

ENTANGLEMENT OF BEING AND BEINGS: HEIDEGGER AND IBN ARABI ON SAMENESS AND DIFFERENCE

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Abstract: Martin Heidegger was reported to have considered his work Identity and Difference (based on two seminars delivered in 1957) to be “the most important thing he ... published since [his magnum opus] Being and Time.” (Heidegger, 1969, 7) While Being and Time begins with the human being (Dasein; being-there), aiming to proceed to an understanding of the Being of beings, in Identity and Difference the focus is on the very “relation” between the human being and Being. (Ibid., 8) The present work highlights the intertwined and entangled sameness/difference between beings and Being. This entanglement and belonging, as we shall see, is also one of the most foundational concepts and prominent themes by the renowned and highly influential Muslim mystic Ibn Arabi (1165-1240). We particularly focus on his important compendium of mystical teachings, Fusus al-Hikam (Bezels of Wisdom). We also touch upon the sameness/difference of thoughts between these two thinkers.

I. Introduction

The “ontological difference” is a fundamental area of exploration for Heidegger. What is the distinction between Being and beings? In fact, there is an entangled similarity and difference between the two, which is elaborated. We use the slash sign ‘/’ to denote binaries or dualities, especially that of Being/beings, that are similar yet cannot be reduced, that are different yet cannot be separated. Our comparative analysis aims to combine Heidegger’s thought with Ibn Arabi’s in the latter’s exploration of a ceaseless dance of *Haqq/Khalq*. *Haqq* means that Being which cannot be falsified, the Truth, the Real; *Khalq* refers to creation, created beings. Ibn Arabi and his commentators point out that the root word for *Khalq* actually refers to a fabrication, i.e., a primordial truth that has taken on a form, appearing as a thing; i.e., *Khalq/Haqq* are far closer than they appear. A key theme is whether *Haqq* is hidden or manifest (the question of concealment). In addition, in further exploring *Haqq* in Ibn Arabi’s thought, we identify paths of dialogue between Heidegger’s Being and Ibn Arabi’s *Haqq*. We begin with Heidegger.

II. Heidegger’s Un/Concealment

Heidegger is a fierce critique of essentialism, the Platonic idea that all things are defined, deeply imprinted, by a static essence at their core. He wishes to go *there* (*da*) to look for *that*. Hans-Georg Gadamer, in fact, noted that Heidegger’s lifelong effort was to look for *da* (Gadamer, 1994). However, this does not mean that Heidegger falls oblivious to beings in their everydayness. Quite the contrary. He seeks to find relations between *thatness* (the ontological realm) and *whatness* (the ontic realm) of beings. This is sensed throughout *Being and Time* and stands out in

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Identity and Difference. How do we relate beings (particularly the human being) to the Being of beings? What is the ontic-ontological relationship?

In the first part of *Identity and Difference*, namely *The Principle of Identity*, Heidegger takes the reader on a journey, formulating the principle of identity as “A is A,” focusing on the “is,” i.e., on the *Being of beings*. It is this, the claim of the identity, that “speaks” to him, to us, whether we hear it or not, “whether the sciences hear it or not, whether they throw to the winds what they have heard or let themselves be strongly affected by it.” (Heidegger, 1969, 26)

In common everyday thinking, when relating two things, the *whatness* (ontic reality) is primary, followed by the relation. Heidegger invites us to see this differently; that *belonging* together comes first. It is the *relation* that determines *what* is being related, and not the other way around. As noted by Joan Stambaugh in the preface, “It is perhaps difficult for us to think of a relation as being more original than what is related, but this is what Heidegger requires of us. This relation is then no relation in the ordinary sense of that term. We do not know, and we cannot predict what is related. Man does not have the static essence of the animal rationale or the subject thinking its object. One of Heidegger’s most basic insights is that we do not know what man is, even if he could be understood as a ‘what’ at all.” (Ibid., 12)

As Heidegger notes, “Man is essentially this relationship of responding to Being, and he is only this. This “only” does not mean a limitation, but rather an excess.” (Ibid., 31) The human being is *essentially* a relation. He continues, “A belonging to Being prevails within man, a belonging which listens to Being because it is appropriated to Being.” Meanwhile, Being itself belongs to the human being in that only with the human being (which is a relation, an openness, not an objective presence) “can Being be present as Being, that is, become present.” (Ibid., 33) ... “for it is man, open toward Being, who alone lets Being arrive as presence.” (Ibid., 31) Thus man and Being come “face to face in such a way that they challenge each other” (this gathering is *Ge-Stell*, the framework, enframing) (Ibid., 35). “Within the framework, there prevails a strange ownership and a strange appropriation. We must experience simply this owning in which man and Being are delivered over to each other, that is, we must enter into what we call *the event of appropriation [Ereignis]*.” (Ibid., 36) “The event of appropriation is that realm, vibrating within itself, through which man and Being reach each other in their nature, achieve their active nature by losing those qualities with which metaphysics has endowed them.” (Ibid., 37) It appears that we must seek the ontic-ontological difference here as a vibrating movement, back and forth, oscillating between identity and difference, losing and gaining dimensions along the way.

What is the role of difference within identity? In the second part, *The Onto-theo-logical Constitution of Metaphysics*, we may find some answers. While in “Western thinking” (metaphysics), one focuses on “Being”, “If we think of this matter just a bit more rigorously, if we take more heed of what is in contest in the matter, we see that *Being* means always and everywhere: the Being of *beings*.” And “*beings* mean always and everywhere the beings of *Being*.” (Ibid., 61) One thing that is clear is that “when we deal with the Being of beings and with the beings of Being, we deal in each case with a difference. Thus, we think of Being rigorously only when we think of it in its difference with beings, and of beings in their difference with Being.” (Ibid., 62) According to what we saw in the first part, if we prioritize the ontic, the essence and the objective presence, we will be misled. In

such representational, *what*-centered thinking, the difference will thus be reduced to “a relation which our representing has added to Being and to beings ... a distinction, something made up by our understanding” (Ibid., 62) in contrast to *relation*-centered thinking.

Heidegger thus appears to construct a foundation where Being and beings, which have identity and sameness, have difference at the same time. Wheresoever we go, “we always find that Being and beings in their difference are already there.” (Ibid., 62) We may say that the ontic-ontological difference is *always already there*. Heidegger, appearing to some to build a monism and holistic metaphysics, actually places difference into the very core of his thinking: difference as difference. Confronting this difference, coming face to face with it, takes place “once we accomplish the step back.” (Ibid., 64) That is, stepping back to the original, most primordial moments, freeing ourselves to behold the ontic-ontological difference. It is the central underlying issue (foundation or ground) in Heidegger’s changing perspectives and divergent approaches; it is, in a sense, an oscillating foundation, a moving ground.¹

What Heidegger teaches us is that *being* is a transitive verb, unlike what we’ve been taught! “While we are facing the difference, though by the step back we are already releasing it into that which gives thought, we can say: the Being of beings means Being which is beings. The “is” here speaks transitively, in transition.” (Ibid., 64) He adds, “Being transits (that), comes unconcealingly over (that) which arrives as something of itself unconcealed only by that coming-over. Arrival means: to keep concealed in unconcealedness—to abide present in this keeping—to be a being.” Thus, Being is unconcealed as it comes over beings, yet its arrival remains something concealed. There is a ceaseless cohabitant interplay (shall we say dance) of un/concealment.

Heidegger then mentions insightfully an example from Hegel. Someone wishes to buy fruit from a store, being offered with apples, pears, peaches, etc. He rejects all. “What was offered to him in every instance *is* fruit and yet, it turns out, fruit cannot be bought.” (Heidegger, 1969, 64) We behold beings, and beings *are*, yet we do not behold Being; but if Being underlies beings, are we not beholding Being? More on this after Ibn Arabi enters our narrative.

III. Ibn Arabi’s Transcendence from Transcendence

Some 700 years earlier, Ibn Arabi had taken the entanglement of sameness/difference to unparalleled heights in his mystical teachings. As mentioned in the introduction, we use the slash sign ‘/’ to denote binaries or dualities that are similar yet irreducible, that are different yet inseparable. We may say (in an admittedly vulgar example) that they are *different* sides of the *same* coin. Their similarity/difference persist always. Ibn Arabi ceaselessly explores *Haqq/Khalq*. As outlined in the introduction, *Haqq* is that Being which cannot be falsified, the Truth, the Real, Reality, but not in the Heideggerian sense of objective presence. In fact, quite the opposite: Ibn Arabi emphasizes over and over that *Haqq* (the Real) takes on

¹ Behler, E., 1991. *Confrontations: Derrida/Heidegger/Nietzsche*. Trans. S. Taubeneck, Stanford University Press. See chapter 1 for “oscillations” in Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche. Their link to the “ontic-ontological difference” is emphasized in p. 27 onwards.

new realities every moment, leading to his teaching of perpetual manifestation/creation². Meanwhile, *Khalq* is creation, created beings, yet not as we think them; they are far more intricately and intimately linked with *Haqq* than our common sense envisages. There are in fact significant parallels between Ibn Arabi's *Haqq/Khalq* and Heidegger's Being/beings. Ibn Arabi and his commentators point out that the Arabic root word for *Khalq* actually refers to a fabrication, i.e., a primordial truth that has taken on a form, appearing as a thing³; i.e., *Khalq/Haqq* are far closer than they appear (than 'creation' implies).

It is also very worthwhile (but beyond the scope of this writing) to compare and contrast efforts by three Christian thinkers, Denys (Pseudo-Dionysius; 5th- 6th century), Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), and Bonaventure (1221-1274) on affirmation vs. negation of qualities from God. They also strive and question: must one assimilate God, affirming His creation-like (similar) qualities, or purify Him, asserting His difference and transcendence, and negating and denying creation-like qualities from Him? Meanwhile, in the works of Ibn Arabi, just a few decades before Thomas and Bonaventure, one witnesses a rich and original plethora of discussions and foundational emphases on the entangled affirmation/negation of qualities, and sameness/difference of *Haqq/Khalq*. In fact, our assessment is that Ibn Arabi takes this entangled affirmation/negation to unprecedented heights.

Ibn Arabi especially formulates these themes in his *Bezels of Wisdom*. It is worth noting that while hundreds of works are attributed to Ibn Arabi, *Bezels of Wisdom* is considered "as the quintessence of his writings and thought and a major source of his influence," attested to by the more than 100 commentaries (Yahya, 1964, 241-255; Chittick, 1984, 1). We especially focus on chapters 3 and 5 (and additionally refer to chapters 10 and 12) of the compendium, which in total has 27 chapters, each linked to the "logos" of a Prophet. Chapter 3 is entitled, "The Quintessence of the Wisdom of the Most Glorified in the Logos of Noah," and pays particular attention to purification or transcendence (*tanzih*) vs. assimilation or affirmation of similarity (*tashbih*). Ibn Arabi begins with a surprisingly strong statement⁴:

Know that purification (*tanzih*) ..., concerning the divine, amounts to limitation and restriction. So, the one who purifies is either ignorant or ill-mannered ... He imagines that he has reached, but he has missed.

² This has been expressed as the doctrine of *tajaddud* (renewal/perpetuity) of *amthaal* or *khalq* (creation) by Ibn Arabi's followers, and has been highly influential in mystical, philosophic and literary traditions. It is also sometimes referred to as the doctrine of "there is no reoccurrence in manifestation" (*laa tikraar fi tajalli*).

³ For instance, see p. 515 of *Commentary on Fusus al-Hikam* (hereafter **CFH**) by Taj al-Din Hossein Kharazmi (14th-15th century) (edited by Ay. Hassan-Zadeh Amoli, 2000). The commentary by Kharazmi (in Persian) significantly follows commentary by Sharaf al-Din Davood Qeisari (in Arabic).

⁴ In this work, I have considered 3 English translations (especially the first two as they are more accurate): (i) Abrahamov, B., 2015. *Ibn Al-Arabi's Fusus Al-Hikam: An Annotated Translation of The Bezels of Wisdom*. Routledge. (ii) Austin, R., 1980. *Ibn al-'Arabi: The Bezels of Wisdom*. Paulist Press. (iii) Bewley, A. *The Seals of Wisdom*. Meanwhile, I have significantly benefited from the abovementioned valuable commentary CFH to correct and alter some translations.

The statement is strong in the prevalent religious context in which *tanzih*, i.e., verbal and mental purification and elevation of God from the realm of the lowly and deficient, is considered merit, while *tashbih* by contrast, is typically reprimanded. Why does Ibn Arabi chastise those who commit *tanzih*? It is because *Haqq* and *Khalq* have relatedness:

The Real (*Haqq*) is manifest in every created being (*Khalq*) in a specific way. He is the Manifest in everything understood, and He is the Hidden from all understanding, except understanding of one who holds that the world is His form and His identity; and it is the name, *the Manifest*, while He is by meaning the Spirit of what is manifest, so He is *the Hidden*⁵. Thus, His relation to manifested forms of the world is that of the governing spirit to the form⁶.

Ibn Arabi then adds:

The Real is defined by every definition, and [yet] the forms of the world are not ordered or encompassed [are limitless in quantity and quality] ... so definition of the Real is impossible.

This point links with Hegel's above-mentioned challenge with fruits. Ibn Arabi says that the Real is captured and defined by everything, manifesting Him, and yet He is impossible to capture and define as His manifestations are endless. In a commentary on this part we encounter, "Glory to Him who is High in being Low, and Low in being High; is Hidden in being Manifest, and is Manifest in being Hidden."⁷ In another text by Ibn Arabi, *Naqsh al-Fusus*, "Imprints of the Bezels of Wisdom," which concisely summarizes his *Bezels of Wisdom*, he comments on this chapter:

The absolutivity [i.e. being made absolute] of what is given this description [of purification] is a delimitation. Therefore, he [who has purified] has raised up none but a limited being by attributing absolutivity to it. (Chittick, 1984, 13)

In fact, in certain Islamic philosophic traditions (e.g., transcendent philosophy of Mulla Sadra; influenced by Ibn Arabi), three kinds of being are outlined: "conditional", "unconditional (except by absolutivity)" and "unconditional (even by absolutivity)"⁸. One who claims that Being is absolute, separate, and distinct from particulars imagines that he has praised but, as Ibn Arabi warns, is indeed short-sighted and has grossly missed. To use another vulgar analogy, there is an intolerable difference between a King that transcends his subjects (is above and beyond them) and one that transcends such transcendence.

Ibn Arabi continues in chapter 3:

⁵ These names, reverberating in Ibn Arabi and other mystics' works, refer to the famous Quranic verse, "He is the First and the Last, The Manifest and the Hidden, and He is, of all things, knowing." (57:3)

⁶ Later in the chapter, Ibn Arabi says: You are to Him as your body-form is to you, and He is to you as the spirit which governs your body-form. [23] CFH, p. 251.

⁷ An expression "Low in being High, and High in being Low" in fact appears in a prayer by Imam Ali son of Husayn (the Prostrator) (659-713) in the renowned collection of his supplications, *Sahifa al-Sajjadiyya* (supplication 47).

⁸ See *Be Shart-e Laa* versus *Laa Be Shart-e Qismi* verses *Laa Be Shart-e Maqsami*.

Similarly, whoever assimilates Him, without purifying Him, has limited Him and restricted Him and not known Him. Whoever combines purification and assimilation in his gnosis ... has known Him.

In a commentary, we read:

“Glory to God from assimilation and purification”
As you consider him Evident and Hidden
Be certain that He is neither this nor that. (Kharazmi, 2000, 245-246)

We are also invited to ponder:

Being so Hidden, He is Evidently Evident
Being so Evident, He is Innermost Innermost. (Ibid., 245-246)

Be wary of mere purification; instead, do not neglect purification in purification,
nor forget assimilation in assimilation. (Ibid., 259)

Then we encounter the following poetry by Ibn Arabi:

If you purify Him, you delimit; if you assimilate Him, you restrict.
But if you do both, you have been shown the right way: you are a guide in gnostic
knowledge, a master.

So, Ibn Arabi formulates what his commentators refer to as the all-pervasive, highly-consequential principle of *tashbih* in *tanzih*, and *tanzih* in *tashbih*. We refer to this as entangled *tashbih/tanzih*, which in a very close sense, is echoed in Heidegger’s identity/difference. One who purifies Being from beings, denying their sameness, no longer faces Being. One who instead assimilates, denying the difference, actually amplifies the difference: if the Being of beings is not different from beings, beings *are* on their own, i.e., have a Being of their own, besides Being; acquiring two distinct Beings, a duality. It may be what Ibn Arabi means when he says in a follow-up verse, “Take care lest you be a dualist by assimilation”! In any case, this realization and framework open up new horizons for Being/being, “by losing those qualities with which metaphysics has endowed them,” as Heidegger says (Heidegger, 1969, 10). Before further elucidating this analysis, let us pause and ask a different question.

IV. Sameness/difference of thoughts

Is there a sameness and difference between Ibn Arabi and Heidegger themselves and in their *Haqq* and Being? Let us begin by noting that Ibn Arabi’s *Haqq*, which he sometimes directly refers to as god (*ilaah*) or God (*Allah*), has sameness and difference from the “God” of his time. He does not shy away from using the same language and signifiers, yet is entirely comfortable and insistent on his God being different as well, e.g., a non-theological God. In his view, God is a Being that is not absolute, as we saw, but rather unconditional even from being absolute! It may be said that He is both limited, transcending absolutes, and absolute, transcending limits. As we saw above, He is “defined by every definition,” and yet defining Him

“is impossible.” God perpetually manifests (Heidegger, 1969, 64), so much so that even the *same* being is *different* in every moment. As a result, Ibn Arabi insists that “God” in the creed of each individual is to be recognized, not denied; e.g., in Chapter 10, “The Quintessence of the Wisdom of Unity in the Logos of Hūd,”⁹ he says about God:

He is [both] unrecognized and recognized, considered incomparable and compared ... each individual must have a belief (*i'tiqaad*) regarding his Lord through which he turns to Him and seeks Him. If the Real reveals Himself to him within this belief, he acknowledges Him. But if He reveals Himself in another belief, then he denies Him, seeking refuge against Him ... Such a believer only believes in a god which he created in himself, for a god in beliefs is created. So (the believers) saw none but themselves and what they created in themselves ... Beware of limiting yourself by a specific belief [*aqd*; literally: knot] and disbelieving in everything else lest you miss much good; moreover, you will miss knowing of things as they really are.

Ibn Arabi then immediately adds:

Be in yourself primal matter, utterly receptive to all forms of belief, for indeed God, Blessed and High, is too all-embracing and great to be confined by one belief rather than another; He said: “Wherever you turn, there is the face of God” (2:115) without mentioning any particular direction.

In another passage in chapter 12, “The Quintessence of the Wisdom of the Heart in the Logos of Shu’uib,”¹⁰ Ibn Arabi says:

Quite evidently, there are a great many beliefs [by the great many beings]: whosoever restricts Him [to his own belief], denies Him [when manifested] in other beliefs, affirming Him [only] when He is manifest in the belief to which he restricts Him. And whoever does not restrict Him, does not deny Him, affirming Him in every form He transforms to, devoting himself to the endless forms in which He is manifest, for the forms of manifestation have no end.

Thus for Ibn Arabi, God / “God” have identity and difference. “Each individual must have a belief,” and yet, he must transcend it lest he misses “much good”. In the words of Rumi:

I am a sculptor, a painter, creating an idol every moment
 Only to set them all ablaze in Your presence.
 I conjure up images, in multitudes, mixing all with my spirit
 Only to toss them all into fire when I see Your image.
 Are you a wine-seller or a vigilant foe,
 That you obliterate every home I build?
 In a home built with mud, this heart is at ruins without You,
 So either enter this home, or I shall have it deserted.¹¹

⁹ The Prophet Hud has by some been identified as Eber (or his son), an ancestor of the Ishmaelites and Israelites according to the “Table of Nations” in the Book of Genesis. See: Wensinck, A. J., “Hūd”, in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam, First Edition (1913-1936)*, Eds. M. Th. Houtsma, T.W. Arnold, R. Basset, R. Hartmann.

¹⁰ The Prophet Shu’uib is commonly identified with the biblical Jethro.

In fact, Ibn Arabi himself says in a famous poem:

My heart has become receptive to every form: it is
 A pasture for gazelles and a monastery for Christian monks,
 A temple for idols and Kaaba for the pilgrim,
 Tables of the Torah and the book of the Quran.
 I observe the religion of Love: whatever way Love's
 rides take; that is my religion and my faith.¹²

This is an all-important topic on its own, opening pathways of recognition and comparative analysis through this sameness/difference amongst different traditions, for instance, between continental philosophy and Islamic mysticism (as well as transcendent philosophy). More specifically, it can be seen that Ibn Arabi would easily recognize Heidegger's Being as same/different from his God. However, we are obviously saying more. In fact, we imagine Ibn Arabi, given Heidegger's formulation of Being/beings, to perhaps recognize him as "a guide in gnostic knowledge, a master"! Let us further our analysis.

V. Belonging and Nourishment

Following his poetry (in Chapter 3 of *Bezels of Wisdom*), as mentioned above, Ibn Arabi enters a remarkable analysis. He writes:

He, Most High, says, "*There is nothing like His likeness*," thus He purifies [Himself], "*and He is the Hearing, the Seeing*," (42:11) thus He assimilates. (At the same time) He, Most High, says, "*There is nothing like His likeness*," thus He assimilates and makes two, and "*He is the Hearing, the Seeing*," thus He purifies and makes one.

Ibn Arabi is referring to a famous Quranic verse that is commonly understood by others to mean *there is nothing like Him*. Not so by Ibn Arabi! Highly reminiscent of Heidegger, Ibn Arabi is seen throughout his works to powerfully probe words, their roots, hidden meanings, and cross-links. As he does strikingly in various places, here, he notes that the literal translation is actually that "*There is nothing like His likeness*," intertwining similarity/difference: God has a likeness ('*mithl*'), and at the same time, nothing is like ('*ka*') His likeness! Similarly, in noting that "*He is the Hearing, the Seeing*," He is ascribed creation-like qualities ('*sami*', '*basir*'), and at the same time, He is *the* ('*al*') One with those qualities. Ibn Arabi marvels at the power of expression here, having "unified both affairs into one affair" and having together "assimilated and purified in a single verse; rather, in half a verse."

Is there a sense of belonging between God and human beings? Later in the chapter, Ibn Arabi says, quoting another Quranic verse:

¹¹ Rumi's *Dīwān-e Shams-e Tabrīzī*, Ghazal 1462.

¹² Nicholson, R. A. ed., 1911. *The Tarjumán al-Ashwáq: A Collection of Mystical Odes by Muhyiddīn Ibn al-'Arabī* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, Oriental Translation Series, New Series XX, reprinted in 1981 by the Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois). Poem XI (verses 13-15); we have slightly edited the translation (p. 67) based on the poem in Arabic (p. 19).

[He says,] “Do not take anyone besides Me as trustee of (your) affairs.” (17:2) So ownership (of affairs) was confirmed for them [human beings], and the management of it (trust and representation on their behalf) belongs to God ... so the ownership (property) is theirs ... For this reason, the Real is the property of [His] property.¹³

Human beings belong to God, and God belongs to human beings, so God is the belonging of the belonging! This non-ending belonging is key to seeing *Haqq/Khalq* as ever-renewing, confronting, manifesting, and entangled.

Ibn Arabi highly emphasizes the circularity of movements in relations. Later in the chapter, he relates the prophetic narration: “Increase me in perplexity,” and goes on to say: “Every time it shines on them, they walk in it. When the darkness comes over them, they stop.” (2:20) So the perplexed one ceaselessly turns about and has circular movement about the Pole. But he who has a stretched-out (long) path is always turning aside and outside of the Goal, seeking that which is (already) within him [or which he is within], having an imagination to which is his end, so he has “from” and “to” and “what lies between them.” Meanwhile, the one with a circular movement has no beginning, “from”, which clings to him, and no end, “to,” which rules over him. Thus, he has the most complete existence, and he is given the entirety of logos and wisdoms.

Linear movements are for those searching for the absolute. And Ibn Arabi’s God is not limited by being absolute! Circular movements, by contrast, are for those that behold the *belonging* together. Ibn Arabi especially explores this perplexity, ecstasy and circularity in chapter 5 of his *Bezels of Wisdom*, entitled “The Quintessence of the Wisdom of Bewilderment in the Logos of Abraham.” The term *muhayyam* refers to being in a condition of perplexity, bewilderment, being lost, ecstasy¹⁴. Ibn Arabi says early in the chapter,

You have pervaded (*takhallul*) the course of the spirit within me,
and that is why the intimate friend (*khalil*) is called the intimate friend.

It is just as the color permeates the coloured; in such a way, the accident (*‘arad*) (pervades) its substance (*jawhar*).

The emphasis here is on a being that is pervading and entirely *relational*. He goes on to say, “It is not (the relationship between) a place and that which is placed in it.” It is far different! Ibn Arabi goes on to elucidate the ecstatic *Haqq/Khalq* dynamic, transcending conventional “stretched-out” movements, e.g., pointing out how beings rule over the Real. The chapter focuses on Abraham (who is known by the name *khalil*, an intimate friend in Islamic traditions). Ibn Arabi takes Abraham as a relational human being, having realized the abovementioned dynamic, and at the same time, extends this entanglement (by differing depths) to all beings. He says:

¹³ The latter phrase is commonly mistranslated in English translations, e.g. as “Ruler (or King) of Kingdom” which loses the beauty and very key point behind this expression (*melk al-melk*, property of property, according to CFH).

¹⁴ See Kharazmi, 2000 (CFH), p. 335; also see translation by Aisha Bewley.

Abraham was called the Intimate because he had pervaded and encompassed all (Attributes) through which the Divine Essence is described ... and because the Real permeated the existence of Abraham's form.

Surprisingly, Ibn Arabi refers to this permeation as mutual *nourishment*, and expresses the relationality as follows:

Know that whenever something permeates another, it is assumed into it. That which permeates, the agent, is disguised by that which is permeated, the object of permeation. Thus, the object in this case is the manifest, while the agent is the hidden. The latter is as nourishment for the former, as a piece of wool swells and expands because of the water that permeates it. If the Real is the manifest, then the created being is hidden in Him, and as a result, the being (assumes) all the names of the Real, His hearing, His seeing, all His relationships and perceptions. If the created being is the manifest, the Real is concealed and hidden in him; the Real, then, is the hearing of the created, his seeing, his hand, his foot and all his faculties, as referred to in the correct narration.¹⁵

He goes on to analyze this relationship, especially developing how the Real bestows *being* upon beings while they dictate rulings upon Him through their being and form (an analysis that is beyond the scope of this writing). He thus states, "You are His nourishment with rulings, while He is yours with Being," and that "the order is from Him to you," i.e., to Be! and "from you to Him," i.e., in what you/He shall be. This can also be linked to our prior statements that the Real is the belonging of the belonging in an endless cycle. This circularity and nourishment constantly engage, dictate, and expand. Thus, we, human beings, belong to Him but also belong to ourselves, as He belongs to us. Ibn Arabi concludes with these poems:

We belong to Him as has been shown,
As also we belong to ourselves.
And He has only my being,
And we are His as we are through ourselves.
... in me is His theatre of manifestation,
And we are for Him as vessels.

In the poetry of the mystic Maghrebi (1348-1406):

Your manifestation is from me, and my Being is from you,
You do not manifest if I am not, and I am not if you are not.

VI. Concluding Remarks

Haqq and *Khalq* dance continually, "vibrating," as Heidegger would say, "reach[ing] each other in their nature." (Heidegger, 1969, 37) Thus we see that "*Being* means always and everywhere: the Being of *beings*," and "*beings* mean

¹⁵ The latter part refers to the famous Prophetic narration of "supererogatory acts", according to which God rewards the believer who performs such acts "by becoming the hearing with which he hears, the seeing with which he sees..." This is referred to as proximity by supererogatory deeds. Alternatively, Ibn Arabi refers to Islamic teachings (which he terms proximity by obligatory acts) in which, instead of God becoming one's faculties, the human being loses himself and becomes God's hearing, seeing.

always and everywhere the beings *of Being*.” (Ibid., 61) And yet, “when we deal with the Being of beings and with the beings of Being, we deal in each case with a difference.” (Ibid., 62) *Khalq* dictates upon *Haqq* and brings out its existence from *Haqq*, manifesting *Haqq* of *Khalq*. *Khalq* belongs to *Haqq*; it is *Khalq* of *Haqq*: we may thus say that *Khalq* “is only this. This ‘only’ does not mean a limitation, but rather an excess.” (Ibid., 31) One who misses this “only,” imagining he has been freed, has been incarcerated. *Haqq/Khalq* have as their true substance, as their “active nature,” that they are relational, that they belong together, that they nourish, that they are identity/difference entangled, “High in being Low and Low in being High; Hidden in being Manifest and Manifest in being Hidden.” (Kharazmi, 2000, 335)

Overall, Ibn Arabi and Heidegger exhibit significant parallels in their realms of exploration and thinking. They observe a relational existence and circularity that transcends both conditions and absolutes. They both aspire to behold Being/beings in their identity/difference, to witness their joyful dance, and to invite us to participate in this special occasion that takes place every day. Furthermore, Ibn Arabi’s emphasis that *Haqq* is manifest in all knots and creeds and faiths, and the sameness/difference between them, can open new venues and pathways of dialogue between different works. Journeying through these works, it is seen that, for each thinker, realities stand out in vibrant and non-reducible ways and that their entanglement plays a key role in their thinking.

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