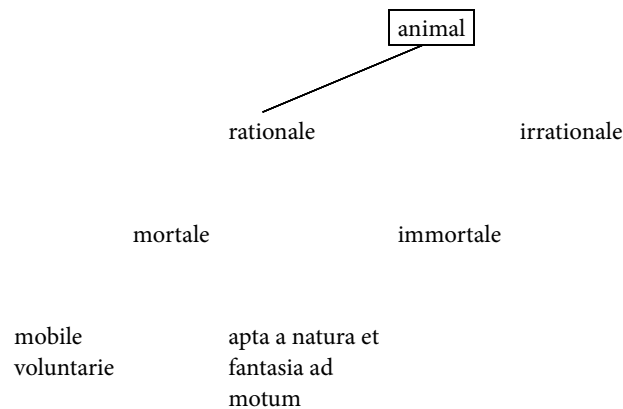


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dition I have elsewhere called the ‘Kindian tradition’.⁵ Miskawayh’s views on the soul are heavily indebted to Neoplatonic sources, though he builds on received Neoplatonic opinion. He seeks to defend it with new arguments, and in some cases spells out its consequences more clearly than had earlier figures such as al-Kindī. My discussion will focus on an unjustly ignored text, Miskawayh’s *Risāla fī-l-nafs wa-l-‘aql* [*Epistle on Soul and Intellect*, hereafter *Nafs*].⁶ I shall supplement this with the aforementioned *Fawz* and *Tahdhīb*, as well as *al-Hawāmil wa-l-shawāmil* [hereafter *Hawāmil*], which records an extensive philosophical correspondence between al-Tawhīdī and Miskawayh.⁷ These texts seem to present a fairly consistent psychological theory, despite their different purposes. Indeed, characteristically Miskawayh recycles arguments and even repeats passages verbatim from one treatise to another. Along the way we shall have an opportunity to observe that al-Kindī himself, alongside the Neoplatonic texts translated in the Kindī circle, was an influence on Miskawayh’s Platonizing psychology.

THE ONTOLOGY OF THE SOUL

I shall begin my overview of Miskawayh’s philosophical theory of soul by sketching the contents of his *Nafs*. The epistle responds to a short passage by an unnamed opponent,⁸

5. See my *Al-Kindī*, New York, 2007, ch. 1, and ‘The Kindian Tradition: The Structure of Philosophy in Arabic Neoplatonism’, in *Libraries of the Neoplatonists*, ed. C. D’Ancona (Leiden, 2007), 351–70.

6. Ed. in M. Arkoun, ‘Deux épîtres de Miskawayh’, *Bulletin d’études orientales*, 17, 1961–2, pp. 7–74, at pp. 10–55 in the Arabic pagination. I shall cite by Arabic pagination with line numbers.

7. Al-Tawhīdī and Miskawayh, *al-Hawāmil wa-l-shawāmil*, eds A. Amīn and A. Saqr, Cairo, 1951. Another work relevant for Miskawayh’s psychology is *Risāla fī-l-‘aql wa-l-ma‘qūl* [*Epistle on the Intellect and the Intelligible*], which sets out a Farabian scheme of celestial intellects related to the heavenly spheres. For this work see M. Arkoun, ‘Notes et documents: Miskawayh, *De l’intellect et de l’intelligible*’, *Arabica*, 11, 1964, pp. 83–7; translated in R. Marcotte, ‘The *Risāla fī-l-‘Aql wa-l-Ma‘qūl* of Miskawayh: An Epistle On the Intellect and the Intelligible’, *Islamic Culture*, 70, 1996, pp. 1–17.

8. Arkoun, ‘Deux épîtres’ (n. 6 above), p. 12 n. 6, tentatively suggests that this opponent might be al-Tawhīdī, simply because Miskawayh composed *Kitāb al-hawāmil wa-l-shawāmil*, which as mentioned above is a set of responses to questions by al-Tawhīdī. I am not particularly tempted by this suggestion; if Arkoun is right, then al-Tawhīdī would certainly seem to be playing devil’s advocate. The opponent