

UDC 1(09)

## INVESTIGATING THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AS A PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM IN THE INTELLECTUAL SYSTEM OF SUHRAWARDI AND JOHN HICK

**Abdullah Hosseini Eskandian**

University of Tabriz

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2318-022X>

[hoseeinieskandianabdullah@gmail.com](mailto:hoseeinieskandianabdullah@gmail.com)

DOI:10.30546/ifs.2021.1(36).53

**Abstract.** The issue of evil is one of the most important issues in philosophy, which is very important in philosophy because it contradicts the existence of God with improper evidence. Suhrawardi believes that evil is non-existent and what is considered evil or not evil and or it is a means of achieving good, and since it is a means of obtaining good, it is also good, and as a result there is no evil. But John Hick, according to the "Theodicy of the Cultivation of the Soul" believes that evil exists, and that the existence of evil is minimal and merely for the cultivation and evolution of the human soul and spirituality. Examining and comparing the thoughts of Suhrawardi and John Hick about evil as philosophers with two different religions and schools of thought, and on the other hand their partisan defense of the existence of God and His attributes about evil is something that can lead us to their thoughts to familiarize themselves with the problem of evil and their solutions to solve it. In this article, with a descriptive-analytical method, the nature and interpretations of evil by Suhrawardi and Hick, the types, solutions and answers given by these two philosophers on the problem of evil are examined and finally their thoughts are compared. Suhrawardi and Hick believe that the existence of evil has no contradiction with the existence of God because God is absolute good and evil is not issued from him and what is considered evil is either an estimate of a person's misunderstanding or a necessity for acquiring charity.

**Keywords:** Evil, Suhrawardi, philosophy, God, Hick, good system

## ŞƏR PROBLEMİNİN SÜHRƏVƏRDİ VƏ CON HİKİN DÜŞÜNCƏ SİSTEMLƏRİ NÖQTEYİ-NƏZƏRİNDƏN FƏLSƏFİ MƏSƏLƏ KİMİ TƏDQIQI Abdulla Xoseyni Eskardian

Şər problemi bu məsələ ətrafında lazımı, uyğun və kifayət qədər dəlillərin olmaması səbəbiylə Allahın varlığı fikrinə ziddiyyət təşkil etdiyi üçün hazırda fəlsəfinin ən vacib məsələlərindən biri kimi çıxış edir. Sührəvərdi belə güman edir ki, şər mövcud deyil və ona əslində heç Şər kimi deyil, Xeyir kimi baxılmalıdır. Nəticədə belə çıxır ki, Şər ümumiyyətlə mövcud deyil.

Con Hik isə "Ruhun tərbiyəsi nəzəriyyəsi" nə əsasən, inanır ki, Şər minimal dərəcədə də olsa, mövcuddur və o, insan ruhu və mənəviyyatının evolyusiyası və tərbiyəsinin nəticəsidir.

İki müxtəlif dinə və fəlsəfi fikir məktəbinə mənsub olan filosoflar olaraq Sührəvərdi və Con Hik Şər haqqında fikirlərinin tədqiqi və müqayisəsi, həmçinin onların Allahın varlığının müdafiəsi belə bir fikir yürütməyə əsas verir ki, bu iki filosof Şər problemi ilə məşğul olaraq, onun əlamətlərinə nüfuz edib bu problemi həll etmək istəmişlər.

Deskriptiv analitik metodun istifadə edildiyi bu məqalədə Sührəvərdi və Hik tərəfindən Şərin təbiəti və təfsiri verilmiş, Şər probleminin həlli metodları, növləri tədqiq edilərək, hər iki filosofun fikirləri müqayisəli təhlil edilmişdir. Sührəvərdi və Hik belə hesab edirlər ki, Şərin mövcudluğu Allahın mövcudluğu ilə heç də ziddiyyət təşkil etmir, çünki Allah Özü Mütləq Xeyirdir və Şər Ondan

törəmə deyil, bu filosoflara görə Şər əslində şəxsiyyətin Xeyir məfhumunu düzgün qavramamasından və ya Xeyirə müvəffəq ola bilməməsindən doğur.

Açar sözləri: Şər, Sührəvərdi, fəlsəfə, Allah, Hik, Xeyir sistemi.

## ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ ЗЛА КАК ФИЛОСОФСКОЙ ПРОБЛЕМЫ В СИСТЕМЕ МЫШЛЕНИЯ СУХРАВАРДИ И ДЖОНА ХИКА

Абдулла Хосейни Эскардиан

**Резюме.** Проблема зла является одним из наиболее важных вопросов в философии, поскольку он противоречит существованию Бога без подходящего доказательства.

Сухраварди полагает, что зла не существует и что оно рассматривается как не зло или как средство достижения добра и поскольку это является достижением добра, оно также является добром и в результате нет зла. А Джон Хик согласно «Теодоции возвращения души» верит, что зло существует, и что его наличие минимально, и оно просто результат возвращения и эволюции человеческой души и духовности. Исследование и сравнение мыслей Сухраварди и Джона Хика о зле, как философов, представляющих различные религии и школы мысли, а с другой стороны их тайная защита существования Бога и свойства Он пронизывает злу это то что может навести нас на мысль, что они думали ознакомится с проблемой зла, и разрешить ее.

В настоящей статье, где использован дескриптивно-аналитический метод, природа и толкования зла со стороны Сухраварди и Хика, типы, решения и ответы, данные этими двумя философами относительно проблемы зла исследована, и в итоге их мысли были сравнены. Сухраварди и Хик полагают, что существование зла не находится в противоречии с существованием Бога, потому что Бог – это абсолютное добро, и зло не производится от него, и то что рассматривается как зло и то исходит от неправильного понимания его личностью, или необходимости достижения добра.

**Ключевые слова:** зло, Сухраварди, философия, Бог, Хик, система добра.

### Introduction

The existence of hardships, difficulties and sufferings in life has always involved the human mind with the problem of evil, and on the other hand, in appearance, it contradicts his belief propositions such as knowing the almighty, the absolute Good and the absolute benefactor. The existence of this type of cases has always attracted the attention of different thinkers in philosophy and theology to the issue of evil and to discuss it (Hosseini Eskandian & Rajabnezhadian, 2020, 108).

The problem of evil has a long history in the history of man, from the beginning until now, every time he has been afflicted with various kinds of suffering, he has been faced with the question of why there is evil? What is the purpose of their existence? Or could the world not exist without evil? In the revelatory religions where the attributes of God are absolutely stated, the issue of evil can be in contradiction with their accepted religious principles in different interpretations, and that is whether evil is issued from God, who is absolute good? The existence of such questions and doubts has always led to discussions and research about evil and their nature. In ancient Greek philosophy, philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle and Xenon have discussed evil and offered solutions to its problem. Also in Islamic philosophy, many philosophers such as Ibn Sina, Farabi, Mulla Sadra, Allameh Tabatabai and others have discussed and researched about evil. In the meantime, the study and comparison of Suhrawardi's thoughts as a Muslim philosopher and mystic with the thoughts of John Hick Christian about evil is the main focus of this research.

Suhrawardi believes that evil is non-existent and has no realization in the universe. He considers evil as the lack of perfection in the essence of the object, which is considered evil because it is useless. He considers God to be the absolute good that only good is issued from him and evil can not

be attributed to Him, and this is the person who causes sin and aggression with ill will and will, and in a sense, "evil". John Hick, unlike Suhrawardi, has accepted the existence of evil and believes that God has given good deeds and values to man that can not be achieved except in spite of pain and suffering and tolerance by man. He considers the world to have a good system in which all its components are in the right place, and evil cannot disrupt this ultimate order of the world of creation.

This article tries to answer these questions by using credible sources and using analytical capacities;

What definition of evil did Suhrawardi and John Hick have? Is evil non-existent or existential? Can the existence of evil deny the existence of God or restrict His attributes? Can evil violate the good system of the universe? In what ways do Suhrawardi and Hick know evil? What strategies did Suhrawardi and Hick express to solve the problem of evil? What are the similarities and differences between the ideas of Suhrawardi and John Hick on the issue of evil?

### **The Nature and What Is the Problem of Evil**

**2-1. Suhrawardi:** In Suhrawardi's works, instead of the words good and evil, light and darkness are sometimes used, which is because Suhrawardi's philosophy is based on absolute light and the importance of the subject of light in his philosophy and for this reason, he attributes goodness to light, which is the same as light and guidance, and attributes evil to darkness. This Suhrawardi's explanation expresses the luminosity of goodness and the darkness of evil.

According to Suhrawardi, evil is a non-existent thing that has no essence and he has defined evil as having no essence (Suhrawardi, 1996, vol3, 55).

Suhrawardi says : "Evil is not a thing, but it is either nothingness or imperfection of something, and since the obligatory existence is pure good and its essence is the most perfect beings and rational beings, then pure goodness exists from God.

And if there is something in which there is evil in him, his goodness was more than evil, and this kind is due to the highest kind, and good is pure Ashraf, and that is the world of reason, and like it, but it appears like water and fire. That is, their benefit is greater than their harm, and the benefit of fire is necessary to burn the dervish's clothes from time to time, and to leave a lot of good out of every small evil, there is a lot of evil, and there is no dominant evil. If someone says that why did they not create this species so that there is no evil in him? This question is wrong, or is it still the case that someone says why they did not make water non-water and fire non-fire. And if all were pure good, you would have been the first kind and you would not have been the second kind, and the existence of the universe would not have been possible, more complete than what has been achieved "(Ibid 60-61).

Suhrawardi divides beings into five categories: absolute good, abundant good and little evil, equal good and evil, absolute evil, and abundant evil and little good, and it is believed that in the meantime, only the first two propositions are realized and equal good and evil or absolute evil or multiple evil and little good have no place for realization and manifestation.

Suhrawardi considers evil as a necessity of the nature of the world and due to the poverty of the Ghahereh and Modabareh lights in the world of darkness, and believes that the occurrence of evil is due to a defect that is not worthy of attribution to the light of the lights and should be sought for another reason. It could be because of a divine test or punishment. According to Suhrawardi, although it is possible for a person to consider a series of things and phenomena as evil for himself that cause him to lose his composure or cause harm to him, but the same things and phenomena are nothing but good in comparison with the whole world system. And evil is a partial estimate of the superficial view of man, and if it is explained in comparison with the whole system of the universe, it will be all good.

According to Suhrawardi, evil is realized when it can be considered as an existence for which the whole universe has possible beings, but since the existence of the obligatory existence is obvious and clear and human intellect and soul confirm it, therefore it can not be considered evil.

**2-2. John Hick:** Hick says: "Instead of trying to define evil based on the type of theological theory, for example, as something that is against the will of God, it is better to define it without veiling, that is, by showing what these words mean, evil means suffering refers to physical pain, mental pain and moral evil" (Hick, 1993, 89). He also states: "The word evil, if used in a comprehensive sense, can be distinguished in two ways; 1. Moral evil caused by human evil 2. Immoral or natural evil such as disease and natural disaster. Moral evil is created by human beings, cruel, unjust, vicious and misguided thoughts and actions, or in other words, moral evil refers to those evils in which the human factor has a direct role in its emergence. But natural evil arises independently of human actions: disease, flood, earthquake, storm, drought, tornado, etc" (Hick, 2007, 265).

Hick defines an example of evil and says: "Instead of trying to define evil on the basis of some kind of theological theory, it is better to define it without arguing, by showing what the word means. Evil refers to physical and mental suffering and moral evil" (Hick, 1990, 39).

Unlike Augustine, Hick believes that evils are non-existent and their existence in the creation world cannot be denied. He considers the non-existence of evil and on the other hand to offer solutions to solve the problem to be contradictory and believes that providing solutions to solve the problem is contradictory and he believes that providing a solution to solve the problem of evil is one of the reasons for proving the existence of evil in the universe, because no rational human being for a non-existent assumption states the solution to solve the problem, and if the solution is expressed, it means that the problem already existed that the solution to the problem is now stated.

From Hick's point of view, the existence of evil in the universe has no contradiction with the attributes of God's benevolence, wisdom and absolute justice; Because God is absolute good and nothing good is issued except good and evil can not be attributed to God because it is contrary to divine attributes and God can not be considered the creator of evil. On the other hand, he believes that the existence of evil is necessary to achieve charity, and their minimal existence in the world to identify and gain knowledge about charity is obvious.

From Hick's point of view, the existence of evil in the world has no contradiction with the goodness of this world, because the existence of evil in this world is an integral part of it and without them, this good system of the world cannot be imagined, and despite this evil, the world is called the creation of the best system.

### **Evil Types**

**3-1. Suhrawardi:** Suhrawardi has not given a detailed and comprehensive division about evil in his works, but from his discussions about evil, it can be acknowledged that he believed in the existence of three types of evil, which include metaphysical, natural and moral evil.

Metaphysical evil refers to those evils that lie at the root of things and people and potentially exist in them. Metaphysical evil is the absence of absolute perfection from which it is inherently useless. Broad says: "It is metaphysically necessary that every creature world should contain some kind of metaphysical evil because in every world a creature is made up of monads and each monad has a degree of ambiguity and therefore a degree of metaphysical evil" (Broad, 1975, 160).

Metaphysical evil is the absence and absolute perfection that is woven into the core of the whole possible world. Metaphysical evil is a prerequisite for the creation of the universe of possibility. The evil that pervades the universe and that is the limitation and imperfection of the universe relative to the infinity of God. In other words, metaphysical evil is the evil that all possible beings and creatures of God are affected by and cannot be separated from them, and means the limitation and, in Mulla Sadra's words, "existential poverty" of all possible beings in the face of God's infinite perfection. Because every limitation is considered a defect and weakness and every defect is considered as a kind of evil; therefore, limitations are poverty and the possibility of the existence of evil (Alizamani & Sadat Hashemi, 2015, 98).

Suhrawardi has used metaphysical evil in order to explain the possible existence of this world and its creation, and on the other hand, the perfection of the goodness of God's existence, from which nothing but good is issued.

Natural evil is the same events of the natural world as floods, earthquakes, storms, tsunamis, etc., which may always occur in different parts of the world and their existential roots go back to nature, and although human manipulation in their creation should not be ignored.

Natural evil is one of the characteristics of the natural world that is always happening and happens frequently in different regions. It seems that there is a kind of inseparable existence between this group of evil and the ruling system of nature. Some believe that evil natural is the manifestation of metaphysical evil in the natural world.

Suhrawardi believes that the existence of floods and earthquakes is an inseparable part of this world and these things can not be considered evil, because it is a matter of nature and because it is related to nature, and because it is related to nature, it is therefore not evil and it is good, and it can lead to the attainment of many good deeds for man, which may be hindered by the limited thought of man in understanding all aspects of it.

According to Suhrawardi, the last type of evil is moral evil, which is the source of the creation of a person who commits sin by following his whims and avoiding divine commands. In fact, moral evil is the obedience of man to the devil inside and outside, which causes evil between human beings and the world.

Moral evil is all the evil that is the intentional product of those people who do evil deeds or the evil that is made possible by human beings who fail to do good deeds due to negligence. (Swinburne, 2002, 154).

According to Suhrawardi, the performance of moral evil by man is one of the means of authority, because one of the proofs of the existence of authority in man is the power to choose between good and evil. Suhrawardi attributes the existence of evil to man and considers God as pure good. Nothing good is issued from him and he is not the cause of evil, and what is considered evil is the product of man's will and authority in an inappropriate position.

**3-2. John Hick:** Hick considers evil to be unique in both moral and natural forms. Moral evil is the result of man's evil and his evil will to create evil, and natural evil includes the natural things in the universe, such as floods and earthquakes. About this categories he says: "Moral evil is created by human beings. Oppressive, unjust and misguided thoughts and actions, or in other words, moral evil is the kind of evil that the human factor has a direct role in its emergence. But natural evil is independent of human will and human will does not play a role in its creation" (Hick, 2010,265).

Hick considers moral evil to be the result of human will and will caused by the human factor. He considers one of the factors that causes moral evil to be human selfishness. In other words, it has been the selfishness and superiority of human beings throughout history that has led to wars and killings, because as long as there is no greed for the land and capital of another land, no war has taken place and blood has not been shed for no reason. Hick considers another factor that causes moral evil to be the ignorance of a person who suffers from evil in knowing good and evil and chooses evil and is unable to distinguish between good and evil. Accepting and surrendering to fleeting desires and committing moral vices all stems from human ignorance in committing and creating evil.

Hick says: "There is a deep connection between moral evil and human free will, and human free will plays a major role in creating moral evil "(263 lbid). Hick when confronted with the question of why God, the absolute benefactor, does not prevent the creation of moral evil? He points to man's free will and states that if God prevented man from creating moral evil, then man's free will would not be valid. And man became like the creatures that God had already created, and one of the differences between man and the angels is man's freedom to do good and sins.

Hick believes that if a person realizes that God, the Holy Father, is always watching over him and wants him to give up evil and walk towards him; according to this understanding, man will never commit moral evil. But since man's tint is occupied with the passion and lust, and he does not consider God as he deserves and deserves; he suffers from evil and evil creation.

In the case of natural evil, Hick also considers suffering as one of its symbols. John Hick considers natural evil to be one of the tools of human progress in science and technology, and believes

that if it were not for natural evil, many of today's inventions, tools, and instruments that play an important role in human life would not have been created. Hick, however, believes that natural evil can sometimes cause great harm to humans and animals. But he considers the charity resulting from this evil to be much greater than its losses, and he considers the losses resulting from natural evil to be insignificant in comparison to its charity.

#### **4. Solutions to Solve the Evil Problem**

**4-1. Suhrawardi:** Suhrawardi has stated these solutions to solve the evil problem;

**4-1-1. Evil Is Necessary for a Good System:** Suhrawardi considers the world of creation at its best and considers it a good system in which even as much as mustard, there is no disorder and distortion, because creation is the creator of the almighty and pure good, and there can be no evil or wrong for it. It was considered because this world and all its creatures of absolute goodness from which no evil is ever issued, and the evils that man thinks are either not evil or are necessary for this good system.

In a comprehensive look at Suhrawardi's views, it can be seen that in all his works that raise the issue of evil, he emphasizes the two important philosophical foundations of "good system" and "abundance of good". Suhrawardi, by stating that evil occurs only in darkness and dark affairs and is an inherent requirement of material nature, tries to portray the existence of evil in the universe as a partial existence in the face of abundant goodness and to show that leaving much good due to evil little is contrary to expediency, divine wisdom and mercy (Solgi, 2018, 155).

Suhrawardi believes that evils are necessary for the world of nature and the world cannot be considered without them, because otherwise we will face another world that God has already created. He states: "Evils cannot be separated from the natural world, and just as moisture is inseparable from water or burning from fire, evils are also inseparable from the universe (Suhrawardi, 2001, 467).

**4-1-2. Evil Is Few and Good Is Great:** Suhrawardi believes in the minimum of evil or the second type of Aristotle's division, that is, the existence of abundant good and little evil, and considers the existence of little evil in the world as a necessity for obtaining charity.

Suhrawardi states: "If someone says that because he has stated that good is more than evil, why is it that obedience to lusts, anger, ignorance and renunciation of the hereafter prevails over people, and most of them are misguided? Know that the ranks of the people in this world are three categories; the upper side in worldly and moderate happiness is far and low, which is the supply of attach and physical suffering, and the sum of both parts is more than this. Now it is the same and happiness and goodness is more than cruelty and evil (Suhrawardi, 1996, vol3, 56). Suhrawardi also states: "Consider a human being whose clothes have been burnt by fire. First, if we compare the harm caused by the burning of clothes with the amount of benefit he has gained from the fire during his lifetime, we will see that they are not comparable in any way; a human being is beneficial and his goodness is greater than his evil" (Ibid, Vol 1, 272).

According to Suhrawardi, the existence of evil and what is considered evil is itself necessary for obtaining good, and therefore it should also be called good.

**4-1-3. Evil Is Non-Existent:** Existence is absolutely good and selective, and every good has two descriptions and properties; if it exists, it is beloved, and if it is missing, it is desirable and the origin of evil, which is non-existent in the realm of the natural world, is two things; the weakness and deficiency of talent, which prevents the acceptance of the superior perfection of existence, and the antagonism that exists between these two modes of existence in natural objects. The limitations, collisions, conflicts and contradictions that exist in the natural world cause some beings to dominate others, preventing them from reaching their proper perfection and this collision and contradiction is not due to the existence of material beings, but is due to the allocation, the existence of which is natural and intoxicating; this determination limits and restricts each of them and prevents each of them from surrounding the other and included in the other or united with them or carried on it (Javadi Amoli, 1997, vol 2, 156 -157).

Hydarabadi says: "Suhrawardi has proposed the issues of good and evil according to the nature of God and believes that it is impossible to issue evil from the essence that is pure good, because the existence of evil is imperfection and this kind of non-existence is not conceivable about God. It is and non-existence is not attributed to the doer in the sense that it is non-existence except with using samples (Hydarabadi, 2006 ,261).

Suhrawardi believes that whatever God has created in the world of creation is good, and whatever is considered "existence" is nothing but good. So evil does not exist at all, and if there is something, it is good and it cannot be called evil.

**4-2. John Hick:** Hick believes that although in appearance it is possible that the existence of evil is incompatible with the existence of God almighty and His attributes, or that it challenges the goodness of the system of existence, but when we realize the truth of evil, not only it does not contradict with existence of God and the good system, but rather we realize the existence of God and understand the goodness of this world in the best way. He has stated these solutions in order to solve the evil problem;

**4-2-1. Evil Is Necessary for Achieve to Charity:** One of the solutions to the problem of evil, which has been expressed by many religious thinkers, is that it is necessary to understand charity. Based on this solution, we sometimes realize the goodness of some phenomena through evil, and by realizing them, we try to protect and fortify them as much as possible. For example, illness is a kind of evil by which we realize the importance and value of health or hunger that makes us realize the blessings of satiety. Thus, although evils may seem harmful in appearance, they will either direct us to charity to try to pay more attention to their preservation, or lead us to newer charities.

Taliafro says: "By experiencing evil, we come to understand the nature of good and appreciate it fully. Good without evil is neither known nor its value will be known. This approach can also be called the "theory of divine justice "of the great good. By believing in this theory, theists believe in the all-encompassing dimensions of the universe that they believe are truly good; they cling to it, in addition to arguing that these good deeds are either a condition for the existence of some evil people or the realization of these good deeds requires some evil people" (Taliafro, 2003, 500)

Hick believes that with a superficial view, we should not consider every seemingly evil thing to be harmful and bad to us, because in its essence it may be all good and benefit for us, and we may be unaware of its nature. The same trend continues in the universe, and natural phenomena, although seemingly harmful to nature and to ourselves, but the benefits of that natural evil far outweigh the harms to us humans and nature itself.

Hick believes that the existence of evil is necessary for the acquisition of charity, and one of the areas in which evil causes the acquisition of good is that evil cultivates the spirit and spirituality in people and as a result elevates them to a much higher human level and it is difficult to find the ground for excellence for anything.

From John Hick's point of view, evil does not exist without reason because all evil people pursue a goal. He believes that God allows evil to create greater good. (Peterson, 2014, 98)

Hick also about charity from natural evil states: "If we remove suffering from the world, human activities and efforts to alleviate suffering and natural disasters, and on the other hand, learning techniques and skills, and the creation and expansion of civilization and culture, will break the rules and lose their cooperation and mutual support. In this case, the human race will have innocent, but ineffective and unmotivated people. Human beings without identity and personality and devoid of dignity and greatness and having human responsibility and policy who are in a dreamy, pleasant, unchallenged, quiet and peaceful world "(Hick, 2007, 307). Therefore, from Hick's point of view, the existence of evil is a necessary thing in order to know and acquire charity.

**4-2-2. Epistemological Distance:** In order to explain and solve the problem of moral evil, Hick uses a solution called epistemological distance, which links the creation of moral evil by man to his distance from God, he will no longer be able to earn good and will inevitably suffer evil. In defining the epistemological distance, Hick says that " the epistemic distance refers to the distance that exists

between God and provides man with the possibility of freedom and independence from God" (Hick, 2007, 281).

Hick believes that the starting point of man's epistemological distance from God is when God blew his spirit into man and turned away from God, widening the gap by immersing himself in the concerns of material and worldly life. And this epistemological distance causes man to commit sin because man is far from God; that is, he far from good and all that is good, and as a result, he suffers from evil.

Hick puts man at an epistemological distance from God. The result of this effective tool in maintaining man's epistemological distance from God is the emergence of the intelligent man as the axis of creation. For this reason, man's spiritual position in the epistemological distance from God forces him to organize his life apart from God and to place himself at the center of competition with his peers. This central self naturally appears in the developmental nature of individuals and is considered a moral evil that one finds in oneself (Parsa , 2009, 52).

Hick believes that this world has less color and smell from God than the world of the hereafter, and that is why God has given man will and authority, and because man does not follow the divine commands as much as he should and his will used in inappropriate matters; It causes him to turn away from God and as a result create evil. Hick has used this strategy to justify moral evil.

**4-2-3. Evil Is Relative:** Another evil solution is to consider it relative. According to this theory, evil is a relative thing and may be a phenomenon of evil for some people and the same phenomenon may seem good to others, and we should note that relativity is opposite to truth. Also, the conditions and situation of time indicate that the evil is relative, because in a certain period, a phenomenon may be evil for a person, and in another period and time, the same phenomenon may appear as good.

Evils are of two kinds: evils that are non-existent affairs and evils that are existential affairs and are bad because they are the source of a series of non-existent affairs. Evils that are non-existent, such as ignorance, helplessness, poverty, etc, are real but non-existent traits. But the evils that exist are bad because they are the source of non-existent matters such as floods, earthquakes, stings and germs, which are undoubtedly the relative evil of these matters. (Sultan al-Qaraie et al, 2010, 97)

John Hick emphasizes that evils are relative, and in contrast to each other, accepting a description of being worse. He explains that even if God eliminates all the evils that we think are the worst, because of the relative nature of the evils, any evil that remains will accept the same prominent title. (Hosseini et al. 2017, 57)

**4-2-4 .Evil Is Compensated in the Other World:** This world, with its limitations, cannot be fully accountable for the creation of justice among human beings, and on the other hand, to please the pious and punish the transgressors. Some human beings from the beginning of life to the end of life are always in sufferings and hardships that are incomprehensible to many others, and if their hardships and difficulties are not answered with a proper reward in this world; this does not mean that they will be deprived of the administration of true justice, but that the limitations of the present world prevent the full administration of justice and God will bring true justice in the hereafter, and although some aspects of it will take place in the same world. If a person in this world always struggles with problems and hardships such as poverty, slavery, suffering and similar bitterness and has not yet achieved his right, or according to religious propositions, God will answer and reward in the hereafter, He will give her hardships because many evils are the punishment of deeds and on the other hand, God will punish other people who oppress others.

In response to the question of endless suffering, Hick points to their mysterious nature and states that behind this evil is so great charity that this world does not have the capacity to bestow it on man, and that there must be a world separate from material features. This is the world so that it can be accountable to man for receiving great good and charity and this great good is in exchange for the sufferings and hardships of man in this worldly life, which are not possible for man to receive this goodness in this world, and God will benefit man in this world in the hereafter.

Hick believes that every hardship that man has endured in this worldly life; In the hereafter, it will be answered with a great reward, and no hardship befalls man in this world unless he shares in the final plan of God, and all this will happen if we believe in the pure and absolute goodness of God and His mighty will. (Hick, 1989, 388).

### **5. Comparison and Conclusion**

The issue of evil is one of the topics that has always caused human thought and thinking over the centuries and has confronted him with fundamental questions about the world of creation and its creator. It is more difficult to face the challenge of evil, especially for believers in monotheism, because in the revelatory religions God is described as wise, just and absolutely benevolent, and at first glance the existence of human suffering and hardship in the world contradicts these divine attributes. This has led to the most difficult doubts in denying the existence of God or restricting His attributes by the issue of evil, and the issue of evil is considered a refuge for Atheism.

Suhrawardi and John Hick are Islamic and Christian thinkers of revelatory religions who have tried to explain and present a narrative on the issue of evil in their religious and philosophical parameters and make it compatible with God.

Methodologically, Suhrawardi has tried to explain on the base of light and darkness, which is the basis of his philosophy, and considers good as good and evil as darkness. John Hick has also tried to explain evil based on his theory of what is called "Soul Cultivation " and is derived from theodicy of St. Irenaeus.

According to Suhrawardi, evil is a non-existent thing that has no existence and essence and means the absence of good in everything. Suhrawardi believes that evil either does not exist or if something is considered evil, such as illness and suffering, it is the cause of achieving good, and because it causes the attainment of good, it is also good, because the cause of achieving good is itself It is also good. He considers the benefits of suffering and illness for a person to be thankful and submissive to the divine will, as well as the acquisition of moral virtues in its guidance, such as generosity, forgiveness, self-sacrifice and help, and he believes that such things, because they cause such good deeds, will be good and there will be no evil.

But Hick believes that evil is not non-existent, but evil has been realized in the world of creation, and there can be no denying the existence of evil in the world of creation, and the minimal existence of evil is necessary for the existence of such a world.

Suhrawardi believes that the creation of the world is a good system that combines good and evil to mean goodness, and John Hick also believes in this rational paradigm and believes that the existence of a minimum of evil makes this world the best world among the possible worlds.

Hick, in his theodicy, on the one hand, attributes the moral evils created by man to God in order to provide the ground for the attainment of charity by creating evil. And on the other hand, in the light of this evil existence, he proves the authority in man, and attributing this duality and on the one hand, all things to God, even the moral evil of man, and on the other hand, proving the authority of man is one of the contradictory points in the theory of soul cultivation. But Suhrawardi believes that God did not create evil and does not create, and man has free will, and if evil is realized, it is the inheritance of man's will and free will, and from the absolute good that God is, nothing but good is issued.

In his theory, Hick has tried to explain evil as a necessity for human mental and physical development, and at this time he faces the problem of excessive evil, like infants who initially have a disease and disability in life without committing a sin, and reincarnation to solve the problem and to solve the problem, he is subjected to reincarnation in order to attribute the sufferings of infants and other such issues to their sins in the previous life. But Suhrawardi, as a Muslim sage, hates reincarnation and whatever smells of duality and polytheism, and he does not believe in such a thing, and he believes that the sufferings and hardships of such people as infants are ultimately compensated for by a great goodness that is not comparable to that aspect of evil.

Suhrawardi considers evil to be limited to three types: natural, moral, and metaphysical, and attributes natural evil to the natural world, such as floods and earthquakes, and moral evil to the will,

such as sin and aggression. Metaphysical evil is also called evil that is potentially in the nature of objects and people and is the absence of absolute perfection. But John Hick considers evil to be limited to moral and natural evil, and does not discuss metaphysical evil. But every two philosophers believe that evil is more the estimation of human will, and that moral evil is much greater than natural evil.

Both philosophers believe that evil is necessary for the acquisition of goodness and the good nature of this world. But the solution to the non-existence of evil, which was stated by Suhrawardi to solve the problem of duality, is not accepted by John Hick, because he accepts the existence of evil. Also, the existence of maximum charity is one of the solution that is accepted by both philosophers.

Finally, it should be noted that despite the ideological and methodological differences that exist in explaining the evil issue between Suhrawardi and John Hick, which is also natural given the scholastic and religious differences, but both philosophers have tried to make a rational defense of the existence of God and the good system against evil suspicions and express a defensive view against evil suspicions in order to deny the existence of God.

### References

1. Alizamani, A, Sadat Hashemi, F (2015) Augustine's Theory of Evil and its Critique from Ibn Sina's Point of View, Sadraie Hekmat, Issue 5, No12
2. Broad, G.D (1975) Leibniz: An Introduction, Great Britain, Western Printing Services
3. Heydarabadi, A (2006) Nahayatol Al-Sodour, Tehran, University of Tehran Press, First Edition
4. Hick, J. (1989) An Interpretation of Religion, London, Macmillan
5. Hick, J. (1990) Philosophy of Religion, fourth edition, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall
6. Hick, J. (1993) Face to Unface, Translated by Jalal Tavaklian, School Magazine, No. 2
7. Hick, J. (2007) Philips on God and Evil, Religious Studies, Cambridge University
8. Hick, J. (2010) Evil and the God of Love, New York, Palgrave Macmillan
9. Hosseini, Z, Atashgar, K, Nazarnejad, N (2017) The Problem of Evil from the Perspective of John Hick, Islamic Studies of Philosophy and Theology, Forty-Eighth Year, No.96
10. Hosseini Eskandian, A, Rajab Nejhadian, M (2020) Evil Thought and Its Approaches with an Emphasis on Swinburne Theodicy of Divine Justice, Metafizika Journal, 2020, Vol3.No.4
11. Javadi Amoli, A. (1997) Rahiq Makhtoum, Tehran, Esra Publishing Center, First Edition
12. Parsa, A. (2009) Solving the Logical Problem of Evil from the Perspective of Shahid Motahhari and John Hick, Hekmat Sadraei Scientific Quarterly, Year 7, Issue 2
13. Peterson, M. (2014) God and Evil, Translated by Rostam Shah Mohammadi, Semnan, Semnan University Press, First Edition
14. Solgi, M. (2018) A Comparative Study of the Problem of Evil from the Perspective of Suhrawardi and Swinburne, Quarterly Journal of Modern Religious Thought, Fourteenth Year, No.55
15. Suhrawardi, Sh. (2001) Hekmat Al-Eshragh, Tehran, Tehran University Press, First Edition
16. Suhrawardi, Sh. (1996) Sheikh Ishraq Collection of Works, Henry Carbon Research, Edited by Hossein Nasr and Najafgholi Habibi, Tehran, Institute of Cultural Studies and Research, First Edition
17. Sultan Al-Qaraie, Kh, Atashi, H, Elmi, Z. (2010) A Study and Comparison of Evil from the Perspective of Augustine and Ibn Sina, Journal of Philosophical Research, University of Tabriz, Fifth Year, Ninth Issue
18. Swinburne, R. (2002) Is there a god? Translated by Mohammad Javadan, Qom, Mofid Publishing Institute, First Edition
19. Taliadro, Ch (2003) Philosophy of Religion in the Twentieth Century, Translated by Insha'Allah Rahmati, Tehran, Suhrawardi Research and Publishing Office, First Edition