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THE SCIENCE OF THE SOUL ACCORDING TO MULLA SADRA

Though, today, terms such as “psychology” (*ilm al-nafs*), and the like suggest a special branch of knowledge with its own origin, methodologies, and goals, reflection on the main aspect of man’s life and his existential foundation, i. e. “soul” or “spirit”, does not belong to a particular age. One may dare to say that no period of life and no aspect among various aspects of life may be justified without taking into consideration this spiritual element. And even a part of human’s primary knowledge — though in an undistinguished manner — had been devoted to the soul and its state, and belief in it had been cast in myths. General and ordinary beliefs of people, their individual and social rituals, and, in particular, their creeds in various ages concerning life after death, suggest man’s attention paid to the category of the soul and its predominance over all aspects of life and in particular the determination of man’s existential level. Many religious rituals and creeds of the primary inhabitants of the South America, Africa, Asia, and in particular Far-East suggest a supra-natural aspect of the soul and its important role in spiritual and even material developments of humanity; and according to them, it has been mostly regarded as a intermediate between divinity and ordinary life of human beings.

This is other than creeds and schools which concerned (and in some cases concern) states of the Dead and their destinies after death and, in other words, the continuation of the spiritual life of human beings, among ancient nations and even the new ones. Anyway, it may be said that the aspect shared between all these schools and creeds is the desire for transcendence and permanent life which may be attained through the soul and its immaterial essence; and it should be said that no age of the human history may be found which is void of such desire. Egyptians, Babylonians, Ionians, Iranians, and Indians have mentioned this existential aspect in their own ways and presented various writings and creeds concerning its attributes, properties, and influences on this-worldly life, among them are Greeks’ reflections and beliefs about “soul” and “spirit” and, generally speaking, origin of life, mentioning which is not quite meaningless.

In the ancient Greek, two terms, *psyche* and *pneuma*, which mean respectively “soul” and “spirit” (or “breath, power of life”), are among the keywords of the philosophy of the soul. Some Greek philosophers and philosophical schools, such as the Milesians, Pythagoreans, Empedocles, and Anaxagoras, have used the term “pneuma” as an equivalent for “wind” and “origin of life”¹. Aristotle regarded it as

¹ Chambers’ Dictionary of Etymology. New York, 2000. Vol. 2. P. 809.

an equivalent for “formal cause”, though later this term is replaced by the term *anima* in Aristotelian tradition. For Stoics, the term *pneuma* meant “spirit”, “power”, and “creative fire”, a fire which warms and moves man’s existence. In the modern ages, the term *pneumatica* is used for what belongs or relates to spirit or spiritual beings.

A heroine of ancient Greek mythology, *psyche* is mostly depicted as a young beautiful girl with two wings like butterfly; after many sufferings, she attains freedom and permanence.² In Greek myths we read that originally a beautiful mortal, Psyche was warned by the Delphi Oracle that she would love no mortal, but she would fall in love with an immortal being — Eros, boy-God of love, and would face many hardships.³ The essence of respective myths is that *psyche* is a symbol of man’s soul, purified by love and suffering, which seeks for eternal happiness in love⁴.

In sayings of the Greek philosophers and wise men, man’s soul or spirit — *psyche* — has been mentioned as the best gift of God and nature, and it has been emphasized that one has to know it and care of it. Perhaps the great Greek philosopher Pythagoras and his followers, as well as the followers of Orpheus, are the first philosophers who have reflected extensively and systematically upon soul, its properties, and destiny. Their ideas concerning embodiment of the soul, necessity of asceticism, and man’s self-control to care of it, as well as their belief in transmigration, are among the most famous Pythagorean ideas in the science of the soul⁵. As it is well-known, their ideas in this regard, numbers and the essence of mathematics have had extensive and long-lasting influences on many philosophical circles in the East and the West. For Socrates, “the soul of the true philosopher thinks that she ought not to resist this deliverance, and therefore abstains from pleasures and desires and pains and fears, as far as she is able”⁶. Plato mentions soul as follows: “soul, which is the divinest part of man”⁷. And thus it should be cared of more than other parts. Because of the fact that the soul is divine, he regards it as being essentially good and beautiful; and thus, he thinks that kinds of vice and evil are caused by imperfections of body or miseducation or corruption of the Polis.⁸ It is here where Plato’s educational and moral considerations are introduced and a large part of *The Republic* is devoted to them⁹.

² This is an allusion to man’s permanent goal which cannot be achieved unless through sufferings and hardships.

³ Kennedy M. D. Encyclopedia of Greco-Roman Mythology. P. 264; Grimal P. The Concise Dictionary of Classical Mythology. P. 379—80.

⁴ Smith J. Dictionary of Greco-Roman / Trans. into Persian by Shahla Baradaran Khosrowshahi. Tehrān: Farhang-i Mo’āšir, 2005. P. 149.

⁵ Jaeger W. The Theology for the Early Greek Philosophers. Oxford, 1947. P. 206.

⁶ Plato. *Phaedo* / Trans. B. Jowett.

⁷ Plato. *Laws* / Trans. B. Jowett.

⁸ Plato. *Timaeus*. P. 86—7.

⁹ Plato. *The Republic*. Book IX.

Aristotle regards the soul (or *psyche*) as the form of body; and defines it as follows: “The first stage of actuality of a natural organized body”¹⁰. For this reason, the agent of motion which is for him *telos*, for man is the same as his soul which is both the formal cause and *telos* and united with the body. Difference between Aristotle’s view and that of other Greek philosophers in this regard is seen in his empirical and objective look at the soul and his statements concerning it, its actions, and its relation to the body.

Continuance of the Greek science of the soul may be found in Stoicism and Neo-Platonism. For Stoics, the soul is a particle of divine fire; and thus its potentiality should turn into actuality; and this is possible only through practical way-faring. Neo-Platonism, however, is based on some sort of philosophical-Illuminationist science of the soul. The teachings of Plotinus and Proclus are well-known in this regard. In brief, these teachings are as follows: the soul (as the third (the lowest) hypostasis) is at the greatest distance from the origin of light (existence). Thus, it should be, through piety and asceticism, brought to the path of transcendence and, finally, unity with the first hypostasis, i. e. the One. This existential unity looks like connection of a water drop to the ocean; and in this way, the drop is saved from all imperfections, finitude, corruption, and mortality¹¹. This description of the reality of the soul and its destiny is distinct from views of Plotinus’ forerunners; and at the same time, it has been of extensive influence on his intellectual successors both in the Christian world and Islamic world.

At the same time, it should not be forgotten that Muslim philosophers have reflected upon the soul, its reality, and levels and kinds, much more than their Greek forerunners. Also, concerning its origins, actions, and how it relates to the body — which has been (and is) among the most important philosophical problems in the Western philosophical tradition — they have made great innovations, and in this regard, their guiding principles have been epistemic sources such as the Book and Tradition. For example, concerning the problem of the soul’s belonging to the body and the way that the former relates to the latter — where human mind inclines towards embodiment and transmigration, — the Holy Quran has made use of the term “breath”, and God has introduced Him as its origin¹².

Anyway, reflection upon the Qur’anic verses has been the most important guiding principle for Muslim philosophers — in particular Mulla Sadra — in this path. For example, while correcting and completing Aristotle’s view about the soul and its triple division — vegetal, animal, and rational — Ibn Sina says that the rational soul, which is the most perfect from among the souls, includes all perceptions and is defined as “the first grade of actuality of a natural organized body because of doing voluntary actions and perceiving universals”¹³. For this reason, in some other

¹⁰ Aristotle. *De Anima* (On the Soul) / Trans. J. A. Smith.

¹¹ Plotinus. *Enneads*. VI. 9: 11(771b).

¹² «I breathed into him of My Spirit» (The Holy Quran. 38: 72).

¹³ *Ibn Sīnā*. *Al-Nijāt*. Tehran: Murtaḍawī, 1984. P. 158.

cases, he makes distinctions between levels of sense faculties — whether the apparent or the hidden — as well as between levels of speculative intelligence (from “material intelligence” to the “acquired intelligence” and “angelic intelligence”), and describes their properties; and in this, he seeks help from the noble verse of “Light”¹⁴. Other philosophers (both Peripatetics and Illuminationists), as well as Muslim mystics, have devoted great parts of their works to the soul, its levels, and its relation to other beings.

In this regard, the views of some theologians are of importance as well. For example, though influenced seriously by views of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina in the science of the soul, Ghazali mentions the faculty of abstraction and its branches in addition to apparent and hidden faculties of the soul listed by his forerunners¹⁵.

Also, while being influenced by the views of Ibn Sina and writing critical marginal glosses on his *Ishārāt wa 'l-tanbīhāt*, Fakhr Razi has written an independent book called *Al-Nafs wa 'l-Rūh wa Sharḥ Quwāhimā* (The Soul, the Spirit, and the Description of Their Faculties), in which he has presented his own views.

From among all mystics, however, Ibn ‘Arabi has paid more attention to the station of man and his spiritual and ideal aspect; and one may say that an important part of his works has been devoted to this subject. He takes the term *ins* as the root of the term *insān* (man), and we find the same in Mulla Sadra’s *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* (Keys to the Unseen). As compared to the whole universe (which is called Macrocosm by Ibn ‘Arabi), Ibn ‘Arabi calls man and his sphere “microcosm”, and writes: “microcosm means that man is the spirit of the world, its cause and its spheres...”¹⁶.

Elsewhere he writes that though man’s body and matter is very small as compared with the universe, in spiritual terms he is very great, and he is equal to the whole universe and includes all beings.

Two terms, “comprehensive being” and “perfect (universal) man”, which have been repeatedly mentioned in his works and in those of his followers and commentators, are allusions to the importance given to man and his station in Ibn ‘Arabi’s mysticism. And as we know, both terms have been extensively reflected on in the Transcendent Philosophy as well¹⁷.

Emphasizing the importance of the science of the soul and enlisting its eight virtues in his *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* and basing on his two theories of “motion in the substance” and “bodily origination and spiritually subsistence of the soul”, Mulla Sadra proceeds to present a theory of the science of the soul which, on the one hand, includes all strong points of the theories of previous philosophers; and, on the other, is free from their weak points. The whole eighth book as well as a part of the ninth book of *al-Asfār al-arba‘ah* (Four Intellectual Journeys) have been devoted to the definition of the soul, its nature, faculties, immateriality and attri-

¹⁴ The Holy Quran. 24: 35.

¹⁵ *Al-Ghazālī*. *Iḥyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn*. Cairo, 1348 AH (Lunar). Vol. 1. P. 118.

¹⁶ *Ibn ‘Arabī*. *Futūḥāt al-makkiyah*. Miṣr, 1392 AH (Lunar). Vol. 1. P. 118.

¹⁷ *Ibid*. P. 379.

butes. By studying them, one may understand how Mulla Sadra has described previous philosophers' views concerning the science of the soul, and what his own innovations in this regard are. In the first five chapters of the eighth book of the *Asfār*, various issues including quiddity, immateriality, and levels of the soul, as well as statements concerning it, have been introduced. From the chapter six onward, points concerning human rational soul and in particular subsistence of the soul and the "immateriality of the faculty of imagination" have been studied and discussed¹⁸. In other Mulla Sadra's works, such as *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyah* and *Mafātiḥ al-ghayb*, valuable points concerning the science of the soul and its consequences may be found as well. For example, in the third *mashhad* of his *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyah*, while separating man's apparent and hidden senses in the same way that Peripatetics do, he mentions some defects in their views in this regard and corrects them. From the most important items in this part of the book is the author's view concerning the fact that "the soul is bodily in origin and spiritual in subsistence" and the arguments for it. His view is in brief as follows: the soul is originated because of the origination of the body; and there are differences in genus, kind, and personification for the soul because of its entrance in various modes of existence after its entering into the body¹⁹. Also, in the fifteenth *miftāḥ* of the *Mafātiḥ al-ghayb*, he mentions a subtle point which is, in brief, as follows:

"Breathing is of two kinds, one to extinguish fire and the other to start a burning; then both existence and subsistence of the soul and its annihilation is by Divine effusion; however, here is another mystery; some ancient philosophers have said that the soul is fire and wind (according to the ancient Greek philosophers such as Heraclitus and Stoics). We do not have to regard these words as being stemmed from conjectures; for what has been revealed by the Legislator includes these words as well"²⁰.

Now, to make a general picture of Mulla Sadra's view concerning man's rational soul and its station, we mention some points, and in this way his innovations are introduced. Here, we do not want to go in details of Mulla Sadra's ideas, but rather, we will have only a passing look at the foundations of his science of the soul.

In the fourth "journey" of his "Four Journeys", Mulla Sadra discusses the generation of the soul and the way it attains the highest stations of perfection. At first, however, he introduces the meaning of "life" and its existential effects such as sense, motion, feeding, sleeping, and reproducing; and then he explains its relationship to the existing perfectional form²¹. Then the quiddity of the soul and the

¹⁸ *Mullā Ṣadrā*. *Al-Asfār al-Arba'ah*. Book Eight. Tehran: Sadra Islamic Philosophy Research Institute, 1382/2003.

¹⁹ *Mullā Ṣadrā*. *al-Shawāhid al-Rubūbiyah* / Ed. Seyyed Jalāl al-Dīn Ashtiyānī. Tehran: University Publishing Center, 1981. P. 202.

²⁰ *Mullā Ṣadrā*. *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb* / Ed. Najafqoli Habibi. Tehran: Sadra Islamic Philosophy Research Institute, 1386/2007. Vol. 1. fifteenth *miftāḥ*. Ch. 2.

²¹ *Ṣadrā*. *Asfār*. Vol. 8. Ch. 1.

origin of the actions of vegetal and animal kinds are introduced, and this is followed by a discussion about the apparent and hidden faculties of the rational soul²². After these issues, one of his most original views concerning the soul, i. e. the doctrine that “the soul is bodily or material in its origination and spiritual in its subsistence” (*jismāniyyat al-ḥudūth rūḥāniyyat al-baqāʾ*) is presented, and the proofs of its veracity are mentioned²³. In what follows he discusses and proves motion in the psychic substances and its necessity for human perfection. Thus, motion in the psychic substances is from the station of nature, to the station of middle immateriality (*tajarrud barzakhī*), then to rational immateriality, and finally to the super-immateriality. Nevertheless, perfection of the rational soul happens not in a horizontal disconnected way, but in an internal becoming from the material body towards pure immateriality. Now, we have to find how parts and foundations of Sadrean science of the soul are related to each other.

1. According to the Transcendent Philosophy and, in particular, the doctrine of the principality of existence (*aṣālat al-wujūd*), existence is real and free from any plurality, and at the same time enjoys various levels and degrees, and quiddity is not other than a shadow and a mental manifestation of existence. In other words, both unity and plurality are true, but not so that “plurality of things is other than unity of things”, but rather in a way that unity of existence — i. e. that existence is principal and equivocal between beings and quiddity is mentally-posed — is true in spite of plurality of existence; plurality of existence as well is determined in spite of unity of existence²⁴.

In this sense, unity is the true description of the reality of existence; and plurality is the true description of the various levels of existence graded in terms of intensity and weakness; none of these levels, of course, is out of the reality of existence; and plurality in beings is the manifestation of the graded levels of existence. Thus, in Sadrean philosophy, based on the principality and simplicity of existence as well as on the doctrine of the gradation of the reality of existence, distinctions between beings are not of the kind of distinctions stemming from quiddity, so that it might result in some contradictions between them.

To explain this, it should be said that in Aristotelian philosophy as well as in the philosophy of Muslim Peripatetics, divisions such as those between “matter and form”, “substance and accident”, “actuality and potentiality” are among the divisions stemming from quiddity; and thus relationships between them are of the kind of oppositions; in Sadrean philosophy, however, the above-mentioned divisions are existential ones. Based on the principle of the gradation of levels of existence, from one of its level “form” is abstracted and from another “matter” is abstracted. For example, from the level of actuality of existence of a body, its “form” may be abstracted, and from its level of potentiality, its matter is abstracted. Other

²² Ibid. Ch. 2, 3, 4.

²³ Ibid. Ch. 8.

²⁴ Ibid. Vol. 1. first *minhāj*. P. 47; Shawāhid. P. 116.

divisions employed in the Peripatetic tradition also undergo such changes in the Sadrean philosophy.

According to Mulla Sadra, some problems and difficulties in Peripatetic tradition, such as the essential contradiction between genera and, consequently, the problem of their relation to each other or the reduction of one of them to the other, stem from the fact that in the Peripatetic tradition the statements concerning existence and quiddity have been confused. If, according to the Peripatetic tradition, we take for granted borders and the essential opposition between things, according to Sadra, there will be realized infinite different quiddities between the beginning and end of beings, which is against the assumption of the Peripatetics²⁵.

Thus, we have to admit the “unique connected reality of existence” which is intensified and graded, and from each and every grade of it, a limit and quiddity is abstracted. This intensified existence has all perfections of the beginning and end; and species, genera, and differentia are, because of the one connected existence, seen in the essence of being. This appears in Sadrean science of the soul as follows: human rational soul includes all levels of existence potentially; in its becoming, it goes from one state to another; such becoming, however, does not harm the soul’s simplicity and immateriality.

2. Taking into account what was said in the item 1, existence of “substance and accident” may be justified in the light of true unity and graded levels of existence. And since “accident” is, by definition, of a secondary and non-independent reality, in all its modes it follows substance and statements concerning it. Thus, in Sadrean philosophy, the accidents of objects are nothing but aspects and levels of the existence of substance. What makes a being individuated and distinct is not out of that being, but rather originates from within it²⁶. Thus, what was described by the previous philosophers as motion in natural philosophy and was confined and limited to some accidental categories, in the Transcendent Philosophy, was described under the statements of existence (ontology) and metaphysics, motion in accidents being conditioned by motion in substance while retaining the personal unity of the being²⁷.

To explain this, it should be said that, according to philosophers, motion is evident and undeniable; and Aristotle and majority of the Peripatetic philosophers have confined it to four accidental categories, thus regarding the issue of motion as one of the natural issues. Criticizing this view, Mulla Sadra proceeds to introduce the theory of “motion in substance”, whose simplest version is as follows:

“Matter is, by nature, in flux and continuous renewal; but this does not mean that motion comes into matter, but rather that the external mode of a material being is the same as motion. Nature is the same as motion and becoming by essence; in other words, it is an essence which is the same as renewal. The world of nature

²⁵ *Mullā Ṣadrā*. «Al-Ḥikma al-‘Arshiyah», al-ishrāq al-thānī fī ḥaqīqat al-ma‘ād, al-aṣl al-thāliṭh.

²⁶ *Ṣadrā*. *Asfār*. Vol. 3. P. 75.

²⁷ *Ibid*. P. 77.

is full of motion and flux; and that is not the case that motion and the mover are independent of each other. What is in the external world is only an established being and an unstable essence; and motion and mover are other than each other only in a mental analysis. The material world has no rest even for a moment; and it will not come to a halt as long as its existential potentialities are not actualized”²⁸.

On the other hand, since existence of accidents is a secondary and non-independent one and the same as relation and attribution, as long as there is no motion in substance, there will be no motion in accidents. In this way, “accidental motion of quiddity” in the Peripatetic tradition turns into “existential substantial motion” in the Transcendent Philosophy; and inevitably its subject goes under “metaphysics” instead of “natural philosophy”.

To explain this, it should be said that, as mentioned previously, in the Transcendent Philosophy, motion is a kind of existence (and not quiddity). Motion is a mode of existence, be it the existence of substance or that of accident; and thus it is regarded as one of the topics of metaphysics. Transferring the topic of motion from “natural philosophy” to “metaphysics” is one of the innovations introduced in Sadrean Philosophy, and this has changed views of forerunners to the category of motion and its statements. This concept is of great influence in the science of soul: since the soul and the body are two manifestations of the same reality, motion in the soul is the same as motion in the substance and origin of life; and change in matter and body depends upon change in the soul and its statements.

3. For Mulla Sadra, motion is among “secondary philosophical intelligibles” and not among concepts of quiddity.

According to this view, the reality of existence has two aspects and levels; one is “flux” which is the same as becoming and the other is the level of “stability” which is the same as “being”. Being and becoming are not against each other;²⁹ rather they are two faces of the same reality; and, as it was said, according to Mulla Sadra, opposition lies in the divisions of quiddity (and not existence).

Thus, the reality of existence has two faces, between which there is no conflict and opposition. Motion and the moving thing are, in conceptual terms and in a rational analysis, two separate things; in the external world, however, they are a single identity and reality. Hence, one may conclude that substantial motion does not lead to changes in the essentials; for, firstly, motion happens in existence (and not in quiddity); and secondly, since substantial motion is a gradual and continuous one, the connective unity is co-extensive with the personal unity³⁰. Here the distinction between Sadrean view on motion in substance, which is, in his own words, “dressing after dressing” (*al-labs ba’d al-labs*), and the mystics’ view, which is called “dressing after undressing” (*al-labs ba’d al-khal’*), is seen. In Sadrean view, all changes are continuous, and thus personal unity does not vanish. In mystics’

²⁸ *Şadrā*. «Shawāhid», al-mashhad al-awwal. P. 97.

²⁹ Unlike categories in the philosophy of Hegel which are against each other.

³⁰ *Şadrā*, *Asfār*, vol. 3, p. 78.

view, however, the changing thing loses its own personal unity. This property helps to solve the problem of distinction between the soul and body as well, which is, as it is well-known, among the most important problems for ancient and modern philosophers. The soul with all its existential modes and levels is, according to the Transcendent Philosophy, a product of substantial motion of the body; and thus, the soul and the body are not regarded as two separate realities; and, as a matter of fact, the unity between the two is resolved in the substantial unity of "man". The soul and the body are two modes and two levels of man's all-inclusive existence; i. e. man is a multi-levelled existential reality (from the level of nature to the level of intellect, there are three main levels or modes (*mash'ar*): "sense", "imagination" and "intellect"; and all these modes are potentially hidden in man. Thus, man potentially enjoys all natural, imaginal, and intellectual levels and modes; other beings, however, have only one potentiality or mode: they are either intelligible or sensible. In the course of substantial motion, man passes levels of imperfections and finds levels of perfection gradually. This is the same journey which begins with "bodily or material origination" and ends in "spiritual subsistence"³¹.

Nevertheless, if substantial motion had not been proved, the analysis of the existential relationship between the soul and the body would not be possible. In Sadrean system, the main foundation of the issue of the soul is the principle of substantial motion in matter. According to this philosophy, man is a dynamic reality which passes its own stages of perfection one after the other in the light of substantial motion; and thus, the soul is a dynamic (and not static) reality which is going from the stage of "bodily origination and alteration" to the stage of "spiritual subsistence and intellection". That is why Mulla Sadra regards the soul as a "traveller" and man as a continuously travelling being. In this way, in the Transcendent Philosophy, the traditional opposition between the soul and the body is removed in such a way which is in agreement both with natural dualism and unity of the soul and the body. According to the principle of substantial motion, man is a single graded reality, which is the same from its material stage to the stage of immateriality and beyond. A traveller which goes station to station and wears a new clothing in each station, so that he may be a proof of the Revelation "Were We then worn out by the first creation? Yet they are in doubt about a new creation" (The Holy Quran, 50: 15).

4. Though Sadrean view concerning substantial motion is based on "relational existence" and the fact that "man is the same as relation" and, consequently, Divine effusion and creation is necessitated continuously for man and his worlds, Mulla Sadra considers such an extent for man and his existential modes that a level from among the levels of "creator-ness" is proved for man; i. e. in his perfectional becoming man attains such a station that he plays, somehow, his role in creation; this creator-ness is a symbol (and not the negation) of the Divine Creator-ness. It may be said in brief that the soul and the body which will appear in the Resurrection Day are products of man's reality in the world. Thus, it can be said that, according

³¹ Şadrā, *Shawāhid*, al-mashhad al-thālith, p. 246.

to the principles of this philosophy, the soul is the best product of the body in the world; and the other-worldly body may be the best product of the soul in the other-world; and all these are consequences of the principle of motion in the substance³². Among objections to Mulla Sadra's view in this regard is this one: "What is the criterion for the unity and plurality of the substantial motion of the soul?" In reply, the following can be said.

Firstly, according to the principles of Sadrean philosophy, "unity" is co-extensive with "existence"; thus, since existence is a graded and multi-levelled reality, unity is graded and multi-levelled as well.

Secondly, in this view man is an infinite reality from the stage of "bodily origination" to the stage of "spiritual subsistence"; the former and the latter may be distinguished mentally; but they are a single intensive continuous reality which is permanently in changing. Thus, man is not a being for whom one can determine limits and borders, i. e. affirm the end of his previous motion and the beginning of his next motion!³³ As a matter of fact, plurality of motions is a mental one; and, as already said, there is no conflict and opposition between various levels of man's existence, including his soul and body. For, according to Mulla Sadra, there is no opposition and conflict between different divisions of existence; the conflict concerns quiddities and their statements.

Thus, difference between the soul and the body — and, as a matter of fact, between intellectual existence and natural existence — refers to the difference between gradual levels of existence. Mulla Sadra writes:

"It is necessary to know that man is a combination of the soul and the body; and the difference between the two refers to the difference between levels of existence; and they are the same thing which has two faces; one of them is changing and it is the minor one; and the other is stable and surviving, and this is the main one. And the more perfect the existence of the soul, the more purified and subtle the body, and the more intensified its connection with the soul; so that eventually the union between the two becomes so intensified and strong that the intellectual existence appears; and the two become a single existence without any discrepancy between them"³⁴.

It goes without saying that here we find one of the unrivalled innovations of Mulla Sadra concerning the relation between the soul and the body in particular and the changing of man's existence from the sensory and natural stage to the intellectual and imaginal one in general; with such consistency, this can be found neither in the Western philosophical tradition nor elsewhere in Islamic tradition. What makes this view distinguished is, in addition to its internal consistency, the fact that it is among the necessary consequences of the real unity of existence, the doctrine of motion in substance, and the personal unity of man's existence.

³² Šadrā, *Asfār*, vol. 9, p. 128.

³³ Ibid. P. 132.

³⁴ Ibid. P. 128—9.

5. As it was said, one of the properties of Sadrean philosophy is that in it the science of soul is regarded, instead of as being categorized under natural philosophy, as an independent and separate part of the Transcendent Philosophy. According to Mulla Sadra, firstly, man is an “active” being not a “passive” one; secondly, the realm of man’s soul is similar to the realm of the Creator, the Exalted One; and thirdly, there is no halt in man’s motion and becoming. Thus, it may be maintained that man’s station in the Sadrean philosophy equals to the whole cosmos; and, in one sense, the whole cosmos focuses on man’s existence. This focus, however, does not lead to humanism prevalent in the Western philosophical traditions; for man and his soul, in all levels of existence, are “the same as relation and attribution”, and thus he does not forget his origin; nevertheless, he is so great that all levels of existence are reflected in his existence, and as “microcosm” he is a mirror of the “macrocosm”.

To explain, it should be said that in the embryonic stage, man’s soul is a vegetal one. Thus, in this stage, the vegetal soul is actual and the animal soul is potential. Upon birth, man’s soul ascends from vegetal to animal level; and this continues until formal maturity. In this time and during spiritual maturity and internal growth, man’s rational soul, which is potential in him, is actualized. Thus, in the beginning, man’s rational soul is, in terms of sense perfection, in the lowest level of things and the lowest mode of the material world. The soul in this world is, therefore, the form of every potentiality and its actuality and perfection. Because all perceptual and motivational powers, as well as their effects, are helped and controlled by the soul. In the other-world, this very soul is ready and apt to receive any form by which it appears in this world. Thus, the soul is a combination of two oceans, i. e. it is a locus where the ocean of corporal existence and the ocean of spiritual existence meet each other³⁵.

It should be noted that the greatness of man’s station in the Transcendent Philosophy in particular and in the Islamic philosophical tradition in general is not an affirmation of man’s independent and the so-called “self-established” existence which is seen in the humanist and subjective views of the Western tradition; but rather man’s greatness and infinity in the Transcendent Philosophy is a manifestation of the greatness of the Origin of existence and the Essence of the Creator, the Exalted, who gives all possible beings — including man — determination as beings related to Him. Thus, this view certainly does not lead to humanism and the like; and it does not face the problems and contradictions facing such views. To explain the relation and the attribution of man’s existence to the existence of the Real, Mulla Sadra uses the noble verse: “He caused them to forget their souls” (the Holy Quran, 59: 19), believing that this verse shows that the soul is the same as a relation to God and the Cause of causes; and thus to neglect God — the Exalted — is the same as to neglect the soul.

The reason is that in the circle of “existence”, there is no trace of “human-centeredness” and “God-centeredness”, of two realities and two worlds. As a matter

³⁵ Ibid. Vol. 8. P. 156—7.

of fact, the story is about a single reality and its manifestations. And this is among the consequences of Sadrean philosophy. In view of this, there is no opposition and conflict between existence and its divisions; if there is some opposition, it is between the divisions of quiddities. According to Mulla Sadra, there are things which are opposed to each other, and at the same time each of the two opposites includes the other as well. In this view, though man is the centre of the universe, he is a mere relation and attribution, and this is one of the fascinations of Sadrean philosophy.

6. As already said, one of the other considerations concerning Sadrean science of the soul is that soul originates from body — and in Mulla Sadra’s words, *hyle* — which has been introduced under the title “bodily origination and spiritual subsistence”. Before Mulla Sadra, like majority of Greek philosophers, Muslim philosophers regarded the soul as a part different from the body; and then, they proceeded to justify its unity with material and corporal body. In most of such views, there appeared problems concerning the presentation and explanation of the case.

One of such problems was the problem of essential difference between the soul and the body which could not be easily explained even by Suhrawardi’s Illuminationist school, doctrine of light essences, and the like. On the other hand, before Mulla Sadra, whoever claimed that the soul originates from the body, was regarded as materialist and denier of immaterial things. Mulla Sadra, however, posed a different idea and said that *hyle* is the origin of the soul. Man is a reality from the level of *hyle* to the station of immateriality and beyond; this was not, however, an affirmation of materialism.

According to Sadrean philosophy and, in particular, the doctrine of substantial motion, we have an intensive existential reality called “man”, which covers levels from *hyle* to pure immateriality. Such levels are divisions of existence, and therefore, there is no opposition and conflict between them. The soul is a product of matter and body; but the soul and the body are not two essentially different substances — rather, the soul is a multi-levelled existential reality, from which we abstract name and definition. The other point is that the reality of the soul because of its created-ness is finite and determined but because of the extent of its existence it is infinite and undetermined. Thus, because of its *hyle* and natural aspect, human existence is finite; and because of its immaterial and ideal aspect, it is infinite. Mulla Sadra even justifies and explains levels of human perception in correspondence to the levels of existence³⁶. And this is one of the consequences of ontology of Sadrean philosophy.

Mulla Sadra’s deliberations and innovations concerning “resurrection”, “Resurrection Day”, and theory of “corporal resurrection” are among issues related to the science of the soul which have been discussed in detail in the last part of the “fourth journey”, and include subtle points which have to be discussed separately.

³⁶ Ibid. P. 151.