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# THE IMPLICATION OF CHALMERS' ONTO-EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROPERTY DUALISM ON THE HARD PROBLEM OF CONSCIOUSNESS: NEOSADRIAN PERSPECTIVE

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## Abstract

This study aims to examine the various onto-epistemological implications arising from Chalmers' property dualism within the framework of Neosadrian onto-epistemological substantialist dualism concerning consciousness. The methodology employed entails an onto-epistemological philosophical analysis, encompassing ontology and epistemology as the two branches of philosophy addressing the nature of reality and knowledge related to it. This onto-epistemological approach draws insights from various Neosadrian Islamic philosophical thinkers, including Taqi Misbah Yazdi, Muthahhari, Jawadi Amuli, and Thabataba'i. Consequently, the research inquiries encompass: *firstly*, elucidating how David J. Chalmers' argument on property dualism addresses the conundrum of consciousness; and *secondly*, exploring how Neosadrian onto-epistemology scrutinizes the concepts and ramifications of Chalmers' property dualism in relation to consciousness. The investigation demonstrates that Chalmers' argumentation in response to the *hard problem of consciousness* refers to the principle of pan-physicalism, positing consciousness as the foundation of reality's structure present in all entities. Moreover, consciousness, though distinct from matter, emerges

from intricate material processes. Additionally, the unidirectional duality interaction (epiphenomenal) resulting from pan-physicalism, according to Chalmers, offers the most cogent explanation for bridging the onto-epistemological gap inherent in the hard problem of consciousness. From the Neosadrian perspective, Chalmers' viewpoint carries implications: *firstly*, Chalmers' pan-physicalism implies the absence of an ontological relationship between consciousness and matter, thereby perpetuating their entrapment in the ontological gap, which constitutes the central issue of the hard problem of consciousness. *Secondly*, as consciousness engenders something external to itself, it contradicts the principle of *al-Wāḥid lā yaṣḍuru 'anhu illā al-wāḥid* in the Neosadrian perspective and elevates the position of structured reality (*murakkab*) over simple reality (*baṣīṭ*).

**Keywords:** *Phenomenal Property, Hard Problem of Consciousness, Aṣālat al-Wujūd, Tashkik al-Wujūd.*

## Abstrak

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menguji berbagai implikasi onto-epistemologis yang muncul dari dualisme properti Chalmers dalam kerangka dualisme substansialis onto-epistemologis Neosadrian mengenai kesadaran. Metode yang digunakan memerlukan analisis filosofis onto-epistemologis, meliputi ontologi dan epistemologi sebagai dua cabang filsafat yang membahas hakikat realitas dan pengetahuan atasnya. Pendekatan onto-epistemologis ini mengambil wawasan dari beragam pemikir Neosadrian, termasuk Taqi Misbah Yazdi, Muthahhari, Jawadi Amuli, dan Thabataba'i. Karena itu, pertanyaan dalam penelitian ini meliputi: *pertama*, ulasan bagaimana argumen David J. Chalmers seputar dualisme properti menjelaskan teka-teki kesadaran; dan *kedua*, eksplorasi bagaimana onto-epistemologi Neosadrian mencermati konsep dan konsekuensi dualisme properti Chalmers mengenai kesadaran. Investigasi ini menunjukkan bahwa argumentasi Chalmers dalam menanggapi problem rumit kesadaran mengacu pada prinsip pan-fisisisme, yang menempatkan kesadaran sebagai fondasi struktur realitas yang ada di semua entitas. Selain itu, kesadaran, meskipun berbeda dari materi, muncul dari proses material yang rumit. Selain itu, interaksi dualitas searah (epifenomenal) yang dihasilkan dari pan-fisisisme, menurut Chalmers, menawarkan penjelasan yang paling meyakinkan untuk menjembatani kesenjangan onto-epistemologis yang melekat dalam problem rumit dari kesadaran. Dari perspektif Neosadrian, sudut pandang Chalmers

membawa implikasi: *pertama*, pan-fisisisme Chalmers menyiratkan tidak adanya hubungan ontologis antara kesadaran dan materi, dengan demikian mengabadikan jebakan mereka dalam kesenjangan ontologis, yang merupakan isu sentral dari masalah sulit kesadaran. *Kedua*, karena kesadaran melahirkan sesuatu yang eksternal bagi dirinya sendiri, maka hal ini bertentangan dengan prinsip *al-Wāḥid lā yaṣḍuru ‘anhu illā al-wāḥid* dalam perspektif Neosadrian dan mengangkat posisi realitas terstruktur (*murakkab*) di atas realitas sederhana (*basīṭ*).

**Kata Kunci:** *properti fenomenal, problem rumit kesadaran, aṣālat al-wujūd, tashkik al-wujūd.*

## Introduction

In the study of the philosophy of consciousness, particularly concerning the hard problem of consciousness, a philosophical figure typically adopts a steadfast ontological position when addressing the gap between mind and body (Toresano and Al Walid 2023). This stance can be categorized into two camps: materialist monism and substantialist dualism. However, David J. Chalmers challenges both and introduces his ontological standpoint, termed property dualism. This position sparks intense debate and is often compared by researchers in the philosophy of mind to substantialist dualism (Chalmers 2010a). On the other hand, a crucial factor contributing to the emergence of the concept of phenomenal property is the shortcomings of René Descartes' substantialist dualism. However, upon delving into the depths of Islamic thought, it becomes evident that Islamic philosophy has extensively engaged in discussions and advanced arguments concerning the ontological gap, particularly within the framework of Neosadrian. This is evident, among other aspects, in the onto-epistemological concept of *aṣālat al-wujūd*, characterized by its various essential attributes (ontology), and the categorization of *ḥuṣūlī* and *ḥuḍūrī* knowledge (epistemology) (Daftari 2010). Neosadrian ideas, aside from offering a philosophical resolution to the ontological gap dilemma, also possess the capacity to scrutinize the rational implications generated by philosophical deliberations. This is apparent in its ontological foundation, which

directly challenges the ontological status of reality through its concept of *aṣālat al-wujūd* (Rahman 2022). Hence, the issue and stance of Chalmers' dualistic concepts in addressing the problem of consciousness should be viewed within the framework of Neosadrian philosophy as a fresh perspective on substantialist dualism for analyzing the ramifications engendered by Chalmers' property dualism.

The examination of David J. Chalmers' property dualism as a subject of study can presently be categorized into three primary aspects: *first*, the exploration and elaboration of Chalmers' dualistic concepts. As noted by Mistry, Chalmers endeavors in this context to defend the Computational Theory of Mind (CTM) and elucidate that the CTM framework can address issues concerning disparate computational entities (Mistry 2015). *Secondly* is the discursive and scientific discourse on David J. Chalmers' proposition of property dualism. In this regard, Ross asserts that the conceivability argument is unsustainable and that the knowledge argument holds no relevance in the metaphysical discourse (Ross 2013). *Thirdly*, there is the application of David J. Chalmers' property dualism position to various scientific discoveries. According to Robinson, property dualism aligns or parallels the quantum physics model and even correlates with theories of differing perspectives, suggesting its potential application to the mind-uploading method (W.S. Robinson 2014). Among the three primary aspects of the study, none has specifically centered on scrutinizing the implications of David J. Chalmers' property dualism, particularly from the standpoint of substantialist dualism in Islamic philosophy.

The objective of this research is to enrich the discourse surrounding dualism within Chalmers' perspective while examining potential developments and criticisms from the wealth of Islamic philosophy, encompassing integrative traditions, philosophy, *irfān* (mysticism), and religious texts. This study aims to demonstrate the relevance and argumentative nature (both rational and scientific) of philosophical doctrines such as Neosadrian in analyzing David J. Chalmers' dualism and its implications for the discourse

on consciousness. Furthermore, it seeks to elucidate the onto-epistemological implications as foundational to Chalmers' reasoning within the framework of Neosadrian philosophy. Therefore, building upon the aforementioned analysis, this research can be formulated around the following questions: How does David J. Chalmers' property dualism argument elucidate the hard problem of consciousness? What is the perspective of Neosadrian onto-epistemology regarding the ideas and implications of David J. Chalmers' property dualism concerning the problem of consciousness?

Studying the implications and criticisms of Chalmers' property dualism within the Neosadrian framework is crucial as it can offer a nuanced understanding and resolution to potential applications of Chalmers' property dualism concerning consciousness. Additionally, it positions Islamic philosophy as a discourse evolving in line with the developmental trends in Western philosophy and modern science. Research indicates that Chalmers' argument regarding the hard problem of consciousness revolves around pan-physicalism, asserting that consciousness forms the foundational structure of reality and permeates all entities. Furthermore, consciousness is posited as a distinct entity from matter but emerges from complex material processes. Moreover, the unidirectional duality interaction (epiphenomenal) resulting from pan-physicalism, according to Chalmers, provides the most rational explanation for addressing the onto-epistemological gap inherent in the hard problem of consciousness. However, from a Neosadrian perspective, Chalmers' pan-physicalism implies that consciousness and matter lack an ontological relationship, thereby remaining ensnared in the ontological gap, which constitutes the core issue of the hard problem of consciousness, the cause gives rise to something that is not part of itself; the fundamental reality precedes the cause and is not the cause itself.

## Dualism

Dualism in philosophy is defined as a paradigm that posits reality is divided into two distinct realms: mental reality and physical reality.

This concept emerges from a fundamental issue in the philosophy of mind, which argues that reality cannot be solely explained by the physical realm. Consequently, this perspective stands in contrast to materialist monism, which contends that reality can be entirely understood through the physical domain. Within the context of the philosophy of science, dualism stems from challenges within physics. Physics, serving as the foundational science for understanding reality, encounters difficulties in elucidating the relationship between mental phenomena and the physical brain. Dualism arises from this challenge, asserting that mental reality cannot be reduced to physical reality (the brain). As a theory, dualism postulates the existence of distinct mental and physical domains, each with its unique reality and systems (Pigliucci 2014). The challenge of understanding the relationship between the mental and physical realms forms the foundation for the emergence of the ontological stance of dualism in philosophical and scientific discourse. The realm of physical reality encompasses properties attributed to physical entities, such as weight, size, color, shape, length, width, space, time, and motion. Conversely, mental attributes encompass properties that cannot be ascribed to physical reality, including emotions, perceptual experiences, intentions, and the like (W.S. Robinson 2014).

Dualism, characterized by its well-known duality, can be delineated into three distinct forms. The first form is substantial dualism, which demonstrates that these differences exist at the substantive level (W.S. Robinson 2014). This indicates that substantialist dualism perceives mental reality and physical reality as substantively distinct entities. The second form is property dualism. Property dualism fundamentally holds that there are two inherently different property realities (Chalmers 1996). This perspective posits the existence of mental properties that cannot be encompassed by physical properties; rather, they stand in contrast to them. In essence, this dualistic model maintains that the physical realm cannot fully account for mental properties, as both operate under distinct

causal laws (Chalmers 1996). The third form is predicative dualism. Predicative dualism contends that reductionism, or the perspective that all mental phenomena can be quantified and explained solely in terms of physical reality, is untenable (Daudov 2014). At this juncture, predicative dualism acknowledges its inconsistency with the prevailing monist view, which is generally prominent in the scientific realm (W.S. Robinson 2014). Instead, it is recognized that both realms (physical and mental) operate under distinct laws and mechanisms. Among these three dualistic models, each possesses unique characteristics pertaining to duality and asserts the existence of separate realities that cannot be reduced to a singular physical or mental reality.

### **The Hard Problem of Consciousness**

By definition, the hard problem of consciousness is a complex issue that arises when attempting to explain how the physical system, known as the brain, generates subjective personal experiences (Grindeland 2013). In this dilemma, Chalmers identifies what he terms an “explanatory gap”, a divide that separates the explanation of the correlation between the emergence of consciousness and the brain, stemming directly from the standpoint of physicalism. If the hard problem exists, there is also an opposing explanation for the constraints of this issue, known as the “easy problem” of consciousness. This is deemed “easy” because it does not delve into the discourse on the personal self, which constitutes the core issue that the hard problem of consciousness seeks to elucidate (Sękowski and Rorot 2022). Easy problems, conversely, focus solely on brain processes and their diverse functions in human behavior, as well as the brain’s reception of stimuli and decision-making mechanisms. Thus, the easy problem does not inquire into the subjective personal experiences that arise within the brain, which constitute the central issue in the natural sciences (W.S. Robinson 2014). Hence, the hard problem of consciousness endeavors to explore and propose steps

toward scientifically and philosophically elucidating the gap in personal experience.

From a discursive standpoint in studying the problem, there are two aspects to consider: scientific and philosophical. In the scientific study model, the hard problem of consciousness may gradually find an answer through the examination of the easy problem of consciousness. By utilizing the theory of NCCs (neural correlates of consciousness), researchers aim to elucidate the problem of subjective experience by examining the activity of specific neurons. It is posited that certain neuronal activities bear a causal relationship to individual consciousness (Andrea 2019). Chalmers, a prominent figure in the exploration of the hard problem of consciousness, acknowledges that research findings indicate the activation of numerous neurons plays a significant role in shaping and elevating individual consciousness (Chalmers 2022). However, Chalmers perceives that this does not provide a reason for the emergence and origin of the subjective self, nor does it elucidate the relationship between the presence of this experience and neurons (Fletcher 2020). This scientific issue has prompted the development of a philosophical discursive study approach model, which seeks metaphysical justifications to support the explanation of this problem (Chalmers 2022). In this model, Chalmers adheres to the panpsychism paradigm, which acknowledges the existence of diverse consciousness within reality. This paradigm posits that every entity possesses personal consciousness, fundamental to its reality. Of these two study models, both develop the most effective approach and remain aligned with scientific findings.

### **Chalmer's Short Biography**

Chalmers, hailing from Sydney, Australia, cultivated his early years with a fervent passion for mathematics. Beyond a mere pastime, his proficiency in solving mathematical quandaries distinguished him. In philosophical parlance, one might aptly designate this

individual as a math aficionado or a math geek (Lawrence 2020). He pursued a course in mathematics at Adelaide University from 1983 to 1986. He embarked on an intellectual odyssey to Europe, culminating in his arrival at Oxford University, marking a significant chapter in his scholarly pursuits. Beyond his immersion in mathematics, he exhibited a profound interest in the intricacies of consciousness philosophy. Ultimately, he resolved to undertake doctoral studies at Indiana University, delving into the realm of cognitive science—a discipline that intersects with these philosophical quandaries. Under the tutelage of Doug Hofstadter, a luminary in the domains of philosophy of mind and art, he conducted rigorous research, shaping his scholarly trajectory. Following a two-year tenure at the cognitive studies laboratory alongside Hofstadter, Chalmers opted to pursue postdoctoral studies at Washington University in Saint Louis. Subsequently, he transitioned to Santa Cruz from 1995 to 1998, where he ascended to a professorial position, before relocating to the University of Arizona from 1999 to 2004. Thereafter, he returned to Australia, embarking on a distinguished career trajectory at the Australian National University in 2004 (Lawrence 2020).

He forged his academic trajectory through collaborative endeavors in publishing, spearheading a co-founding initiative with his peers in the esteemed international scientific publishing platform, Philapers (Nash 1997). This institution encompasses philosophical inquiries spanning from metaphysics to the philosophy of science. Chalmers has faced criticism from researchers regarding his perspectives on the philosophy of consciousness. What propelled Chalmers into the scientific limelight was not only his role in founding a scientific publishing company specializing in cognitive studies and philosophy but also his notable presentation at an international conference. During the conference, Chalmers delivered a keynote address titled “Toward a Science of Consciousness” (Maung 2019). His presentation further elevated his renown, solidifying his status as a luminary in the realms of philosophy and

science. It prompted his audience, primarily composed of scientists, to recognize the intricate nature and paramount significance of the issue at hand. As previously underscored, this conundrum represents a pivotal lacuna awaiting resolution, encapsulating the elusive quest to unveil the enigmatic relationship between subjective consciousness and material phenomena (W.S. Robinson 2014).

### **David Chalmers' Property Dualism**

Chalmers' property dualism denotes the general definition of property dualism, an ontological stance within the philosophy of mind tradition positing a duality at the level of properties, specifically mental properties and physical properties (W.S. Robinson 2014). The physical properties Chalmers refers to encompass attributes such as mass, shape, size, and motion of a physical object. Conversely, the phenomenal properties alluded to by Chalmers elude explication through these physical attributes; they encompass sensations such as taste, color, pain, and happiness (Chalmers 2022). According to Chalmers, these two properties are inherently irreducible to one another, implying that terms from each domain cannot adequately elucidate the other. While physical properties lend themselves to objective explication, phenomenal properties resist accommodation within linguistic systems and even the constraints of physical laws (Chalmers 1996). The stringent demarcation of roles and positions between the two ontological statuses leads Chalmers to the conclusion that phenomenal properties are non-reductive.

According to Chalmers, grasping the essence of the property dualism stance necessitates recognizing unequivocally that phenomenal properties defy explication by physical properties. Chalmers posits that one must apprehend the conscious acknowledgment that phenomenal experience is inherently subjective, terming this state "phenomenal realism" (Chalmers 1996). In elucidating phenomenal experience, Chalmers distinctly distinguishes the term "phenomenal experience" from

“consciousness” or “awareness”. This distinction is crucial as it delineates the fundamental and distinct nature of phenomenal experiences from physical properties. He expounded upon the disparity between phenomenal experience and awareness by precisely defining the nature of awareness (Blackmore 2005). According to him, consciousness entails a person’s conscious states, wherein they can access the information in their mind to regulate behavior. This implies that awareness invariably aligns with a circumstance governed by an individual’s self, enabling them to consciously access their memories with full self-control (Chalmers 2002). Consequently, awareness always ensues after the functioning of physical properties. Thus, the existence of physical properties is requisite for the emergence of consciousness. However, what is termed a phenomenal experience precedes the functioning of physical properties (W.S. Robinson 2014) This condition describes a state where humans unequivocally experience awareness without the necessity of self-control.

Chalmers also posits that reality comprises consciousness inherent in every smallest element, a concept he terms “micro-physical” (Chalmers 2012). According to Chalmers, consciousness is present in every physical microstructure, down to the smallest element. However, he views consciousness not as an independent substance, but rather as contingent upon complex processes of emergent properties. These emergent properties arise as a result of intricate system processes, rather than being unified entities, as in the context of neurons (Chalmers 2022). If so, then the ontological relationship between the physical and consciousness is unidirectional, signifying that the physical dictates the existence of consciousness, which constitutes the primary fundamental element of reality. Thus, Chalmers concurs with duality, albeit not at the level of substance. He regards consciousness as a fundamental reality, yet posits that this consciousness is not a separate substance from the body but rather one substance, namely the physical. From this perspective, it can be inferred that substantialist dualism within the framework of

panpsychism shares similarities but also exhibits distinct differences (Maung 2019).

### **Neosadrian in the Scientific Discourse Map of the Hard Problem of Consciousness**

Neosadrian is rooted in the evolution of Mulla Sadra's philosophy, which accentuates form as the fundamental essence of all reality and its intrinsic attributes. It perceives this form as the focal point of discourse across all philosophical inquiries, including modern philosophy (Gama 2014). The successors and proponents of Mulla Sadra's philosophical legacy were later labeled as Neosadrian. Neosadrian contextualizes and systematizes Sadra's concepts within contemporary philosophical discourse. One of the modern quandaries that Neosadrians, including Muhammad Husein Thabataba'i, Murtadha Muthhari, Abdullah Jawadi Amuli, Muhammad Taqi Misbah Yazdi, and Hasan Zadeh Amuli, endeavor to address is the matter of epistemology (Gama 2014). Initially, this issue was not part of the concentrated study of classical Islamic philosophy. This is because Islamic philosophy, from Aristotelianism and illuminationism to Transcendent Theosophy, primarily focused on the study of ontology (Rifa'i 2001). However, over time, with the advancement of science and the emergence of various paradigms and methodologies, classical Islamic philosophy began to incorporate epistemological themes that mirror the evolution of modern Western philosophy (Nasr 2006).

The hard problem of consciousness, within the Neosadrian context, can be viewed as a contemporary exploration concerning the nature of the soul, a facet of the epistemological inquiry. Generally, the study of the soul isn't acknowledged by scientists, as the notion of a soul as an immaterial substance whose functions are intertwined with matter is typically deemed unscientific and beyond the purview of scientific observation. Nonetheless, this study has garnered attention within the critical discourse analysis framework

(Coates 2008). This study model accommodates various issues and approaches in an interdisciplinary manner. It encompasses scientific studies, rooted in both empirical and non-empirical findings, which can include language and social sciences (Abdullah 2016). These disciplines, although often marginalized in modern scientific studies, find a place within this framework and gain recognition (Coates 2008). The nature of the soul, as defined above, is then examined through an interdisciplinary lens, employing various approaches to address the issue. Philosophers explore facets of the soul that cannot be elucidated by positivistic science reliant on observational discoveries, within the realm of critical discursive studies (Ni'am 2020).

Neosadrian and the hard problem of consciousness can be situated within a critical discursive study model, enjoying significant academic backing, particularly within the fields of social sciences, anthropology, and psychology. According to Nasr, this stems from the necessity for modern humans to comprehend a more intricate reality, urging the expansion and integration of various approaches in studies. Chalmers also echoes this sentiment, suggesting that if a study cannot be confined within the bounds of a particular framework, there must be an expansion of the study, albeit still adhering to scientific procedures (Chalmers 2016). Therefore, Neosadrian finds a foundation and relevance within the critical discourse study model concerning the hard problem of consciousness, particularly in the context of exploring the nature of the soul and its interaction with the body.

### **The Essence of Phenomenal Properties in the Realm of Existence**

Chalmers posits that the fundamental essence of phenomenal properties is grounded in the physical reality wherein phenomenal experiences manifest. These experiences, in turn, arise from these properties and various intricate micro-physical mechanisms that

resist reduction solely to physical reality (Chalmers 2010a). This suggests that Chalmers contends that phenomenal experiences do not originate from the physical realm *per se*, but rather emerge as a consequence of physical mechanisms, excluding non-physical mechanisms (Maung 2019). At this juncture, it becomes apparent that the cause of non-physical generation mirrors the ensuing outcome, wherein the physical does not engender the physical, but rather yields a non-physical phenomenal reality. Chalmers promptly advances this notion as his primary critique of materialism (Chalmers 2010a).

In exploring the onto-epistemological ramifications of this assertion, Neosadrians delve into the concept of the nature of being or the principality of being. Sadra, serving as the principal influence on Neosadrian thought, posited that the essence of reality lies solely in its form, contrasting with *māhiya* (Shirazi 1984). The quiddity is deemed fundamental because, according to Suhrawardi, the definition of what it is depends on *māhiya*. According to Sadra, a *māhiya* cannot be designated as such or exist as itself without existence (Thabataba'i 1387). Hence, existence forms the foundation of *māhiya*'s reality. Within the framework of Neosadrian ontology, phenomenal properties can be positioned as components of the mode of being or the image of being. As previously noted, form serves as the underlying principle of every reality, whether material or non-material.

In the Neosadrian context, phenomenal properties, as part of the mode of existence, can be discerned more specifically in discussions concerning human nature, particularly focusing on the soul (Thabataba'i 1387). This is because, within the framework of Neosadrian ontology, the soul is deemed the most fundamental aspect of human beings. Neosadrian concurs with the characterization of the soul as a reality whose potential is non-material, yet its actuality is immaterial (Thabataba'i 1387). This definition renders the study of the soul scientifically viable for research, as it suggests that the soul, as an independent substance, exerts actual effects in the form

of material actions. These material actions can thus serve as the foundation for substantiating the status of the soul. In the realm of science, mental models aligning with this definition can be found across various scientific disciplines, such as psychotherapy, which devises scientific procedures to alleviate stress levels in individuals suffering from stomach acid issues (Gama 2014). This is evident from scientific studies indicating that stress levels can influence physical well-being, including increasing stomach acid levels. Additionally, similar correlations are observed in other diseases such as heart disease, where stress levels are recognized as one of the contributing factors. Thus, mental states can significantly impact bodily health, aligning with the definition of the soul employed in Neosadrian studies and various schools of substantialist dualism.

The phenomenal properties and experiences, central to Chalmers' study, are regarded as the outcomes of micro-physical processes. This implies that the nature of these properties and experiences is inherently linked to intricate physical activities. This theory draws from panpsychism, which posits that reality comprises consciousness, with each consciousness arising from the complexity of physical systems, termed emergent systems (Maung 2019). At this juncture, Chalmers examines the reality of phenomenal properties and their experiences through the lens of the relational model of epiphenomenalism, asserting that the physical impacts the soul, but not vice versa (Chalmers 1996). The essence of physicality as the foundation of reality engenders something distinct from its ontological status. Within the Neosadrian framework, this contradicts the principle of *al-wāḥid lā yaṣḍuru 'anhu illā al-wāḥid*, which asserts that one does not give birth to another (Thabataba'i 1387). This implies that the essence of reality will generate something entirely dissimilar to its status. This notion stems from the impossibility of reality giving rise to something that is not inherent or characteristic of that reality. Chalmers posits that matter, or more specifically the brain, gives rise to phenomenal experience,

yet concurrently maintains that phenomenal experience cannot be solely reduced to the brain (Chalmers 1996). Therefore, phenomenal experience should not be considered as originating from the brain, as it differs from the brain itself and the brain cannot fully account for it.

The problem that Chalmers encounters within the Neosadrian framework can be surmounted by adopting existence as the guiding principle. Through this lens, every reality can be perceived as a manifestation of existence (Yazdi 1990). Since existence, as its essence, can simultaneously encompass diversity and unity (Amuli 1388). The dilemma regarding the disparity between phenomenal experience and matter, or their irreducibility to one another, would find resolution if both are regarded as manifestations of existence. Both would be encompassed within the concept of gradation, which comprises various levels and systems but is merely an effect of the mind perceiving the image of existence (Thabathaba'i 1428). As essentially existence is the fundamental aspect underlying the ontological status of both. This concept can also be extended to the ontological relationship between the soul and the body, which forms the crux of Chalmers' critique of substantialist dualism. According to Chalmers, with the principle of existence and its gradations, it becomes rational to accept the impossibility of mutual influence between the soul and the body due to their substantial (ontologically independent) status within the framework of being. It's important to note that both the soul and the body are considered images of a graded form of existence (Thabataba'i 1387). Hence, Chalmers' panpsychism within the Neosadrian framework carries implications for an ontological status that appears incongruous, as physics, as a principle of reality, does not encompass its effects, namely phenomenal experience. This is because the condition for a cause to be deemed a cause is its ability to account for the nature of the effect or consequence. Furthermore, the ontological gap criticized can be addressed by the principle of existence and its gradational nature.

## **The Ontological Gap of Phenomenal Properties in the Gradations of Existence**

One of the central issues in the hard problem of consciousness, as raised by Chalmers within substantialist dualism, is the ontological gap between the soul and the body. He questions how two entirely distinct realities can interact with each other in the absence of any similarities. For Chalmers, this presents a fundamental philosophical dilemma for substantialist dualism or interactionism. Consequently, he finds himself compelled to adhere to the principle of panpsychism, viewing reality as consciousness arising from the complexity of physical phenomena. This perspective also serves as a response to the inadequacy of materialist explanations, which reduce phenomenal reality to mere matter. By adopting a panpsychical stance, Chalmers aims to circumvent the problem of the ontological gap and evade materialist reductionism (Chalmers 1996).

In Chalmers' view, reality is solely physical, and its complexity, according to him, will never be fully understood, even if humans were to create a flawless simulation model mirroring the mechanisms occurring in humans. However, Chalmers primarily criticizes substantialist materialism and dualism concerning this problem without explaining how phenomenal experiences, generated by phenomenal properties, can be interconnected, despite their inherent differences (Chalmers 1996).

However, Chalmers relies on this assumption based on the discoveries and studies of quantum physics, which reveal the existence of phenomena beyond the scope of classical physics such as Newtonian physics (Chalmers 1995). Additionally, there are findings from quantum physics that, according to him, do not align with substantialist dualism as previously mentioned, nor with materialism. One notable finding that has undergone numerous tests is the discovery in quantum physics concerning superposition. The phenomenon of superposition involves sub-atomic particles existing

in multiple states or positions simultaneously before measurement (Chalmers 2009). According to him, consciousness or subjective experience from the perspective of a materialist is produced through the brain. Therefore, there should be findings or explanations on how the superposition phenomenon of quantum physics can affect the brain. However, according to him, such findings or explanations have yet to materialize. These findings highlight various physical phenomena that diverge from the principles of Newtonian physics. It is on this basis that Chalmers asserts that phenomenal experiences, contained within phenomenal properties, possess systems and mechanisms that can still be scientifically justified. Furthermore, he argues that other positions, such as substantialist dualism and materialism, are not consistent with quantum physics, which serves as his reference (Grindeland 2013).

From this explanation, various possibilities can be discerned to be addressed by the Neosadrian concept of gradations of form, and their implications can be scrutinized. The gradation of existence can be succinctly elucidated as the depiction of a singular form possessing different gradations or intensities in terms of its existence (Thabataba'i 1387). This gradation arises from differences in quality among this existence. Simultaneously, the existence embodies two characteristics: singleness and plurality (Thabataba'i 1387). Mulla Sadra terms this concept *al-kathrah fi 'ayn al-wahdah wa al-wahdah fi 'ayn al-kathrah* (plurality in unity and unity in plurality). Neosadrians further elaborate that differences and levels in form do not stem from its substance, but rather manifest at the level of existence, presence or absence, appearance, invisibility, and hiddenness (Al Walid 2012).

These levels or gradations of quality are determined by the level of complexity; the more complex the form appears, the lower its position. In this context, matter is a mode of existence with a complex appearance, where the dimensions of the material can be quantitatively measured and determined. Conversely, if the mode of existence is simpler (*basīṭ*), it signifies higher quality (Yazdi 1990).

In this context, it can be likened to the gradation or quality of light. The further the light is from the source and undergoes various kinds of refraction, the dimmer it becomes, indicating lower quality. Conversely, the closer the light is to the source and the less refraction it experiences, the higher the quality (Warno 2023).

The Neosadrian framework of gradations of being, as explained above, suggests that the phenomenal properties described by Chalmers operate at the physical level. Chalmers himself assumes that the physical, as a representation of existence with gradations, should underlie phenomenal experience as an effect. As Chalmers explains, subjective phenomenal experiences are viewed as components of events generated by complex physical mechanisms (Chalmers 2009). Neosadrian philosophy posits that if this is the case, then the lowest gradation should not be at the simpler level (*basīṭ*) of phenomenal experience. The ontological gap that arises between phenomenal properties and phenomenal experiences is perceived as part of the image of existence, implying that both are essentially the same existence with different manifestations. The existence, which appears or is depicted as a being, is entirely existentially dependent on the absolute being, which serves as the foundation of its existence. This perspective suggests that reality between levels is not composite; rather, its existence is entirely unified or dependent, and fundamentally, there is only a singular reality amidst multiplicity. Consequently, there exists no ontological gap between the two within the Neosadrian framework. The positioning of the physical as higher than phenomenal experience, which Chalmers suggests cannot be reduced to matter itself, leads to an irrational ontological standpoint.

### **Objectivity and Subjectivity of Phenomenal Property in the Concepts of *Huṣūlī* and *Huḍūrī***

Chalmers contends that subjective knowledge, often disregarded by materialists, holds significant importance in endeavors aimed at

uncovering reality through science (Chalmers 1996). The subjective experience he refers to is an experience that unfolds within the mechanism of phenomenal properties, accessible exclusively to the subject undergoing it. Such an experience is inherently personal, akin to a private chamber where the subject engages with their own life (Blackmore 2005). Meanwhile, objective knowledge pertains to factual information that can be empirically verified. Chalmers views the phenomenal experience as a crucial reality that shapes the trajectory of a more holistic understanding of the world. Therefore, he cautions against adopting a reductionist materialist approach when addressing this issue. However, Chalmers confines the examination of the subjectivity and objectivity of knowledge to natural scientific methodologies, emphasizing that studies must adhere to experimental testing (Chalmers 1996).

In light of this explanation, Neosadrian philosophy considers the study of subjectivity and objectivity of knowledge within the framework of *ḥuṣūlī* and *ḥuḍūrī*. These two concepts elucidate how the knowing subject acquires knowledge: *ḥuṣūlī* (mediated) and *ḥuḍūrī* (directly without mediation). The intermediary here is the concept itself, serving as the bridge between the known reality or object and the knowing subject. These foundational concepts constitute the focal points of inquiry into the nature of knowledge in the Neosadrian tradition. Neosadrians perceive scientific studies and all forms of knowledge obtained through conceptualization as falling under *ḥuṣūlī* science, encompassing philosophy, theology, science, and theoretical Sufism. Conversely, the science of *ḥuḍūrī* necessitates that the knowing subject directly experiences knowledge without the need for conceptualization (Yazdi 1990). This model of knowledge can be accessed through a mere awareness of existence or the direct experience of existence by the subject. Furthermore, Sufi practitioners have cultivated this model of knowledge through the outcomes of inner feelings, which then lead to subjective experiences of divinity that impart knowledge without

any intermediary. Naturally, this has significant implications for the subjectivity of knowledge, which can only be actualized through the individuality of the experience (Lone 2020).

From this explanation, upon examining the phenomenal experience as meant by Chalmers, the model of this experience is rooted in the understanding of presence within the context of Neosadrian science. This can be delineated through the definition of phenomenal experience itself, along with the characteristics elucidated by Chalmers. The subjectivity of phenomenal experience serves as the primary characteristic of the presence of that experience within the realm of science. Through various criticisms, Chalmers contends that phenomenal experience must be differentiated from consciousness. His rationale is that consciousness remains subject to the control of the individual and the various mechanisms occurring in the brain (Chalmers 1996). Meanwhile, phenomenal experiences transcend the control of the subject and are undergone without the subject's volition (Chalmers 2010b). This process of distinguishing between phenomenal experience and consciousness evidently indicates that the level of understanding Chalmers discusses concerning phenomenal experience aligns with the science of *ḥudūrī* within a Neosadrian framework. At this juncture, Chalmers implicitly acknowledges the existence of inherent knowledge, which serves as the foundation for other forms of knowledge. This inherent knowledge, in turn, shapes objective knowledge as an outcome of evaluating subjective knowledge.

Chalmers' explication of the nature of phenomenal experience already suggests implications that resonate with the dichotomy of knowledge in Neosadrian studies. Although the genesis of the concept of phenomenal experience stemmed from Chalmers' critique of materialist reductionism, Neosadrian departure stems from the studies on existence. Subjectively, in various instances and interviews, Chalmers even conceded that the genesis of his criticisms of materialism marked a fundamental shift in his

paradigm. This indicates that his change in perspective is genuinely rooted in a thorough awareness and acknowledgment of the deficiencies of materialism. However, his exploration of phenomenal experiences still binds him to empirical findings as the foundation for substantiating all the mechanisms underlying these phenomenal experiences. Consequently, the fount of knowledge concerning phenomenal presence or experience itself is confined to scientific inquiry, and its advancement does not align with the essence of phenomenal experience itself, which he posits as non-reductive. Neosadrian posits this science of presence as truly the cornerstone of conceptual science (*ḥuṣūlī*) (Labib 2011). Conceptual knowledge products derived from *ḥuṣūlī* without a foundation in presence will not engender a conceptual knowledge product. At its pinnacle of development, *ḥuḍūrī* will generate a model of knowledge that can directly access reality in its form (Yazdi 1990). This implies that Chalmers' method for examining phenomenal experiences aligns with the *ḥuḍūrī* model, which directly accesses and maximizes these experiences to uncover their essence. While Chalmers previously employed a conceptual science approach to study phenomenal experience, Neosadrian acknowledges a non-positivistic method for accessing phenomenal experience or human science. This is grounded in the Neosadrian assumption that human inquiry extends beyond the effects caused by the subject (scientific study) to include the individual's internal approach to uncovering the nature of Chalmers' version of the science of presence or phenomenal experience (Gama 2015).

The internal approach, as elucidated in Neosadrian transcendental anthropology, offers a means to overcome the limitations or gaps in accessing the science of *ḥuḍūrī* by examining humans not merely in terms of the effects produced by human faculties, but also by delving into the internal mechanisms inherent within humans themselves, philosophically speaking. Consequently, in this context, Chalmers should broaden the scope of the study,

encompassing not only the effects induced by the subject in the form of purely observational studies but also the subject's internal mechanisms from a philosophical standpoint. Through this approach, a more comprehensive understanding of humans can be attained, and the study of phenomenal experiences can be further elucidated from a philosophical rational perspective (Gama 2015).

### **Science and Phenomenal Properties in the Perfection of Knowledge**

A scientific paradigm rooted solely in physicalism proves inadequate in elucidating the reduction of consciousness to physical reality. This deficiency became apparent during Chalmers' interview with the renowned media outlet, *Closer to Truth*, wherein he proposed the necessity of broadening the scope of scientific inquiry. He suggested that the exploration of the nature of consciousness must extend beyond traditional scientific domains, allowing for a more comprehensive examination of facts pertaining to consciousness (Chalmers 1996). For instance, Chalmers suggests that the examination of consciousness should be contextualized within the framework of quantum physics, while neuroscience should be situated within the broader context of biology. Here, Chalmers advocates for an integration of observational science to elucidate the phenomenon of consciousness. Previously, scientific inquiry primarily focused on neuroscience and studies that treated humans merely as objects (Chalmers 1996).

From the perspective of integration, Chalmers underscores that the exploration of consciousness, particularly the formidable enigma known as the hard problem of consciousness, should adopt a comprehensive integrative approach within the constraints of physical data or data explicable in quantifiable terms. This stance is imperative for scientists to operate within their contextual framework of explanation. However, within the realm of philosophy, this stance becomes highly problematic. The delineations of philosophical

inquiry would then be confined to observable objects, serving as the foundation for elucidating reality. Chalmers' adherence to panpsychism and his various objections raised against substantialist dualism underscore his reliance on observational science as a metric for scientific rational examination. For instance, his critique of the incongruence between substantialist dualism and quantum physics exemplifies this standpoint (Chalmers 1996). However, on the contrary, he defers the possibility of explaining the problem of the nature of consciousness within his scientific (observative) standpoint (Chalmers 1996). He further elaborated that property dualism, as an ontological position in science, aligns most with modern science, whereas substantialist dualism is deemed classical dualism, which is not congruent with modern science and its myriad contemporary discoveries, encompassing scientific discourse on consciousness and other fields like quantum physics.

Conversely, the hard problem of consciousness, serving as the foundation for various ideas, is posited as a philosophical quandary rather than merely a scientific one. Within the discourse map, the hard problem of consciousness, as elucidated earlier, encompasses various stances, including those of philosophers (Chalmers 1996). In this context, Chalmers' stance restricts philosophical inquiries to the realm of science, given his dual role as both a scientist and a philosopher. However, in contrast, Neosadrian encounters a trilemma concerning science but remains open to the prospect of integration with it (Gama 2015). This can be elucidated within a framework of ideas concerning knowledge and its refinement. Neosadrians acknowledge the significant utility of science, which has played a pivotal role in the advancement of human civilization and the evolution of science itself. Positioned as a component of the perfection of knowledge, science is classified as a method for unveiling reality based on the effects stemming from physical phenomena. Therefore, the constraint of this assessment lies in the revelation of physical reality (Amuli 1381).

Regarding the human studies undertaken by Chalmers, Jawadi Amuli delineates three primary approaches. *Firstly*, through the main or efficient cause; *secondly*, via the human or internal structure (subject); and *thirdly*, by examining the effects produced by humans, such as character, behavior, and influence. According to him, and as per Neosadrians, humans can be comprehensively studied through six channels of knowledge: revelation, the science of presence (existential experience), reason or rationality, religious texts or holy scriptures, mathematics, and sensory perception, involving the five senses (Amuli 1388).

Cipta, a Neosadrian researcher, elucidates in his article the mechanism and function of the Jawadi Amuli knowledge channel in constructing the concept of transcendental anthropology. He asserts that the science of huḍhūri can unveil existential knowledge across different tiers. The five senses serve as a conduit for accessing objective effects stemming from human material existence. Moreover, the three texts of the Qur'an and Hadith furnish various indispensable insights concerning humans through their intricate methodologies. Lastly, the analysis and formulation of knowledge into a set of statements, whether explicit or axiomatic and theoretical or naẓāri, represent the fourth avenue of knowledge dissemination (Gama 2015).

## Conclusions

From the previous elucidation, two primary points can be deduced regarding the formulation of the proposed problem. *Firstly*, Chalmers' discourse in addressing the hard problem of consciousness is encapsulated within his critiques of materialist monism, which encompass arguments such as the conceivability argument, the knowledge argument, and the property dualism argument. Additionally, his criticisms and perspectives on substantialist dualism include the problematization of interactionism with general science, quantum physics, and the deduction of phenomenal components.

These diverse critiques have yielded positions and proposed solutions that, according to Chalmers, offer the most rational explanations for the hard problem of consciousness, notably panpsychism, which forms the foundation of property dualism. This stance posits that consciousness underpins the fabric of reality and pervades all entities, emerging from the intricate activities of material complexity. The epiphenomenal unidirectional interaction, a consequence of panpsychism for Chalmers, stands as the most logical explanation for bridging the onto-epistemological gap of the hard problem of consciousness.

*Secondly*, the Neosadrian onto-epistemological explication and analysis of Chalmers' arguments concerning the hard problem of consciousness can be condensed into two philosophical dimensions: the ontological dimension and the epistemological dimension. In the ontological dimension, Chalmers' arguments entail implications such as the notion that the cause gives rise to something beyond itself, where material engenders non-material consciousness. Furthermore, the fundamental reality precedes the cause and is not synonymous with it, with Chalmers viewing consciousness as the essence of reality but arising subsequent to the complex activities of matter. These implications contravene the principle of *al-wāḥid lā Yaşḍuru 'anhu illā al-wāḥid* in the Neosadrian perspective, while also positioning structured reality (*murakkab*) as more perfected than simple reality (*basīt*). Additionally, in the ontological dimension, Chalmers' panpsychism necessitates that consciousness and matter lack an ontological relationship, as both are considered distinct realities ensnared in the ontological gap, which constitutes the crux of the hard problem of consciousness. This, from a Neosadrian standpoint, can be addressed and opposes the principle of *al-kathrah fī 'ayn al-waḥdah wa al-waḥdah fī 'ayn al-kathrah*.

Meanwhile, in its epistemological dimension, Chalmers' ideas carry implications for the epistemological confinement of phenomenal experience solely to concept-based knowledge (*ḥuṣūlī*),

despite his indirect acknowledgment of phenomenal experience as knowledge present in the Neosadrian context. Furthermore, Chalmers' argument advocating for the expansion of scientific inquiry to include other scientific disciplines, such as quantum physics, regarding phenomenal experiences still necessitates partial and restricted knowledge about these phenomenal experiences.

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