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**The Suspended Man Self-awareness in Ibn Sina and  
Suhrawardi (a comparative study)**

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**Abstract**

The question what is the soul is one of the fundamental questions in philosophical psychology, and the answer to it, along with other psychological questions, has been and is one of the most important and first concerns of philosophers. Among the philosophers, Ibn Sina and Suhrawardi have offered a novel view of the identity of the soul in comparison with their predecessors. In order to know the identity of the soul, Ibn Sina mentions the experience of the suspended man in space in some of his works, and Suhrawardi, while expressing and correcting Ibn Sina's experience, speaks of other experiences. Through this research, it becomes clear that the efforts of the two in recognizing the soul are not equal; because Ibn Sina reaches existence in the experience of the man suspended in space, which is a hypothetical experience, not a real one, and in the experience of liberation from the body and the sleep and wakefulness experiences, which are real and not hypothetical experiences, Suhrawardi achieves self and his own identity. In this article, we have interpreted and evaluated both views.

**Keywords:** Ibn Sina, Suhrawardi, soul identity, self-knowledge, I.

## Introduction

Every student of the humanities has heard Descartes say, "Cogito ergo sum." Descartes also became famous in the world with it. My essence is in the sentence "I think then I am" is only thought, and from Descartes' point of view, thought includes thinking, imagination, feeling, doubt, and so on (Descartes, 2008: second reflection). "I" is the subject in opposition to object. The subject became the center of everything and a new age emerged. Descartes' view of who is the "I" has been widely studied and several philosophical schools have sprung up.

Before Descartes, Iranian philosophers, contrary to the Aristotelian philosophical tradition, spoke of the "I" or the soul and sought to know it. Ibn Sina (980) and Suhrawardi (1008) are two Iranian philosophers who have spoken about the identity of the soul and the "I" in a new and unprecedented way. However, in comparison with Descartes, the words of these philosophers have not been explored; there are very few researches in this field, the most important of which are mentioned:

"Self-Awareness in Islamic Philosophy: Ibn Sina and After Him" written by Kaukua, is interesting. In this book, he deals with the issue of self-awareness from the point of view of Ibn Sina, the thinkers after him, especially Suhrawardi and Mulla Sadra, as well as Abu al-Barakat and Fakhr al-Razi. He provides a comprehensive analysis of Ibn Sina's reasons for self-awareness. One of those reasons, he said, is the experience of the flying man. According to Kaukua Ibn, Sina in that experience proves the soul's immortality based on its self-consciousness. Kaukua believes that the purpose of the flying man experience is to show the reader's experience; it is a concrete experiential sense of what acts as our soul and can exist apart from the body. He insists that the flying man experience is about self-awareness and not about awareness of the essence (dhāt) of the soul (Kaukua, 2015: 38-42). In other chapters, he reports the Suhrawardi and Mulla Sadra conceptions of self-awareness.

The article "Study and Analysis of the Relationship between Self-awareness and Metaphysical Foundations in Ibn Sina's Philosophy" written by Asma Ishaqi Nasab and Hossein Zamiha shows that Ibn Sina's man suspended in space has a deep connection with metaphysical distinction of existence and quiddity. In this experience, Ibn Sina reaches identity that contrasts with quiddity, and therefore, the analysis of Ibn Sina's self-awareness has gone beyond Descartes' self-awareness (Ishaqi Nasab, 2015).

The article "Nature of the Soul according to Suhrawardi" written by Hassan Rezazadeh has shown that the theory of intuitive knowledge has been proposed for the first time in Suhrawardi's philosophy; Suhrawardi has explained the nature of the soul with intuitive knowledge (Rezazadeh, 2011).

The article "Analysis of the idea of the suspended man in space, based on Sorenson's logical model" written by Mohammad Saeedi Mehr and Vahid Khademzadeh. Based on this model, it analyzed the idea with a brief introduction of mental experiments and Sorenson's proposed model for the logical formulation of mental experiments. They conclude that this idea can only be used to prove the abstraction of the soul by accepting a number of auxiliary hypotheses and additional assumptions (Saeedi Mehr, 2009).

The difference between this writing and the aforementioned writings is that it becomes clear that Ibn Sina's achievement of the suspended man experience is firstly his own existence and secondly his immediate awareness of it and the result of Suhrawardi's experiences is self-awareness. Therefore, in this article, we first explored Ibn Sina's view on "self-identity" by relying on "man suspended in space". Then we examine Suhrawardi's view of the nature of the self. In the end, we compare these two perspectives with together; it becomes clear which one is more stable and has fruitful results.

## Ibn Sina

Ibn Sina has new sayings in philosophical psychology in comparison with his predecessors, and one of those new perspectives is the discussion of the identity of the soul. For Aristotle the body is matter and the soul is form; the combination of the soul with the body is, in his view, a combination of matter and form, and we can never consider the soul and the body as two independent phenomena, but they are two aspects of one thing (Aristotle, 1987: 412a-414b). According to him, the soul and the body both come together and disappear. States such as anger, sadness, joy, fear, etc. are of something that is composed of matter and form, not the form alone. Professions and other abilities are not only from the soul, but from matter and form. The soul and the body are one, and it is the combination of the soul and the body that is called "I", not the form (soul) alone (Davoodi, 1970: 25-26 and 344). Contrary to Descartes, who considers "I" as something opposite to body, because the essence of the soul is thinking and the essence of the body is extension (Descartes, 2008: Second Reflection).

According to Ibn Sina, the soul is a substance that is inherently immaterial but has a connection with the body and acts on it and at the same time is affected by it. According to Ibn Sina, although the soul, in its generation, depends on the special disposition that appears in certain matter called the body, it does not occur to it in its persistence (Ibn Sina, 1983, Theology: 60. *ibid*, 1983, Nafs: 22-23).

According to Ibn Sina, states such as anger, sorrow, professions and crafts are specific psychological actions, not common actions between the soul and the body. In other words, these states and actions belong to the soul, because the appearance of these states in the soul is not always contemporaneous with their bodily effects. The intellect, on the other hand, can prevent certain psychological states, such as sorrow or joy, but it cannot prevent the emergence of certain bodily pleasures or pains (Davoodi, 1970: 275 and 345). Therefore, the soul is the "I".

Ibn Sina gives several reasons to prove that the "I" exists and that it is something other than the body. In addition to those reasons, he has an experience called "Suspended Man in Space" which is mentioned in the book *Nafs of Shifa* (Ibn Sina, 1983, vol. 2: 12 and 225-226), the treatise of *Azhawiyah* (Ibn Sina, 2003, 1270128), on the rational soul and its state (Ibn Sina, 1952: 184), the book of discussions (Ibn Sina, 1992: 62-58) and finally in the third way of *Isharat* (Ibn Sina, 2989: 159-160).

He has been used this experience to prove various issues such as the existence of the soul, the immateriality of the soul, the alterity of the soul with the body, and the direct knowledge of everyone to his/her soul (Davoodi, 1970: 299). Some believe that Ibn Sina in this experience seeks to prove the existence of the soul and its truth (Razi: 105). Others believe that Ibn Sina gives two kinds of reasons: ontological and based on quiddity, in which the quiddity of the existence of the soul (its immateriality) is proved (Ahanchi and Anvari, 2011). Others consider the experience of Ibn Sina's flying man to be similar to Descartes' *cogito* (Kaukua, 2007: 71).

Ibn Sina and some scholars have called the argument "man suspended in space" an experience, an internal and general experience (Ibn Sina, 1989: 159; Mesbah, 1996, vol. 2: 168).

In this experience, Ibn Sina tries to prove that there is a soul or "I" and that it is other than the perceptible body, and that the works are from it and not from the body. To show that an "I" exists, he enumerates four states: three realized states and one hypothetical state

1. Awakening: It is when the external and internal senses are active and I am aware of the objects around me and I am also aware of myself because I am not aware of other things until I am aware of the self or "I."

2. Sleep state: In this state, the external senses cannot perceive the sensations, but the inner senses are active. In this case, too, I am self-aware.

3. Drunkenness: In this state, the external and internal senses are not active, and yet the drunk is self-aware. In these three states, man is self-aware and can be aware of other things as well.

4. The state of man suspended in the air: In this state, man is aware only of himself and not of other things. Because in the first three states, the external or internal senses are somewhat active, but in the fourth case, none of them are active, and yet man is aware of himself. This hypothetical case is as follows:

Suppose a human being is suddenly created and is even perfect, with a sound mind and a healthy body structure. This man is suspended in the air and does not perceive anything, not even the things around him or his own organs. In such a state, such a person is unaware of everything except "his existence" (Ibn Sina, 1989: 159) or "his existence and identity" (Shad, 2019) and is aware of the existence of his human soul and the otherness of the soul with the body (Shad, 2019).

Who is the perceiver in the experience of man suspended in space? A) The external senses cannot perceive the soul because they are supposed to be disabled. B) The perceiver is esoteric senses; Perception by the esoteric senses is of two kinds: first, the esoteric senses without intermediaries, like the intellect, which in its intellection does not need mediator. Mediated esoteric senses such as imagination and illusion that perceive in a mediated manner. It is not possible to know I through the mediated esoteric senses because there is no mediator in this assumption; because we assumed that man is unaware of all his outward and inward powers. Therefore, the perceiver is the soul itself, and the perceived is the soul itself, and there is no separation or duality between the perceiver and the perceived (Ibn Sina, 1989: 162).

It remains to see what this "I" is. According to Ibn Sina, I is not the whole body, nor the individual organs such as the hands and feet, nor the internal organs such as the heart and liver, because in the assumption that man is suspended in the air, it is not aware of any of them. So I is something incorporeal and immaterial (ibid).

Ibn Sina may be criticized that we realize our essence and "I" through the action of the soul, like feeling and thought; because we feel and think, we become aware of our essence and "I". But according to Ibn Sina, we have no means to understand our essence and soul; but feeling and thinking themselves are mediators.

Ibn Sina's answer is that the meaning of an action is either an absolute act that requires an absolute actor, not a special actor which is the very essence of "you"; or you consider your action, like I think, I work. In this case, your essence is other than your action. So your essence either precedes your action or accompanies your action. So your essence is not proved by your action, and your essence is proved by itself. The result of the above argument is that there are various effects of the soul. The soul is the "I" and the soul is an immaterial substance that governs the body. In other words, the essence of the soul, or I, is an immaterial substance (Ibn Sina, 1989: 164).

In short, what Ibn Sina achieves following the experience of the suspended man is the proof of his own existence or his own being and identity or the existence of the human soul, which is other than the body and which man perceives it without the help of his senses. Logically, Ibn Sina's achievement is firstly his own existence and secondly his immediate awareness of it. Thirdly, that existence called the soul or I is immaterial.

### **Suhrawardi**

Suhrawardi, another Iranian philosopher, considered the framework of Peripatetic philosophy incorrect and made a philosophy called the philosophy of illumination with new



and well-established ideas. In the field of philosophical self-knowledge, he does not like the discourse of the Peripatetics and devises a new plan himself. Below, while giving a brief introduction, we recount and analyze Suhrawardi's view.

Suhrawardi classifies everything, from God to the lowest thing, first into light and darkness, and each of them into substantial and accidental; because everything is either light itself or darkness itself. Something that is itself light either is not dependent on another and is self-subsistent; such light is pure light; the intelligible world, and the human and celestial souls are pure light; or it depends on the other and that light is accidental. Accidental light itself has two categories: a category depends on bodies, like sunlight, etc., which are added to the substance of these things, and a category that depends on pure lights, like light of low order receiving from above. What is itself darkness is either needless of the place that is the covered substance or the darkness is a form for another, which is called the dark form (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 2: 107-108 and 117; Shirazi, 2005: 277-279; Shahrzuri, 2001: 288-192; Falsafi, 2019: 11-27).

Pure light is self-aware because it is by itself; the accident light is not self-aware because it is not by itself (Suhrawardi, 1998, J 2: 113). The most obvious pure light from Suhrawardi's point of view is everyone's self because everyone perceives himself immediately and whatever is so, it is self-aware (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 2: 114).

He recounts three experiences to prove his point: Liberation from the body (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 1: 115) and 2. Experience in sleep and 3. Self-awareness in waking (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 2: 115-117, 484 and 403-404; Homo, 1998, vol. 2: 110-112).

### **Experience of liberation from the body**

In the experience of "liberation from the body", Suhrawardi says that when I released myself from my body and looked at myself, I was alone myself in myself. As Ibn Sina says, I found neither substance nor body governance: "I was alone with myself and I looked at myself, I found my identity and existence, and I saw that it has to do with the without-substratum, which is like definition by description for substance, and it has to do with the body. These connections with the body are like the definition by description for soul. But I find these connections to the body outside of my own truth, and the characteristic of the without-substratum is a negative expression. I do not understand if being substance has any other meaning than the without-substratum, but I gained myself in front of myself and realized that I am not absent from it. It does not have a differentia because I did not understand it by differentia, but by the same characteristic of presence, and therefore if there was differentia or a feature other than existence in knowing the essence of self, I must have understood it simultaneously; because nothing is closer to me than myself. "In my essence, when I examine it in detail, I see nothing but existence and perception ..." (Suhrawardi, 1998, J 1: 115).

In this experience, there are some important points that should be mentioned: First, that existence and perception are the same from Suhrawardi's point of view. Suhrawardi uses a lot of philosophical-logical terms in a way that is inconsistent with those of Peripatetics. One of these terms is the term existence, which has one meaning in Peripatetic philosophy and another meaning according to Suhrawardi. According to Suhrawardi, existence has two meanings: an intellectual meaning, which is used by the peripatetic and is only in the mind, and the existence in the meaning of self-awareness and illumination. Wherever Suhrawardi speaks of existence, it means self-awareness, and self-awareness is the same as illumination (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 1: 186-8 and 190).

The second point is to replace the Aristotelian logical method with the intuitive method. We know that the only way to achieve the unknown from the peripatetic point of view is logic, and it is an Organon for right thinking. Thinking is also knowing the unknown with the known. The unknown are also of two kinds: 1- Concept (imagination) is unknown;

as we do not know what the meaning of the moon is. 2- Affirmation is connection of two unknown concepts; as we do not know that the moon is hot, in which case the connection between the moon and the hot is unknown.

The part of logic that teaches the method of correctly identifying an unknown concept is called definiens or definition and the part that teaches the method of correctly identifying an unknown affirmation is called "reasoning." The concept part of thought is superior to the other part, because without it, it cannot be addressed.

We know the unknown concept by the known ones. The known concept that explain the unknown concept is called the "knower" and the unknown concept after explanation is called the "known". When we know the unknown concepts through the knower's concepts, we call it definition. The definition in Aristotelian logic is either essential definition or definition by description. Essential definition is a discourse that expresses all of fixed and substantial properties of the unknown. From Aristotle's point of view, such a definition is accurate and complete, but it may be impossible to achieve (Aristotle, 1999: Second Analysis; Beta 8 and 10).

The definition by description is that which identifies the unknown with its accidentals (unstable properties) in addition to its essentials. Aristotle is dissatisfied with this definition, but uses it.

Suhrawardi marks the way of thinking of the Peripatetics and reveals its incorrectness with several reasons. In his view, fixed and substantial properties are all mentally posited and everything is an accumulation of accidents, and therefore it cannot be known by the method of Aristotelian logic, and we must use another method. After abandoning the Aristotelian essential definition, Suhrawardi considers the perception with one of the senses and intuition as ways of knowledge, each of which is universal in nature. Perception with the senses is specific to the dark and physical world, and "intuition" is specific to the world of illumination (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 2: 72-73, 135 and 47).

The third point is that in this experience Suhrawardi has reached self which is awareness, and in this reflection there is neither gender nor differentia. Suhrawardi answers two supposed questions and removes ambiguity from his experience in every way. The first question is that perhaps there is a differentia in this experience that Suhrawardi was unaware of. The answer is that if there is a differentia and it is other than my essence, of which I am unaware, the existence of such a differentia is impossible because my essence is present for me and whatever I am unaware of is not part of my essence. "The question is about the unknown differentia - the answer is that if you understand the meaning of I, the unknown does not add anything to it, so it is by itself outside of me" (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 1: 116-117).

The second question is that if all souls are the same awareness without composition, then all must be necessary being, and such a thing is impossible. Suhrawardi's answer is that the reason for the distinction of things is not their differentia, but rather the reason for their distinction can be their intensity and weakness. The necessary being is a pure existence that is most complete; my existence is from him as a ray of the sunlight; the difference between perfection and imperfection does not need differentia; this is possible on the basis of this imperfection and that absolute perfection (Suhrawardi, J 1: 186-8 and 190).

### **Sleep experience**

Suhrawardi sees Aristotle in a dream and complains about the difficulty of science and perception and asks him to help him solve this difficulty. Aristotle knows the solution in knowing the soul and tells him to come back to himself! (Suhrawardi, 1998: 75) Self-knowledge is intuitive and is not mediated by the representation, and any representation is

general and no matter how much it is limited, its generality is not removed; even if it has only one instance outside, it is still conceptually general, but your essence is not like that and it is alien with any representation.

In short, the perception from Suhrawardi's point of view is not "... but the soul's intention, when it observes and observation does not depend on general representation, but on the singular observation, and necessarily the soul's knowledge is illuminative" (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 1: 485); Perception is the attention of the soul when observing, and observation is not general but singular.

This experience can be considered as a separate type because Suhrawardi has realized in sleep both the importance of knowing the soul and its nature and therefore can be different from other experiences.

### **Awakening experience**

The experience of self-awareness in awakening is the core of Suhrawardi's philosophy, and without understanding it, understanding his philosophy is impossible. In order to clarify Suhrawardi's fundamental words, we must report the mediated or intuitive knowledge and the mediated empirical knowledge.

Philosophers consider knowledge as two types (Ibn Sina, 1989, p.?) (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 1: 484-489): mediated and immediate. In mediated knowledge, there must be three things in order to attain knowledge: A) someone knows, the knower. B) The idea of something known in the mind of the knower, imagination. C) Object known. All mediated knowledge is our knowledge of the external world. The question now is whether or not everyone's self-knowledge is similar to our knowledge external things.

### **How is it and why is it different?**

Everyone's self-knowledge is not similar to the first kind of knowledge. We have seen that in knowledge of the first kind there are three things: the knower, the known, and the object. In immediate knowledge, there are two things: the knower and the known; I and myself. It is obvious that I and self are not two separate things; they are one and the same, and that is knowledge, light and obviousness. Accordingly, everything I am unaware of is not a part of me, and the "I" is not fundamentally divisible; it is a simple light without genus and differentia.

Suhrawardi conceptualizes this experience and proves it in other words. He clarifies with several reasons: I, the knower, cannot perceive itself, the known, with its representation:

A. Representation of I is not I itself; it is something else and something known is the representation of I and not I. This means that I become aware of myself by becoming aware of something else, and its inaccuracy is clear (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 3:23 *ibid*, 1998, vol. 1: 484 *ibid*, vol. 1: 111).

B. I either know this is a representation of I or I do not know. If I know, then I already know the representation and I no longer need it; if I do not know that this representation is that of I, then I do not know myself (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 2: 111).

C. Each concept is general and, along with thousands of other concepts, does not become singular or specific. "Concept of I" is also general and "I" is a singular thing, so it cannot be known with it, and knowing this is only with itself (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 1: 484).

D. When my arm is wounded, I find pain without knowing that the skin is torn. Awareness of pain is intuitive that I am aware of it without being aware of skin tear (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 1: 485).

We accept that man cannot find himself with his representation, but can he find himself with his other attributes? In other words, I am something (essence) that I am aware, capable, alive, etc., and with these attributes I perceive my own essence. In his opinion, such a reason is baseless, because until I am aware of myself, I do not know whether these attributes belong to me or not (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 2: 111).

From what has been said, it becomes clear that everything that has a self-conscious essence finds itself without the mediation of any other attribute, whether it is knowledge or generosity, and so on. Things that we do not find intuitively like the hand, foot etc. are not the "I" itself. Pure lights are self-aware, the closest of which to man is everyone's self, and Suhrawardi examines the world of lights based on the study of everyone's self (Ibid: 112).

E. Suhrawardi expresses Ibn Sina's argument of the man suspended in the air in such a way that it is both real and in awakening, and everyone has such an experience. "Know that you forget every part of your body and see some organs whose destruction does not impair people's lives and perceptions, and you know some, such as the [brain], heart and liver, through comparison and description," he says. In general, every corporeal thing, no matter what it is, you can be unaware of [but] you do not be unaware of yourself and know yourself without all this (Suhrawardi, 1998, J 3: 23).

Every human being finds that he/she is unaware of an organ of his own organs, not of all of them, and since he/she cannot be unaware of himself and the organs can be neglected, then none of those organs is the self. "So your identity is not all of these organs, and not because of any of these organs, so that if one of these organs of the body were involved in your identity, you could never remember yourself without it, so you are beyond objects and accidents" (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 3:23; *ibid*, 2001, vol. 4: 85).

### **Application and judgment**

Here, we apply and evaluate Ibn Sina's experience of man suspended in the space and Suhrawardi's experience of liberation from body. Ibn Sina's experience of man suspended in the space is faced with several critiques: A. Experience of man suspended in space is merely a hypothesis, and we cannot logically prove existence of anything with it. Putting something hypothetical in place of something existential is a fallacy. In other words, as long as man is in this world, he really cannot be without his body and its powers, and man may really experience such a state after death. In contrast, Suhrawardi expresses the same experience, but instead of emphasizing the forgetfulness of all the organs, which is something really impossible, he recommends the forgetfulness of some of them, which everyone has experienced and experiences in his life.

B. Just because the perceiver and the perceived is something other than the body, it cannot be said that it is something immaterial. Perhaps the soul is a subtle body different from the earthly body, or perhaps some form of energy or an unknown body. In contrary, in Suhrawardi's experiences and on the basis of intuitive knowledge, there is no separation between the perceiver and the perceived. In intuitive knowledge, we first see with our knowledge and then conceptualize it; in the experience of seeing there is no concept.

C. The second states, man in sleep and third, man in drunkenness, do not show that man is not aware of his outward and inward senses, because that in such situations I feel that I am unaware of my outward and inward senses, it does not prove that it is really so.

D. The result of Ibn Sina's experience is the attainment of existence, and in other words, he achieves something composite, a being that is self-aware. That existence is the



result of Ibn Sina's experience is derived from his philosophical apparatus, ontology and methodology. In ontology, in addition to considering the subject of philosophy as existence qua existence (Ibn Sina, 1404; Theology: 9), Ibn Sina uses the Greek word *on*, meaning "existent" in its original form, and using "enna" instead of it is not correct (Khorasani (Sharaf), 1988). In the experience of the suspended man, after neglecting everything, he reaches his own existence and it becomes clear that existence is not equal to awareness. Existence is not conceptually and extensionally same as awareness. This is evident. They are not the same extensionally because existence is divided into existence that is aware and its criterion is being immaterial and existence that is not aware and its criterion is materiality.

After reaching the existence, one must ask what it is. It is a being that cannot be ignored after neglecting everything. This is where the logical method of the peripatetic philosophers shows itself. They consider the best way to recognize the unknown notion to be the essential definition that comes from the genus and the proximate differentia. From their point of view, then we can know something whose genus and differentia we know, and in this experience the soul is known so: an existence that I am not unaware of.

E. In addition, it seems that Ibn Sina failed to achieve his existence in this experience; because the result of this experience is incompatible with the experience itself. Ibn Sina comes to his own existence because "he is never unaware of himself" (awareness is unequal to existence). Such a conclusion is clearly incorrect, and the correct conclusion is that you come to self-awareness from "you are never unaware of yourself"; (awareness, to self and from self, to awareness).

On the contrary, Suhrawardi's experience can be considered as a phenomenological experience on the one hand, because he has perceived himself as he is by abandoning the presuppositions of Aristotelian logic, and on the other hand, this experience is universal and real, and anyone can look at himself and perceive it as only one thing.

The result of Suhrawardi's experience is the attainment of awareness, and in other words, he is very awareness, not something that is aware of himself. That awareness is the result of Suhrawardi's experience is also derived from his philosophical apparatus, ontology and methodology. Suhrawardi considers the subject of philosophy to be light (Suhrawardi, 1998, J 2: 6) and light is the same awareness in his view (Suhrawardi, 1998, J 2: 23). On the other hand, the soul is pure light and as a result, the soul is the same as awareness (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 2: 110-16).

Suhrawardi uses existence in his writings and considers the human psyche, angels and God as pure beings (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 1: 70, 116, 117, 403, 484 and 485; *ibid*, vol. 2: 111-114). According to Suhrawardi, existence has two meanings: the meaning that the peripatetic speaks of, and existence in the sense of self-awareness and illumination. In his Illuminationist thought, existence means self-awareness (Suhrawardi, 1998, vol. 1: 186-8 and 190).

Considering the comparison of Suhrawardi's experience of liberation from body and Ibn Sina's man suspended in space, it seems that Suhrawardi's experience of liberation from body is more plausible than Ibn Sina's man suspended in space.

Suhrawardi's second attempt to know the identity of the soul is the experience in sleep, which is similar to the experience of the suspended man of Ibn Sina, but seems more plausible than the experience of Ibn Sina. For first, it is more real than Ibn Sina's experience; everyone is unaware of some of their organs in their sleep, but they are aware of themselves. Second, as it was said in the experience of liberation from the body, Suhrawardi reaches awareness and Ibn Sina reaches his existence.

Suhrawardi's third experience is the experience of awakening. If it is compared by the experience of Ibn Sina's man suspended in space, it has some advantages: first, in this experience, there is no need to assume a situation that is in fact impossible; Secondly, by contemplating on oneself, one can reach a more desirable result than Ibn Sina's. Because in

this experience, Suhrawardi reaches the self, which is the same as light, and light is also the same as awareness, not existence.

### Conclusion

Ibn Sina did not follow Aristotle in the field of self-knowledge, and the result of not following him is to devise a new plan in philosophical psychology. One of these innovations is the experience of the man suspended in space, which he has dealt with in his initial and final writings. In this experience, Ibn Sina, instead of reaching self, has reached existence and it is clear that existence is not equal to awareness. In contrast, Suhrawardi, according to his methodology and the foundations of his philosophical thought, reaches own self in the experience of liberation from the body.

In his philosophical psychology, Suhrawardi uses the intuitive knowledge and inner intuition and reaches important achievements; we can consider him as one of the great philosophers in this regard.

It is true that everyone is present for himself and no one is closer to him than himself, but knowing the "self" is a difficult task; we can see its difficulty in the thoughts of thinkers such as Ibn Sina and Suhrawardi.

The most praiseworthy honoring of thinkers is the analysis and critique of their thought, because it is in analysis and critique that thought is reproduced and shortcomings are revealed and a solution is offered to them. One of Suhrawardi's most important works in the field of philosophical psychology is a critical look at the heritage of the Peripatetics, especially Ibn Sina. From this critical point of view, a new psychology has been born and becomes a tool for future theorists.

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