

## HUMAN CONCEPT ACCORDING TO MULLĀ ṢADRĀ AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO MODERN SPIRITUAL CRISIS

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**Abstract:** *The background of this research departs from the reality of the humanitarian crisis in the modern era characterized by materialistic behavior, the decline of ethical values, and spiritual alienation. Previous studies of human philosophy have discussed many aspects of axiology and anthropology, but there is still a gap in offering a comprehensive philosophical-spiritual solution by referring specifically to the synthesis of Mullā Ṣadrā’s Islamic philosophy. The purpose of this article is to analyze the concept of human in the perspective of Mullā Ṣadrā’s Islamic philosophy and its contribution as a solution framework for the problem of contemporary spiritual crisis. This research uses a qualitative method with library research, focusing on the analysis of primary texts such as *Hikmah al-Muta’āliyah*, and supported by related secondary sources. The results of the study indicate that humans in Mullā Ṣadrā’s view are dynamic entities consisting of the soul (*nafs*) and the body, where the soul undergoes a gradual process of existential perfection through substantial movement (*al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*). The process of soul transformation towards perfection (*al-insān al-kāmil*) is carried out through soul cleansing (*tazkiyah al-naḥs*), the acquisition of knowledge—especially metaphysical knowledge about God—and spiritual practice in the four spiritual journeys (*al-asfār al-arba’ah*). The conclusion of the study confirms that Mullā Ṣadrā’s thoughts are not only relevant but also become an ontological foundation for an educational character that is able to overcome the spiritual crisis of the younger generation, so that it can function as an alternative solution in answering today’s existential problems.*

**Keywords:** *Ethics, Human, Islamic Philosophy, Mullā Ṣadrā, Substantial Movement.*

**Abstrak:** Latar belakang penelitian ini berangkat dari realitas krisis kemanusiaan di era modern yang ditandai oleh perilaku materialistik, penurunan nilai-nilai etika, dan alienasi spiritual. Studi-studi filsafat manusia sebelumnya telah banyak membahas aspek aksiologi dan antropologi, namun masih terdapat celah dalam menawarkan solusi filosofis-spiritual yang komprehensif dengan merujuk secara spesifik pada sintesis filsafat Islam Mullā Ṣadrā. Tujuan artikel ini adalah untuk menganalisis konsep manusia dalam perspektif filsafat Islam Mullā Ṣadrā dan kontribusinya sebagai

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kerangka solutif bagi permasalahan krisis spiritual kontemporer. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kepustakaan, berfokus pada analisis teks-teks primer seperti *Hikmah al-Muta'aliyah*, serta didukung oleh sumber-sumber sekunder terkait. Kerangka teoretis yang diterapkan merujuk pada filsafat transenden Mullā Ṣadrā. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa manusia dalam pandangan Mullā Ṣadrā merupakan entitas dinamis yang terdiri dari jiwa (*nafs*) dan tubuh, di mana jiwa mengalami proses penyempurnaan eksistensial secara gradual melalui gerak substansial (*al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*). Proses transformasi jiwa menuju kesempurnaan (*al-insān al-kāmil*) dilakukan melalui pembersihan jiwa (*tazkiyah al-nafs*), perolehan pengetahuan—khususnya pengetahuan metafisika tentang Tuhan—serta pengamalan spiritual dalam empat perjalanan rohani (*al-asfār al-arba'ah*). Simpulan penelitian menegaskan bahwa pemikiran Mullā Ṣadrā tidak hanya relevan, tetapi juga menjadi fondasi ontologis untuk pendidikan karakter yang mampu menanggulangi krisis spiritual generasi muda, sehingga dapat berfungsi sebagai alternatif solutif dalam menjawab problem eksistensial manusia masa kini.

**Kata-kata Kunci:** *Etika, Filsafat Islam, Gerak Substansial, Manusia, Mullā Ṣadrā.*

## Introduction

As human beings living in the modern world, understanding “the human” as a concept is a fundamental task required of every person. This is because the human being, by nature, is endowed with reason; it is reason that enables humans to survive from the simplest acts of acquiring knowledge to applying it in life and ultimately building civilization (Muthahhari 2008, 59).

In the contemporary era, Western influence, often marked by a Eurocentric outlook that positions itself at the center of politics, history, and culture, has led to a reduction of the meaning of the human being, who is now often viewed merely as a physical and rational creature (Gubman 2022, 628). This narrowing of the human concept has further manifested in the form of wars, genocide, and various forms of injustice (Ayun et al. 2024, 333). Ironically, the very human concept that modern Western discourse upholds through instruments such as human rights is meant to champion moral virtues and foster the realization of goodness (Ritonga and Ichsan 2025, 203).

Human reason in the present age has, in fact, reached one of its highest points in the history of civilization. Yet behind the remarkable progress that has been achieved, human beings have forgotten who they truly are. Existing philosophical anthropology studies on Mullā Ṣadrā—while significant in exegeting concepts such as *insān Ilāhī* (Khair and Toresano 2020, 92), soul origination (Baghirov 2024, 3575), spiritual humanism (Khair and Qoriah 2020, 51), perfectionist comparison with Nietzsche (Tsani and Encung 2023, 300), and free will contrast with Kant remain predominantly descriptive. Taken together, these studies—directly or indirectly—address the concept of the human being, though each explores it through different philosophical dimensions such as axiology, anthropology, and ontology. None systematically operationalize Ṣadrā’s metaphysics as an applied framework for deconstructing contemporary pathologies (Yarali et al. 2023, 13).

Amid the dominance of materialistic worldviews that reduce the human being to a merely physical entity, there is a pressing need for a philosophical framework capable of fully integrating both rational and spiritual dimensions. It is in this

context that the thought of Mulla Ṣadrā becomes remarkably relevant. Through the school of *Hikmah al-Muta‘āliyah*, Ṣadrā offers a distinctive synthesis of philosophical demonstration (*burhān*), spiritual illumination (*‘irfān*), and revealed texts (the Qur’an). The strength of this synthesis lies in its ability to articulate a conception of the human being that is not trapped in a rigid dichotomy between soul and body. Instead, it views the human being as engaged in a dynamic process of perfection (*ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*). This conceptual contribution remains relatively underexplored as a potential response to the modern human crisis of self-understanding. Beyond addressing this gap in the literature by examining the human concept within Mulla Ṣadrā’s Islamic philosophical framework, this article also seeks to highlight the importance of understanding the human being as a foundational reference for ethical conduct within society.

The central question explored here is how Mulla Ṣadrā, as a Muslim philosopher, conceives of the human concept. The article discusses three specific aspects. First, it examines general understandings of the human being, ethics, and culture. Second, the core of the discussion analyzes Mulla Ṣadrā’s perspective on the human being. Third, it explores the contribution of Ṣadrian anthropology to the contemporary crisis of spirituality in the modern world. Through this analysis, the article aims to provide concrete evidence and offer a renewed perspective on society’s understanding of the conditions of the present age.

Together, these three aspects provide a comprehensive picture of the human concept within Mulla Ṣadrā’s Islamic philosophy and its contemporary significance. This study is crucial not only for enriching knowledge—especially in the field of Islamic philosophy—but also because societal realities show that many human behaviors today are misaligned with Islamic philosophical principles, whether in ontology, epistemology, or axiology. This study demonstrates the need for humans to return to the straight path, acting at the very least in accordance with ethical principles, to cultivate healthier and more harmonious social interactions. In this regard, Islamic philosophy serves as a vital interpretive instrument for understanding the concept of the human being.

This article is constructed upon the observation that contemporary human actions increasingly transgress ethical boundaries, manifesting in phenomena such as genocide and the growing shallowness of individual spirituality. It is also grounded in the argument that human beings today tend to prefer doctrinal acceptance over independent inquiry. Relying solely on doctrine renders one’s thinking rigid and less capable of embracing difference. Although some individuals may still tolerate differing views, such tolerance often arises from social discomfort rather than from a genuinely reasoned intellectual stance. Furthermore, doctrines themselves are varied and sound, while others are misleading. Both types may exert a strong influence, yet the consequences become far more destructive when a person is shaped by misleading or distorted doctrines: their entire mode of conduct may deteriorate, sometimes drastically (Zmigrod 2022, 14–38).

This study is grounded in Islamic philosophy as developed by Mullā Ṣadrā. We employ a qualitative approach and library research to constitute the methodological

foundation of this work. We examine and collect data from relevant literature that is directly connected to the object of discussion, after which the data are analyzed through discourse analysis. Data collection includes an examination of primary philosophical sources, followed by the use of secondary sources to serve as complementary material in deepening the analysis. In addition to printed works, we also draw on electronic academic articles as supplementary references for the development of this paper (Mukhyi 2023, 34).

The database and other forms of data used in this study are categorized into two types: primary and secondary sources. The primary data consist of the main materials employed in this article, namely Mullā Ṣadrā's own work *al-Ḥikmah al-Muta'āliyah fī al-Asfār al-'Aqliyyah al-Arba'ah*. Although Ṣadrā's writings continue to require extensive scholarly investigation due to their depth and complexity, several prominent scholars have succeeded in examining and systematizing his thoughts. Among them is Ṭabāṭabā'ī through his work *Bidāyah al-Ḥikmah*, which provides a more accessible entry into the principles of Ṣadrā's philosophy. Secondary data, on the other hand, refers to materials external to the primary sources, works composed by other authors whose analyses offer relevant information concerning the figure under study and the development of his philosophical ideas (Nasution 2023, 6).

The primary sources used in this study are the philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā and *Ḥikmah al-Muta'āliyah*, both written by Mullā Ṣadrā himself. The secondary sources consist of books and scholarly articles that discuss the themes related to this study.

Based on the method of data presentation, this study employs a descriptive-analytical approach. This method does not merely describe the relevant themes but offers a deeper analysis to generate new and more comprehensive insights. Concerning the research data, the authors classify this work as qualitative research, a methodological procedure that produces data in the form of words, not numbers, including notes and reflections related to meaning, value, and interpretation. Consequently, the qualitative method tends to be holistic, as it interprets data in relation to the broader network of concepts and contextual dimensions that may be involved (Syahir 2021, 6).

## General Concept of Human Beings, Ethics, and Culture

The concepts of human beings, ethics, and culture are intrinsically interconnected. In the Islamic intellectual tradition, the human being is regarded as one of God's creations endowed with the highest rank, surpassing even the demons and the angels (Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an 2019, 403). This superiority is illustrated through God's command to both angels and Iblīs to prostrate before the first human being (Zulihafnani and Putri 2021, 305; Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an 2019, 7).

This elevated status stems from the fact that humans possess qualities found in both angels and demons: namely, desire (*nafs*) and intellect (*'aql*). Desire is often associated with moral deficiency, while intellect is viewed as the principle

of goodness. Consequently, humans have the capacity to choose between good and evil, and this moral freedom constitutes an essential aspect of their ontological structure. One of the primary purposes behind the creation of human beings is their role as *khalīfah* (vicegerents) on earth. The caliph referred to—according to the Quran—is humankind as stewards of the earth, utilizing and prospering the earth and its contents in accordance with sharia (Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur’an 2019, 6). Humans can do this because God has endowed them with the potential of reason and reasoning (Mubarak et al. 2024, 1).

This role entails the responsibility to preserve and cultivate the world, a responsibility that inherently constitutes divine tests through the trust placed upon humans. These tests manifest in three interconnected dimensions: first, the test of self-restraint against exploitative tendencies; second, the test of establishing justice in human relationships; and third, the test of maintaining ecological balance. The Quranic narrative in QS. Al-Baqarah 2:30 explicitly frames this appointment as both an honor and a trial, where angels questioned human capability due to their potential for corruption, yet Allah affirmed that He ‘knows what they do not know’—indicating that the capacity for stewardship itself is the testing ground for human righteousness (Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur’an 2019, 6).

The concept of *khalīfah* in this context does not merely refer to ordinary human beings living without purpose or direction. Rather, it refers to individuals who are deeply conscious of their existence, who understand the purpose of their creation, and who remain aware that the trials they face originate from the One God, the Most Exalted (Zalta 2021).

From a philosophical standpoint, the human being can be viewed from multiple dimensions—physical and spiritual (Muthahhari 2023, 9–10). In Western philosophy, two major schools remain influential today: Materialism and Idealism. According to materialists (also called naturalists), the human being is essentially physical matter, existing in space and time, and therefore measurable, quantifiable, and observable (Malcolm 2014a, 22). They deny the existence of a spiritual realm because, for them, there is a contradiction in the words “incorporeal substance,” which is the same as saying there is “an object that is not an object,” which, if these words are combined, will mutually destroy their own meaning (Malcolm 2014b, 610).

Phenomena beyond current human comprehension are assumed merely to reflect gaps in knowledge, not spiritual causation; thus, only that which is perceptible through the senses is accepted as real. In contrast, idealists hold that the essence of the human lies in its spiritual dimension, emphasizing the reality of ideas or mental forms (idealism is also termed spiritualism) (Plato 2000, 134). George Berkeley posited that “to be is to be perceived” (Berkeley 1998, 104); objects exist insofar as they are apprehended by an active mind. Because ideas cannot be measured like material objects, consciousness becomes the medium of philosophical inquiry (analogous to neuro-technological analogies measuring brain activity during thought). Idealists uphold concepts such as the soul and God, arguing that consciousness is the only certain foundation of knowledge. Yet

their affirmation of the spiritual does not imply a rejection of matter or physical laws (Abidin 2014, 25).

If we look at it from the perspective of Islamic philosophy, they not only accept the two schools of thought above but also have a broader view of humans. This is because Islamic philosophy views humanity through the principle of *tashkīk al-wujūd* (gradations of existence), where the material and spiritual dimensions are not two dichotomously separate substances, but rather a single soul that animates the body. Thus, human perfection is achieved not by denying one or the other, but through the harmonization of theoretical and practical reason toward closeness to God (al-Shīrāzi 1990c, 99).

Ethics is often understood as manners or appropriate conduct, yet from a philosophical standpoint, ethics is a branch of axiology that concerns values and moral principles, which discuss moral values and principles that lead to perfection of the soul and the highest happiness (Fārābī 1995, 12). Thus, to speak of ethics is to assess whether actions are right or wrong, good or evil, and these apply universally to all humans regardless of status or scale of action. Every human is innately endowed with a natural disposition to discern good from evil; yet this disposition is frequently obscured by human vice. Ethics often intersects with social norms, which differ across societies. For example, rural Indonesian communities typically emphasize gender-based roles—women predominantly occupy domestic spaces while men work publicly. Urban societies, by contrast, tend to advocate gender equality, where roles and responsibilities are determined by competence and mutual agreement rather than biological sex—thus creating a more flexible social structure (Suseno 1987, 15).

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that the relationship among the three—humanity, ethics, and cultures is mutually influential in shaping behavior, values, and social order. Human beings are the creators and practitioners of culture and ethics, constructing them to fulfill the necessities of life. Consequently, none of the three can be separated from human existence.

### The Essence of the Soul According to Mullā Ṣadrā

As a 17th-century philosopher whose school synthesizes Peripatetic philosophy (*Mashā'i*), Illuminationist philosophy (*Isbrāqī*), and *ʿIrfān*, Mullā Ṣadrā presents a profound anthropology. For Ṣadrā, the human being consists of two major dimensions: the body, as a material vessel enabling interaction with the physical world, and the soul, an immaterial substance that animates, makes conscious, and receives knowledge. He argues that the soul initially emerges as corporeal (*jismanī al-ḥudūth*) and gradually evolves toward spirituality (*rūḥānī al-baqāʾ*). The soul cannot be eternal from the outset, for what is perfect does not descend toward imperfection; thus, the soul originates materially and ascends through stages of existential transformation (Shīrāzi 1990c, 12).

The spirit (*rūḥ*) differs from both body and soul—it is a sacred substance breathed into the body at birth and withdrawn at death. The body, being physical, deteriorates and perishes, while immaterial realities remain eternally once created,

though they begin from nothingness. In Ṣadrā's philosophy, the soul is dynamic, not static; its existence develops over time. The soul possesses faculties of thinking, intuition, and action. Life originates from the soul, but the soul requires the body to be its medium in the physical world. When the soul actualizes all its capacities, it reaches existential perfection (Khair 2020; Shīrāzi 1990b, 13–14).

One of the theories developed by Mullā Ṣadrā as his major contribution to philosophy is *substantial motion* (*al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*). The term “motion” here does not merely refer to a simple transition from one point to another; rather, it has a broader and deeper meaning—namely, a gradual transformation from potentiality (*quwwah*) to actuality (*fi'liyyah*). Why is this so? His theory explains that everything in the universe—every mode of being (*wujūd*)—does not only move and change at the accidental level (i.e., its external attributes), but also at the substantial level (i.e., its very essence and existential reality). The human soul at its inception is physical (*jismāniyyat al-ḥudūth*), that is, it is a form (*ṣūrah*) or perfection that emerges from the peak of the evolution of bodily matter. Through substantial movement (*al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*) that continues to strengthen (*ishtidād*), the soul transforms beyond physical limitations to become an independent and eternal spiritual substance (*rūḥāniyyāt al-baqā*) (al-Shīrāzi 1990b, 14).

For example, accidental motion can be seen when a person walks from home to the marketplace. In contrast, substantial motion is exemplified by a seed that, once planted, grows into a great tree. The seed undergoes an essential transformation—from sheer potentiality to full actuality, from simplicity to complexity. Another illustrative case is the process of learning and acquiring knowledge. When a person studies, the change is not merely quantitative (the increase of information), but rather qualitative and substantial, altering the very mode of thinking and the structure of understanding through which the world is perceived. This, too, constitutes an essential transformation within the individual (Pratomo 2017, 50).

Furthermore, change may occur either instantaneously or gradually over a duration. Instantaneous change falls under the category of *kawn* (coming-into-being) and *fasād* (perishing). What is meant by *kawn* and *fasād* is a transformation in which emergence and destruction occur spontaneously and within a single event, without the mediation of temporal succession. An example of such an instantaneous change is a fruit falling from its tree. Meanwhile, a change that unfolds slowly and progressively over time is what is referred to as *motion* (*ḥarakah*), as illustrated by the gradual heating of water. In relation to the present discussion, the soul (*nafs*) is a mode of existence (*wujūd*) that changes. This is because that which remains constant and immutable is only the perfect mode of being, such as the Necessary Existent (*wājib al-wujūd*) and the intellect (*'aql*). In contrast, any existence that transforms is by definition imperfect, such as corporeality (*jism*), matter, and the soul insofar as it is still bound to the body (Gharawiyān 2012, 197).

In the context of the human being, the soul—according to Mullā Ṣadrā—undergoes substantial motion, progressing from a vegetative soul (*al-nafs al-nabātiyyah*) to an animal soul (*al-nafs al-ḥayawāniyyah*), then to a rational-human

soul (*al-nafs al-insāniyyah*), and continuously advancing toward perfection. In his work, he says:

أحدها النفس النباتية وهي كمال أول لجسم طبيعي آلي من جهة ما يتولد ويروبو ويولد. وثانيها النفس الحيوانية وهي كمال أول لجسم طبيعي آلي من جهة ما يدرك الجزئيات ويتحرك بالإرادة. وثالثها النفس الإنسانية وهي كمال أول لجسم طبيعي آلي من جهة ما يدرك الأمور الكلية؛ ويفعل الأفاعيل الكائنة بالاختيار الفكري والاستنباط بالرأي

First, the vegetable soul (*al-nafs al-nabātiyyah*) is the first perfection of the natural, organic body in that it nourishes, grows, and reproduces. Second, the animal soul (*al-nafs al-ḥayawāniyyah*) is the first perfection of the natural, organic body in that it perceives particular things and moves with will. Third, the human soul (*al-nafs al-insāniyyah*) is the first perfection of the natural, organic body in that it perceives universal things and performs actions based on intellectual choices and conclusions (Shīrāzi 1990b, 54).

Mullā Ṣadrā explains that the human soul is classified into three. The first is the vegetative soul, which is the lowest level. At this level, the soul plays a role in providing nutrition, growth, and reproduction; the soul is seen as the guardian of the body's existence, from raw matter to the actual body. One level above it, there is the animal soul, where it can perceive (stimuli/stimulus, such as seeing, hearing, touching) things, and move according to will. Finally, there is the human soul, where reason is the axis, where humans not only see an object, but also understand its abstract concept; this is what is called abstraction and logic. Although the soul has three classifications, the soul remains a unity that complements each other through the process of substantial movement. Where once it has reached the human soul, then both vegetable and animal souls are present within it.

Herein lies Ṣadrā's definition of change: matter develops from potentiality toward actuality. This transformation, as previously mentioned, occurs slowly and gradually over time, and it is precisely this gradual transformation that is termed *motion* (*ḥarakah*). For the soul to ascend to higher degrees of existence, it requires knowledge, experience, and sound spiritual understanding. Throughout this process, the soul, bound by material needs, gradually sheds its attachment as its consciousness expands. In doing so, the human being ultimately attains a higher level of spirituality, the station of *al-insān al-kāmil* (the perfect human) (Walid 2023, 138).

From an ontological perspective, Ṭabāṭabā'ī explains that the human being, in reality, is one among the many *mumkin al-wujūd* (contingent beings). This understanding is inseparable from the fact that the human being is a reflection of the *Wājib al-Wujūd* (Necessary Existent); it is said so because, in essence, humanity would not exist were it not for the existence of the Necessary Being.

Ontology, in its foundational discussions, addresses the relationship between cause and effect. Thus, one may ask: Is the human being a cause or an effect? As previously stated, since the human being is a reflection and manifestation of the Necessary Existent, it is therefore an effect (*ma'lūl*) of the act of creation by the Necessary Being. And the Necessary Being is the ultimate source and principle of all causation. Accordingly, the law of cause and effect may be likened to a chain: if one continuously traces each link back to its origin, it will inevitably terminate

at the final link—the Necessary Existent Himself (Ṭabāṭabā’ī 2002, 52; Ṭabāṭabā’ī and Sabzwārī 1998, 194).

The discussion above represents Mullā Ṣadrā’s holistic view of the human being, encompassing physical, mental, and metaphysical dimensions. His perspective regards the human being as a dynamic creature—one whose reality is not limited to the physical aspect alone, but also includes the non-physical dimension, namely the soul (*nafs*). Mullā Ṣadrā asserts that the soul possesses the capacity to ascend toward perfection through substantial motion (*al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*). Furthermore, from a metaphysical standpoint, the existence of the human being is grounded in the Necessary Existent (*wājib al-wujūd*).

### The Process of Perfecting the Soul Through Knowledge and Reason

To attain perfection of the soul, one must undergo *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul). What, then, is meant by purification of the soul? In brief, it refers to distancing the soul from blameworthy traits and adorning it with praiseworthy virtues. Such a definition is indeed broad; therefore, for the sake of clarity, we will narrow the concept of purification to the dimension of knowledge and intellect. First, we must understand the relationship between the two. Knowledge and intellect are complementary; knowledge is truly knowledge only when the intellect comprehends and actively grasps it. Through the operation of the intellect, knowledge becomes internalized within the soul. In essence, the human soul can only be fulfilled through knowledge. How is this so? Consider the example of your current reading of this article: when you feel curiosity about how the soul can be satisfied by knowledge, that curiosity itself indicates that your intellect and soul are aware of a state of not-knowing. Once you acquire that missing knowledge, your soul experiences a sense of fulfilment. Nevertheless, as long as we exist in this world, nothing can absolutely satiate the soul’s hunger for knowledge. World knowledge provides only temporary satisfaction its effect fades, and hunger returns. Therefore, no world knowledge can offer complete satiation, because the soul, in its very substance, is immaterial. Consequently, it can only be fully satisfied by immaterial, metaphysical knowledge—knowledge of God—for both are alike in immaterial essence. When the soul receives knowledge of God, it will gradually detach itself from material fixations, no longer regarding material existence as the ultimate reality. Material entities are not what is truly Real (*al-ḥaqq*) (Hasanuddin and Khojir 2023, 18).

Mullā Ṣadrā said in his magnum opus:

الإنسان، فاعقل إن كنت تعقل، فانظر في كل ماسوى الله وما وصفه الحق به؛ وهو قوله: (وإن من شيء إلا يسبح بحمده، ووصف الكل بالسجود، وما جعل لواحد منهم أمراً في العالم، ولا نهيًا، ولا خلافة، ولا تكوينًا عامًا، وجعل ذلك للإنسان الكامل، فمن أراد أن يعرف كماله فلينظر في نفسه...

O human being, understand—if you are capable of understanding, and look at everything other than what the Truth describes, namely His words: ‘And there is nothing that does not praise Him,’ and He describes everything with prostration, and He does not give orders to

anyone in this world, no prohibitions, no authority, no general creation, and He gives it to a perfect human being. So, whoever wants to know his perfection, let him look at himself... (Shirāzi 1990b, 140–41).

Here, he emphasizes that all creatures—except the human being—glorify (*tasbīḥ*) and prostrate (*sujūd*). However, their glorification and prostration are intrinsic and automatic, in accordance with the laws of nature. They are not subject to command or prohibition. Why is this so? Because command and prohibition can only be apprehended by an entity endowed with intellect (*‘aql*). Without intellect and the knowledge required to distinguish between good and evil, the soul can never attain the level of *choice* that leads to perfection.

Furthermore, his statement, “Whoever wishes to know his perfection must look within himself,” refers to the method of *‘ilm ḥuḍūrī* (knowledge by presence). To attain perfection, the soul must come to know itself. This act of “seeing” is not carried out through the physical eye, but through the inner vision (*baṣīrah*) and the intellect. It is precisely this self-knowledge that serves as the gateway to the knowledge of God and of the cosmos. He also explains that *khilāfah* (vicegerency) and the capacity for *takwīn* (creative governance or ontological agency) are granted only to the Perfect Human (*al-insān al-kāmil*).

Within Ṣadrā’s philosophy, the human being attains the rank of vicegerency not by virtue of the physical body, but because the soul has reached the level of the Acquired Intellect (*al-‘aql al-mustafād*)—that is, the intellect that has actualized universal knowledge. Without knowledge, the human being does not differ essentially from animals, which merely “prostrate” instinctively without intellectual awareness. The higher the degree of one’s knowledge and intellect, the greater the intensity of one’s existence (*wujūd*). A human being who fails to actualize the intellect has not yet attained the true degree of “humanity” within the existential hierarchy. Therefore, the perfection of the soul can only be realized through the activation and cultivation of the intellectual faculty. Without intellect and knowledge, the human being remains among ordinary creatures subject to nature; but with intellect, one ascends to the rank of God’s vicegerent (*khalīfah*), endowed with spiritual and existential authority within the cosmos.

### Achieving True Happiness by Uniting with God

In *al-Asfār al-Arba‘ah*, Mullā Ṣadrā writes that there are four spiritual journeys undertaken by the human being (in his work, the traveler is referred to as the intellect, *al-‘aql*) to attain true happiness within the material world. These four journeys are: the journey from creation (the material world) toward the Real (*al-Ḥaqq*, the Absolute Truth, i.e., God); the journey in God and through God; the journey from God back toward creation by means of God; and the journey among creation together with God (Shirāzi 1990a, 13).

These spiritual itineraries serve the purpose of attaining knowledge and wisdom. In the first journey, the intellect as the subject demonstrates the necessity of the Existence (*wujūd*) of God and His Essence (*dhāt*), affirming that only God truly exists, for He is the self-subsistent and real Being (Shirāzi 1990a, 14). Moving into

the second journey, the intellect has arrived at the presence of the Divine (*al-ḥaqq*); thus, its next task is to deepen its understanding of the Divine until it reaches the degree of sainthood (*walāyah*). In this phase, the intellect begins its inward ascent from the station (*maqām*) of the Divine Essence toward the degrees of Divine perfections, traversing them one by one. In doing so, its sainthood becomes perfected, and this second journey culminates in its annihilation (*fanā'*) within the Divine Essence (Shīrāzi 1990a, 14).

In the third journey, the intellect—having reached its highest summit of illumination and having become effaced in the Divine—descends once more to society, calling human beings toward goodness and enjoining the Divine command, in a manner analogous to the prophetic mission. However, such a person is not a prophet, for besides lacking the unique prophetic capacity, the cycle of prophethood itself has ended. Rather, this individual acts in the role of a *khalīfah* (vicegerent), guiding people toward righteousness and the fulfillment of God's commands (Shīrāzi 1990a, 14).

The fourth and final journey is one in which the intellect witnesses all creatures, along with their effects and respective states. It is capable of knowing the good and evil actions of these beings, both in this world and the hereafter. It also perceives what each being needs, what harms it, what benefits it, what grants it happiness, and what leads it to misery (Effendi 2021, 346; Shīrāzi 1990a, 15). The highest perfection can be attained by the rational human soul, and such perfection is realized once the intellect has purified both its corporeal and spiritual dimensions. So, how is spiritual happiness achieved? Happiness can be achieved by humans using their intellectual minds, not by relying on external things.

فسعادة النفس وكمالها هو الوجود الاستقلالي المجرد والتصوير للمعقولات والعلم بحقائق الأشياء على ما هي عليها، ومشاهدة الأمور العقلية والذوات النورانية...

The happiness and perfection of the soul lies in its independent abstract existence, its conception of intelligible concepts, its knowledge of the true nature of things, and its observation of intellectual things and luminous beings...(Shīrāzi 1990c, 128).

Mullā Ṣadrā maintains that the happiness of the soul is attained when it becomes independent, liberated from material attachments that confine and imprison it within the physical realm. The soul must ascend from its initial dependence upon matter toward a mode of self-subsistent existence. In this ascent, the soul achieves perfection and happiness by grasping universal and intellectual realities whose truth is not subject to change over time. The more intelligible objects the soul apprehends, the stronger and more expansive its mode of existence (*wujūd*) becomes. Ṣadrā understands happiness as “knowing things as they truly are”, not merely recognizing their names, but comprehending the very reality of their being as signs and manifestations of the Divine.

Such knowledge activates the very substance of the soul: just as one who perceives the essence of truth possesses a fundamentally different quality of soul compared to one who knows only its outward appearance. Ultimately, happiness

is realized when the soul comes to know what is noble. By knowing the noble, the soul itself becomes ennobled. When the soul knows God and Truth, it becomes, in an ontological sense, united with that truth. Thus, happiness is attained because the soul is no longer separated from what it loves but rather becomes united with it. Therefore, the path to happiness is both intellectual and spiritual. It is achieved through learning (the perfection of the intellect) and through self-purification (the refinement of the soul), until the soul becomes sufficiently strong to transcend its dependence on matter and to unite with the realm of Divine Light.

### Mullā Ṣadrā's Contribution to Overcoming the Modern Spiritual Crisis

Mullā Ṣadrā's thought, as articulated in his magnum opus *al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyah*, has a significant impact and strong contemporary relevance as a foundational framework for modern life. His primary contribution lies in his harmonious synthesis of philosophy (rationality), theology (revelation), and *'irfān* (spiritual gnosis). This integration offers a response to the crises of modernity, which often segregate intellectual advancement from spiritual value. The relevance of this synthesis is evident in its practical embodiment within Iran, where scientific and intellectual progress continue to advance in tandem with the preservation of spiritual tradition—even under the persistent pressure of Western embargoes. This intellectual-spiritual synthesis has also produced and inspired leading modern philosophers such as Ṭabāṭabā'ī in the development of Ṣadrā's systematic ontology (Ṭabāṭabā'ī and Sabzwārī 1998, 5–7), Khomeini in the integration of mysticism with politics (Khomaynī 2006, 158), and Seyyed Hossein Nasr, who brought the principle of *al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyah* (Nasr 1978, 92–94).

In the context of addressing contemporary spiritual and ecological crises, Mulla Ṣadrā's conception of the human being underscores the importance of maintaining cosmic balance. As a creature brought into existence by God, the human being bears an ontological responsibility to preserve harmony—not only among fellow human beings, but also with the natural environment and the broader ecological order. Within the perspective of *al-Hikmah al-Muta'aliyah*, the designation of a “true human being” is not a static status, but an existential achievement—one that is realized only when a person can actualize and manifest this cosmic balance within the depths of their own soul.

أما قوة العلم فأعددها وأحسنها أن تصير بحيث تدرك الفرق بين الصدق والكذب في الأقوال، وبين الحق والباطل في الاعتقادات، وبين الجميل والقيح في الأعمال؛ فإذا انصلحت هذه القوة واعتدلت من غير غلو وتقصير حصلت منها ثمرة هي بالحقيقة أصل الخيرات ورأس الفضائل وروحها... وأما قوة الغضب فيعبر عن اعتدالها بالشجاعة والله تعالى يحب الشجاع؛ فإن مالت إلى طرف الإفراط سمي قهوراً، وإن مالت إلى النقصان سمي جنباً... وأما الشهوة فيعبر عن اعتدالها بالعفة، وعن إفراطها بالشره، وعن تفریطها بالحمود... وأما قوة العقل والحكمة فيصدر عن اعتدالها حسن العدل والتدبير، وجودة الذهن و ثقابة الرأي، و إصابة الظن و التفتن لدقائق الأعمال وخبايا آفات النفوس، و أما إفراطها فتحصل منه الجريزة و المكر والخداع والدهاء، ويحصل من ضعفها البله و الحمق و الغباوة و الانخداع

As for the faculty of knowledge, its most balanced and optimal state is such that a person can distinguish between truth and falsehood in speech, between right and wrong in belief, and between beauty and ugliness in action. When this faculty is properly refined and brought into equilibrium—without excess or deficiency—it yields a fruit that constitutes the very root of goodness, the foundation of virtue, and its animating spirit...As for the faculty of anger (*quwwat al-ghaḍab*), its proper moderation is expressed as courage, and God Almighty loves those who are courageous. When it inclines toward excess, it becomes recklessness; when it falls into deficiency, it becomes cowardice...As for the appetitive faculty (*al-shahwah*), its moderation manifests as chastity, its excess as greed, and its deficiency as insensibility or lack of desire (Shīrāzi 1990c, 89–90)...Finally, as for the faculty of intellect and wisdom (*al-‘aql wa al-ḥikmah*), its proper application leads to justice and sound governance, to sharp intelligence and profound judgment, to accurate perception, and to an awareness of the subtleties of actions and the hidden deficiencies within the soul. However, its excess gives rise to base cunning, deceit, and manipulation, while its deficiency results in ignorance, foolishness, stupidity, and susceptibility to deception (Shīrāzi 1990b, 91).

From Mullā Ṣadrā’s view above, it is evident that he emphasizes four foundational faculties within the human being: the faculty of knowledge, the irascible faculty (*quwwat al-ghaḍab*), the appetitive faculty (*al-shahwah*), and the faculty of intellect and wisdom. When these four pillars are brought into proper balance, the human being attains an inner equilibrium that reflects a broader cosmic harmony. This is because there exists a profound relationship between the disorder of the macrocosm and the imbalance of the human microcosm. The macrocosm may be understood as a projection of the loss of spiritual balance within the human soul. Consequently, cosmic harmony cannot be realized so long as the human being has not first achieved equilibrium within these internal faculties. Spiritual crisis, therefore, arises from the alienation of the human being from the very reality of their own existence. When this inner balance is lost, the human being is inclined to perceive nature merely as a commodity, rather than as a manifestation (*tajallī*) of the Divine.

### **Deconstruction of Materialism Through the Concept of *Ḥarakah Jawhariyyah***

In the condition of modern reality, human beings have fallen into a static and materialistic worldview. This condition arises from what may be termed an “ontological blindness,” wherein the universe is perceived merely as a collection of inert and lifeless matter, severed from any trace of the Divine—rather than being understood as a dynamic manifestation of being (*wujūd*) that is continuously unfolding through substantial motion (*al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*). On a practical level, this worldview emerges from the loss of balance among the faculties of the human soul. When the appetitive (*al-shahwah*) and irascible (*al-ghaḍab*) faculties dominate the intellectual faculty (*al-quwwah al-‘aqliyyah*), the human being loses sensitivity to cosmic harmony and is transformed into a predator toward the environment, driven by material gratification. Consequently, the ecological crisis we witness today can be understood as a projection of spiritual disorder and the loss of “inner justice” within the human being. From a Ṣadrīan perspective, this condition obstructs the realization of true humanity, preventing the individual

from attaining their authentic existential rank (Shīrāzi 1990c, 89).

One clear example can be observed in the current social media phenomenon among university students, who frequently upload displays of hedonistic lifestyles—posting photographs of luxury items, lavish places, and extravagant food. Such tendencies inevitably affect the educational environment: education becomes a platform for social validation rather than intellectual cultivation, a space for showcasing wealth instead of pursuing knowledge. Students become trapped within the need for validation from others and succumb to peer pressure (Halim and Moekahar 2024, 97; Deftarani et al. 2024, 35). This kind of behavior encourages modern individuals to perceive the human being solely through the lens of materiality, where existence is judged according to physical appearance, beauty, wealth, or social status. Consequently, existential crises arise—such as fear of aging, fear of death, and an inner emptiness that persists despite material abundance.

Mullā Ṣadrā maintains that the soul is not static but dynamic—that is, it is perpetually in motion and in flux. The soul does not come to rest at the level of materiality; rather, it continuously advances toward the realm of eternal spirituality. As articulated in Ṣadrā’s well-known doctrine, the soul is corporeal in its origination (*jismāniyyat al-ḥudūth*) yet spiritual in its subsistence (*rūḥāniyyat al-baqā*). In other words, while the soul emerges in conjunction with matter, it ultimately endures as an immaterial reality, whereas the physical body perishes. For this reason, the body should be understood merely as an “initial phase” or a “shell,” rather than the true identity of the human being. Human beings must therefore become aware that they are engaged in a continuous process of evolution toward immaterial perfection. The theory of substantial motion (*al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*) offers a more comprehensive account of the continuity between the physical and metaphysical dimensions—an aspect that classical materialism fails to adequately explain. It does so by transforming the human paradigm: from viewing nature as a collection of static matter to understanding it as a dynamic flow of being (*wujūd*) that continuously renews itself. In this perspective, matter is no longer regarded as an ultimate end, but rather as a transitional medium toward a higher spiritual reality (Shīrāzi 1990c, 11).

### **Redefining Happiness: The Transition from the Body’s *Mizāj* to the Soul’s *Kamāl***

The phenomenon of hedonism positions material pleasure as the primary measure of life’s purpose—manifested, for instance, in the pursuit of expensive branded goods or indulgent foods that merely gratify momentary desire (Isham 2024, 345). Within this framework, the standard of happiness for modern individuals is assessed through transient bodily pleasures alone. Consequently, when their mood deteriorates, or pleasure subsides, they experience a sense of emptiness or perceive life as lacking meaning. This condition reflects an implicit assumption that the soul and the body are either identical or inseparably fused, a view that ultimately reduces and impoverishes the true meaning of the soul. This

is because such a worldview diminishes the status of the soul, which ought to function as an independent governing principle over the body, reducing it instead to a mere servant of the lower faculties (*al-shahwah*). As a result, it obstructs the soul's substantial motion (*al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*) toward higher spiritual perfection.

Ṣadrā maintains that the soul is a substance (*jawhar*), meaning that it subsists independently rather than being an accidental attachment, and that its essential nature is one of continuous motion toward perfection (*kamāl*) (Shīrāzi 1990c, 28). Accordingly, the body and the soul occupy distinct ontological ranks: the soul, by virtue of its immaterial nature, stands at a higher level than the body, which is material. For this reason, gratifying the body (*mizāj*) can never truly satisfy the soul (*nafs*), since each belongs to a different *maqām* (ontological station). The soul can only be fulfilled through knowledge (*ʿilm*) and gnosis (*maʿrifah*), for these correspond to its very essence and reality (Shīrāzi 1990c, 89–90).

### Overcoming Anthropocentric Dualism: Humans as Cosmic Unity with Nature

The dualistic separation between the human being and nature gives rise to a reality in which human self-interest becomes dominant. Humanity engages in the exploitation and oppression of nature without considering the consequences for its own existence. The floods and landslides that struck the provinces of Aceh, North Sumatra, and West Sumatra in November 2025 were the result of massive deforestation, subsequently replaced by oil palm plantations (Tanjung and Maullana 2025). As a consequence, tropical forests—which function as vital buffers for soil stability and water regulation—were severely degraded. This sense of superiority arises because human beings are trapped within an ontological dualism that views nature merely as inert material objects, rather than as an interconnected manifestation of being (*wujūd*). The human failure to preserve ecological harmony reflects a breakdown in their function as a microcosm—one that bears the responsibility of sustaining the order of the universe for the sake of the universal good. From a Ṣadrian perspective, arbitrary and exploitative actions toward nature are projections of the disintegration of the soul's internal equilibrium. In such a condition, the dominance of the material ego severs the human being's spiritual connection to the sacred cosmic order (Shīrāzi 1990c, 89).

In this regard, Mullā Ṣadrā offers an ontological solution that dismantles such dualism. In his view, there is no rigid dividing line between the spiritual and physical dimensions of the human being; rather, the two are intrinsically interconnected. This is because within the human being reside multiple levels of the soul, one of which is the vegetative soul (*al-nafs al-nabāṭiyyah*). Consequently, harming nature is tantamount to harming a layer of one's own existential reality (Shīrāzi 1990c, 51). Moreover, since the human soul originates from the womb of matter (*jismāniyyat al-ḥudūth*) and develops through the material realm, nature may be regarded as the soul's existential matrix—or even its primordial “mother.” In other words, to destroy nature is to sever the chain of the soul's perfection, for

the soul requires a balanced natural order to continue its process of becoming and perfection (Shīrāzi 1990c, 78).

### Ṣadrā's Epistemology of Knowledge by Presence and Its Contemporary Relevance

A dimension of Mullā Ṣadrā's thought that merits deeper scholarly attention is his theory of knowledge, particularly the doctrine of *'ilm ḥudūrī* (knowledge by presence). Unlike the Peripatetic tradition, which privileged representational knowledge (*'ilm ḥuṣūlī*) acquired through abstraction and conceptual mediation, Ṣadrā advances an epistemology in which true knowledge is attained through direct, unmediated presence of the known object within the knowing subject.

As Warno demonstrates through a comparative study of Ibn Sīnā, Suhrawardī, and Mullā Ṣadrā, while all three philosophers acknowledged presential knowledge, Ṣadrā uniquely integrated this epistemological principle into a comprehensive ontological system (Warno 2023, 340). For Ṣadrā, knowledge is not merely a mental representation but an existential actualization: the soul literally becomes what it knows, transforming its substance through the very act of cognition (Khademi and Hesari 2025, 145). This epistemological framework carries profound implications for addressing the contemporary spiritual crisis, which is partly characterized by an epistemic fragmentation in which knowledge has been reduced to mere information accumulation without corresponding existential transformation. Mousavian and Mostafavi trace the intellectual genealogy of presential knowledge through Avicenna's origination of the human soul, establishing philosophical foundations for Sadra's epistemology (Mousavian and Mostafavi 2017, 55).

In the context of postmodern epistemological uncertainty, where truth claims are frequently deconstructed, and objective knowledge is contested, Ṣadrā's epistemology offers a compelling alternative. His doctrine of the unity of the intellect and the intelligible *ittihād al-'āqil wa al-ma'qūl*. (Mediano examine the theoretical foundations of Integrated Information Theory, which shares conceptual affinities with Sadra's graded ontology of consciousness.) suggests that genuine knowledge is inseparable from being: to know something truly is to participate in its mode of existence (Mediano et al. 2022, 652–53).

Mohammed argues that this principle provides a robust ontological grounding for consciousness studies, particularly in dialogue with contemporary theories such as Integrated Information Theory (IIT) (Mohammed 2025, 712). Furthermore, the hierarchical structure of knowledge in Ṣadrā's system—from sensory perception to imaginative cognition, and ultimately to intellectual intuition—establishes a graded continuum that mirrors the soul's own substantial motion toward perfection. This framework is particularly relevant for educational philosophy, as it suggests that authentic learning must engage not only the cognitive faculties but the entire existential being of the learner, thereby fostering an integrative mode of knowing that harmonizes reason, intuition, and spiritual insight.

## Ṣadrian Anthropology in Dialogue with Modern Mental Health Frameworks

Ramin elucidates the doctrine of trans-substantial motion as an ontological process of essential transformation (Ramin 2020, 30), while Zamaniha interprets the four spiritual journeys as progressive levels of self-consciousness (Zamaniha 2022, 135). The convergence between Mullā Ṣadrā's philosophical psychology and contemporary mental health discourse represents a particularly fertile domain for interdisciplinary inquiry. Razi demonstrates that Ṣadrā's conception of the soul as a dynamic, evolving reality that ascends from corporeal origins toward spiritual perfection exhibits remarkable parallels with modern psychological frameworks, including the biopsychosocial model, humanistic psychology, and existential psychotherapy (Razi 2024, 168).

Ṣadrā's doctrine of substantial motion provides a metaphysical vocabulary for understanding psychological growth as an ontological transformation rather than merely behavioral adaptation. Within this framework, mental illness can be philosophically reconceptualized not as a static diagnostic category but as a form of stagnation or imbalance in the soul's natural movement toward higher states of existence—a perspective that resonates with contemporary notions of arrested development and loss of existential meaning.

Božek, Nowak, and Blukacz empirically demonstrate that spirituality functions as a significant mediator between health-related behaviors and psychological well-being. The practical implications of this Ṣadrian approach to mental well-being are substantial (Božek et al. 2020, 7). Contemporary research has increasingly recognized spirituality as a protective factor in mental health, with studies demonstrating significant correlations between spiritual well-being and reduced symptoms of depression and psychosomatic disorders (Hinterberger and Walter 2025, 3).

Ṣadrā's four spiritual journeys (*al-asfār al-arba'ah*) can be interpreted as a structured program for existential self-realization, providing a systematic pathway from alienation to integration. The first journey—from creation to the Real—corresponds to the therapeutic process of meaning-making; the second journey within the Divine reflects the attainment of inner tranquility; the third journey back to creation mirrors the concept of service to others; and the fourth journey among creation with God represents the highest stage of self-transcendence. Moreover, Rosmarin, Pargament, and Koenig emphasize that integrating spirituality into mental health care presents both challenges and opportunities, suggesting that Ṣadrā's integrative framework—which synthesizes philosophical reasoning, mystical insight, and scriptural foundation—offers a particularly robust model for spiritually informed therapeutic practice (Rosmarin et al. 2021, 92).

### Integrative Implications for Character Education and Social Harmony

The anthropological framework elaborated by Mullā Ṣadrā carries significant implications for character education and the cultivation of social harmony in

pluralistic societies. Ṣadrā's understanding of the human being as a microcosm (ʿālam ṣaġhīr) who mirrors the macrocosm (ʿālam kabīr) establishes an ethical foundation that transcends narrow self-interest and fosters a sense of cosmic responsibility. Alavyfar and Fallahnejad emphasize that in Ṣadrā's system, human perfection is achieved through the harmonious integration of physical and spiritual development, requiring the perfection of both theoretical and practical intellect alongside divine love and spiritual passion (Alavyfar and Fallahnejad 2018, 178). This holistic vision challenges the compartmentalization prevalent in modern educational systems, where intellectual development is frequently divorced from moral and spiritual formation.

Furthermore, Ṣadrā's concept of graded existence (*tashkīk al-wujūd*) provides a metaphysical framework for understanding human diversity within a unified ontological continuum. Amoosoltani argues that the soul's emergence from bodily substantial motion represents a unique form of emergent creationist substance dualism (Amoosoltani 2025, 130–31). provides a metaphysical basis for respecting diversity while maintaining universal ethical standards. Just as existence manifests in varying degrees of intensity and perfection, human beings exhibit diverse capacities and stations along the path of spiritual development. Yet, all participate in the same continuum of being. This perspective supports an educational approach that accommodates individual differences without collapsing into relativism. The empirical research on spirituality and cognitive flexibility further substantiates this approach, demonstrating that individuals with higher spiritual well-being exhibit greater openness to experience and enhanced capacity for adaptive thinking (Leung and Pong 2021, 12).

By integrating Ṣadrā's philosophical insights into character education curricula, educators can cultivate in students not merely intellectual competence but also the existential depth and ethical sensitivity required to navigate the complexities of contemporary life, thereby contributing to the formation of a more harmonious and spiritually grounded society.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that the modern humanitarian crisis—manifested in materialistic behaviour, hedonism, and spiritual alienation—originates from reducing the human being to a purely physical entity. Through the philosophical synthesis of *al-Ḥikmah al-Mutaʿāliyah*, Mullā Ṣadrā offers a fundamental and integrative framework of solution grounded in the concept of substantial motion (*al-ḥarakah al-jawhariyyah*). This concept deconstructs static conceptions of humanity by affirming that the soul is a dynamic entity that evolves from material origination (*jismāniyyat al-ḥudūth*) toward spiritual perfection (*rūḥāniyyat al-baqāʾ*). Such an understanding is crucial for reorienting modern human life away from the mere gratification of physical temperament (*mizāj*) toward the attainment of true happiness through the perfection of the soul's substance (*kamāl*) and metaphysical knowledge.

Furthermore, the ethical implications of Mullā Ṣadrā's thought provide a

foundation for restoring harmonious relationships between human beings, one another, and the cosmos. By conceiving the soul as a unified force encompassing vegetative and animal dimensions, Ṣadrā dismantles the anthropocentric dualism that has long separated humanity from nature. This perspective calls for an environmental ethic that regards nature not as an object of exploitation, but as an existential foundation whose balance must be preserved for the continuity of the human soul's process of self-perfection.

Based on these findings, this study recommends that educational institutions integrate philosophical insights concerning the dynamic nature of the soul into character education curricula, as a means of safeguarding younger generations from the pitfalls of hedonistic lifestyles and crises of meaning. Moreover, future research is encouraged to expand this inquiry through comparative studies between Mullā Ṣadrā's transcendent psychology and modern psychology or contemporary environmental ethics, to formulate more practical and applicable strategies for addressing the challenges faced by today's global society.

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