



The Philosophical and Ethical Analysis Of The Soul and Purity In The Teachings Of Fazl Ibn Ahmad

Saipova Mavjuda Karimjanovna

Associate Professor of Fergana State University

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47134/bai.v2i2.3912>

*Correspondence: Saipova Mavjuda
Karimjanovna

Email: SaipovaMavjuda22@gmail.com

Received: 12-02-2025

Accepted: 23-03-2025

Published: 09-04-2025



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. Submitted for open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

Abstract: This article provides information on the philosophical analysis of the soul and purity according to Fazl ibn Ahmad. The relationship between the soul and purity is discussed in his work “Iddatul Uqul” and “Umdatul Ma’qul” (The Promises of the Intellect and the Foundations of What the Intellect Considers Appropriate). In the process of building New Uzbekistan, the teachings of Rumi, especially the ideas of Fazl ibn Ahmad, remain significant in educating young people to become spiritually sound individuals and in elevating them morally in today’s complex era. Today, the effective use of Fazl ibn Ahmad’s “Iddatul Uqul” and “Umdatul Ma’qul” (The Promises of the Intellect and the Foundations of What the Intellect Considers Appropriate) in social development, societal welfare, and the fulfillment of human needs is emphasized.

Keywords: Islam, Sufism, Doctrine, Enlightenment, Spirituality, Morality, Intellect, Soul, Ego, Truth, Destiny

Introduction

We can observe the strength of loyalty, affection, and love between people in their relationships – in their words and actions. For some, however, such love is only in name, with desires and lust as the real motive. That is why the love of Allah is stronger, more intense, and more powerful than the love of any creature.

In the pursuit of truth, resolving the existing conflicts between the soul and the body also holds great significance. This is achieved primarily by freeing human nature from the afflictions of the ego and negativity, attaining spiritual enlightenment, and reaching a state of ecstatic love in the garden of passion. A human being is composed of four elements: the body, the intellect, the soul, and the heart. Throughout life, a person struggles – questioning which path leads to the ultimate goal: that of the intellect or the heart? Al-Ghazali expressed the following thought: “The intellect harbors pride; follow what your heart commands. The heart never deceives a person”.

In Sufi teachings, a human being is composed of five elements: the body (that is, the physical form), intellect, soul, heart, and ego (nafs). According to Sufism, the inner struggle within a person is defined as a battle between the intellect and the ego. Therefore, in Sufi doctrine, one attains the rank of ‘arif (gnostic or enlightened one) only by overcoming and freeing oneself from the afflictions of the ego. When a person reaches the level of ‘irfan

(spiritual insight), they begin to perceive the Truth (Haq) in a miraculous way through the mirror of the heart – they begin to hear without hearing, to see without seeing. Sufis refer to this state as *jazba* – spiritual ecstasy or divine attraction.

Due to the dual nature of human beings, a person is inclined toward two aspects – the physical and the spiritual. The bodily-physical side pulls them downward, toward baseness, while the spiritual-mental aspect draws them upward, toward elevation. For this reason, Sufi masters and spiritual guides have divided people into two types: Nuriy and Noriy individuals. Nuriy individuals focus in life on their true, eternal essence – the spiritual, the divine – and place limits on their physical and bodily desires. The way of life for Nuriy individuals includes: *tawakkul* – trusting in the divine destiny ordained by God; *taslim* – complete surrender to the Creator; *khalwat* – seclusion or withdrawal from the world; *uns* – closeness to the Divine; *wahdat* – unwavering belief in the oneness and unity of God; and *hal* (state) – attaining a specific spiritual condition to draw closer to God. Noriy individuals, on the other hand, are likened to fire – they are consumed by lust, bodily and sexual desires, and are driven by anger, wrath, envy, greed, and endless worldly ambitions. According to the teachings of Sufi doctrine, only those who are Nuriy can discipline themselves by curbing their bodily desires, taming their ego, purifying their inner being, and fully dedicating themselves to the spiritual path – thus drawing near to the Creator, the Almighty God.

Methodology

Allah created the *nafs* (self or soul) as a believer and referred to it as a blessed tree, like the olive tree. Sahl ibn Abdullah said, “This refers to the light of Muhammad (peace be upon him)”, while Sufyan al-Thawri stated, “This is a metaphor for the light of the Qur’an”.

Fadl ibn Ahmad stated that the human *nafs* (soul or self) is not dependent on the body and is, in fact, a separate essence. In other words, the human *nafs* is not a physical entity, but a substance. The evidence that it is a substance lies in the fact that anything which causes a body to move and controls it must exist independently in its own essence. If the human *nafs* exists in its own essence, accepts opposites without being bound by them, does not transform itself, and possesses a definite yet boundless nature, then it is indeed a substance – because these are the very qualities that define the human *nafs*.

The *nafs* is not limited by psychological or physical actions. It exists continuously, defining its own domain of uniqueness and exerting influence over other emotions and states. Therefore, the *nafs* is an essence (*jawhar*), and its attributes are not confined by the physical body or external qualities. It encompasses its own relations and characteristics, which is why the essential nature (*jawhariyya*) is its fundamental attribute.

Thus, the *nafs* is a human essence, independent of both physical form and attributes. Its ability to govern the movement of bodies and define their characteristics affirms its essential nature. If something can initiate movement without undergoing change itself, then it is not merely a material or a state – it is an independent substance. This idea illustrates that the human *nafs*, without being subject to constant change, exists in its own essence and actively participates in the management of life. Thus, the nature of the human *nafs* is distinct from matter or states – it can only be understood as a substance. “The *nafs* must exist in its own essence” means that the *nafs* exists independently, composed solely of itself, and

possesses the ability to express and govern itself. The constancy of the nafs is related to how a person maintains their spiritual or intellectual qualities in various decisions, events, and states. For example, whether a person is joyful or sorrowful, the core state of their nafs does not change; rather, external influences and conditions may affect their emotions. However, the essential domain of the nafs remains stable at all times. These qualities of the human nafs help us fully understand a person's moral, intellectual, and spiritual levels.

The thinker highlighted the difference between the nafs and the body, emphasizing that the human nafs is independent of matter, unchanging, and stable. The fact that the human nafs can accept various contradictions without undergoing any change indicates that it is a distinct essence.

بدان که متضادات در جسم جمع نشود که محال باشد اجتماع المتضادات فی محل واحد؛ زیرا که جسم اگر متحرک باشد ساکن نباشد و اگر سیاه باشد سپید نباشد و اگر عرضی قبول کند از آن عرض او را هیأتی مخصوص حاصل شود، و چون عقب آن عرضی دیگر قبول کند هیأت و عرض نخستین در او باطل باشد و عرض دومین در او ثابت شود. و جسم مادام در تعاقب آن را عرض متبدل و متغیر می گردد. و نفس انسانی متضادات اعراض و مقابلات اخلاق قبول کند چون علم و جهل، و فضایل و رذایل، و سخاوت و بخل، و شجاعت و جبن، و طاعت و معصیت و امثال آیت متضادات، جمله در او مجموع شود و صور حقیقی آن را قبول کند و در او هیچ تغییری و تبدیل نیابد. پس لازم شود که نفس انسانی جوهر بسیط است و جسم مرکب نیست.

Meaning: The nafs is human and is associated with its opposites (contradictory things), and the opposites in the body are summarized as follows:

Firstly, know that contradictory things cannot be gathered in a single body, because it is impossible for opposites to exist together in the same place. If a body is in motion, it cannot be at rest; if it is black, it cannot be white. If a body takes on a certain quality (attribute), this quality produces a specific state, and if another quality follows it, the previous quality must be nullified. Two qualities cannot remain simultaneously in the same body. If this situation continues in a body, the qualities would change in succession, which is not possible. However, the human nafs accepts contradictions and qualities, such as knowledge and anger, generosity and stinginess, courage and fear, purity and sin, and other opposites. All of these contradictions are gathered within the nafs and take its true form, yet there is no change or correction within it. Thus, the human nafs is a substance, not a material.

Secondly, the nafs's ability to accept opposing qualities and virtues:

The nafs can accept human contradictory qualities and opposing morals. These opposites include knowledge and ignorance, virtue and vice, generosity and stinginess, courage and cowardice, obedience and sin, among others. These contradictory qualities accumulate within the human nafs, and the true form of the nafs accepts these opposites, yet no change occurs within it. From this, it follows that the human nafs is a simple essence, not a complex body.

The human nafs is an essence that accepts the contradictions and various qualities within its nature. This means that the nafs is simple and straightforward, while the body is complex and composed of various elements.

Result and Discussion

The nafs is the essence of a person, the inner entity that governs and acts in order to protect and pursue the body's material existence and essential needs for life. It is the "self"

that carries out these activities. The struggle against the nafs, overcoming it, and transitioning from one "state" (hal) and "station" (maqom) to another (spiritual levels) is akin to crossing the "bridge of Sirat". The significance of this path lies in the fact that one cannot move from one maqom to the next without first mastering the previous maqom, nor can one remain in a single maqom indefinitely without achieving the desired goal. Abdulkarim Qushayri, contemplating the reality of the maqom, described it as "the state to which a servant reaches through repeated discipline, which is achieved by asceticism and spiritual struggle". Shaykh Najmuddin Kubra explained, "The maqom is like a resting place on the way, while the hal is like the two wings of a bird, and the maqom is its nest".

Discussion

Ibn Arabi gave detailed answers to questions such as "What is character?" and "Into how many types is it divided?" He explained morality by dividing it into two categories: "Akhlaq-i Mazmumah" ("Blameworthy traits") and "Akhlaq-i Mahmuda" ("Praiseworthy traits"). He also classified the nafs, which has a major influence on a person's character, into several types: "Nafs al-Shahwaniyya" ("The desire-provoking nafs"), "Nafs al-Ghadabiyya" ("The anger-provoking nafs"), and "Nafs al-Natiqa" ("The rational or speaking nafs").

Fazl ibn Ahmad conducted a philosophical analysis of the relationship between emotional and intellectual pleasures in humans, as well as the distinction between the human nafs and the animalistic nafs.

مسأل اگر برسند که نسبت لذات حسی از لذات عقلی چگونه است؟ و کی ممکن باشد حیوان را که قوی تر است از لذات حسی لذاتی تواند یافتن؟ در جواب گفته شود که معلوم محقق است که وصول حواس جسمیه به مدرکات محسوسه بواسطه جسم می باشد و این لذات حسی که می یابد به ادراک محسوسات می یابد چنانکه لذات

اکل و شرب و جماع و غیر آن از مبصران و مسموعات و مشمومات و ملموسات و لذات حسی از ان اقسام برون نباشد البته.

Meaning: If one were to ask how sensory pleasures differ from intellectual pleasures, and whether animals can experience stronger pleasures from sensory sources, the answer would be as follows: according to precise investigation, things perceived through physical senses are connected to the body. Sensory pleasures – those perceived through the sense organs – are necessarily linked to the sensory objects being perceived. For example, eating, drinking, sexual intercourse, and similar experiences are tied to sensory perceptions such as sight, hearing, smell, and touch. Sensory pleasures do not extend beyond these types.

Sensory pleasures arise from human interactions such as eating, swimming, or other physical experiences. These pleasures are perceived through the senses of sight, hearing, touch, and feeling. For example, activities like eating, drinking, and sleeping can be considered as such pleasures.

Intellectual pleasures are based on intellectual or spiritual experiences and arise through human reasoning and mental perception. These pleasures are connected to experiences that rely on personal knowledge and analysis.

Animals' experience of pleasure: For example, animals can also perceive their own sensory experiences. However, unlike humans, animals do not possess intellect and reasoning abilities. Therefore, they experience pleasure primarily based on natural instincts and physiological needs.

Conclusion

Thus, there is a connection between sensory pleasures and intellectual pleasures. Although animals are also capable of experiencing sensory pleasures, the way they enjoy them differs from that of humans. Sensory pleasures are based on perceptual experiences and are produced through physical interaction, whereas intellectual pleasures arise through mental and spiritual processes, relying on human reasoning and moral decision-making.

Researchers have also determined that the *nafs al-natiq* (the rational soul) belongs to the intellectual realm and not to the sensory world. The tools used to perceive material pleasures are created by the *nafs al-natiq* specifically for interaction with the physical and material world. These functions are carried out by the power and command of Allah, the Exalted. Its existence in this material world is temporary, as it is tied to the world of appearance and disappearance – known as the world of *kawn wa fasad* (coming into being and passing away).

References

- Abdulahakim Shari'i Juzzoni. *Sufism and the Human*. – Tashkent: Adolat, 2001.
- Abdulkarim Kushairi. *Risala Kushairi*. – Dergyah: Dergyah Publishing, 1999. – p. 67.
- Aziziddin Nasafi. *The Book of the Perfect Human*. – Tashkent: Gafur Gulom, 2021.
- Jushon M. *Sufism and the Training of the Soul*. – Tashkent: Chulpon, 1998. – p. 13.
- Karimov S. *Philosophy of Sufism. Educational Manual*. – Samarkand: SamDU Publishing, 2021. – 210 pages.
- Khomominov J. *Ontology of Sufism*. – Tashkent: Yosh Avlod Publishing.
- Komilov N. *Sufism. Volume II. The Mysteries of Tawhid*. – Tashkent: Uzbekistan – Gafur Gulom Literature and Art Publishing House, 1999.
- Mirziyoyev Sh.M. *Continuing Our Path of National Development with Determination, and Advancing to a New Stage*. – Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 2017.
- Mirziyoyev Sh.M. *New Uzbekistan Strategy*. – Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 2001.
- Nazarov K. *Philosophy of Existence*. – Tashkent: 2007.

-
- Sobirovich, T. B. (2023). Basic Criteria for Building the Third Renaissance in Uzbekistan. *Asian Journal of Applied Science and Technology (AJAST)*, 7(1), 149-157.
- Translation of the Meanings of the Holy Quran. / Translation and commentary by: Abdulaziz Mansur. – Tashkent: “Tashkent Islamic University”, 2001.
- Turdiyev, B. S. (2021). Cultural and educational development of society in the scientific heritage of world philosophers. *Academic research in educational sciences*, 2(4), 443-451.
- Yuldoshev S., Usmonov M., Karimov R. Ancient and Medieval Western European Philosophy. – Tashkent: Sharq, 2003.
- Zoyirov E. Khojagi Ahmad Kosoni. Risala - Ye Wujudiyya. Manuscript. From the author's personal library.