**Kajian Filsafat Jiwa dan Hubungan Jiwa-Raga dalam Pemikiran Filsuf Klasik dan Islam: Perspektif Perbandingan**

**Abstract**  
Philosophy of the soul holds a central role in the history of philosophical thought, both in the Western tradition since Ancient Greece and in the medieval Islamic philosophical tradition. Classical philosophy begins with Plato, who describes the soul as an immaterial and eternal entity. Aristotle follows with a different approach by explaining the soul as the *form* of the body within the framework of hylomorphism. Islamic philosophers such as al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and al-Ghazali continue this intellectual legacy. They combine Greek philosophical heritage with theological perspectives, which creates a distinctive synthesis between philosophical rationality and spiritual depth.

This study compares how these two traditions explain the nature of the soul and the relationship between soul and body. It examines similarities and differences in their concepts and analyzes how these differences influence epistemology and ethics. The research uses a comparative literature study. It applies textual analysis to classical works and uses philosophical hermeneutics to uncover conceptual meaning. It also employs comparative analysis to identify points of convergence and divergence.

The findings reveal that both traditions emphasize rationality as the defining characteristic of the human soul. However, they differ in ultimate orientation. Classical philosophy focuses on intellectual actualization as a path to worldly happiness, while Islamic philosophy directs the soul toward spiritual perfection that connects human beings to God. This conclusion highlights the value of cross-traditional dialogue in enriching contemporary philosophy. It also points to opportunities for integrating the philosophy of the soul with modern scientific developments.

**Keywords:** philosophy of the soul, soul–body relationship, classical philosophy, Islamic philosophy, comparative philosophy

**Background**

Philosophers have discussed the concept of the soul as a central theme from Ancient Greek times to its extensive development in Islamic intellectual tradition. Classical Western philosophy begins with thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle, who regard the soul as the principle that drives life, the source of intellect, and the essence of human identity. Plato (2001) describes the soul as eternal and separate from the body. Aristotle (1980) takes a different view by defining the soul as the form of a living body, inseparable from matter. These contrasting views shaped the foundation of a long-standing discourse on the nature of the soul. Muslim philosophers such as al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and al-Ghazali continued this discourse by adding a more complex emphasis on metaphysical and theological dimensions.

Islamic philosophy enriches the concept of the soul by integrating Greek philosophical heritage with the scholarly traditions of Islam. Ibn Sina, for example, in *Al-Šifā* (1985) and *Al-Nafs min Kitāb al-Šifā* (1996), explains the soul as an immaterial substance that governs human biological and intellectual functions. Al-Ghazali combines philosophical reasoning with Sufi mysticism. He describes the soul not only as a vessel of knowledge but also as an entity that demands moral purity. This approach shows that the study of the soul in Islamic thought is not a mere adaptation of Greek ideas but a creative synthesis with religious and spiritual principles (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1996).

Debates over the relationship between the soul and the body remain among the most persistent themes in the history of philosophy. In Greek philosophy, Plato sees the body as a prison for the soul. Aristotle asserts a substantial unity between them (Aristotle, 1980). In Islamic thought, Ibn Sina holds that the soul can exist apart from the body yet still manages its functions (Ibn Sīnā, 1992). Later, Mulla Sadra introduces the theory of *al-ḥikmat al-mutaʿālīya*, placing the soul–body relationship within the framework of substantial motion, where the soul evolves from a material state to complete immateriality (Ṣadr-al-Mutaʾallihīn, 1989).

This philosophical discourse shapes other branches of philosophy, such as ethics, psychology, and metaphysics. In ethics, views of the soul influence ideas about free will, moral responsibility, and the purpose of human life (Miṣbāḥ Yazdī, 2014). In psychology, they guide how scholars understand consciousness, emotions, and mental health. In metaphysics, the soul–body relationship helps explain the nature of reality, existence, and the possibility of life after death (Javādī Amulī, 2019).

Recent studies seek to bridge differences between Western and Islamic traditions. Abdoli Mehrjardi and Rahimpour (2022) compare Mulla Sadra’s thought with that of Foster, finding that both acknowledge the interactive dimension of the soul–body relationship, despite ontological differences. Shariati and Khoshnevis (2020) propose the concept of emergent dualism, combining elements of dualism and materialism. These findings highlight the value of integrating classical philosophical heritage with modern thought.

However, most existing studies focus on one tradition—either Greek–Western philosophy or Islamic philosophy—without offering a balanced comparison. Comparative research across traditions could enrich both conceptual and methodological understanding (Āštīyānī, 2002). Furthermore, scholars often overlook the epistemological dimension. Yet the differences between Aristotle and Ibn Sina, or between Plato and Mulla Sadra, lie not only in ontology but also in how they acquire and validate knowledge (Ṭūsī, 2007).

The ethical dimension is equally significant. In Islamic philosophy, the belief that the soul is eternal and accountable for actions in the afterlife shapes moral orientation (Faḫri Rāzī, 1985). In contrast, certain modern Western philosophical schools see the soul as a product of biological interaction, leading toward deterministic perspectives in ethics. These differences create diverse ethical frameworks between the two traditions.

From a historical perspective, the study of the soul reflects a complex process of knowledge transmission. Aristotle’s works, for example, were translated into Arabic, commented upon by Muslim philosophers such as Ibn Rushd, and later influenced medieval Latin European philosophy (Aristotle, 1980). This historical link shows that the philosophy of the soul is not simply a comparison of two isolated traditions but a study of their mutual influence across civilizations.

Although the discourse on the soul–body relationship often falls into the dichotomy of separation or unity, some philosophical approaches seek to transcend it. One example is Mulla Sadra’s idea of the bodily *hoduth* of the soul, which offers a synthesis between material and immaterial aspects (Shariati & Khoshnevis, 2020). Such a model could become a conceptual bridge for cross-tradition studies, though few scholars have tested it comparatively.

This study addresses three main questions: (1) how classical Western and Islamic philosophy understand the soul, (2) how each tradition views the soul–body relationship, and (3) what epistemological and ethical implications arise from their differences. The research aims to present a critical and substantive comparison while identifying possible syntheses between the two traditions.

Academically, this study contributes to the development of comparative philosophy and opens space for cross-tradition dialogue. In today’s context—where issues of consciousness, identity, and the mind–body relationship are increasingly relevant—the findings may offer a richer conceptual framework (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, n.d.). Beyond theoretical relevance, this research carries practical implications for fields such as education and mental health, aiming to broaden intellectual horizons while strengthening ethical and epistemological foundations in understanding the human being as a complex entity.

**Theoretical Review**

In classical Western philosophy, Plato describes the soul (*psyche*) as an immaterial entity, completely separate from the body and inherently eternal. He sees the soul as the source of life, knowledge, and morality. In *Phaedo*, Plato (2001) explains that the soul exists before birth and continues to live after the death of the body. For him, the body serves only as a “prison” for the soul, while death acts as a liberation toward the realm of Forms, where ultimate truth resides. Plato divides the soul into three distinct parts: the rational part, which governs knowledge and wisdom; the spirited part, which controls courage and honor; and the appetitive part, which manages desires and physical needs (Reeve, 2014). This tripartite structure lays the early foundation for the development of moral psychology in the West and shapes his theories of ethics and politics.

Unlike Plato’s dualistic approach, Aristotle rejects a complete separation between the soul and the body. Through his theory of hylomorphism, he presents all living beings as a unity of matter (*hyle*) and form (*morphe*). In human beings, the body acts as matter, while the soul functions as the form that actualizes its potential (Aristotle, 1980). Aristotle classifies the soul into three levels: the vegetative soul, which is responsible for growth and reproduction; the sensitive soul, which enables perception and movement; and the rational soul, which allows thinking and reasoning. Only humans possess the rational soul, which enables them to grasp universal principles. This view establishes an integral vision of human beings, standing in contrast to Plato’s absolute dualism.

Islamic philosophy develops the study of the soul through a synthesis of Greek thought and Islamic principles. Al-Farabi conceptualizes the soul as a spiritual substance with graded capacities—from vegetative to animal to rational—and emphasizes that human perfection occurs when the rational soul connects with the Active Intellect (*al-ʿaql al-faʿāl*) as the source of universal knowledge (Al-Farabi, 1985). Ibn Sina expands this framework by identifying three types of souls: plant, animal, and human. According to him, the human soul is immaterial and eternal, existing independently even after the death of the body. By connecting with the Active Intellect, humans can attain intuitive knowledge that approaches absolute truth (Nasr, 2007).

Al-Ghazali, while critical of Muslim philosophers who he felt were overly influenced by Greek thought, still acknowledges the essential role of reason. In *Ihya’ ʿUlum al-Din*, he integrates philosophy, Sufism, and theology to portray the soul as a spiritual substance capable of drawing closer to God through moral purification and spiritual discipline. For Al-Ghazali, reason serves as the means to discover truth, but it must be illuminated by divine light (*nur*) to function at its highest capacity. His view expands the discourse on the soul from a primarily epistemological focus to include ethical and spiritual dimensions.

Philosophers have also presented several main theories regarding the soul–body relationship. Dualism, made famous by René Descartes in the seventeenth century, separates the immaterial soul and the material body as two distinct substances, raising the question of how they interact (Descartes, 1996). In contrast, monism rejects such separation: materialism regards the soul as a product of the brain’s biological processes, while idealism views the body merely as a manifestation of the mind. Aristotelian hylomorphism—seeing the soul and body as two inseparable aspects of a single entity—remains influential and was even adopted by Thomas Aquinas to align with Catholic theology (Aquinas, 1947).

From the Islamic perspective, the soul and body function in a complementary relationship. The body serves as a temporary vessel for the soul during life in this world, while the soul acts as the guiding principle that gives meaning to the body’s existence. This view blends Aristotelian hylomorphism with theological belief in the soul’s continuation after death. The uniqueness of Islamic philosophy lies in its acknowledgment of the soul’s transcendental dimension—something that cannot be fully reduced to materialistic or mechanistic explanations.

**Research Methodology**

This study uses a library research approach combined with the framework of comparative philosophy. The researcher chooses library research because the object of study is conceptual in nature and relies on philosophical texts, both from the classical Western tradition (Plato, Aristotle) and from the Islamic philosophical tradition (al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, al-Ghazali). This method allows the researcher to explore primary and secondary sources in depth, build a comprehensive understanding, and identify both the points of convergence and the fundamental differences between the philosophers under study (Creswell, 2018). This research is qualitative in nature and focuses on conceptual analysis. The analysis emphasizes extracting meaning, examining argument structures, and uncovering the epistemological and ontological foundations of each philosopher’s thought. Within the framework of comparative philosophy, this method combines critical interpretation of texts with systematic cross-tradition comparison (Rescher, 2003). The researcher selects this comparative approach because it can bridge dialogue between Greek and Islamic philosophy, two traditions that historically engaged in significant intellectual interaction. Plato’s and Aristotle’s ideas form a conceptual foundation that Muslim philosophers later adapted, critiqued, and developed through processes of translation and reconstruction (Davidson, 1992; Gutas, 2001).

The research data comes from two categories of sources. The primary sources consist of the original works of the philosophers, including *Republic* and *Phaedo* by Plato; *Metaphysics* and *Nicomachean Ethics* by Aristotle; *Al-Madina al-Fadila* by al-Farabi; *Al-Shifa* and *Al-Najat* by Ibn Sina; and *Tahafut al-Falasifah* and *Ihya’ ʿUlum al-Din* by al-Ghazali. The secondary sources include academic studies, journal articles, and books that discuss Greek and Islamic philosophy. Among these are works by contemporary scholars such as Fakhry (2004) *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, Adamson (2016) *Philosophy in the Islamic World*, and Gutas (2001) *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture*. The researcher selects secondary sources based on the recency of publication and their relevance to the research topic.

The researcher collects data by searching literature through academic databases such as JSTOR, Brill Online, Cambridge University Press, and Google Scholar. This process includes identifying relevant primary and secondary works, selecting them based on thematic relevance and academic quality, and compiling the data in bibliographic form to facilitate analysis. Because the study relies on existing documentary sources, the method is non-reactive, which enables the researcher to focus entirely on deep analytical work (Bowen, 2009).

The researcher analyzes data in three stages. The first stage is textual analysis, which emphasizes a critical reading of primary texts to understand key terminology, argument structures, and historical contexts—for example, the concept of *idea* in Plato and *ousia* in Aristotle. The second stage is philosophical hermeneutics, which follows Gadamer’s approach (1994) to reveal the conceptual meaning behind the texts while considering historical horizons, language, and intellectual traditions. Hermeneutics provides insight into how Muslim philosophers interpreted, adapted, or critiqued Greek ideas. The third stage is comparative analysis, which identifies similarities, differences, and cross-tradition influences—for instance, comparing al-Farabi’s theory of prophecy with Aristotle’s metaphysics.

The researcher maintains data validity through source triangulation, which involves checking the consistency between information in primary texts, commentaries by classical scholars, and findings in contemporary research. The researcher also strengthens validity through cross-reading between translations and original Greek or Arabic texts whenever possible. The research flow consists of collecting primary and secondary texts, conducting in-depth reading, recording key concepts, applying hermeneutic analysis, performing systematic comparison, and synthesizing the findings. With this methodology, the study aims to offer a profound understanding of the continuity and transformation of philosophical ideas between Greek and Islamic traditions, as well as their contribution to the broader discourse of global philosophy.

### **Results and Discussion**

**The Soul in Classical Western Philosophy**

Plato (427–347 BC) viewed the soul (psyche) as an immaterial and eternal entity. He believed the soul exists before entering the body. In Phaedo, Plato argued that the soul returns to the world of Forms after death. This transcendent realm contains perfect ideals of all things (Plato, trans. Jowett, 1999). Plato divided the soul into three parts in Republic. The logistikon (rational) seeks truth and wisdom. The thymoeides (spirited) drives courage and defends justice. The epithymetikon (appetitive) governs bodily desires. Plato claimed the soul achieves balance only when reason rules, spirit supports, and appetite obeys (Annas, 1981). Plato also saw the body as the soul’s "prison." He thought bodily distractions prevent the soul from grasping pure truth. Thus, he defined philosophical liberation as anamnesis (recollecting innate knowledge) and freeing the soul from material bonds (Cornford, 1941).

Aristotle (384–322 BC) rejected Plato’s dualism. He developed hylomorphism in De Anima. Aristotle saw living beings as unions of form (morphe) and matter (hyle). He defined the soul as entelechy—the actualizing principle of the body’s potential (Aristotle, trans. Smith, 1957). Aristotle categorized three soul levels: the vegetative soul (nutrition/reproduction in plants), the sensitive soul (perception/movement in animals), and the rational soul (thought in humans). He emphasized that the soul needs the body to function. Yet Aristotle acknowledged the rational soul’s potential separability due to its immortality (Bostock, 1988). His view bridged Platonic dualism and later Islamic integrative approaches.

**The Soul in Islamic Philosophy**

Al-Farabi (872–950 AD) blended Aristotelian thought with Neoplatonic emanation. In Al-Madina al-Fadila, he described the soul’s hierarchical faculties: vegetative, sensitive, imaginative, and rational. Al-Farabi believed the soul reaches perfection by connecting to the Active Intellect (al-‘aql al-fa‘‘al). This cosmic entity emanates universal knowledge (Al-Farabi, trans. Walzer, 1985). The Active Intellect links the material and intellectual worlds. Souls uniting with it achieve ultimate happiness (sa‘adah)—humanity’s highest goal (Fakhry, 2004).

Ibn Sina (980–1037 AD) systematized soul theory in Al-Shifa and Al-Najat. He accepted the vegetative-sensitive-rational division but argued the rational soul transcends the body. Ibn Sina famously illustrated this with his "Floating Man" thought experiment. He imagined a person suspended without sensory input yet still self-aware. This proved consciousness requires no physical senses (Davidson, 1992). Ibn Sina concluded the soul is immortal. After death, it persists in a state reflecting earthly spiritual growth (Gutas, 2001).

Al-Ghazali (1058–1111 AD) critiqued Greek philosophy in Tahafut al-Falasifah but upheld the rational soul. In Ihya’ ‘Ulum al-Din, he fused philosophy, Sufism, and theology. Al-Ghazali called the soul lubb al-insan—the human core governing spirituality and ethics. He taught that the soul’s purpose is approaching God through purification (tazkiyat al-nafs). The soul receives divine light guiding it toward truth (Al-Ghazali, trans. Faris, 1981). Thus, Al-Ghazali integrated ethics, spirituality, and intellect.

**Soul-Body Relationship: Comparative Analysis**

The soul-body relationship differs ontologically across traditions. Plato sharply separated soul and body. Aristotle unified them through hylomorphism. Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina allowed soul transcendence beyond matter. Al-Ghazali oriented the soul toward God.

Epistemological differences also exist. Plato prioritized anamnesis (recalling innate knowledge). Aristotle derived knowledge from sensory experience. Al-Farabi emphasized connection to the Active Intellect. Ibn Sina valued intellectual intuition. Al-Ghazali added kashf (inner revelation through spiritual purification).

Teleological aims vary: Plato sought the soul’s return to the World of Forms. Aristotle aimed for virtue-based actualization. Al-Farabi pursued happiness (sa‘adah) via the Active Intellect. Ibn Sina desired intellectual perfection. Al-Ghazali sought direct communion with God.

**Implications for Contemporary Thought**

Classical and Islamic philosophies profoundly influence modern ethics, psychology, and spirituality. Plato’s tripartite soul inspired Freud’s id-ego-superego model. Both stress balancing drives, emotions, and reason. Aristotelian hylomorphism remains relevant in neurophilosophy. It explains mind-body unity without reducing consciousness to biology. Ibn Sina’s immaterial soul supports non-reductionist views of consciousness. Al-Ghazali’s tazkiyat al-nafs (soul purification) enriches value-based psychotherapy.

These ideas can integrate with modern science. Neuroscience could use hylomorphism to bridge brain activity and consciousness. Positive psychology might blend Aristotelian virtue with Al-Farabi’s sa‘adah for holistic well-being models. Mental health could adapt Al-Ghazali’s purification into psychosomatic-spiritual therapies. Such interdisciplinary synthesis offers alternatives to 21st-century materialist reductionism.

### **Conclusion**

This study **highlights** key connections and differences between classical philosophy—especially Aristotle—and Islamic philosophy—particularly Ibn Rushd—in understanding the soul. Our findings **reveal** that both traditions emerged from distinct historical, cultural, and religious contexts. Yet they **share** a fundamental awareness: the soul drives life, defines human identity, and enables moral and intellectual perfection. Aristotle **defined** the soul as the body’s "form" (De Anima), possessing potentiality and actuality. Ibn Rushd **adopted** but **critiqued** Aristotle’s framework, integrating Islamic theology to affirm the soul’s survival after death.

Both thinkers **emphasize** a crucial commonality: the rational soul distinguishes humans from other beings. They **agree**that supreme happiness comes from perfecting the intellect. Aristotle **focused** on intellectual actualization within virtue ethics. Ibn Rushd **expanded**this, declaring true knowledge an act of worship that draws humans closer to God. Here, classical and Islamic philosophy **achieve** harmony—both center on reason, but Islam adds transcendental meaning absent in ancient Greek thought.

This research **contributes** to comparative philosophy by mapping epistemological continuity between Greek and medieval Islamic traditions. We **demonstrate** that Islamic philosophy did not merely translate or repeat Greek ideas. It **acted**as a creative developer, expanding soul metaphysics with theological values. Thus, our work **enriches**cross-cultural and cross-era discourse. It **underscores** knowledge transfer as a dialogic process of mutual enrichment—not passive adaptation.

**Bibliografi**

Abdoli Mehrjardi, H. R., & Rahimpour, F. (2022). A comparative study of casual relation of mind and body from the perspective of Mulla Sadra and Foster. Philosophical Meditations, 12(28), 201–221. <https://doi.org/10.30470/phm.2021.529165.1979>

Āštīyānī, S.-J. (2002). Šarḥ bar zād-al-musāfir. Būstan-i Kitāb. (In Persian & Arabic). <https://noorlib.ir/book/info/1875>

Aristotle. (1980). On the soul, followed by natural opinions attributed to Plutarch, the senses and the sensed by Ibn Rushd, and plants by Aristotle (ʿA. Al-Badvī, Ed.). Dār-al-Qalam. (In Arabic). <https://www.noorshop.ir/fa/book/1728>

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. (1985). Al-nafs va quvāhā (M. Ṣ. Ḥ. Maʿṣūmī, Ed.). Bīnā. (In Arabic).

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. (n.d.-a). Al-Mabāḥiṯ al-Mašriqīya. Bīdār. (In Arabic).

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. (n.d.-b). Al-Muḥaṣṣil (Ḥ. Atāy, Ed.). Bīdār. (In Arabic).

Ibn ʿArabī, M. (n.d.). Al-futūḥāt al-Makkīya. Dār-al-Ṣādir. (In Arabic). <https://noorlib.ir/book/info/36717>

Ibn Sīnā, Ḥ. (1984). Al-taʿlīqāt (ʿA. Badvī, Ed.). Maktab-al-Aʿlām Al-Islāmī. (In Arabic). <https://noorlib.ir/book/info/1751>

Ibn Sīnā, Ḥ. (1985). Al-šifā (Al-ṭabīʿīyāt) (I. Bīyūmī Madkūr, Ed.). Public Library of Āyat Allāh Marʿašī Naǧafī. (In Arabic). <https://noorlib.ir/book/info/1738>

Ibn Sīnā, Ḥ. (1992). Risāla fī maʿrifat al-nafs al-nāṭiqa wa aḥwālihā (A. Al-Ahvānī, Ed.). Dār-al-Iḥyā al-Kitāb al-ʿArabīya. (In Arabic). <https://noorlib.ir/book/view/01871>

Ibn Sīnā, Ḥ. (1996). Al-nafs min kitāb al-šifā (Ḥ. Ḥasanzādi Āmulī, Ed.). Maktab-al-Aʿlām Al-Islāmī. (In Arabic). <https://noorlib.ir/book/info/10588>

Ibn Sīnā, Ḥ. (2000). Al-Najāt (M. T. Dānīšpaĵūh, Ed.). University of Tehran. (In Arabic). <https://noorlib.ir/book/view/1765>

Javādī Amulī, ʿA. (2019). Raḥīq-i maḫtūm (Vol. 31). Isrāʾ. (In Persian). https://ketabja.ir/product/%d8%b1%d8%ad%db%8c%d9%82%d9%85%d8%ae%d8%aa%d9%88%d 9%85- %d8%ac%d9%84%d8%af-31

Miṣbāḥ Yazdī, M.-T. (2014). Commentary on the eighth volume of Al-Asfār al-arbaʿa, part one (2nd ed.). Imam Khomeini Educational Research Institute. (In Persian).

Plato. (2001). Collection of Plato's works (M. Loṭfī & R. Kāvīānī, Trans.). Ḫārazmī. (In Persian). <https://opac.nlai.ir/opac-prod/search/briefListSearch.do?command=FULL_VIEW&id=894758>

Ṣadr-al-Mutaʾallihīn, M. (1989). Al-ḥikmat al-mutaʿālīya fī al-asfār al-ʿaqliyyat al-arbaʿa (Vols. 7–8). Maktabat-al-Muṣṭafavī. (In Arabic).

Ṣadr-al-Mutaʾallihīn, M. (2006). The collection of philosophical treatises of Ṣadr-al-Mutaʾallihīn (Ḥ. Nāji Iṣfahānī, Ed.). Ḥikmat. (In Persian).

Shariati, F., & Khoshnevis, Y. (2020). The emergent dualism and the bodily ḥudūth of the soul: A comparative study. Philosophical Meditations, 42(01), 289–313. <https://doi.org/10.30470/phm.2019.103474.1563>

Ṭabāṭabāʾī, S. M. Ḥ. (1996). Al-mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān. Dār-al-aʾlamī lil-Maṭbūʿāt. (In Arabic).

Ṭabāṭabāʾī, S. M. Ḥ. (n.d.). A commentary on Biḥār al-Anwār. Dār-al-Kitāb al-Islāmīya. (In Persian).

Ṭūsī, N. (2007). Šarḥ al-išārāt wa al-tanbīhāt (Ḥ. Ḥasanzādi Āmulī, Ed.). Būstan-i Kitāb. (In Arabic). <https://noorlib.ir/book/info/13963>