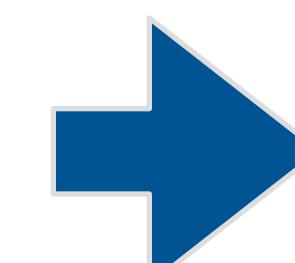


The thinking soul in Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism

The thinking soul (*nafs-i nātiqa*) plays an important role in Islamic Philosophy, and also in Iranian mysticism. What is the meaning of *nafs*? It means the (inner) self or the soul of human beings. The soul is divided into different parts, its highest part is the „thinking“ or „speaking“ soul, which connects the human being with the spiritual realm. The activation of this part of the soul, which happens throughout the „substantial motion“ (*al-haraka al-ğawharīyya*), a concept introduced by the Iranian Philosopher Mullā Ṣadrā (1571–1640), helps human beings to become more intellectualized. The ontological theory of the substantial motion is an important concept for the doctrine of *nafs*. The substantial movement is a gradual transformation occurring in the very inner structure of beings. It is a movement from potential (*quwwah*) to actuality (*fi'liyyah*). Through the intensifying (*takāmulī*) inner movement of the *nafs*, it turns to become the intellect, the intelligent and the intelligible, all of which are but one reality.



Conclusion and relevance to spirituality and health



The more the substantial movement → the more the approach to the absolute Intellect ('*aql al-kull*)
→ The more extension will the being become (*basīt al-wuğūd*) → the more consciousness will it gain → finally: a healthy soul

vs.

The less the substantial movement → the less the approach to the absolute Intellect ('*aql al-kull*) → the more active the realm of the imagination (*hiyāl*) (in contrast to the realm of the intellect) → results in: an unhealthy soul