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Chapter 1 : 1- Mulla Sadra and Stoicism (with arabic references) | Mahdi Esfahani - www.nxgvision.com

Whether we understand Mulla Sadra's use of intuition as "a higher form of reason" in the Platonic sense (Rahman , 6), or as a prophetic experience that turns philosophy into "theosophy" (Nasr , 57), in reality there is no actual separation between reason and intuition in Mulla Sadra's philosophy.

He was born in Shiraz and educated there and in Isfahan. Faced with the opposition of some literalist jurists, he retreated to Kahak, a small village near the city of Qom. Upon the request of Shah Abbas I, he returned to Shiraz to teach at the Khan madrassa, where he composed his later works. He died in Basra in on the way back from his seventh pilgrimage. Sadra viewed existence as modulated and graded in various degrees of intensity, arguing that existence unveils itself in numerous forms and modalities of substances, accidents, primary and secondary causes, and opaque and subtle beings. Since existence is the ground of all realities, Sadra criticized the previous concepts of knowledge for having subjectivist tendencies and for failing to explicate the close relationship between being and knowing. He interpreted existence as a dynamic and self-regulating reality, and he applied this principle to the natural world. In the fields of traditional psychology and eschatology, Sadra interwove metaphysics, cosmology, and ethics. For Sadra, the soul is neither purely material nor spiritual but gradually develops from one state of existence to the other. It is this being that survives death and experiences the hereafter.

General Overviews There is a growing literature on Sadra in modern scholarship. Nasr and Nasr present Sadra as a philosopher who sought to combine philosophical arguments with realized knowledge. London Academy of Iranian Studies, Edited by Oliver Leaman, "As of , only the first volume has been published. London and New York: Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, The Philosophy of Mulla Sadra. State University of New York Press, In Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Edited by Edward N. Farhang-i Istilahat-i Falsafi-yi Mulla Sadra.

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Chapter 2 : Mulla Sadra - The Full Wiki

1. Life and works *Life.* Mulla Sadra was the sole child born into a courtly family in Shiraz, southern Iran, in around AH/ A bright young man, his interest in intellectual pursuits was indulged by his father, and he moved first to Qazvin in AH/ and then to Isfahan in AH/, successive capitals of the Safavid empire, to pursue his study of philosophy, theology.

Many have heard of his name, and nearly all travellers to Persia since the Safawid period, who have been interested in the intellectual life of the country, have recognized his importance have been impressed by his fame, 2 yet no one outside a group of his disciples in Persia, who have kept his school alive until today, has done justice to his doctrines in presenting them to the world at large. A member of the famous Qawam family of Shiraz, Ibrahim held the post of a vizier and was a powerful political and social figure in his native city. The young Sadr al-Din exhibited his exceptional intelligence from childhood and was given the best possible education in Shiraz. Not satisfied simply with formal learning, Mulla Sadra left the worldly life in general and retired to a small village named Kahak near Qum where he spent 15 years in asceticism and purification of his soul until, as he claims in his introduction to the *Asfar*, he became endowed with the direct vision of the intelligible world. Having reached both formal and spiritual perfection, Mulla Sadra returned once again to the world. Meanwhile, Allahwirdi Khan, the Governor of Shiraz, had built a large madrasah and invited Mulla Sadra to return to Shiraz as the head of the new school. Akhund accepted the offer and returned to his native city, making the school of Khan the major centre of intellectual sciences in Persia. It was only the influence of his powerful family that made it possible for him to continue his teaching activities. His life is itself the testimony of one of the main aspects of his wisdom, that in order to be effective theoretical knowledge must be combined with spiritual realization. The writings of Mulla Sadra, nearly all of which were composed in the last period of his life, are almost without exception of great merit and have been among the main sources from which the later generations of theologians, philosophers, and gnostics have drawn their inspiration. All his writings concern religious sciences or metaphysics, theodicy or Hikmat, 7 and are in a very clear and fluent style making them more easily understandable to the reader than the writings of his predecessors like Mir. For example, in one of the quatrains he says, The Truth is the spirit of the universe and the universe of the body, And the orders of the angels are the senses of the body, The heavens, elements, and compounds are its organs, Lo! Unity is this, and the rest nothing but rhetoric. In dividing the writings of Mulla Sadra into the intellectual and the religious ones, we do not in any way wish to imply that these two categories are completely separated in his view. On the contrary, one of the major achievements of Mulla Sadra consisted in uniting and harmonizing religion and the intellectual sciences. Likewise, among the above-mentioned works some are more gnostic in character and others are presented in a more discursive language, although they all bear the fragrance of gnostic doctrines. The title of *Asfar* itself has been the cause of much difficulty to the few Orientalists who are acquainted with the book. So it was that Gobineau considered the work to be a series of four books. Actually, *asfar* means journeys but not the account of travels in the ordinary sense of the word as Gobineau understood it to be. As Mulla Sadra himself mentions in his introduction to the book, the *Asfar* consists of the following four stages or journeys of initiatic realization *suluk*: This monumental work is, therefore, an account of the stages of the journey of the gnostic, systematized in a logical dress. In content, the first book of the *Asfar* deals with Being and its various manifestations, the second with the simple substances, i. All these topics are treated in detail taking into account the voluminous. The first is acquired in school with the aid of a teacher, and the second based upon a greater degree of certainty than the first, is the science possessed by the prophets and saints through the purification of the soul and the catharsis *tajrid* of the intellect. It was the first category that we are primarily concerned here. There are five principal elements which are clearly detectable in the new analysis brought about by Mulla Sadra; they are also found, though less explicitly, in the doctrines of the Safawid sages before him. Mulla Sadra, like Suhrawardi, held in great esteem the pre-Socratic philosophers and sages of Greece, both historical and mythological, and regarded Thales,

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Anaximander, Agathedemon, Empedocles, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle as the last group of sages in the ancient world to have possessed wisdom in its entirety. He, like many other Muslim Hakims, considered Greek philosophy not to have started with Aristotle but to have ended with him and believed all the later Greek sages to have been masters of various arts and sciences other than metaphysics. For him gnosis, philosophy, and revealed religion were elements of a harmonious ensemble writings. Through the symbolic interpretation of the sacred text he demonstrated the gnostic quality of the esoteric meaning of revelation and through intellectual intuition he made rational and discursive thought subservient to the universal truths of gnosis. In the introductory chapter of the *Asfar*, he divides the sciences, following the Peripatetics, into theoretical wisdom consisting of logic, mathematics, natural philosophy, and metaphysics and practical wisdom consisting of ethics, economics and politics. The first is divided into three categories: The science of words comprises the sciences of the alphabet, word-construction, syntax, prosody, poetics, and the meanings of terms in logic. Sufism, comes into being. As for the science of thought, it consists of the sciences of logical demonstration, the science of arithmetic, the science of geometry including astronomy and astrology, and the sciences of nature including medicine and the various sciences dealing with minerals, plants, and animals. These sciences also include the knowledge of death, resurrection, and all that pertains to life hereafter. And among its branches none is as important and principled as metaphysics or the science of the principle of things, so that this branch of knowledge alone is often considered worthy of being called Hikmat. With such a conception then it is no wonder that Mulla Sadra spent so much of his life in teaching and writing about Hikmat only and regarded all the other sciences as its subsidiaries. There are four topics in each of which Mulla Sadra has departed from earlier philosophical perspectives and which form the principles of his whole intellectual vision. These four subjects concern 1 being and its various polarizations, 2 substantial motion or the becoming and change of the substance of the world, 3 knowledge and the relation between the knower and the known, and 4 the soul, its faculties, generation, perfection and final resurrection. We shall consider these questions in the above mentioned order, emphasizing in each case the particular complexion given to these subjects by Mulla Sadra. As we have already mentioned, 27 one of the major points of contention among Muslim philosophers and theologians concerned the question whether Being or the quiddities mahiyyat of things are principal. We saw that the Muslim Peripatetics like the Sufis believed in the principality of Being, i. In this debate Mulla Sadra sided definitely with the Peripatetics and Sufis in accepting the principality of Being, and opposed the Illuminationists. On the question of unity and gradation of Being, however, Mulla Sadra departed from peripatetic teachings completely. In the view of the Muslim Peripatetics the being of each thing is in essence different and distinct from other beings while it is principal with respect to its own quiddity. According to Akhund, however, Being is the same reality in all realms of existence, it is a single reality but with gradations and degrees of intensity. Just as we say the light of the sun, the light of a lamp, or the light of a glow-worm and mean the same subject, i. However, since at the level of a stone the manifestation of Being is very weak, these attributes are hidden and not perceptible. These limitations are abstracted by the mind and become the forms of quiddities mahiyyat of things, and when transposed into the principle domain, they become the Platonic ideas or archetypes. Unlike Being which is objectively real and in fact is the reality of the cosmos, the mahiyyat are accidents of Being abstracted by the mind without having a reality independent of Being. What distinguishes the earthly manifestation of things from their celestial archetypes is not a gradation of the mahiyyat from more subtle to more gross modes of existence, as certain followers of the Illuminationist school believe. Rather, it is the intensity of Being which determines the level of existence of each creature. If the light of Being shines upon the form or quiddity of a man with a greater intensity than now, he will become the man of the intermediate world barzakh and if the intensity is greater still he will become the celestial man identified with his heavenly archetype. Absolute Being itself, which is the proper subject for metaphysics, is above all limitations and, therefore, above all forms or mahiyyat, above all substances and accidents. Since Being is unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity, 32 it partakes of logical distinctions and divisions while remaining in essence indivisible and above all polarizations. Mulla Sadra goes into great detail about the

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various divisions and categories of Being and in fact most of the first book of the Asfar is concerned with them. We mention here a few of the division which Akhund discusses with great rigour in his writings, especially in the monumental Asfar. This category of being which exists in itself is in turn divided into three kinds: From another point of view Mulla Sadra considers the being of all things other than God to be the connective being wujud al-rabit and only the Being of God to be Being per se. If it has need of a cause outside itself it is called possible being. Moreover, the attribute of possibility pertains to its quiddity as well as to its being. The possibility of its quiddity concerns its relation to its particular being, and the possibility of its being pertains to its relation to the Necessary Being. The being or existence of each object, therefore, depends upon the being of God and the knowledge of anything upon the knowledge of the root or principle of its own being. Since the root or basis of the Necessary Being is unknowable, the knowledge of the being of things remains also unknowable to us and it is only the quiddities or mahiyyat which we can know. These quiddities, as already mentioned, are the limitations placed upon being and abstracted by the mind. The intellect in perceiving any object immediately analyses it into being and quiddity, the latter consisting of the limit determination of the former. It is only in the case of the Divine Being that such an analysis cannot be made because Absolute Being has no mahiyyah. One can say that It is without mahiyyah or that Its Being and mahiyyah are identical. The quiddities in themselves are only mental concepts without a separate objective existence so that the effects produced by things come from their being and not from their quiddity. Likewise, cause and effect are categories of being which in one case becomes the cause and in the other the effect of things. The mahiyyat are either particular or universal; the latter either exist before or are abstracted by the intellect from particulars. Mulla Sadra likewise criticizes Aristotle and ibn Sina for considering the Platonic ideas to be nothing but the forms of things impinged upon the divine intellect. He insists upon the reality of the archetypes in a spiritual world that is completely independent of the world of particulars as well as of all mental images formed in the human mind. There is a spiritual man in the spiritual world who is the real cause for the activities and ontological qualities of the terrestrial man; likewise in the case of other species each has an intelligible idea or archetype which governs all the activities and life of that species on earth. The archetype appears different in each stage taur of manifestation while in the realm of reality it is one and the same truth. The beings of this world are the reflections and shadows of the archetypes so that they are like them and share in their reality and at the same time are different from them in being less real and farther removed from the source of Being. For example, the being of man on earth in his present state of imperfection necessitates the being of man in the intermediary world of souls, and the latter the being of the spiritual man in the intelligible world. After showing the mahiyyat are in reality limitations of being, Mulla Sadra goes on to assert that the logical distinction made by Aristotle and all the later philosophers between substance and the accidents which together form the ten categories concerns only the mahiyyat; Being properly speaking, is neither substance nor accident but above both. When we say of a thing that it is such and such a substance or that its particular quality and quantity are its accidents we refer only to its mahiyyahi and not to its being. The relation of cause and effect, however, contrary to that of substance and accidents, concerns only the being of things. That is why the well-known principle that from unity only unity can issue forth, *ex uno non fit nisi unum*, must be true. From the divine essence which is simple and one, only a simple being can issue forth. God is, thus, the Cause of causes and the Ultimate Source of all effects to be seen in the universe, because all causes and effects arise from the beings of things and all beings are in reality the stages of the One Being. To terminate our discussion of the polarizations of Being in cosmic existence we must also consider the question of form and matter. On this question Mulla Sadra sides with the Peripatetics and is against the Illuminationists in accepting the theory of hylomorphism. In his view, however, matter is not limited to the corporeal domain. Rather, it is the aspect of potentiality which manifests itself in all the realms of existence according to the conditions of that particular realm. Bodies have a matter belonging to the corporeal world, and souls *anas*, a matter conformable to the subtle world of the psyche, moreover, in each world matter is a lower degree of being of the form with which it is united and for that reason accompanies it in all realms of existence until the highest

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realm which is the world of pure intelligences mujarradat. That is why, as Akhund expresses it, matter has love for form which forever compels it to seek union with it form. Substantial Motion The question of potentiality leads to that of motion because motion, as Aristotle said, is becoming actual of that which is potential. Mulla Sadra rejects the possibility of sudden change from one substance to another which the Peripatetics accepted along with gradual change. Rather, he considers all change to be a form of motion and introduces the idea of substantial motion al-harakat al-jauhariyyah , 40 which is another of the well-known principles associated with his name, as a basis of his whole outlook from which he goes on to prove the creation of the world in time, bodily resurrection and many other doctrines that will be discussed in the course of this chapter. It is well known that the Muslim Peripatetics, following Aristotle, limited motion to only four of the ten categories, i.

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Chapter 3 : The Elixir of the Gnostics : Mulla Sadra " Seeker After Truth

A study of Sadra's thought with a particular emphasis on Sadra's Shi'ite background and what Corbin calls "prophetic philosophy." See pages Kalin, Ibrahim.

Those cities were successive capitals of the Safavid dynasty and center of Twelver seminaries at that time. He was trained under the supervision of Mir Damad. After his studies with scholars there, he produced several works, the most famous of which was his Asfar "Journeys". Asfar contains the bulk of his philosophy, which was influenced by a personal mysticism bordering on the ascetic, that he experienced during a fifteen-year retreat at Kahak, a village near Qom, Iran. Expounding his theory of nature, Mulla Sadra argued that the entire universe "except God and his knowledge" was originated both eternally and temporally. Nature, he asserted, is the substance of all things and is the cause for all movement. Thus, nature is permanent and furnishes the continuing link between the eternal and the originated. Much of his philosophy was also existentialist in nature. Toward the end of his life, Mulla Sadra returned to Shiraz to teach. He died in Basra on a pilgrimage to Mecca and was buried in present-day Iraq. This was also the opposite of the idea of "essence precedes existence" previously supported by Avicenna and his school of Avicennism as well as Shahab al-Din Suhrawardi and his school of Illuminationism. What first affect us are things that exist and we form ideas of essences afterwards, so existence precedes essence. This position referred to as primacy of existence Arabic: In contrast to Aristotle and Ibn Sina who had accepted change only in four categories, i. As Henry Corbin describes: All the levels of the modes of being and perception are governed by the same law of unity, which at the level of the intelligible world is the unity of intellection, of the intelligizing subject, and of the Form intelligized "the same unity as that of love, lover and beloved. Within this perspective we can perceive what Sadra meant by the unitive union of the human soul, in the supreme awareness of its acts of knowledge, with the active Intelligence which is the Holy Spirit. Reciprocally, the soul, as a Form intelligizing itself, intelligizes itself as a Form intelligized by the active Intelligence. Through their reading one realizes that he did not suddenly mushroom from a vacuum but rather was the crowning achievement of a tendency which for several centuries was in the making. For example, on the subject of the harmony between philosophy and religion, his solution is the final state of a process that goes back to al-Kindi himself. In four large volumes; also published several times in nine smaller volumes. He composed this book gradually, starting in about A. Sharh al-hidayah, a commentary on a book called Hidayah, which had been written on the basis of Peripatetic philosophy. He called this book the Beginning and the End, since he believed at heart that philosophy means the knowledge of the Origin and the Return. He proved his solid theory through the theory of the trans-substantial motion. Professor Henry Corbin has translated it into French and written an introduction to it. This book has recently been translated into English, too. It presents some guidelines and instructional points to wake up the sleeping. Here, Mulla Sadra has combined epistemology and ontology. As in al-Mazahir, he has tried to demonstrate the Beginning and the End concisely but precisely. This book has been translated by Professor James Winston Morris into English with an informative introduction. Sarayan nur wujud, a treatise dealing with the quality of the descent or diffusion of existence from the True Source to existents quiddities. Zad al-musafir, demonstrating resurrection and the Hereafter following a philosophical approach. It is an inventory of his particular theories and opinions which he had been able to express in philosophical terms. It is considered as one of the chapters in [Mafatih al-ghayb]. Here, by resorting to the main three moral principles, he has dealt with moral and educative subjects related to scientists, and advised his contemporary philosophers. His intention here is to condemn and disgrace impious sophists. A Collection of Scientific-Literary Notes, some short notes of his own poetry, the statements of philosophers and gnostics, and scientific issues have been left from his youth, which comprise a precious collection. These notes were compiled in two different collections, and it is likely that the smaller collection was compiled on one of his journeys. Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, State University of New York Press, Princeton

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University Press, *The Elixir of the Gnostics*, Provo: Brigham Young University Press, Rizvi, Sajjad, Mulla Sadra Shirazi: Oxford University Press, Jambet, Christian, *The Act of Being*: Jeff Fort, New York:

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Chapter 4 : Chapter Sadr al-Din Shirazi | A History of Muslim Philosophy Volume 2, Book 4 | www.nxgvisio

For an explanation of Mulla Sadra's views concerning the relation of God and the world see Fazlur Rahman, 'The God-World Relationship in Mulla Sadra', in George Hourani (ed.) Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science (Albany,):

Secondary Books in European Languages 1. As the only son of a noble family, he received both intellectual and financial support towards a good education that started in his home town, Shiraz, in southeastern Iran. In his quest for advanced religious and philosophical training he left Shiraz for Qazvin and then moved to Isfahan where he studied with the most eminent intellectual figures of the day, Mir Damad d. There is yet no historical evidence that he ever studied with Mir Findiriski d. However, the frequency of associating the two by scholars such as Henry Corbin d. In , upon the death of his father, Mulla Sadra returned to Shiraz. Later he related his experience during the time spent in Shiraz in a doleful and critical voice denouncing the intellectual atmosphere of the city for being hostile, suppressive, and philistine with regard to philosophy al-Asfar I 7. He decided to leave Shiraz for a life of solitude and contemplation in Kahak, a quiet village near the city of Qom. There he also found some of his life-long students who became well-known scholars of their own time. This period was followed by several journeys between Shiraz, Isfahan, Qom, Kashan, and most importantly, seven pilgrimages to Mecca. Apparently, this itinerant stage played an important part in his intellectual and spiritual growth that is also suggested by the "journey" metaphor in the title and divisions of al-Asfar. Mulla Sadra had a family of six children, three sons and three daughters. The intellectual network consisting of Mulla Sadra, his teachers and students that was later dubbed "the School of Isfahan" was formed in a unique political and religious context. A prolific writer, Mulla Sadra composed a large number of treatises on ontology, epistemology, cosmology, psychology, eschatology, theology, mysticism, the Quran and the Tradition. With the exception of Risala-yi si asl Treatise on the Three Principles which is in Persian, he wrote all his works in Arabic that was the lingua franca of the Muslim world at that time. After a pious life of dedication to acquiring and expanding philosophy and Islamic sciences, Mulla Sadra died in Basra on the way to his seventh pilgrimage to Mecca. His death was once believed to have occurred in with his body being buried in Basra. Synthetic methodology Mulla Sadra was determined to construct a spacious house of "transcendental philosophy" that could accommodate the apparently conflicting paths in Islamic history towards the ultimate wisdom. He was also heir to a long tradition of philosophy in Persia which had adopted the methodology of Greek philosophy and interpreted it not only in accordance with the Islamic faith, but also implicitly and partly in continuation of the antique Persian traditions. Similar to his past philosophical masters Ibn Sina d. In particular, he followed Suhrawardi by adopting a holistic method of philosophy in which reason is accompanied by intuition, and intellection is the realization of the quintessence of the human soul, with prophecy nubuwwa and sainthood wilaya as the noblest manifestations of it. It is based on this holistic attitude that on the one hand, Mulla Sadra synthesizes the two main schools of Islamic philosophy, namely, the Peripatetic and Illuminationist schools, and on the other hand, bridges the gaps between philosophy, theology, and mysticism. The pivotal place of intuition in his philosophical methodology is especially reflected by the influence of Ibn Arabi d. Rather than considering ratiocination that is, the process of exact thinking and intuition as independent ways leading to different visions of the truth, for him they merge into one path complementing and completing each other. Although no Islamic philosopher had ever announced reason and revelation, philosophy and prophecy in conflict with each other, in practice, several philosophical doctrines were regarded by theologians as blasphemous due to contradiction with the theological formulations of Quranic teachings. By synthesizing the findings of his predecessors and relying on his holistic methodology, Mulla Sadra addressed several controversial issues that had opened a wide gap between philosophy and theology, reason and faith. His conciliatory attitude is manifest in his writings that are replete with scriptural and theological references alongside and in harmony with the teachings of Ibn Sina, Suhrawardi, Ibn Arabi, and other Muslim thinkers. Primacy of Being Although Aristotle identifies the external existence of a thing

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with its primary substance, he distinguishes between two questions we can ask with respect to everything: This conceptual distinction was later extended to the extra-mental realm of contingent beings by Islamic philosophers, most insistently Ibn Sina, and following him scholastic philosophers such as Aquinas. For Ibn Sina, essence, or quiddity *mahiyya*, is universal in the mind while particular in the external world once being is bestowed on it by the Necessary Being who is identified with the God of Abrahamic faith. Except for God who exists in His own right, every other being is composed of essence and being, hence contingent in the sense of dependence on the Necessary Being for their existence. The distinction was taken for granted after Ibn Sina but turned into a controversial issue when philosophers in the Illuminationist school questioned the external reality of being over and above essence. Suhrawardi and following him Mir Damad argued that being was only a mental construct and the distinction between essence and being was only possible in the conceptual domain. Since then, Islamic philosophers have roughly been categorized as adherents of either the primacy of essence or the primacy of being. Influenced by his philosophy master, Mulla Sadra started as an advocate of essentialism but soon diverged towards the opposite doctrine that he made famous as "the primacy of being" *asalat-i wujud*. He built on this foundation the whole of his philosophical system. Starting with the concept of being, Mulla Sadra attributes two major characteristics to it. Firstly, being is beyond logical analysis, hence indefinable, due to its simplicity and supra-categorical status. It is self-evident and prior to any other concept in the mind. Secondly, it is a univocal concept in the sense that it has one and the same meaning in all its applications, whether we apply it to God or to any other entity. The first characteristic seems to place being as such totally outside the grasp of discursive thought. The second one leaves the philosopher with the hope that in case he finds an alternative path towards being, he will be able to bridge the ontological gap made by certain theologians between the Creator and the created. For Mulla Sadra, though essences are not genuine in their existence, they still exist as delimitations of the Real Being that is the ground of all that exists. Using a poetic analogy, the indefinite Reality is a colorless light while essences are the colourful glasses through which the single light appears as diverse phenomena. Conceptual differentiation, without which thinking and speaking would be impossible, is owing to this semi-reality of essences. To sum up, while being is the principle of unity, essence or quiddity is the principle of difference. Mulla Sadra has several arguments for the primacy of being and its unrivalled reality. The most comprehensive list of the arguments appears in his *al-Mashair*, a useful summary of his ontology, and several arguments are included in *al-Asfar*. For the premises of his arguments, Mulla Sadra relies on the classical understanding of essence as a universal without external effects within the mind. On this ground, the real horse can give you a ride while the universal horse in the mind is incapable of that because real particularity, external properties and real effects are owing to being and cannot be in the mind. Gradation of Being The univocal concept of being applies to its instances in the same sense because of the unity of its reality, and conceptual differences are only due to essences. On the other hand, essences have no reality of their own. Based on these two premises, one could conclude that diversity is not real. According to this doctrine, though one simple reality, being comes in grades, in a similar way that sunlight and candlelight are the same reality of different grades. In effect, there are only differences by degrees, while essences, as concepts in the mind, reflect gradations as contrasts. As Mulla Sadra put it, The instances of being are different in terms of intensity and weakness as such, priority and posteriority as such; nobility and baseness as such, although the universal concepts applicable to it and abstracted from it, named quiddities, are in contrast essentially, in terms of genus, species, or accidents. For example, he regarded a horse more of an animal than a fly. His ontology was based on light as the hierarchical reality of universe with realms of existence as different ranks of it. Accordingly, Reality is one and the same thing but possessed of different degrees of intensity, which justifies diversity within unity. The doctrine of gradation not only supports the reality of diversity, but also points out the all-encompassing simplicity of being qua being. The Absolute and the Relational Given that for Mulla Sadra reality consists in different grades of the same being, the nature of causality becomes an urgent question for him. Mulla Sadra begins with causality in the sense of existentiatio *ijad* according to which contingent essences are brought into existence once their existence is

necessitated by the Necessary Being. Therefore, he finally replaces this duality by the distinction he makes between two senses of being, the independent and the relational. At the cosmic level, the only independent being is the Absolute Being, while the rest, no matter of what intensity, are only relational. Relational being is a "being-in-another" in the sense of being nothing other than a relation to another being. For example, in saying that "snow is white", the predicative relation that is expressed by "is" has no existence apart from "snow" and "white". Mulla Sadra regards all beings as nothing but an existential relation to the Absolute Being. For Him, "He is the Truth and the rest are His manifestations. It is for this reason that he studies knowledge as a subject of first philosophy, namely, the study of being qua being. He diverges from what he criticises in Ibn Sina as the negative process of abstraction al-Asfar III in favour of the positive presence of noetic or mental beings in the mind. For Mulla Sadra, knowledge is the realization of an immaterial being which corresponds to the extra-mental reality because it is the higher grade of the latter being. He rejected the dominant theory of knowledge as the representation of the abstracted and universal form of particular objects to the mind. This innovation, though on a different ground and based on a different foundation, is comparable to the 20th century efforts made in the area of phenomenology and existentialism to get over the epistemological scepticism resulting from Cartesian dualism. Mental Being In classical Islamic epistemology knowledge is divided into "knowledge by presence" that consists only in the immediate access of the soul to itself in the sense of self-consciousness, and "knowledge by acquisition" that originates in sense perception and provides the subject with an abstracted representation of the external objects, that is, the intelligible universal at the level of intellect. In line with the Neoplatonic trend of thought adopted by Suhrawardi, Mulla Sadra replaced representation by direct presentation *hudur*. For Mulla Sadra, all knowledge is, at bottom, knowledge by presence because our knowledge of the world is a direct access to what is called mental beings. In contrast to the Peripatetic mental form or concept as a universal produced by abstraction, mental being is an immaterial and particular mode of existence with a higher intensity than the external object corresponding to it. According to Mulla Sadra, mental being is the key to the realization of all levels of knowledge including sense perception, imagination, and intellection. Upon encounter with the external world, the soul creates mental beings in a similar manner that God creates the world of substantial forms both material and immaterial *al-Shawahid al-rububiyya* Although the human soul has the potentiality of creating modes of existence also in the absence of the matter, as in the case of miracles, for the average human soul, as long as she lives in the material world, contact with matter is necessary for activating the creative process of generating mental beings. Unity of the Knower and the Known Mulla Sadra revolutionized epistemology with regard to the relationship between the knowing subject and her object based on the doctrine of the unity of the knower and the known previously held by the Neoplatonic Porphyry d. Siding with the former, Mulla Sadra redefines the status of knowledge. Conversely, for Mulla Sadra, knowledge that is made up of mental beings functions as a substantial form that actualizes the potential faculties of the soul. Similar to form and matter in the physical world, there is no real separation between the knower soul or mind and the immediately known object of it, that is, the mental being. Owing to this unity, rather than being a fixed substratum for accidental mental forms, the mind in its reality is identical to the sum of all the mental beings that are realized in it. In other words, there is no such thing as an actual mind in the absence of knowledge. This existential unification holds at all the levels of knowledge that is confined by Mulla Sadra to sense perception, imagination, and intellection. The faculty of sense perception is a potentiality of the soul that is unified with the perceptible forms or beings in the occasion of contact with the sensible world. Once sensible forms beings are realized, a higher grade of mental beings called "the imaginal beings" are actualized in unity with the imaginative faculty of the soul. The same unification holds at the level of intellection between the intelligible forms beings as the actual and the intellect as potential. From this level, the human soul is capable of acquiring higher degrees of knowledge that prepares her for the final unification with the Active Intellect that is the reservoir of all knowledge, and as a result, the activator of the human mind during the creative process of knowledge formation. This epistemic elevation is at the same time the journey of the soul towards higher grades of being

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and spiritualization. Soteriological Psychology In the pre-modern context, one should understand the term "psychology" in the sense of inquiry into the nature and mechanism of the metaphysical soul in its relation to the body. Moreover, informed by the Islamic doctrines and inspired by mysticism, Islamic philosophers regarded the human soul as capable of elevation through acquiring knowledge and spiritual practice. Substantial Motion and the Soul Mulla Sadra describes the soul as one simple but graded reality that in its unity includes diverse mental faculties. He also regards the soul as bodily in its origin, but spiritual in subsistence. It is built on the doctrine of substantial motion that is one of the hallmarks of transcendental philosophy. According to this doctrine, all nature, including substances and accidents, is in motion. As bodily in its origin, the soul too moves from one form to another as long as it is living in this world.

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Chapter 5 : Table of contents for Islamic philosophy from its origin to the present

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It was his paradigm that paved the way for mysticism to enter Islamic philosophy. Neoplatonism, which has remained one of the salient features of Islamic philosophy, has performed two functions: Philosophically, Neoplatonism provides answers to most major questions within the context of Islam, such as how multiplicity came from unity and how corporality emanated from an incorporeal God, as well as explaining the ascending and descending order of beings. From here on, there are generally two distinct interpretations of Avicennan philosophy: Those who see him only as a rationalist who had nothing to do with mysticism and those who argue that later Avicenna had embraced mysticism as is reflected in some of his later works. Many Muslim philosophers in particular Iranian scholars of Avicenna have a more inclusive reading of his writings and tend to agree that in the later period of his life, Avicenna developed an interest in mysticism. For Avicenna, similar to many other Muslim philosophers, the ultimate philosophical endeavor was to unveil the mystery of creation in particular; how Divine unity became the multiplicity of the world of existents. Avicenna was not a practicing Sufi with any known affiliation to a Sufi order. However, the presence of mystical elements in some of his later works is held by some to be undeniable Aminrazavi With Avicenna, who represents the pinnacle of rationalistic philosophy in Persia, came two other intellectual trends. Having been disillusioned with intellectual sciences, he practiced asceticism for a number of years in seclusion and finally found his answers in the Sufi tradition. He spent the later part of his life teaching, writing and practicing Sufism. He wrote extensively on mysticism, arguing it to be the only right path to truth. He also has written numerous shorter commentaries on the spiritual significance of fasting, praying, invocation of divine names and attributes, and spiritual music as instruments of the catharsis of the soul. It should be noted that he was a figure under whose name works by many diverse thinkers may have been collected. As one goes from the outward to the inward and esoteric level of Islam, one gains the consciousness which is the key to understanding the symbolism of prophetic teachings. First, one has to live a morally virtuous life and second, the adept must prepare himself philosophically. The novice has to travel through fifty-six paths within seven walls in order for the soul to gain the knowledge of Reality. In one poem he writes: Between the knower and the known. There lies a distinction by one who Has awakened from sleep of heedlessness. Similar to the figures of St. Echoes from both phases of his life can be seen through out his works Hunsburger Many of these deal with mystical and Sufi ideas. The Islamic world at the time was so large, and the intellectual milieu so rich and diverse, that no single book could put an end to its philosophy and discursive reasoning. This School whose salient feature was to synthesis rationalism, mysticism, intellectual intuition and even popular Sufism was undoubtedly the precursor to the School of Isfahan. Among the great masters of philosophical mysticism hailing from Spain, Ibn Masarrah CE stands out. He was an ascetic whose views on the mystic quest for unity of the soul with God comprised a major theme in his philosophical mysticism. A number of rationalistic philosophers who adhered to Sufi ideas and often practiced Sufism, became exponents of philosophical mysticism. Between 11th-16th century, Shiraz became the center of Sufi and gnostic thought in Persia. This work is still used today by Sufi masters as a practical guide on how spiritual ethics can cleanse the soul. The latter was a strict Aristotelian who wrote extensive commentary on logic and other aspects of Aristotelian thought. Writing quatrains in the style of Omar Khayyam , it is in his poetry that Sufism is most apparent. By the 14th century CE. Within the next two centuries, despite the rise and fall of several dynasties, the patronage of philosophers in India in general did not change. Sufi patronage reached a new high during the Mongol period, whose rulers were particularly keen in the Sufi tradition in all its manifestations; especially philosophy, poetry

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and the visual arts. There the use of Sufi doctrine, philosophy, and asceticism within a single philosophical paradigm reached its pinnacle. His philosophico-mystical structure, based on the principality of essence, provides the intellectual frame work for the ascendance of the soul and its eventual unity with its source. His students carried out his philosophical legacy well into the modern era. The question is how to transcend the world of objects which appears as many, to see the Oneness which lies at the heart of multiplicity. The salient features of the School of Tehran were that knowledge is hierarchical in essence and that discursive philosophy, while useful, is ultimately limited. Both of their works are gnostic and mystical commentaries upon a wide range of philosophical problems. The number of Muslim philosophers who became proponents of mystical philosophy in the Islamic world are too numerous to mention here, but clearly mysticism is a living tradition that continues to occupy center stage in the philosophy in the Muslim world. The impact of mysticism on Islamic philosophy has been so profound that it has changed the very essence and definition of philosophizing. Authentic philosophy, according to Muslim philosopher-mystics is therefore committed to providing a rationalistic commentary upon those issues which traditionally belonged to the mystical domain only. From Its Origin to Rumi, ed. Whose Logic and Which Orient? Essays in Honor of S. The Heart of Islamic Philosophy: Oxford University Press, Avicenna and the Visionary Recital. Histoire de la philosophie islamique, Paris: Their History and Doctrine, Cambridge: Turnhout, Volume 1, "Principles of Epistemology in Islamic Philosophy: Knowledge by Presence, Albany, NY: Toshihiko Izutsu and Mehdi Mohaghegh, Tehran: The Ruby of Badakhshan, London: Islamic College for Advanced Studies Press. Mystical Dimensions of Islam. University of North Carolina Press.

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Chapter 6 : The Elixir of the Gnostics | Mulla Sadra | Technology of the Heart

Thus Mulla Sadra's system of transcendental philosophy is to a large extent built on his "study afresh of the sources of Islamic revelation along with the sayings of the Shi'i Imams and his own experience and intellectual vision of reality made possible by both the outward and inward dimensions of the revelation" (Nasr ,).

Here he completed the first part of his major work, the *Asfar* The Four Journeys. He was then invited by Allah-wirdi Khan, the governor of Fars province, to return to Shiraz, where he taught for the remainder of his life. Illuminationist ishraqi philosophy, originated by Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi, had also been a major current in illuminationist philosophy. Mulla Sadra made the primacy of existence *asalat al-wujud* the cornerstone of his philosophy. But it was Ibn Sina who later became the source for the controversy as to how the accidentality of existence was to be conceived. He had held that in the existence-quiddity *wujud-mahiyya* or existence-essence relationship, existence was an accident of quiddity. Ibn Rushd had criticized this view as entailing a regress, for if the existence of a thing depended on the addition of an accident to it, then the same principle would have to apply to existence itself. This was merely an argument against the existence-quiddity dichotomy, but al-Suhrawardi had added to this another argument, asserting that if existence were an attribute of quiddity, quiddity itself would have to exist before attracting this attribute in order to be thus qualified. From this, al-Suhrawardi deduced the more radical conclusion that existence is merely a mental concept with no corresponding reality, and that it is quiddity which constitutes reality. However, Mulla Sadra himself took the opposite view, that it is existence that constitutes reality and that it is quiddities which are the mental constructs. By taking the position of the primacy of existence, Mulla Sadra was able to answer the objections of Ibn Rushd and the Illuminationists by pointing out that existence is accidental to quiddity in the mind in so far as it is not a part of its essence. When it is a case of attributing existentiality to existence, however, what is being discussed is an essential attribute; and so at this point the regress stopped, for the source of an essential attribute is the essence itself. Mulla Sadra adopted this theory but replaced quiddity with existence, which was for him the only reality. Reality is therefore pure existence, but an existence which manifests itself in different modes, and it is these modes which present themselves in the mind as quiddities. When reality or rather a mode of existence presents itself to the mind, the mind abstracts a quiddity from it - being unable, except in exceptional circumstances, to grasp existence intuitively - and in the mind the quiddity becomes, as it were, the reality and existence the accident. It is this which is the most universal and most self-evident concept to which the Aristotelians referred, and which al-Suhrawardi regarded as univocal. The peripatetics had held that substance only changes suddenly, from one substance to another or from one instant to another, in generation and corruption and therefore only in the sublunar world, and that gradual motion is confined to the accidents quantity, quality, place. They also held that the continuity of movement is something only in the mind, which strings together a potentially infinite series of infinitesimal changes - rather in the fashion of a film - to produce the illusion of movement, although time as an extension is a true part of our experience. What gives rise to movement is an unchanging substrate, part of the essence of which is that it is at an indefinite point in space at some instant in time; in other words, movement is potential in it and is that through which it becomes actual. Mulla Sadra completely rejected this, on the grounds that the reality of this substance, its being, must itself be in motion, for the net result of the peripatetic view is merely a static conglomeration of spatio-temporal events. The movement from potentiality to actuality of a thing is in fact the abstract notion in the mind, while material being itself is in a constant state of flux perpetually undergoing substantial change. Moreover, this substantial change is a property not only of sublunary elemental beings those composed of earth, water, air and fire but of celestial beings as well. Mulla Sadra likened the difference between these two understandings of movement to the difference between the abstracted, derivative notion of existence and the existence which is reality itself. In other words, existence can be conceived of as a continual unfolding of existence, which is thus a single whole with a constantly evolving internal dynamic. What gives things their

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identities are the imagined essences which we abstract from the modes of existence, while the reality is ever-changing; it is only when crucial points are reached that we perceive this change and new essences are formed in our minds, although change has been continually going on. Time is the measure of this process of renewal, and is not an independent entity such that events take place within it, but rather is a dimension exactly like the three spatial dimensions: All of this permits Mulla Sadra to give an original solution to the problem which has continually pitted philosophers against theologians in Islam, that of the eternity of the world. In his system, the world is eternal as a continual process of the unfolding of existence, but since existence is in a constant state of flux due to its continuous substantial change, every new manifestation of existence in the world emerges in time. The world - that is, every spatio-temporal event from the highest heaven downwards - is thus temporally originated, although as a whole the world is also eternal in the sense that it has no beginning or end, since time is not something existing independently within which the world in turn exists see Eternity. His theory of substantial motion, in which existence is a dynamic process constantly moving towards greater intensity and perfection, had allowed him to explain that new forms, or modes, of existence do not replace prior forms but on the contrary subsume them. Knowledge, being identical with existence, replicates this process, and by acquiring successive intelligible forms - which are in reality modes of being and not essential forms, and are thus successive intensifications of existence - gradually moves the human intellect towards identity with the Active Intellect. The intellect thus becomes identified with the intelligibles which inform it. Furthermore, for Mulla Sadra actual intelligibles are self-intelligent and self-intellected, since an actual intelligible cannot be deemed to have ceased to be intelligible once it is considered outside its relation to intellect. As the human intellect acquires more intelligibles, it gradually moves upwards in terms of the intensification and perfection of existence, losing its dependence on quiddities, until it becomes one with the Active Intellect and enters the realm of pure existence. Humans can, of course, normally only attain at best a partial identification with the Active Intellect as long as they remain with their physical bodies; only in the case of prophets can there be complete identification, allowing them to have direct access to knowledge for themselves without the need for instruction. Indeed, only very few human minds attain identification with the Active Intellect even after death. Philosophy and mysticism, hikma and Sufism, are for him two aspects of the same thing. To engage in philosophy without experiencing the truth of its content confines the philosopher to a world of essences and concepts, while mystical experience without the intellectual discipline of philosophy can lead only to an ineffable state of ecstasy. When the two go hand in hand, the mystical experience of reality becomes the intellectual content of philosophy. The four journeys, the major sections into which the *Asfar* is divided, parallel a fourfold division of the Sufi journey. In the second journey, in the Truth with the Truth, the stage at which the Sufi begins to attract the divine manifestations, Mulla Sadra deals with the simple substances, the intelligences, the souls and their bodies, including therefore his discussion of the natural sciences. In the third journey, from the Truth to creation with the Truth, the Sufi experiences annihilation in the Godhead, and Mulla Sadra deals with theodicy; the fourth stage, the journey with the Truth in creation, where he gives a full and systematic account of the development of the human soul, its origin, becoming and end, is where the Sufi experiences persistence in annihilation, absorbed in the beauty of oneness and the manifestations of multiplicity. In the earlier days I used to be a passionate defender of the thesis that the quiddities are the primary constituents of reality and existence is conceptual, until my Lord gave me spiritual guidance and let me see His demonstration. All of a sudden my spiritual eyes were opened and I saw with utmost clarity that the truth was just the contrary of what the philosophers in general had held. Ibn Sina provides the ground on which his metaphilosophy is constructed and is, as it were, the lens through which he views Peripatetic philosophy. The imaginal world had first been formally proposed by al-Suhrawardi as an intermediate realm between that of material bodies and that of intellectual entities, which is independent of matter and thus survives the body after death. For Mulla Sadra, this world is a level of immaterial existence with which it is possible for the human soul and indeed certain higher forms of the animal soul to be in contact, although not all the images formed by the human soul are necessarily veridical and therefore part of

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the imaginal world. In consequence, philosophy has often been seen, usually by non-philosophers, as a school with its own doctrines. This is despite the assertions of philosophers themselves that what they were engaged in was a practice without end for, as Ibn Sina had declared that what is known to humankind is limited and could only possibly be fulfilled when the association of the soul with the body is severed through death, part of the discipline of which consisted in avoiding taqlid, an uncritical adherence to sects see Islam, concept of philosophy in.

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Chapter 7 : Imam Ali - Sadra Islamic Philosophy Research Institute - www.nxgvision.com

This paper discusses the life and philosophy of Mulla Sadra, one of the most important Muslim Iranian philosophers and founder of new school of Islamic philosophy, entitled Transcendent philosophy, in 5 sections: his life, what is the "Transcendent philosophy", the 14 principles of Mulla Sadra's philosophy, Mulla Sadra's views on.

I am also grateful to John Kloppenborg, Shafique Virani, and Laury Silvers at the University of Toronto for the support that they gave me when I most needed it over the time I was preparing the manuscript. I would also like to thank Patricia Crone, the series editor, for her patience and precision towards improving my work and Sajjad Rizvi for his great editorial comments on my manuscript. There are so many scholars, professors, colleagues, friends, and students in Iran who I wish to thank for having been wonderful sources of inspiration during both my student years and teaching career. Among these people I would like to specially appreciate Mustafa Malekian and Mahmoud Khatami for their unique intellectual and spiritual generosity. I should also thank Amir for all the love and support he has given me throughout our life together not only as my husband, but as an intellectual with brilliant ideas, passion, and sincerity. Between Suhrawardi and Mulla Sadra, philosophical endeavors consisted mostly in commentaries, apologies, occasional solutions to past problems, and, above all, attempts to synthesize philosophy with both theology and mysticism. The best known commentators are men such as Qutb al-Din Shirazi d. Thanks to Mulla Sadra, the synthetic vision of Islamic philosophy was given new life. He developed a synthetic approach to philosophy that became the backbone of all that emerged later. It was in line with his role as a system builder that he revived the Ibn Sinan tradition of writing voluminous books on different areas in metaphysics and touching on a variety of subjects such as being, knowledge, the soul-body relation, the beginning and end of cosmos, and God. The result is mystical philosophy, a philosophy of the type which is tied to Islamic prophecy and which is often known in the West as theosophy. He considers the Twelve Imams as the most perfect instances of wilaya. The one and only World Congress on Mulla Sadra, held in Tehran and constantly referred to by Sadra scholars all over the world, is emblematic of this significance. The reason he has turned into the most celebrated philosopher in Iran after the Islamic Revolution cannot simply be reduced to politics, though political use has certainly been made of him. Serious attempts to expand Mulla Sadra scholarship, and to introduce him to Western academia, had already started almost a decade before the revolution inside the Imperial Academy of Iranian Philosophy. Mutazilite theology, with its emphasis on logic and rationalism, is the closest to philosophy among the theological schools. For example, we read in a Hadith attributed to the sixth Imam Jafar Sadiq that: His disciples in Mughal India, who became interested in his work shortly after his death, were mostly Sunnis. So too were scholars from Pakistan such as Mohammad Iqbal d. More will be said about his influence in the last chapter of this book. What makes Mulla Sadra so interesting to such a variety of thinkers is the inclusiveness of his system. As we shall see, building his philosophical system on the uniqueness of being or existence as a dynamic whole of different degrees, he created a more flexible and conciliatory approach to the problems which seemed to dissociate reason from faith, including those regarding the beginning and the end of the world and bodily resurrection. He developed an organic system in which rational, gnostic, and religious elements naturally merged and helped the growth of the whole. It is only after we read Sadra that we can figure out why Islamic philosophy and theology never drifted apart with the advent of modernity, contrary to the fate of Christian theology in the modern West. Philosophers in the eastern Muslim world chose the second way and built a system where the truth of faith cannot be separated from the findings of reason. He not only saved Islamic philosophy from being crushed by dogmatic attacks but also represented the culmination of philosophical debates over theological issues. As he was the only son in the family, he received a lot of attention from his father, who encouraged him to begin his studies in his home town. His early education took place in Shiraz where he learned the philosophies of his predecessors, most probably on his own, as it is not clear yet whether he had a teacher there or not. According to recent scholarship, at that time philosophy

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education was not available at the religious seminaries of Shiraz Rizvi , 7 and his first encounter with philosophy was in Qazvin. Under the guidance of the most celebrated philosopher of the time, Mir Muhammad Baqir Astarabadi known as Mir Damad d. He also developed some of his ideas in response to questions which had first been raised by Mir Damad. He learned as much as he could in different branches of Islamic sciences and mysticism from this wonderful teacher, who is still remembered in Iran as a legendary scientist and sage. He was also well-read in Sufi traditions and some scholars believe that he was even attached to a Sufi order Lewisohn , 89 , though there is not sufficient evidence for such a claim. Moreover, both his teachers were influential figures of the time due to their affiliation with the court and that they served as head of the jurists or shaykh al-Islam of Isfahan. There is no proof that Sadra also studied under Mir Findiriski, a third leading figure in the intellectual life of Safavid Isfahan. Sadra never mentioned him in any of his works Nasr , Harassed by hostile jurists, he eventually retreated to a small village named Kahak near Qom, where he lived a life of contemplation for five years or more. Though the details of the conflicts are not available, we can see from his writings that his feelings must have been deeply hurt. In *Risala-yi si asl* The Three Principles , the only treatise he ever wrote in Persian, he bitterly addresses his detractors in his mother tongue: O grand scholar and arrogant theologian! It was in this period that he laid the foundations of transcendental philosophy and began working on his *al-Asfar*. He was invited to teach in Shiraz by Imamquli Khan d. He stayed in Shiraz and taught at the Khan School for the rest of his life, though he travelled a great deal. There is no good evidence as to where he was buried. He specialized in Islamic Law, Hadith, theology, and philosophy, completely turning his back on Sufism. Sadra treated all his students as members of his own family. There is hardly any major philosopher or theologian in the east of the Muslim lands that Mulla Sadra had not read. His vast knowledge of earlier ideas and schools is noticeable in all his works, particularly *al-Asfar*. Three people, however, influenced him more than anyone else: Mulla Sadra wrote over fifty books and treatises on a variety of topics which we can categorize under two main headings: The first includes all the philosophical domains which, in modern categorizations, fall under ontology, epistemology, cosmology, metaphysical psychology, eschatology, moral, and political philosophy. We should add to this list the philosophical commentaries that he wrote on books by other philosophers. He started writing *al-Asfar* in Qom and finished it after returning to Shiraz. All the characteristic principles and ideas of the Sadrian system appear in it, and most of his other philosophical treatises simply repeat and expound the same ideas with occasional changes. The synthetic methodology of *al-Asfar* became the hallmark of transcendental philosophy. Sadra not only incorporated different schools of philosophy, theology, and mysticism into his system but also created a dialogical context in which we can judge his position in comparison with and in contrast to earlier Muslim scholars. *Divine Proofs al-Shawahid al-rububiyya* is equally wide in thematic scope, yet it is not as voluminous as *Asfar* but a summary of its major themes. Sadra also wrote a number of shorter treatises on subjects such as the unity of the knower and the known, the origination of the world, resurrection, etc. On the whole, his philosophical works form a huge and consistent system in which we hear echoes of his past philosophic masters side by side with his own philosophical, mystical, and religious ideas. Under the heading of religious sciences we may mention the commentary on *al-Usul al-kafi* by Kulayni d. *Keys to the Invisible World al-Mafatih al-ghayb* is the most important work in this area, particularly the first two *Keys Miftah*. There are overtones of mysticism in almost all his works, but Sadra also devoted a whole book to Sufi teachings, *The Elixir of Gnostics Iksir al-arifin* , the reworking of a Persian Sufi book by Afzal al-Din Kashani d. In this as in many other works he pays tribute to Sufi poetry. He often quotes from famous mystical Persian poets such as Rumi d. But with one exception all his works are in Arabic. Transcendental philosophy is a systematic attempt to reconcile philosophy, mysticism, and theology. In transcendental philosophy the central methodological consideration is that one cannot reach the truth without intellectual intuition for which spiritual illumination is necessary. The approach is holistic in that the intellect and the soul work not separately but as a unified whole. True knowledge is a matter of discovery, which is the final result of this intellectualâ€”spiritual journey. His philosophy cannot be understood independently from his deep faith

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in Islam, particularly its spiritual core. What distinguishes his work is the synthetic approach, encompassing Islamic mysticism and philosophy, kept in check by a determination not to go astray from the real meaning of the sacred text. He warns against commentaries that do so in his opinion. Rationalist endeavors, from the earliest steps taken by Mutazilite theologians to the philosophers in the golden ages of Islamic civilization and later have regularly been criticized. The intellectual connection between Islamic philosophy and that of the Greeks was a problem, not to mention the incongruence between certain philosophical views and Muslim scripture. Despite all the opposition from different quarters, philosophy in the Muslim world managed to survive in close relationship with religious sciences. This hostility was at its worst in the case of mystical philosophy due to the role of Sufi doctrines, which have been as alarming to jurists as philosophy, or more so. The execution of two brilliant Persian philosopher-mystics at a young age, Ayn al-Quzat Hamadani d. Ironically, after these executions the future of philosophy in Iran moved in the direction of mystical philosophy, culminating during the Safavid era. The school of Isfahan, to which Mulla Sadra belongs, was founded at the capital of the Safavid dynasty. This religious and political urgency led to the formation of an unusually powerful clergy. Due to the Sunni roots of Sufism and certain complications in the political life of the Safavids with respect to their early connections with Sufi orders, the anti-Sufi suppression arose mainly as a result of political rivalry and became apparent only in the mid seventeenth century, under Shah Abbas II. Yet, during the reign of Shah Abbas I, mysticism as a theoretical field of study different from practical or popular Sufism was still in vogue. The conceptual distinction between mysticism *irfan* and Sufism *tasawwuf*, which is still made by many scholars, especially in Iran, originated in the disapproving attitude of the school of Isfahan toward popular Sufism. Mulla Sadra devoted a whole treatise, *The Breaking of the Idols of Ignorance Kasr Asnam al-jahiliyya* to this cause, and emphatically denied any connections with the Sufi orders of the time. A complex of factors must have helped the school of Isfahan to flourish. Apart from the theoretical nature of mystical teachings in this school, the background of its founders in the religious sciences and jurisprudence was an important factor, so were their high social status and noble connections. Thus, financially and politically he stood on firm ground. His affluence and status guaranteed that his school would survive independently and be secure from the attacks of the other jurists as long as he was alive. These scholars raised a generation of students whose contributions to the intellectual and spiritual traditions have remained influential to the present day. As the clergy gained more and more control, particularly over the court of the next king, Abbas II d. There he referred to the sayings of Imams in order to argue that genuine scholars and ascetics never blame each other, but hold each other in respect as there are different ways to God Fayz Kashani, S. In a general sense, all Islamic metaphysics is transcendental, as it seeks the origin and the end of cosmos beyond the sensible world. In addition, the importance of theological issues in their religious urgency for Muslim philosophers gave their systems a noticeably transcendental color. This has been the case from the earliest attempts to answer questions about the nature of reality, including the natural and the supernatural, by means of Greek logic and metaphysics. To be is not just a matter of receiving your existence from the Creator but to be a manifestation of its Being, outside which there is merely nothingness. Sadra claimed that he had not reached this conclusion with the help of reason alone, but mainly through that kind of existential and spiritual experience which mystics would go through. That the journey of the intellect is also an existential experience and a spiritual ascent is a neo-Platonic legacy which appeared in different degrees in Peripatetic philosophy. However, it was Suhrawardi who for the first time highlighted the methodological significance of mystical intuition for doing philosophy. At the beginning of *The Philosophy of Illumination al-Hikmat al-ishraq* he criticized the followers of Peripatetic philosophy for relying too much on reason and neglecting intuitive wisdom.

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Chapter 8 : Mulla Sadra | Sayeh Meisami - www.nxgvision.com

Sadr al-Din Shirazi (Mulla Sadra) 1 A. Life and Works. The intellectual activity revived in Persia during the Safawid period, some features of which we have discussed in previous chapters, "The School of Ispahan," found its culmination in Sadr al-Din Shirazi known to his compatriots as Akhund Mulla Sadra and to his disciples as simply Akhund or as Sadr al-Muti'allihin, i.e. the foremost.

However, the intellect divides it into quiddity mahiyyah and existence wujud. But which of these is fundamental and principal in the outside realm? This question had not been discussed with much clarity among the ancient philosophers. And as such, we may find areas in their works that sometimes reveal that existence is fundamental and, at other times, that quiddity is fundamental asil. The belief in the fundamentality of quiddity was first introduced to us by Shaykh al-Ishraq and later garnered acceptance among some theosophers, such as Mir Damad. At first, Mulla Sadra, too, adopted this notion, following in the footsteps of his teacher, Mir Damad. However, later when the reality was unraveled for him he started to believe in the fundamentality of existence, instead. He was so firmly confident in the idea that he made it the foremost principle, and the foundational stone, of nearly all of his philosophical proofs. However, it was not intellectually proven in the manner propounded in the transcendental theosophy. After arguing for the principality of Existence, the intellects then propounded its singleness. This forms the second principle upon which nearly all other metaphysical issues depend. The Gnostics, indeed, used to believe in the hypostatic unity wahdah shakhsiyyah of existence and, at times, even tried to prove it in order to counter the vehemence of its opponents. However, they lacked any real success in demonstrating firm intellectual proofs to back their claims. Their body of evidence, rather, was as limited as those of the theologians who were not immune to criticisms, imperfections and weaknesses themselves. We must be alert of the fact that Mulla Sadra first propounded the particular unity of existence and its gradational characteristic, providing the establishment upon which the solution to other problems depended. Then, he arrived at a deeper understanding, which is the belief in the hypostatic unity of existence supported by the mystics. It is apparent in many of his works that he supports their opinion. Alluding to the truth and the more subtle opinion he espoused, he made the following point: And God-Willing, we shall place it in its respective area of discussion as we promised. Then, in a state of joy, he says: And the proof for this principle is of the wisdom that my Lord bestowed on me by His Eternal Grace and made it my share of knowledge by the bestowal of the Grace of His Existence. Thus, through this principle I tried to perfect philosophy and complete theosophy. And in the manner that my Lord enabled me through His Grace and Mercy to comprehend the perpetual annihilation and eternal extinction of the contingent quiddities, He guided me through a brilliant proof to the straight path of truth: Although this principle was inspired by the belief of the mystics in the renewal of amthal, the difference in the two ideas is apparent. Furthermore, the belief in amthal was not intellectually proven by Gnostics. And the truth is that the belief in the occurrence of movement in the category of substance necessitates its occurrence in all the [other] categories. Asfar, vol 3, p The theosophers, relying on the Emanation of the Necessary Being and the impossibility of the occurrence of change in His Essence, prefer to believe that He possesses Eternal Emanation. Furthermore, they allege that all the monotheistic nations are unanimous in its opposition. A section dealing with the fact that motion, in view of its temporal genesis, manifests continual and endless movement. And proving this is of the things that provoke a group of insane proponents of folklore because its apparent import manifests the pre-eternity of the worldâ€¦ However, we are in the process of proving temporal created-ness. Mafatih al-Gyaib, p And he is extremely happy in having solved this issue when he says: Also, I did not find proof on this matter that cures the sick and satiates the thirsty in books of the ancient and succeeding scholars. Surely, Allah advantaged me through His Mercy and Grace, and opened the door of comprehending its truth in my heart. As a result, I placed this sublime issue, along with unique and magnificent pearls of wisdom, in some of my books and treatises. There exists a hand written manuscript of

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the treatise which Mulla Sadra wrote and sent to Shams al-Jilani. However, its expurgation and exposition in the form of a specific intellectual proof was first introduced by Mulla Sadra: We found the difficult nature of this issue and contemplated the problem of the knowledge of substance being itself a substance and an accident. It is well known that Ibn Sina negated this notion and refuted it with numerous drawbacks. And in his book, *al-Isharat*, namat ninth, after mentioning the refutations, he reproachfully says: He proves the knowledge of Allah through the principle that says: Asfar, v 4, p Although he attributed the path that he adapted to the ancient well-rooted theosophers, and it nearly tallies with what the perfect Gnostics believed, this exposition was not known before him as he clearly states after expounding the method of the Gnostics: Asfar, v 6, p In his commentary on the *al-Kafi* he says: Rather, it is how Allah taught me through a specific way different from the aforementioned ways; and I do not see any benefit in quoting the same due to its intricacy and the difficulty for many minds to comprehend it. This notion is considered to be the agent of separation between the two philosophers. Shaykh al-Ishraq, however, adopted it, and in his *Hikmat al-Ishraq* said: Mulla Sadra believes that: Concerning this issue Mulla Sadra believes that: Surely, for every material species there exists a perfect and complete example in the world of Divine Command, which is the root and the origin. And the rest of the species are its offshoots and effects. The reason for this is its completeness and perfection, and the fact that it does not need matter or place. Contrarily, the material species, due to its feebleness and imperfection, needs matter in its essence or action. Asfar, v 2, p Two popular opinions are: One was that of Plato who believed in its pre-eternity Other was that of Aristotle who believed in its temporal genesis. Every philosophical school of thought accepted one of the two notions. The refutations that confronted the first opinion kept the intellectuals from accepting it. Furthermore, there is another difficult question that must be answered and that is the manner in which the body influences the soul in spite of the latter being immaterial in nature. Extensive struggle on this issue was met with no success until Mulla Sadra came and propounded his famous opinion that the soul is materially temporal and spiritually subsistent, and that the fact that the cause in its existential degree includes the existence of the effect removes the contradiction of the pre-eternal existence of the soul together with its temporal genesis. And they found that the human souls exist prior to their bodies according to the perfect nature of its cause and means. And a perfect means necessitates an effect together. Nevertheless, its influence in the body depends on a certain ability and specific conditions. And it is known that the soul comes into being on the body attaining complete preparedness and is subsistent with the body when it perfects. Some were of the opinion that the soul is a single unit. It performs its acts all by itself, but through different means from each of which issues a specific action. This is the opinion of Ibn Sina and those of his level. Asfar, v 7, p And you shall soon come to know that for each of our bodies there is only one soul and that the rest of the faculties are its effects and offshoots in the parts of the bodies. This view was popular among the later authoritative theosophies. However, what we believe is that the soul is all its faculties, meaning that it is a unit that embraces all of the faculties and is their cause and end. Asfar, v 8, p This refutation is of the matters I propounded for many of the contemporary scholars of my time, and none was able to solve its problem, until Allah enlightened my heart and guided me to the straight path. And that is that I beheld my soul and found it to be simple egoity *inniyyah sirfah*. And although this matter is contrary to what the rest of the theosophers believe, including Shaykh and his ilk, that which is to be followed is intellectual proof. And the truth is not known save through intellectual proof. It is not known by looking at the personalities. I did not find from the books of philosophers any research on this matter. Nor did I find any research on the notion of the immateriality of imagination, or on the difference between its abstraction from this material world and the abstraction of the intellect. the knowledge of this is from the things that Allah favored me with and guided me towards. I extremely thank Him and praise Him for this great blessing. Asfar, v3, p From there, Asfar deduced the issue of the immateriality of the animal soul. Surely Allah inspired us by His Grace and Beneficence an Oriental proof on the immateriality of the animal soul that possesses the faculty of imagination from this world and its accidental properties. And the scholars differ in its meaning. Abu Hamid al-Ghazali says: They have given

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several reasons why reincarnation should be considered invalid. Mulla Sadra did not find their arguments to be complete and perfect, and therefore presented another proof based on his discovery of the trans-substantial motion. The reason for Invalidity of reincarnation tanasukh is that the soul is essentially connected to the body and both are harmoniously and naturally united together and the fact that each of the two together with the other possesses an essential trans-substantial motion. According to this principle, any entity cannot descend to a lower plane of existence unless it has crossed the higher planes. Mulla Sadra introduced a similar principle that refines this one: According to this principle, existence cannot attain a more sacred level of contingent existence in the arc of ascent unless it has passed through all the lower levels in this arc. That which is inferred from the apparent contents of the Book of God and traditions of the Holy Prophet and his infallible progeny indicates that resurrection transpires both spiritually as well as materially. The theologians were unable to prove the material dimension of this principle, and simply relied on what the Divine Revelation had brought. However Mulla Sadra claims that he was able to prove the Bodily Resurrection and considers that to be one of the most distinctive features of his transcendent theosophy. The verses of the Book and various faiths and religions tell us that what returns at the time of the Return is the soul together with body, and not just the soul. And it is not necessary for every human being to be raised with a body from the bodies. Tafsir sureh Sajdah, p. Since matters pertaining to the Hereafter are beyond the realm of this world, the intellect cannot comprehend their realities. And this is a literal denial and refusal of the existence of color. Likewise, the covetousness to understand the states of the Hereafter through the process of reasoning and theology meets a literal denial and refusal thereof.

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Chapter 9 : Mysticism in Arabic and Islamic Philosophy (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

One recent study, Mulla Sadra's Transcendent Philosophy by Muhammad Kamal, a comprehensive investigation of Sadra's philosophical doctrines, is an attempt to capture the general outlook of Sadra's system as a whole.

With the former, he studied philosophy and theology, in particular the Peripatetic works of Avicenna d. Contrary to what Corbin and others have claimed Corbin Certainly the story recorded by some of the later biographical dictionaries that claims that Mulla Sadra was advised by Mir Fendereski to study with Mir Damad is apocryphal. However, we have one very valuable source that records the intimate relationship of his study and even spiritual discipleship in a literary-poetic collection of the early 17th century from Qazvin known as the Jung-e Qazvin. Among these notes are short ijaza-like statements for Mulla Sadra. Similarly, in a note Mir Damad referred to Sadra as his spiritual son Khamenehi The dual influence of his teachers can be gauged in his early notes that reveal an interest in Sufism, especially Sufi poetry and the law. However, interest in Sufism does not entail affiliation to a Sufi order, a practice which, in any case, was highly controversial in this period: His retreat khalvat lasted probably five years. His relationship with Mir Damad was particularly important: His devotion was expressed in the letters that they exchanged. He trained a number of significant philosophers in the period in Qom, the most important of whom were Muhsin Fayz-i Kashani d. Other students included the philosophers Husayn Tunikabuni d. After his retreat to Qom, Mulla Sadra probably married in Shiraz. One modern source suggests that his wife was the daughter of Mirza Zia al-Din Muhammad Razi, which would mean that his wife and the mother of Fayz were sisters, suggesting a relationship that predates the teacher and student one. As an affluent man, Mulla Sadra had five children who survived and a large household, including retainers and students. Mulla Sadra also had three sons who became scholars in their own right: Mulla Sadra was the clear choice for teaching there, and it is possible that he had begun his association from the inception of the institution. This late period of his life was productive, and he was much respected as a teacher in his hometown. After an illustrious and prolific career, he died in Basra on his way to his seventh pilgrimage to Mecca. However, there is no clear evidence in support of this date. Abi Talib Khamenehi Hence it is popularly known as the Four Journeys. The first journey from this world to God provides the seeker with the intellectual principles for understanding philosophy such as the basic definition of philosophy and metaphysics, the significance of metaphysics and the question of being for this study. In this journey, the seeker moves away from multiplicity and phenomenal deception towards unity and an awareness of the underlying nature of reality. The second journey in God with God is a discourse on the nature of God, the divine attributes and significantly including his famous proof for the existence of God. The third journey from God to this world explains the God-world relationship, nature, time and creation and ontological categories in this world. For the mystic, this is the return to sobriety and a realisation of the duties of moral agency in this world. The Four Journeys is a major source for the history of Islamic philosophical traditions: But it is not just the arguments of thinkers, well known in academic and scholarly circles, who are considered. He also addressed the positions of some major philosophers of Shiraz, who remain little known even to specialists studying Islamic philosophy, such as Mir Ghiyath al-Din Mansur Dashtaki d. But the Four Journeys remains his most important work and the key to understanding his philosophy as he repeatedly cited it in his other works for a more extended discussion of an issue. Defining philosophy Common with other pre-modern traditions of philosophy, Mulla Sadra conceives of philosophy as more than a ratiocinative inquiry. It is a mode of being and a way of life whose goal is wisdom and the cultivation of a holy life in which the sage strikes a resemblance to the divine cf. His thought is clearly located within a Neoplatonic paradigm of understanding philosophy as espoused by Pierre Hadot and others. Philosophy is the pursuit of metaphysical truths that are not merely understood and grasped through cognition, but are lived realities, in which philosophers, again following the Platonic tradition, are integrated souls who combine theoretical and practical knowledge and its implementation to effect a holistic ethics of living. Inquiry entails a two-fold discipline of

the mind through logical training and the mental exercises of argumentation, analysis, division and refutation, and the disciplining of the soul through spiritual exercises that facilitate the inhering of divine qualities of knowledge, justice and piety. In the Four Journeys, Mulla Sadra provides this critical definition of philosophy that in itself combines a characteristically Neoplatonic vision of philosophy that reconciles Plato and Aristotle: Know that philosophy is the perfecting of the human soul, through the cognition of the true natures of existents, as they truly are, through judgements concerning them that are ascertained through apodeixis, and not understood through conjecture, or adherence to prior authority, insofar as is humanly possible. Through philosophy, man acquires a resemblance to the Creator and ascribes a rational order to the cosmos. Mulla Sadra , I: Philosophy is a process of perfecting the soul through knowledge. The goal of philosophy is explicitly metaphysical: What is significant is that Mulla Sadra proposes a thoroughly rational, or intellectual approach to understanding reality that assumes not only that reality is a given, existing independently of our minds, but also that human minds are capable through self-perfection to understand reality. Knowledge is a process that develops through making judgements. The term judgment is a technical concept in Islamic epistemologies to describe the analysis of a proposition in which one ascertains whether it holds true and whether it describes something that exists. Judgements are therefore closely linked to the discernment of existence. Knowledge develops and is corroborated through the Aristotelian science of demonstration apodeixis. Philosophy requires analysis and demonstration. The rehearsal of ideas, adhering to past authority and conjecture imperfect and rhetorical forms of argument do not constitute philosophical reasoning. Knowledge is not an unlimited process or act of being for Mulla Sadra but does have limits due to the human vehicle of knowing. First, as we discussed above philosophy is a way of life, a lived mode of being and a process that involves spiritual exercises. To philosophise is to cultivate piety, since the end of philosophy is the higher pious life, a reflection of a Hermetic ideal trope. The more truth one knows, the more pious one becomes. Philosophy is a religious commitment that obscures the conceptual boundary between theory and doctrine. The very pursuit of intellectual inquiry and discourse is itself the greatest good and the means through which one knows how to live a good life, and enables one to ascend to the highest heavenly host. The disciplining of the mind cures the soul of incorrect doxa and the disease of irrationality. It cures the suffering of the soul insofar as it reduces the alienation of the soul from the truth and ultimately from God through the journey of the intellect back to the One. The dynamic of this journey involves the performance of spiritual exercises. Mulla Sadra urges the reader to practise philosophy as an art and a method of self-improvement and spiritual enlightenment Mulla Sadra The act of meditation is not irrational detachment but rather the exercise of reason Hadot True pedagogy allied with divine grace leads man to perfection and self-realisation. This can only be acquired through guidance, teaching, discipline, and formation of righteous character Mulla Sadra , VI: Second, he integrates philosophical and spiritual reasoning because, as was common among Islamic Neoplatonists and especially in the method of Suhrawardi, he insisted that philosophy was a mode of Prophetic knowledge inherited in an initiatic chain from Adam down through the Biblical prophets, Greek philosophers, Indian and Babylonian sages through to the Prophet Muhammad and then on through the Muslim philosophers and Sufis. Know that philosophy first issued from Adam, the chosen one of God and from his progeny Seth and Hermes and from Noah because the world can never be free of a person who establishes knowledge of the unity of God and of the return [to God]. The great Hermes disseminated it [philosophy] in the climes and in the countries and explained it and gave benefit of it to the people. He is the father of philosophers and the most learned of the knowledgeable! As for Rome and Greece, philosophy is not ancient in those places as their original sciences were rhetoric, epistolatory and poetry!until Abraham became a prophet and he taught them the science of divine unity. It is mentioned in history that the first to philosophise from among them [the Greeks] was Thales of Miletus and he named it philosophy. He first philosophised in Egypt and then proceeded to Miletus when he was an old man and disseminated his philosophy. After him came Anaxagoras and Anaximenes of Miletus. After them emerged Empedocles, Pythagoras, Socrates and Plato. The knowledge of higher metaphysical realities, similar to the Platonic

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tradition, requires the cultivation of character and surpassing ratiocination. Just as Porphyry and others before had delimited lists of virtues, for Mulla Sadra, the sage possesses the qualities of generosity, good humour, fine judgement, and a pronounced taste and experience of spiritual disclosure Mulla Sadra , VI: Truth must derive its legitimacy and foundation from grace and revelation, and can never find fertile soil merely in the rehearsal of the doctrines of previous philosophers. Phenomenological experience is the ground for philosophy. In the Four Journeys, Mulla Sadra writes: Being and Existence Mulla Sadra is often described as a metaphysical revolutionary because of his uniquely posited doctrine of existence. The analysis of existence commences with the ontological distinction between the Necessary the principle, God and the contingent. God is pure existence without essence, quality or property that undergoes change or motion. Contingents are conceptually dyads of existence the fact that they are and essence bundles of properties that define what they are, Mulla Sadra , I: Since God bestows existence upon contingents, or rather because causally contingents derive their existence from their principle, existence is ontologically prior to essence. Analytically, it may seem to us that the reverse is true because our encounter with things and events takes the phenomenal form of acquaintance with the form and essence of that thing first. In this, and in his doctrine of substantial motion that is discussed below, one can see a systematic rejection of Aristotelian category theory. Before examining the twin doctrines of the fundamental reality of existence and its modulated but singular character at the heart of his metaphysics, it is worth mentioning some of the preliminary positions that he holds on the nature of existence: There was a consensus on this doctrine stemming back at least to Avicenna as it arose out of an Aristotelian conception of essence and the nature of definition. One defines and knows things through their essences but existence has no essence that is singular across its different referents and manifestations. Nor is existence a type of a universal to which individual particulars in reality are attached Mulla Sadra , I: As a concept, it is a secondary intelligible. Secondary intelligibles, however, are logical concepts, abstract notions, concepts based on derivative essences, and concomitants of essences Mulla Sadra , I: As such, being as a secondary intelligible is a concept that is attached to an essence that exists in extra-mental reality cf. As secondary intelligibles are higher order predicates, they are also homonymous terms that exist in the soul. It is a term predicated homonymously mahmul mushtarak of its referents. Existence constitutes a special case of homonymy that he calls tashkik, a term already used by Avicenna to render the tertium quid of the ancients. It is, therefore, in this sense that existence is both the source of commonality and of distinction between existing things because unlike the Peripatetic tradition, he is insistent that existence is the principle of individuation tashakhkhus of a thing other than its essence. Existence is a real predicate for Mulla Sadra since it is a property of an essence that is found in extra-mental reality Mulla Sadra , I: Similarly, if existence were not a predicate, we could not speak meaningfully of quiddities that have no direct reference in reality Mulla Sadra , II: For Mulla Sadra, existential propositions are not analytic. He argues that existence is not an analytic part of essence. Existence is pure goodness Mulla Sadra , I: