adds, for this author there are two intellects, the agent intellect and the possible or receptive material intellect, but they are not really different; rather, they are substantially identical but distinguishable by reason as joined in the single substance of the human rational soul. In this case, consideration of the intellect as united to the body indicates that the possible intellect is perishable in its content yet immortal in its substance, whereas the agent intellect just in itself, as subsistent, is immortal. Such, Gauthier remarks, ‘is the doctrine which reigned without challenge at the faculty of arts from 1225 to 1250, and was maintained even beyond that date.’<sup>70</sup> Gauthier concludes his impressive study with the determination that the first entry of the works of Averroes can now be placed as early as 1225. Yet, as we will see below, evidence of the so-called ‘First Averroism’ doctrine in fact antedates the translations of Averroes.

As Gauthier notes, the issue of ‘First Averroism’ and ‘Second Averroism’ was addressed by Dominique Salman in an article published in 1937. According to Salman, initially Averroes was welcomed as a corrective to Avicennian thought, which required a separate Agent Intellect; Averroes was read as having held the agent intellect and material intellect to be powers of the individual soul. A second, very different, understanding of Averroes’s teaching on intellect later came to the fore among theologians of Europe, one that in Salman’s analysis in fact reflects the genuine teaching of Ibn Rushd:

For Averroes, the possible intellect was unique and separated just like the agent intellect. These two immaterial substances, which are the last in their order, can indeed unite and know in the world of spirits; however, they bring about an act of human intellection if they come into contact in the same phantasm provided for them by the cogitative power of the animal, still mortal, which is the human individual.<sup>71</sup>

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69 Gauthier ‘Notes sur les débuts’, p. 335. His article proceeds with a detailed study of texts, devoting sections to Averroes at Oxford c. 1230–32, Averroes at Paris c. 1225–40, the *Commentary on the Sentences* of Hugh of Saint-Cher (1231–32), the *Summa* of Philip the Chancellor (c. 1232), the question *On Divine Knowledge* in works attributed to Alexander of Hales (c. 1236?), the *De intelligentiis* of Adam of Puteorum Villa (c. 1240), the *De virtutibus* of William of Auvergne (1228–31), and William’s citation of Averroes in his *De universo* (c. 1233–35).

70 Gauthier ‘Notes sur les débuts’, p. 335.

71 Salman, ‘Note sur la première influence d’Averroès’, p. 204. Below I present B. Carlos Bazán’s account of the teachings in the Latin texts of Averroes that support this account by Salman. Bazán (‘Was There Ever a “First Averroism”?’) holds that the Latin expresses clearly enough the real view of Ibn Rushd on the separate and eternal Agent and Material Intellects. He also recognizes the early thirteenth-century Latin view that the agent and possible (material) intellects are powers of the individual human soul, at least partially in line with the views mentioned just above by Gauthier. As will be made clear below, Albert in *De homine* (1242) likewise holds those two intellects to be powers

That is, Salman recognizes the two forms taken by readings of Averroes, and rightly notes that Averroes's (and Ibn Rushd's) true teaching is that the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect exist as separate immaterial and eternal substances.

The distinction between 'First Averroism' and 'Second Averroism' also features in Gauthier's 1984 introduction to the critical Leonine edition of Thomas Aquinas's *Sententia De anima*. There, Gauthier explicitly (and incorrectly) contends that the real teaching of Ibn Rushd, as reflected in the *Long Commentary on the De anima*, is precisely that of 'First Averroism', the account that the agent intellect and the possible (material) intellect are powers of individual human souls. As for 'Second Averroism', the doctrine that the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect are immaterial substances existing separately and ontologically distinct from the human soul, this (he incorrectly maintains) was a false creation on the part of the thirteenth-century Christian theologians and not the genuine teaching of Averroes (that is, of Ibn Rushd). In this, Gauthier asserts his own understanding of Ibn Rushd and moves away from Salman's correct account of Ibn Rushd, which affirmed that the Cordoban himself had taught the existence of two separate intellectual substances, the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect. This assertion by Gauthier is in contradiction to the account of the thought of Ibn Rushd on intellect that I provided above.

For the question of the nature and cogency of the account of 'First Averroism' and 'Second Averroism' that is our concern here, we must return to some additional remarks by Gauthier in his 1982 article, immediately following his important account of the discovery of the citation of Averroes on the intellect in the *De anima et potenciis eius*. Gauthier tells us that this citation is quite surprising, since modern studies have more commonly cited the 'Second Averroism' that argues for the separation of the Agent Intellect and the possible or receptive Material Intellect. Gauthier supports his (incorrect) view now by citing a presumed authority on the Arabic texts of Averroes: 'But do we have reason to be surprised? S. Gómez Nogales has written recently that, on the problem of the intellect, one thing is for sure: "Averroes is not an 'Averroist', in the sense of the term Second Averroism"'.<sup>72</sup> Were the view of Gómez Nogales correct, certainly it would create a serious problem in light of the analysis of the thought of Ibn Rushd I provided above: there, I explained in detail that the doctrine of intellect in the *Long Commentary on the De anima* is precisely the doctrine of the separate Agent Intellect and separate Material Intellect. But the account of Gómez Nogales — whom Gauthier considers an authority in this matter — is incorrect.

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of the human soul and asserts this to be a genuine teaching of Averroes. That is, Albert shares in what Gauthier describes as a common understanding among Christian thinkers in 1225–50.

72 Gauthier, 'Notes sur les débuts', p. 335: 'Mais avons-nous raison de nous étonner? S. Gomez Nogales a écrit récemment que, dans ce problème de l'intellect, une seule chose est sûre: "Averroès n'est pas averroïste", au sens où le second averroïsme entend ce mot.'

In his 1976 article ‘Saint Thomas, Averroès et l’averroïsme’, Salvador Gómez Nogales, editor and translator of Averroes’s *Short Commentary on the De anima*, selected as a concrete example of the paradox that Averroes is not an Averroist the problem of the unicity of the human intellect — that is, whether or not Averroes taught the existence of two separate substances, the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect, in his doctrine of human intellectual understanding. Gómez Nogales spells out his methodology with remarks worth considering at length:

The adversaries of Averroes, among them St Thomas Aquinas, all the Averroists, and even, among the moderns, some Arabists who ordinarily tend to defend Arabic thought, such as Asín Palacios, all agree that Averroes defended the unity of the human intellect. The issue, however, is not clear. There are some expressions in Averroes which show clearly that he admits the unity of the human intellect, yet if one accepts this point of view, one encounters in Averroes a manifest contradiction. I have reached a conclusion which has been affirmed *a posteriori* by three different procedures.<sup>73</sup>

The first of these procedures consists of noting that some (unnamed) Arab researchers have studied the issue without having read the articles of Gómez Nogales but, employing the same sources, have reached the same conclusions: ‘Averroes, they say, did not defend the unity of the intellect as has been thought in the West.’<sup>74</sup> I will not recount the rest of his arguments here; suffice it to note with some irony that Gómez Nogales criticizes at length the analyses of several prominent scholars who support the view that there are two separately existing intellects, the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect, and proceeds to read into the text of the *Long Commentary on the De anima* his own interpretation, which is more in accord with the earlier account of the *Short Commentary on the De anima* of Ibn Rushd, though even the understanding of that work by Gómez Nogales is sorely unsound. Among his conclusions in the article, Gómez Nogales writes the following: ‘Averroes was not an Averroist. If it is true that there have been Averroists who have admitted the unity of the human intellect, this is not the case for Averroes, who admits the individual immortality of the human soul even in the case of the material intellect.’<sup>75</sup> Yet, as I have shown above, there is no provision for individual immortality in any of Ibn Rushd’s commentaries on *De anima*. Gómez Nogales is also unaware of Averroes’s teaching on the Agent Intellect as ‘form for us’ and of the characterization of the presence of the two separate intellects ‘in the soul’ discussed above. He directly contradicts

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73 Gómez Nogales, ‘Saint Thomas, Averroès et l’averroïsme’, p. 166.

74 *Ibid.*, p. 167. The Arabic texts of the Short and Middle Commentaries on the *De anima* are extant and in each Ibn Rushd holds that there are two intellects, the particular human material intellect and the transcendent separate Agent Intellect (the latter of which is common to the Arabic tradition). Aside from fragments, the full text of the *Long Commentary on the De anima* survives only in the Latin translation of Michael Scot. To access this, significant skill in Latin is required.

75 Gómez Nogales, ‘Saint Thomas, Averroès et l’averroïsme’, p. 177.

the teaching of the *Long Commentary on the De anima* that the two intellects are eternal substances ontologically distinct from one another and ontologically independent of human soul.

Gauthier's account of 'First Averroism' and 'Second Averroism' is an inaccurate understanding of Ibn Rushd and the teachings in the Latin translation of the *Long Commentary on the De anima*. As I have shown, that view was based on a seriously misleading article by Gómez Nogales, who presented an unsound account of the theory of intellect in the mature Averroes. Key to capturing the real meaning of the text of Ibn Rushd's *Long Commentary* is an understanding of his engagement with reasoning in the *Paraphrase of the De anima* by Themistius and of the meaning of the teaching that the Agent Intellect must be 'form for us' and intrinsically present 'in the soul', an understanding achieved by few readers of the *Long Commentary* in either medieval or modern times.<sup>76</sup> These problematic readings are in large measure due to the complexity of the philosophical issues involved and the novelty of Averroes's unprecedented teaching on the Material Intellect in his *Long Commentary on the De anima*.

Gauthier's inaccurate account, which rejected the traditional understanding of Ibn Rushd/Averroes as asserting the existence of the separate Agent Intellect and separate Material Intellect, contributed to confusion among scholars. Yet this does not necessarily undermine his thesis that until 1250, some Latin thinkers held that the agent intellect and the possible (material) intellect are powers of the human soul. The existence of this particular teaching has been convincingly affirmed by B. Carlos Bazán.<sup>77</sup>

Bazán argues persuasively in an article published in 2000 that in the pre-1250 period, the doctrine of Averroes on both the Agent Intellect and Material (Possible) Intellect as separate substances was clear enough for Latin Christian readers of the *Long Commentary on the De anima*. The notion of the Agent Intellect as a unique separate substance was commonplace in the Arabic tradition. It was found in translated writings of al-Fārābī, was even a hallmark of the very clear teaching of Avicenna, and was evident in Averroes. As for the unique separate and shared Material Intellect in the historically novel teaching of Ibn Rushd, this too was known and is witnessed by Richard Rufus in his study of Averroes. In Richard's *Contra Averroem*, the question *An intelligentiae separatae sint res individuae* is followed by a detailed discussion, closely based on the texts of Averroes, that displays a clear understanding of the teaching of Ibn Rushd on the separate Material Intellect. For example, Richard writes, 'this seems to have moved Averroes himself even reasonably to assert the possible intellect in us to be one in all'.<sup>78</sup> For Bazán, what

<sup>76</sup> See Taylor, 'Intellect as Intrinsic Formal Cause in the Soul'; Taylor, 'Themistius and the Development of Averroes' Noetics'.

<sup>77</sup> Bazán, 'Was There Ever a "First Averroism"?', p. 37.

<sup>78</sup> *Contra Averroem* 1.2 (Dictum 1, tractatus 2 in Erfordia, Bibl. univ., Amploniana, Quarto 312, fol. 81vb): 'Ergo hoc videtur movisse ipsum Averroem et rationabiliter in ponendo intellectum possibilem in nobis omnibus unum et etiam universale, sicut prius dictum est'. This work is

Gauthier called ‘First Averroism’ is in fact an original creation by Christian Latin theologians who, for the first time, set out the doctrine that the agent intellect is a power of the individual human soul:

The doctrine of the agent intellect as a faculty of the soul is an original contribution of the Latin Masters to the reading of Aristotle’s *De anima* III, 4–5. The importance of this contribution should not be minimized by a label such as ‘First Averroism’, which risks obscuring its originality.<sup>79</sup>

That claim, however, is accurate only if limited to the medieval Arabic and Christian philosophical traditions, since both Philoponus and Themistius in different ways held there to be an agent intellect in the human soul.<sup>80</sup>

Albert the Great himself must be considered a member of the group of Latins to which Gauthier refers, and to which Bazán points, at least since his *De homine* (c. 1242). Albert attributes to Averroes the very doctrine that Gauthier mentions as common in 1225–50 and Bazán ascribes to the creativity of early thirteenth-century Christian theologians. As I shall now show, Albert in the *De homine* unequivocally states that according to Averroes, the agent intellect and the possible (that is, material) intellect are powers of the individual human soul. He also goes further, explicitly asserting that the view that these are separate substances is distinctively false. Albert himself embraced these understandings for his own teaching in accord with the views of his times.

## Explaining Albert’s Two Momentous Interpretive Misconstruals

By 1242, if not before, Albert already held in several works that it is the view of Averroes that ultimate happiness is attained by the rational human soul after death through a conjoining with the First Mover. In his *De resurrectione*, Albert cites

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sometimes also called *De ideis*. My thanks to Rega Wood for permission to quote this passage from her unpublished edition. Thanks also to Timothy Noone for sharing his transcription of the text and for discussion of the work of Richard Rufus. There is some disagreement on the dating of this work. For present purposes it is sufficient to say that it may have been composed in the early 1230s or as late as 1240 — that is, either a few years prior to Albert’s *De homine* (c. 1242) or perhaps even as late as to be contemporaneous with parts or most of it. As will become clear below, Albert was aware of this sound interpretation of the teaching of Ibn Rushd on the two separate Intellects, but dismissed it as an incorrect understanding of Averroes.

79 Bazán, ‘Was There Ever a “First Averroism”?’, p. 37. He continues: ‘The doctrine appeared during the first three decades of the thirteenth century, even before Averroes’ writings were known or had a decisive influence. Latin Masters of Arts, such as John Blund, and Theologians, such as Philip the Chancellor (whose “Summa de bono” was written between 1228 and 1236, and who quotes Averroes only once), held that the agent intellect is a power of the individual soul.’

80 Richard Sorabji remarks that ‘Themistius and Philoponus give a role in concept formation to active intellect, but regard it as human’. Sorabji, *The Philosophy of the Commentators*, p. 104. See his selected translations of Themistius and Philoponus at pp. 107 and 117 and the references there.

Averroes's *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, Book XI (XII), Comment 51 on Aristotle 1073a3 ff., writing:

Further, the Philosopher says in *Metaphysics* I that divine science is the goddess of the sciences. And the Commentator on book XI [XII] says that the question of intellect and of the knowledge that God himself has 'is what is desired by all'.<sup>81</sup>

Ibn Rushd himself connects Aristotle's discussion of the ultimate object of God's intellection (namely, God himself) with the notion from *Metaphysics* I.1 that all humans by nature desire to know.<sup>82</sup> Albert follows him in this and in the discussion of the most noble object of intellection at *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* XI (XII), Comment 51. Regarding this latter point, Albert concludes for Averroes and holds for himself that the First Mover, which is God as First Intellect, is the end to be sought and to be known by human beings in the contemplation that is ultimate happiness. At another location, Albert apparently refers to Averroes again: 'The tenth [apparition] certifies the transition of the risen blessed to beatification, because, as a certain philosopher says, that conjunction with the Prime Mover, that is, with God, is the end of happiness [*prosperitatis*].'<sup>83</sup> This notion is also found in *De quattuor coaequaevis*, where, after discussing Plato, Albert writes: 'Hence also the philosophical position is that the end of the soul's happiness is to be conjoined with the First Mover through contemplation.'<sup>84</sup> In the *De homine*, Albert writes in his own behalf that 'the potency of the possible intellect after death will be perfected [*complebitur*] by the agent intellect and by forms which are in the separate intellects [...]. For the philosophers say that the soul after death returns [*convertitur*] to the First Mover, and this is its end of

81 Albertus Magnus, *De resurrectione*, ed. by Kübel, p. 328, vv. 33–36: 'Praeterea, PHILOSOPHUS dicit in I METAPHYSICAE, quod scientia divina dea scientiarum est. Et SUPER XI dicit COMMENTATOR, quod quaestio de intellectu et scientia dei per se "est desiderata ab omnibus". See Aristotle, *Metaph.* I.2, 983a6.

82 *Tafsīr mā ba'd at-Tabī'at*, p. 1693, vv. 10–11: ان هذا المطلب لما كان هو اشرف المطالب المطالب التي في الله : Long *Commentary on the Metaphysics, Arabic-English*, p. 191: '[T]his object of research is the noblest of the objects of research dealing with God and consists in knowing what is His object of intellection which every man desires by nature'; Long *Commentary on the Metaphysics, Latin*, 335D: '[I]sta quaestio est nobilissima omnium quae sunt de deo, scilicet scire quid intelligit, et est desiderata ab omnibus naturaliter.'

83 Albertus Magnus, *De resurrectione*, ed. by Kübel, p. 284, vv. 76–80: 'Decima certificat transitum beatorum resurgentium ad beatificationem, quia, sicut dicit quidam philosophus, coniunctio cum primo motore, idest cum deo, finis est prosperitatis'. Regarding my translation of 'prosperitas' in Albert as 'happiness', see note 49.

84 *De quattuor coaequaevis*, ed. by Borgnet, p. 312b: 'Unde etiam positio philosophica est quod finis prosperitatis animae post mortem, est quod continetur primo motori per contemplationem.'

happiness'.<sup>85</sup> Elsewhere in the *De homine*, we find Albert explicitly attributing this doctrine to Averroes: 'Averroes, in his commentary on *Metaphysics* XI, says that the rational soul remains after death and it will have its end of happiness, if it conjoins with the First Mover. And he calls the First Mover the Principle of the Universe, which is God'.<sup>86</sup> Later in his career, Albert uses his understanding of the acquired intellect (*intellectus adeptus*, العقل المستفاد *al-'aql al-mustafād*), taken from al-Fārābī, to explain the grounds for his own doctrine on how this return and conjoining is attained.<sup>87</sup> Two teachings are implicit in this understanding of the intellectual apprehension of God as the ultimate felicitous end of human beings: first, an affirmation of a post mortem existence of human beings and, second, based on that, a conception of human intrinsic intellectual powers. In his *Super Ethica*, Albert changed his understanding of the second aspect after realizing his misconception of the teaching of Averroes, and instead attributed to Averroes the post mortem perdurance only of one Soul alone, contained in the tenth Intelligence, a form of monopsychism not found in Ibn Rushd.

### ***Albert's Interpretive Misconstrual of the Natural Epistemology of Averroes in the 'De homine'***

Albert provides a detailed account in the *De homine* of how he crafted a theory explaining that the agent intellect and the receptive intellect are powers of the individual human soul in accord with what Gauthier considered commonplace in 1225–50. This he does by quoting with precision and at length sections of the Latin text of Avicenna's *De anima* and of Averroes's *Long Commentary on*

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85 *De homine*, ed. by Anzulewicz and Söder, p. 429, vv. 15–20: '[P]otentia intellectus possibilis post mortem complebitur ab intellectu agente et a formis, quae sunt in intelligentiis separatis, et ideo non erit supervacua. Dicunt enim philosophi quod anima post mortem convertitur ad motorem primum, et hoc est finis prosperitatis eius'. The editors indicate that this view is also found in several other places in *De homine*: p. 465, vv 53–58; p. 466, vv 8–23; p. 473, v. 18. See also *Ethica*, I.7.17, ed. by Borgnet, p. 133b: 'Propter quod dicit Averroes super XI philosophiae primae, quod finis prosperitatis animae post mortem est, si conjungatur ad motorem primum'.

86 *De homine*, ed. by Anzulewicz and Söder, p. 465, vv. 53–56: 'Averroes super XI *Metaphysicae* dicit quod anima rationalis manet post mortem et finis prosperitatis eius erit, si coniungatur primo motori. Et appellat primum motorem universitatis principium, quod est deus'. Note that earlier in the discussion, at vv. 27–24, Albert understands the phrase *in postremo* to mean after the death of the body.

87 See, for example, his commentary on the *Metaphysics* (c. 1262), Albertus Magnus, *Metaphysica*, ed. by Geyer, p. 527, vv. 46–59: 'Et quia nos iam ALIBI docuimus qualiter homo adipiscitur intellectum suum, etiam iam ex isto potest sciri, qualiter adepto intellectu proprio adipisci potest intellectum substantiarum divinarum et qualiter ista adeptio stat in intellectu substantiae primae, quae est lux omnium intellectuum et intelligibilium per seipsam. Et cum omnes homines natura scire desiderent et illud desiderium naturale stet in fine et ratione et causa omnium intellectuum et intelligibilium, pro certo stabit desiderium in scientia intellectus substantiae primae et propter adipiscendum desiderat scire alia, et quando pervenitur ad Ipsum, stat et habet finem felicitatis contemplativae'. Also see his discussion on pp. 472–73. For an analysis and discussion of this teaching, see de Libera, *Métaphysique et noétique*, chap. 6.

the *De anima*. From these, Albert wove his first substantial account of natural human knowing. Avicenna held that the human rational soul is an entity that is intellectual, receptive, immaterial, eternal *a parte post*, and distinct from the body and the senses. The human rational soul uses the body and its senses in the fashion of a tool or instrument regarding the perceptual world and then connects with the Agent Intellect, a unique eternal separate substance containing all the forms, to bring to perfection or completion human intellectual understanding in an individual rational soul. These teachings, which Albert found in the Latin texts of Avicenna, he rejected in favour of what he understood to be the account of Averroes.<sup>88</sup> Ibn Rushd taught that the human soul is form of the body and depends for human scientific knowledge on sensation, but also on some sort of a natural relationship with the separate Agent Intellect and the separate receptive Material Intellect and their abstractive powers, as I have already indicated. Albert dismissed Avicenna's conception of the human rational soul as requiring a connection to the Agent Intellect that is separate in substance and replete with forms from which the world derives.<sup>89</sup> Regarding Averroes, however, Albert's account is more complex.

As explained above, in Albert's time there were two competing interpretations of intellect in the thought of Averroes in his *Long Commentary on the De anima*. One largely accorded with the genuine teaching of Ibn Rushd that the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect are separately existing immaterial substances through which human beings have scientific knowledge of universals (confirmed by Richard Rufus and discussed by Salman and Bazán). The other contended that agent intellect and receptive material intellect are two immaterial (that is, unextended and incorporeal) powers of each individual human soul.<sup>90</sup> In his *De homine*, Albert is well aware of these two interpretations and rejects the first, instead asserting that the proper understanding of Averroes is that the agent intellect and the material intellect are powers of the individual human soul.<sup>91</sup> That is, Albert reads the text of Averroes in accord with the common view of the

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88 'Albert clearly rejects the views of the philosophers who say that the Agent Intellect is separate and efficient cause of human knowing. He writes against "others" (i.e., Avicenna) that he rejects the connection between the intellect as the tenth in the emanative hierarchy of the heavens and the function of the Agent Intellect. The notion that "the human possible intellect moves a human being to be connected to the agent intellect of the tenth order" (*intellectus humanus possibilis movet hominem ad hoc quod conformetur intelligentiae agentis decimi ordinis*) and that "in this way the goodnesses flow from the agent intellect into the possible intellect" (*et hoc modo fluunt bonitates ab intelligentia agente in intellectum possibilem*) is something Albert will have none of (*nos nihil horum*): Taylor, 'Remarks on the Importance', pp. 140–41.

89 Albertus Magnus, *De homine*, ed. by Anzulewicz and Söder, p. 408, v. 68 and p. 412, vv. 5–68.

90 This is the issue of 'First Averroism' and 'Second Averroism'. In my introduction to the *Long Commentary on the De anima, English*, pp. xcix–civ, I explain the series of errors that led several important twentieth-century scholars to make very bewildering statements about the interpretations of Averroes by the Latins. See also Hayoun and de Libera, *Averroès et Averroïsme*, pp. 78–82.

91 See Taylor, 'Remarks on the Importance', p. 143, where I indicate that Albert himself bears witness to two interpretations in the *De homine*: at 411.52–53, 'uterque istorum intellectuum erit in nobis



soul and its powers on the part of his own predecessors and peers. According to Albert's account, for which he credits Averroes, all natural knowledge comes through the senses, and intelligible species are abstracted from the content of the external and internal senses by the immaterial power of an intrinsic agent intellect and received as intelligibles in act in the immaterial power of receptive possible intellect.<sup>92</sup>

On the basis of a theory of knowledge *not* found in the *Long Commentary on the De anima* of Ibn Rushd, Albert attributed this theory to Averroes and adopted it for himself. His account of natural epistemology in *De homine* was later largely followed by his student Thomas Aquinas in the latter's *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, written in Paris 1252–56, though without the doctrinal misattribution to Averroes.<sup>93</sup> In 1248–52, Albert and Thomas worked together in Cologne, where the young Dominican was assigned to assist Albert in his work of teaching and research.<sup>94</sup> It is impossible to think that they did not discuss in detail philosophical teachings in translated Arabic works as well as what Albert had written in his *De homine*. Many texts from the Arabic tradition are cited and used in the commentaries on Dionysius that Albert wrote with Thomas present. In 1250–52, Albert completed the first Latin commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* with Thomas again present wholly or for the most part. By the time of that work, Albert had realized his earlier mistake in *De homine* regarding the incorrect attribution to Averroes of the teaching that the active and possible intellects are intrinsic powers of the individual soul and set out a very different account in its place.<sup>95</sup> The correction is reflected in the work of Thomas, though without mention of Albert (following the custom in his day). Irrespective of the fact that Albert had misunderstood this point, however, the German Dominican's work proved to be an invaluable and lasting foundational starting point for Thomas's thought on the nature of human knowing and the powers of the soul, as will become clear later in this chapter.

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existens et non separata substantia' ('both of those Intellects will be existent in us and not separate substance').

- 92 See *ibid.*, pp. 143–45. In the opening lines of the *Posterior Analytics*, I.1, 71a1–2, Aristotle states that all reasoned teaching and learning arises from prior knowledge. In the final chapter of *Posterior Analytics*, II.19, 100a3 ff., he identifies this as what is apprehended through sense perception.
- 93 I provide a short account of the natural epistemology of Aquinas in the opening pages of Taylor, 'Remarks on the Importance'. For a detailed study of Aquinas's first substantial engagement with the Arabic tradition on this with translation of the key text, see Taylor, 'Aquinas and "the Arabs"'.  
94 See Mulchahey, 'The *Studium* at Cologne'.  
95 Albertus Magnus, *Super Ethica*, ed. by Kübel, pp. 451, v. 3–453, v. 89. In his *Super Ethica*, in a *solutio* at p. 71, vv. 73–85, Albert explains that philosophy is not sufficiently able to know whether the souls of the dead continue to exist after death. In the response to the third objection at p. 72, vv. 12–19, he notes that Averroes holds that all souls exist as one after death and adds that this is contrary to the faith. Note that the discussion on pp. 451–53, which mentions the 'Commentator', often refers to Eustratius of Nicaea, as indicated by Wilhelm Kübel, editor of Albert's *Super Ethica* (with the exception of p. 452, vv. 80–83 and p. 453, vv. 63–70, where it is a reference to Averroes).

### **Albert and the Monopsychism of Averroes**

In his early *De homine*, Albert considers, in a supporting *sed contra*, the view of Averroes in Book 3 of the *Long Commentary on the De anima* and then, in a passage I have already mentioned, remarks:

[T]he potential of the possible intellect after death will be completed by the agent intellect and by forms which are in the separate intellects, and for this reason it will not be superfluous. For the philosophers say that the soul after death returns to the First Mover and this is its end of happiness.<sup>96</sup>

Also in *De homine*, in the course of a discussion titled ‘Whether or not the rational soul is corrupted with the corruption of the body’,<sup>97</sup> Albert indicates he will set out first the views of philosophical authors, then probable arguments, then demonstrative and necessary arguments, and next discuss them and provide his own solution to the issue. Among the texts he cites is Aristotle, *Metaphysics* XI (XII) 3, 1070a 24–26, the first of the two key texts from *Metaphysics* XI (XII), chapter 3 which I discussed in my account of the teaching of Ibn Rushd above. Here in his *De homine*, Albert quotes part of the text from the Arabic translation into Latin, *Si autem remanet in postremo* (‘If, however, it remains *afterwards*’) and goes on to paraphrase the rest of the text with his own understanding of *in postremo*: ‘There should be investigation regarding this. For in certain cases it is not impossible, for example, if the soul is of such a disposition, nevertheless not the whole, but the intellect.’<sup>98</sup> Albert then explains that the issue is whether after death the whole soul remains in existence, including the sensible and vegetative powers of the soul, or just the intellectual part. A few lines later, Albert cites the commentary of Averroes on *Metaphysics* XI (XII), this time referencing Comment 38, as already mentioned:

Averroes, in his commentary on *Metaphysics* XI, says that the rational soul remains after death and its end [of happiness] will come to belong to it, if it conjoins with the First Mover. And he calls the First Mover the Principle of the Universe, which is God.<sup>99</sup>

Here it is clear that Albert attributed to Averroes the view that human soul has an afterlife in virtue of its intellectual power. What of Albert’s *Super Ethica*, written about a decade later in 1250–52?

In the *Super Ethica*, as noted earlier, Albert interestingly states that the issue of the soul post mortem and its ultimate happiness is properly speaking not a matter for philosophers. It is beyond the ken of philosophers and is, rather, an issue that

96 See note 85 above.

97 *Ibid.*, p. 464: ‘Utrum corrumpatur anima rationalis corruptione corporis, an non.’

98 *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics, Latin*, 302-I: ‘[Q]uaerendum est de hoc. In quibusdam enim non est impossibile, verbi gratia, si autem anima talis est dispositionis, non tota tamen, set intellectus.’

99 See note 85.

belongs to theology and faith. In his *solutio* to an article on whether philosophy can know the state of the soul post mortem, Albert explains:

It should be said that the notion that the souls of the dead remain [in existence] after death cannot be sufficiently known through philosophy. On the supposition that they remain [in existence], nothing at all can be known through philosophy regarding their state and how they are related to the things which come to pass concerning us. Rather, these things are known by a higher infused non-natural light, which is the habit of faith.<sup>100</sup>

In response to objection 3 in the same article, he asserts that something superior can do whatever something inferior can do, but in a more eminent way. Hence, human intellect's understanding of things known by sensing is through a mode superior to that of sense. He continues:

Similarly, a separated soul has a more noble operation which cannot be known by us through philosophy [...] and if intellect is not a particular form,<sup>101</sup> it cannot be demonstrated that many souls remain distinct [in existence] but rather for all there will be one soul, as the Commentator asserts in his *Commentary on the De anima*. In this way he expounds the authority of Aristotle that is introduced, although it is contrary to faith.<sup>102</sup>

100 Albertus Magnus, *Super Ethica*, ed. by Kübel, p. 71, vv. 73–79: 'Dicendum, quod hoc quod animae defunctorum remaneant post mortem, non potest per philosophiam sufficienter sciri. Et supposito, quod remaneant, de statu earum et qualiter se habeant ad ea quae circa nos flunt, omnino nihil sciri per philosophiam potest, sed haec cognoscuntur altiori lumine infuso non naturali, quod est habitus fidei'. Also see *ibid.*, p. 72b: 'Solutio: Dicendum, quod, sicut dictum est, philosophus nihil habet considerare de statu animae separatae, quia non potest accipere per sua principia. Unde qualiter se habeat anima separata ad ea quae fiunt hic, et qualiter iuvatur per ea, nihil pertinet ad philosophum, sed ad theologum'. Later in his *De natura et origine animae* (1258), Albert explains the use of the notion of light employed by Averroes and Ibn Bājja (Abubacher) in asserting that humans share in one intellect and refutes it in detail. See Albert, *De natura et origine animae*, II, cap. 4 and 9; also I, cap. 5 and 6.

101 That is, a determinate particular form. Regarding the sense of *situialis* here, see Albertus Magnus, *De homine*, ed. by Anzulewicz and Söder, p. 154, vv. 1 ff.

102 Albertus Magnus, *Super Ethica*, ed. by Kübel, p. 72, vv. 10–17: 'Similiter anima separata nobiliorem habet operationem, quae nobis per philosophiam non potest esse nota [...] et si intellectus non sit forma situialis, non potest demonstrari, quod remaneant plures animae distinctae, sed omnibus una, sicut ponit Commentator in libro De Anima, et hoc modo exponit auctoritatem Aristotelis inductam, licet sit contra fidem'. The editor of Albert's text identifies Albert's reference to Averroes as referring to what is written in three places in the *Long Commentary on the De anima*, Latin, III.5: p. 401, vv. 424 ff.; p. 403, vv. 73–76; p. 407, vv. 593–96. This last reference should probably be corrected to pp. 406–07, vv. 575–83. In each of these passages, Ibn Rushd's discussion is clearly about one common shared intellect, not soul. In the same order: *Long Commentary on the De anima*, English, p. 317: 'The second question, how the material intellect is one in number in all individual human beings, neither generable nor corruptible, and the intelligibles [are] existing in it in act (this is the theoretical intellect), [yet it is also] enumerated in virtue of the numbering of individual human beings, generable {402} and corruptible through generation and corruption of individuals, this question is very difficult and has the greatest ambiguity'; *ibid.*, p. 318: 'For this reason one should

In the *solutio* of the next article, he adds:

It should be said that, as was said, philosophy has no business considering the state of the separated soul, because [that state] cannot be accepted through its principles. Hence, how the separated soul is related to things which take place here and how it may be aided by them does not pertain to the philosopher but to the theologian.<sup>103</sup>

This did not, however, stop him from considering the teachings of the philosophers, in particular those of Averroes, on the afterlife and ultimate human fulfillment and happiness.

Later in the *Super Ethica*, Albert repeats his earlier view of the philosophers that after death human intellect is linked to separate intellects.<sup>104</sup> In the second objection, Albert cites Averroes (as ‘the Commentator’) in Comment 38 on Book XI (XII) of the *Metaphysics* as saying that ‘this is our ultimate happiness, that our soul is conjoined with the intelligences acting on our souls.’<sup>105</sup> In his response to this objection, Albert writes the following, which is quite in accord with what is found in his *De quattuor coaequaevis* and *De homine*:

Averroes says many heretical things. If we nevertheless wished to support him in this issue, it should be said that our happiness will be in the conjoining to the intelligence not with respect to being but with respect to object, when the soul after death will contemplate the simple quiddities such as the intelligence.<sup>106</sup>

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hold the opinion that if there are some living things whose first actuality is a substance separate from its subjects, as is thought concerning the celestial bodies, it is impossible that there be found more than one individual from one species of these’; *ibid.*, p. 322: ‘On the basis of this account we have held the opinion that the material intellect is one for all human beings and also {407} on the basis of this we have held the opinion that the human species is eternal, as was explained in other places. The material intellect must not be devoid of the natural principles common to the whole human species, namely, the primary propositions and singular conceptions common to all [human beings]. For these intelligibles are unique according to the recipient and many according to the intention received’. Also see *Super Ethica*, ed. by Kübel, p. 453, vv. 44–47: ‘Non manet nisi una anima, quia cum individuatio animae non sit nisi ex corpore subtracto, hoc per quod efficiebatur proprium, remanebit unum commune’. Albert sides there, instead, with Avicenna: coming to be individuated depends on the body, but once individuated, the human soul is a substance having its own *esse*. For the context, see note 106.

- 103 Albertus Magnus, *Super Ethica*, ed. by Kübel, p. 72, vv. 57–62: ‘Dicendum, quod, sicut dictum est, philosophus nihil habet considerare de statu animae separatae, quia non potest accipi per sua principia. Unde qualiter se habeat anima separata ad ea quae fiunt hic, et qualiter iuvatur per ea, nihil pertinet ad philosophum, sed ad theologum’.
- 104 *Ibid.*, p. 452, vv. 69–70: ‘Sexto videtur, quod sit ponere continuationem intellectus ad intelligentias post mortem’.
- 105 *Ibid.*, p. 452, vv. 80–82: ‘Commentator in XI Metaphysicae dicit, quod haec est ultima prosperitas, quod anima nostra continuatur ad intelligentias agentes in animas nostras’.
- 106 *Ibid.*, p. 453, vv. 63–70: ‘Averroes multas haereses dicit; unde non oportet, quod sustineatur. Si tamen in hoc volumus eum sustinere, dicendum, quod prosperitas nostra erit in continuatione’.

Why Albert would say this becomes clear when we consider his *solutio*:

It should be said that the error of some of the Arabs was that our intellect does not remain after death according to being, but only according to essence. In this way they said that it remains in the intelligence of the tenth [procession] from which it flows, and in this way there **remains only one soul**. [This is] because, since the individuation of the soul is only in virtue of body, when that through which it was made proper has been removed, then there will remain one common thing. But this is heresy.<sup>107</sup>

As indicated earlier regarding Comment 38 of the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, the Arabic *بأخرة* (*bi-akharatin*), a prepositional phrase that translated Aristotle's *ὑστερον*, is suitably rendered in an adverbial sense as 'afterwards', 'hereafter', or even perhaps 'eventually' and 'ultimately' in its appearances in the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*.<sup>108</sup> In the Latin translations by Michael Scot, this Arabic phrase is rendered *in postremo* in its many instances, each of which can well and suitably be rendered with the same meanings as the Arabic. To put it simply, the Latin translation is certainly correct. Were the Arabic *بالآخرة* (*bi-l-ākhirati*), the sense would easily be understood rather as 'in the afterlife', for *al-dār al-ākhirā*, 'the ultimate abode', and could also correctly be translated as *in postremo*. But that construction is not found in the Arabic texts. Yet in Latin each occurrence of *بأخرة* (*bi-akharatin*) is soundly rendered as *in postremo*. Hence, while the Latin translation is not wrong here, the translation *in postremo* is liable to the possibility of misconstrual and misinterpretation. This is, in fact, precisely what we find in the *Super Ethica* and the earlier works of Albert discussed in this chapter. Albert could have understood the Latin phrase *in postremo* in the adverbial sense as found in Arabic, but instead chose to read it as meaning 'in the afterlife' or 'in the hereafter'. With this misinterpretation, Albert affirms for Averroes precisely what was denied in the philosophical teachings of Ibn Rushd, namely, the afterlife of human soul.

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ad intelligentiam non secundum esse, sed secundum obiectum, quando anima post mortem contemplabitur simplices quiditates sicut intelligentia.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 453, vv. 40–47: 'Dicendum, quod quorundam Arabum error fuit, quod intellectus noster non manet post mortem secundum esse, sed secundum essentiam tantum. Et sic dicebant, quod manet in intelligentia decimi, ex quo fluit, et sic non manet nisi una anima, quia cum individuatō animae non sit nisi ex corpore subtracto, hoc per quod efficiebatur proprium, remanebit unum commune. Sed haec est haeresis'. This teaching is in fact a construction by Albert based on a mixture of the teachings of Avicenna, Algazel, and Averroes. Albert's understanding of Averroes is spelled out clearly in his responses to the first two objections. In the first response, he explains that Averroes in context does not mean a separation of the human individual possible intellect, which is a bodily power, 'because after death the very essence of soul remains [in existence]' (*quia in anima post mortem manet ipsa essentia animae*), *ibid.*, p. 453, vv. 57–58.

<sup>108</sup> My thanks to Dag Hasse, who is currently preparing a critical edition of the Latin text of Averroes's *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, for helpful discussion of this Latin phrase in email correspondence in August 2020. This phrase *in postremo* is also found in the *Long Commentary on the De anima* without reference to the afterlife.

In the context of the Arabic discussions of Ibn Rushd, who does not hold post mortem existence for human soul, such a reading makes no sense. As we have seen, what Ibn Rushd held was that the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect are each unique, separately existing, eternal substances available to mortal human knowers. In Albert's Latin religious context, however, 'in the afterlife' was an expected and obvious choice, one rather understandable since Ibn Rushd was unique among the major Arabic-writing philosophers in Latin translation in quite clearly denying the post mortem existence of the individual human soul.<sup>109</sup>

With this interpretation of Averroes as affirming a post mortem existence of human soul, Albert was able to complete his own understanding of the teachings of Averroes in the form of a doctrine of Latin Averroism that is not found in the writings of Ibn Rushd. This is the teaching of monopsychism, of one essential soul into which all individual human souls are resolved in a unity at the death of the body. This second misconstrual by Albert of texts in the Latin translations of work of Ibn Rushd — one essential soul to which all individual human souls return at death of the body — contributed to the formation of a form of monopsychism which later became foundational to further developments of Latin Averroism.

This doctrine was set out in Albert's *Super Ethica*, composed in 1250–52 while Thomas was still his assistant in Cologne. Hence, it is not surprising to find young Thomas using what he had learned from his German teacher for his own reasoning in his *Commentary on the Sentences*, written in Paris immediately following his time in Cologne. Albert's interpretation is reflected in the title and content of Thomas's first account of natural epistemology in the context of translations from the Arabic tradition in his *Commentary on the Sentences II*, d. 17, q. 2, a. 1: 'Whether there is **one soul** or intellect for all human beings.'<sup>110</sup> In addition, Albert's account of Averroes's monopsychism is clearly reflected by Aquinas at *Commentary on the Sentences II*, d. 19, q. 1, a. 1. There, in the context of his consideration 'Whether the human soul is corrupted with the corruption of the body', Aquinas provides an account surely based on Albert's conception of monopsychism:

The third position is that of those who say that the intellective soul is partly corruptible and partly incorruptible, because that part of the soul which is proper to this body is corrupted when the body has been corrupted; moreover, that part which is common to all [i.e., soul itself] is incorruptible. For they assert the intellect to be one in substance for all — some the agent [intellect], others the possible [intellect], as was said above [d. 17]. And [they say] this is an incorruptible substance, and that in us there are only phantasms illuminated by the light of the agent intellect, which move

109 Regarding the possibility of a similar view in one of al-Fārābī's lost works, see Neria, 'Al-Fārābī's Lost Commentary on the Ethics.'

110 Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi Episcopi Parisensis*, ed. by Mandonnet, pp. 420–30. See the analysis and translation of this article in Taylor, 'Aquinas and "the Arabs"'. My emphasis.

the possible intellect, in virtue of which we are intelligent insofar as we are conjoined to separate intellect through them. From this it follows that, if that which is proper is destroyed with only what is common remaining, then only one substance from all the human souls would remain when bodies have dissolved. The reasons supporting this position and how it can be disproved, [are treated] above in distinction 17.<sup>111</sup>

## Conclusions

This chapter has focused on two misconstruals in the interpretation of the philosophical thought of Ibn Rushd by Albertus Magnus, misconstruals that had momentous influence. Both concern the nature of human intellectual understanding as discussed in the Long Commentaries of Ibn Rushd on the *De anima* and the *Metaphysics*, and neither involves mistranslation of the Arabic into Latin on the part of Michael Scot. Rather, each misinterpretation was likely motivated, at least in part, by deep-seated religious and cultural beliefs.

First, Albert's misconstrual of the texts of Averroes in his *De homine* is momentous for its influence on his student Thomas Aquinas and surely others as well. In that work, Albert critically examined the teachings of Avicenna, rejecting the Avicennian notion of an external transcendent Agent Intellect emanating forms to complete the process of knowing on the part of the individual rational soul. He went on to set out an account he attributed to Averroes, which held that the agent intellect and the possible (material) intellect are immaterial powers of the individual human soul. He explicitly rejected those interpretations of Averroes holding that the intellects are separate eternal substances which play key roles in the formation of human intellectual knowledge, as is precisely the teaching of Ibn Rushd. This misconstrual permitted Albert to form an account of human intellectual understanding through individuals' experience of the world by way of external and internal sense powers, powers of the brain, and abstraction of intelligibles in potency in things by the individual, intrinsic agent intellect to form

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111 Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, vol. 2, pp. 482–83: '*Tertia positio est eorum qui dicunt, animam intellectivam secundum quid corruptibilem esse, et secundum quid incorruptibilem; quia secundum hoc quod de anima est huic corpori proprium, corrumpitur corrupto corpore; secundum autem id quod omnibus est commune, incorruptibilis est. Ponunt enim intellectum esse unum in substantia omnium; quidam agentem, et quidam possibilem, ut supra dictum est, [dist. 17]: et hunc esse substantiam incorruptibilem, et in nobis non esse nisi phantasmata illustrata lumine intellectus agentis, et moventia intellectum possibilem, quibus intelligentes sumus, secundum quod per ea continuamur intellectui separato. Ex quo sequitur quod si id quod est proprium, destruitur, tantum communi remanente, ex omnibus animabus humanis una tantum substantia remaneat, dissolutis corporibus. Haec autem positio quibus rationibus innitatur, et quomodo improbari possit, supra dictum est, [17 dist.]*'. This quotation from Aquinas is largely in accord with the account of Albert's monopsychism interpretation of Averroes in the *Super Ethica*. Notice especially the use of *proprium*, *commune*, *remanet*, and *corrupto corpore* or *dissolutis corporibus*. The reference Aquinas mentions is to *Commentary on the Sentences*, II, d. 17, q. 2, a. 1.

intelligibles in act in the individual intrinsic possible (material) intellect. With this, Albert's *De homine* (1242) offered a view of human intellectual apprehension — largely in accord with his times — that was adopted as foundational by his student Thomas in his *Commentary on the Sentences* (1252) and other works.<sup>112</sup>

B. Carlos Bazán has shown that the Latin texts of the *Long Commentary on the De anima* by Averroes could be read clearly enough for Latins to understand the actual views of Ibn Rushd/Averroes that the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect are separately existing immaterial and eternal substances.<sup>113</sup> Bazán also confirmed Gauthier's view that there developed among Christian theologians in the early thirteenth century a doctrine novel for the Arabic and Latin medieval traditions, asserting that the agent intellect is a power of the individual human soul.<sup>114</sup> It was in this period that debates flourished on the nature of the human soul and its relation to the body. Is the human soul a *hoc aliquid* or determinate particular substance in its own right, such that it lives on after the death of the body? The Christian doctrine of the resurrection of body requires a reuniting of body with soul and an eternal post mortem existence for each human being. Given that the human being is a created composite of body and soul, how are the two related? Is it sufficient to propose that the soul has a certain *unibilitas* in relation to body and to secure the unity of the human being in that way?<sup>115</sup>

Early thirteenth-century Latin theologians' rejection of the Avicennian notion of the unique separate Agent Intellect shared by all human individual rational souls (material or possible intellects) and the assertion that the agent intellect and possible (material) intellect are powers of the individual soul were important positive steps towards a resolution of the lingering Augustinian problem of soul-body dualism. What remained to be addressed in detail was just how body is necessary for the human soul. Avicenna had provided an account of the rational soul's use of the body with its powers of physical senses and brain as a tool for perfecting the soul. That perfection of soul, however, involved both the influence of the separate Agent Intellect and the denial of an essential unity of body and soul in the human being. Albert adopted this account of the powers of the soul found in his predecessors and read it into the texts of Averroes as a genuine doctrine of the Cordoban. He also explicitly rejected the Avicennian separate Agent Intellect. In doing so, what Albert gained from his reading of Averroes was an account of how human knowing is grounded in the sensory apprehension of things experienced in the world, beginning with external senses, then the common sense's formation of a particular image, next the cogitative power's denuding of the extraneous from the particular image, then the deposit of the particular image in the brain power of memory. Memory then supplies the image to the power of the (human individual's) agent intellect for abstraction and the formation of the intelligible in

112 See Taylor, 'Abstraction and Intellection in Averroes and the Arabic Tradition.'

113 See Bazán, 'Was There Ever a "First Averroism"?', pp. 32–33.

114 See *ibid.*, pp. 33 ff.

115 See Bieniak, *The Soul-Body Problem*.



the (human individual's) possible intellect. In this way, the necessity of the body — with its sensory and brain powers — for the attainment and perfection of the human soul is clearly established.

In sum, Averroes was understood as providing a teleological response to the question of why the soul requires the body. It is this account of human knowing (*sans* Albert's misunderstanding of the real doctrine of Ibn Rushd/Averroes on separate Agent Intellect and Material Intellect) that became the teaching of Thomas Aquinas a decade after Albert completed his *De homine*.<sup>116</sup> It is precisely this sophisticated account in Averroes of the relation of phantasm and cogitative power behind abstraction that supplies Aquinas with materials (not found in Avicenna) for his naturalized epistemology.

Second, Albert's attribution to Averroes of monopsychism and an afterlife of human soul is momentous in its contribution to the development of Latin Averroism. The formation of this school of thought required first ascribing to Averroes the notion of the afterlife of human soul, not found in the commentaries on *De anima* and *Metaphysics* by Ibn Rushd despite being common to philosophical thinkers of the religious traditions of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. Ibn Rushd is an outlier on this in his philosophical teachings. Nevertheless, Albert read that doctrine into the texts by Averroes where he found the Latin phrase *in postremo* and interpreted it as 'in the afterlife.' To this incorrect attribution of a doctrine of the afterlife to the texts of Averroes, Albert seems to have wedded a reading that for Averroes (and Ibn Rushd albeit in a different conception), the Unmoved Mover of Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics* is the ultimate object of human knowing and happiness (*prosperitas*). This interpretation is evidenced in Albert's early *De resurrectione* and also in *De quattuor coaequaevis*, where he asserts that 'the philosophical position is that the end of the soul's happiness is to be conjoined with the First Mover through contemplation.' In his *De homine*, Albert explains that 'the philosophers say that the soul after death returns [*convertitur*] to the First Mover, and this is its end of happiness,' later adding the point I have quoted above: 'Averroes, in his commentary on *Metaphysics* XI, says that the rational soul remains after death and it will have its end of happiness if it conjoins with the First Mover. And he calls the First Mover the Principle of the Universe, which is God.'<sup>117</sup> Yet for Ibn Rushd, while the First Principle is the formal and final cause for all things — and in this way is the ultimate cause drawing all things into being and perfection — there is no doctrine of a personal post mortem contemplative return to God.

Albert asserts in the *Super Ethica* that philosophy has nothing to tell us about the rational soul and its end after death; rather, this is a matter of faith infused by a higher non-natural light. Nevertheless, in each case he proceeds to explain that, while Averroes says many heretical things, the Cordoban does hold that after

<sup>116</sup> Regarding the synthetic and critical use of the teachings of Avicenna and Averroes by Aquinas for the doctrine of the soul in Thomas Aquinas, see Blackerby, 'Contextualizing Aquinas's Ontology of Soul'.

<sup>117</sup> See note 86.

death we as intellect will contemplate simple quiddities and achieve happiness in that way. In this context, Albert tells us in the solution that some of the Arabic philosophers held that in the tenth intellect from which the form of soul flows, there is just one soul to which individual souls return, not in individual being after the death of the body but only 'according to essence' due to the end of bodily individuation. There he calls this heresy and goes on to explain briefly Avicenna's doctrine on the post mortem existence of the human soul.<sup>118</sup> Then, in the response to the second objection, he explains how one might be able to sustain the view of Averroes.<sup>119</sup> Here, Albert himself crafts and attributes to Averroes a doctrine of monopsychism that is not found in Ibn Rushd.

Albert's misconstrual of Ibn Rushd's separate intellects as powers of the human soul in the *De homine* led to the momentarily valuable account of individual human intellectual understanding on the part of his student Thomas Aquinas. His misconstrual of Ibn Rushd's teaching on the afterlife led to the momentous consequence of the development of a novel doctrine of monopsychism which he attributed to Averroes. The positive value of the latter came to be found in the Latin thinkers' responses to this Averroism and the development of sophisticated accounts of individual personal immortality and ultimate happiness in the afterlife in the context of Christian teachings.

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<sup>118</sup> Albertus Magnus, *Super Ethica*, ed. by Kübel, p. 453, vv. 40–54.

<sup>119</sup> The reader of the Latin text should take care regarding Albert's referent in his use of the word *Commentator*. See note 95.

## Appendix: Some Remarks on the Acquired Intellect

In Alexander of Aphrodisias, the conception of the acquired intellect involved sense powers and the external, eternal Agent Intellect coming to have a transitory presence of a sort in the individual perishable human soul for the apprehension of immaterial intelligibles. Ishāq's Arabic translation seems, however, to have offered opportunities for new issues, solutions, and understandings. Marc Geoffroy provides an intriguing account of Alexander and the translation of Ishāq, proposing that al-Fārābī's notion of the acquired intellect, *العقل المستفاد* *al-ʿaql al-mustafād*, *intellectus adeptus*, was formed in connection with his study of the *Theology of Aristotle* edited by al-Kindī from the *Plotiniana Arabica*.<sup>120</sup> In al-Fārābī's *رسالة في العقل* *Risala fi-l-ʿaql*, *De intellectu*, which was available in a twelfth-century Latin translation,<sup>121</sup> the acquired intellect involves the intellectual transformation or complete perfection of a particular human from being a perishable entity into being an immaterial imperishable substance, eternal *a parte post*, when it has reached the point of no longer needing the body in the consideration of intelligible forms (cf. Aristotle, *De anima* III.4, 429b5–10).

For Themistius (whose *Paraphrase of the De anima* was also translated by Ishāq and was known by al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and Ibn Rushd), human understanding also involves sense powers and the unique transcendent Agent Intellect's necessary presence assisting the imperishable, immaterial, and incorporeal individual human intellect with its agent and receptive intellects to form a proper understanding of intelligibles.<sup>122</sup> In Ibn Sīnā, the acquired intellect (*العقل المستفاد* *al-ʿaql al-mustafād*, *intellectus adeptus*) denotes the actual moment of the active apprehension of an intelligible by the human soul in conjoining with the Agent Intellect.<sup>123</sup> For Ibn Rushd in his *Long Commentary on the De anima*, acquired intellect denotes the apprehended intelligibles in the perishable soul and can be identified with the habitual intellect (*العقل بالملكة* *al-ʿaql bi-l-malakati*, *intellectus in habitu*) and the

120 See Geoffroy, 'La tradition arabe du Περὶ τοῦ d'Alexandre d'Aphrodisie': Geoffroy, 'Averroès sur l'intellect comme cause agent et cause formelle'. This is also discussed in Geoffroy's doctoral dissertation, a version of which has been published in two parts as Geoffroy, 'Sources et origines de la théorie de l'intellect d'Averroès'. See also Taylor, 'The Agent Intellect'; Taylor, 'Intellect as Intrinsic Formal Cause in the Soul'.

121 The edition of the Latin text is contained in Gilson, 'Les sources greco-arabes de l'Augustinisme avicennisant'.

122 See Themistius, *De anima paraphrasis*, Greek, p. 103, v. 20–p. 104, v. 13 and p. 98, v. 12–p. 99, v. 10; *Commentary on Aristotle's De anima, Arabic*, p. 187, v. 18–p. 189, v. 15 and p. 169, v. 4–p. 197, v. 9; *On Aristotle's On the Soul, English*, pp. 128–29 and 122–23.

123 هذا ضرب من العقل بالفعل . وهو القوة تحصل للنفس أن تعقل بها نشاء فإذا شاءت اتصلت وفاض فيها الصورة المعقولة . هي العقل المسفاد بالحقيقة وهذه القوة هي العقل بالفعل فينا من حيث لنا أن نعقل . وأما العقل المستفاد فهو العقل بالفعل من Avicenna's *De anima (Arabic Text)*, ed. by Rahman, pp. 247–48; Avicenna Latinus, *Liber De anima seu Sextus de naturalibus*, ed. by Van Riet, p. 150, vv. 62–67: 'Hic enim modus intelligendi in potentia est virtus quae acquirit animae intelligere cum voluerit; quia, cum voluerit, coniungetur intelligentiae a qua emanat in eam forma intellecta. Quae forma est intellectus adeptus verissime et haec virtus est intellectus in effectu [...] secundum quod est perfectio.'

theoretical intellect (العقل النظري *al-'aql al-naẓarī*, *intellectus speculativus*).<sup>124</sup> Albert was aware of the use of this notion in Avicenna and Averroes early on, as we can see in his early works right up to *Super Ethica* (1250–52). Yet in those earlier works, he may have conflated the use of the term in Avicenna and Averroes, in a tendency that favoured the meaning in Averroes,<sup>125</sup> before he had access to the *De intellectu* of al-Fārābī. Albert does evidence knowledge of the acquired intellect with the meaning found in al-Fārābī's *De intellectu* later in his *De anima* and importantly in his *Ethica*.<sup>126</sup> Albert's later use of *intellectus adeptus* as a human power that apprehends separate substances, including God, eventually became the foundation of a so-called 'Averroistic mysticism' in the Latin tradition.<sup>127</sup>

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124 This is also discussed in my introduction to the *Long Commentary on the De anima*, English, pp. lix, lxxv, lxxvii–lxxv.

125 See Albertus Magnus, *De homine*, ed. by Anzulewicz and Söder, pp. 396–99 and 430; *Super IV libros Sententiarum* I, d. 3, a. 20, ed. by Borgnet, p. 118b–119a, and II, d. 3. a. 6, p. 70b; *Super Dionysium De divinis nominibus*, ed. by Simon, pp. 133–34, 199.

126 See Wietecha, 'Albert the Great's Ethical Commentaries'.

127 See de Libera, 'Existe-t-il une noétique "averroïste"?' and his discussion of acquired intellect (العقل المستفاد *al-'aql al-mustafād*, *intellectus adeptus*) in de Libera, 'Averroïsme éthique et philosophie mystique', and *Métaphysique et noétique*, pp. 265–328. Also see Flasch, *D'Averroès à Maître Eckhart*.

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