

Communication

Trans-Substantial Motion and Man's Evolution in Mulla Sadra's Philosophy

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Abstract: The above subject is considered in Islam and Islamic thought, especially in Islamic philosophy and wisdom. We can find theories of it in Transcendent wisdom of Islam by Mulla Sadra Shirazi. He himself has a theory called Trans- substantial motion, which we try to provide and explain it here. First, we give a short account of the properties and principles of Mulla Sadra's philosophy.

Keywords: Islamic philosophy; Transcendent wisdom; Trans- substantial motion; Mulla Sadra's philosophy.

Why are we here? This is one of the most important questions for the man, because by giving answer to this question, man can understand his/her goal of life and role in the material world and the importance of this external universe. For doing this, we must understand the nature of man and the material world. About man, it is necessary to know his/her quiddity and existential dimensions, and his/her relationship to other beings such as the world and its beings. Moreover, we have to recognize the role of man in the material world. About the material world, we have to understand its properties and role and place in man's life, especially his/her evolution. Also it must be considered that man is the only being who has two different dimensions that include body and soul. The property of body is similar to and probably the same as matter, which closer to the material world. But man's soul is an immaterial and spiritual thing that is placed opposite to body and matter. Therefore, man is an excellent being in the material world because of his/her spiritual and material properties and dimensions. Then man, contrary to other beings in itself has unique properties that include origin, mundane life, resurrection and final goal of man. Man has birth, life, death, and aims for himself. But all these

properties, especially man's evolution, are on the basis of living in the material world. It means that, the material world is the only base and background of man's evolution, through its utilization man can reach him/her spiritual aim.

Mulla Sadra (1571-1642) is the founder of the Transcendent philosophy (wisdom) and one of the greatest philosophers in Islamic world; all beings have a special place for themselves in his philosophical system, and proper philosophical explanations. Therefore, they play a special role in Mulla Sadra's philosophical system. Thus Mulla Sadra, in his thought, relies much upon thoughts of peripatetic, illuminative, theological, mystical and also Islamic teachings. He synthesizes an intuition with demonstration, and then both of them with experimental and polemic wisdom and so represents his own school of thought under the title of the *Transcendent Philosophy*. Consequently, he can provide a coherent transcendent philosophy in a reasonable framework so that he may produce an explanation of structure of the material World. This is important when Mulla Sadra's system is carefully studied in its ontological, epistemological, cosmological, anthropological, eschatological and theological frameworks.

Hence there are some more prominent principles that have special properties such as 1- the principality of existence, 2-the gradation of existence, 3-the unity between intelligent and intelligible, 4-the universe temporal creation, 5-the soul corporeal creation and its incorporeal permanence, 6-the principle of unity in plurality, 7-the principle of ultimate in world system, 8-the corporeal resurrection, 9-trans-substantial motion, etc, that all of them are connected with together such as a chain, and they generally show a coherent and completely rational organization.

In this project, from a philosophical and anthropological viewpoint, that is, the main thrust of this article, Mulla Sadra has some new thoughts which can explain some principles of natural sciences about man. These principles are the principle of trans-substantial motion, the principle of temporal creation of universe, the principle of soul corporeal creation of man, the principle of soul incorporeal permanence and the principle of continual creation in the material world. These principles together provide theoretical and practical frameworks which draw the line of creation, life and its ultimate, and the end of man.

In the other words, on the basis of the above principles, we can explain and demonstrate the hypothesis that the origin and resurrection of man's life is based on the trans-substantial motion. In fact, in this opinion we can explain creation and mundane life of man, and finally his/her motion to future world only in the light of

trans- substantial motion and also other principles such as the corporeal resurrection of man. The importance of man's creation and his/her spiritual subsistence and corporeal creation lies in his/her life in this world and his/her complete motion on the basis of his/her acquired abilities in the material world.

Therefore, the principle of trans-substantial motion indicates that although man has two dimensions, material and spiritual, and spiritual dimension is prior to the material, but the material world is only background of his/her growth and only way for passing to the spiritual world; it shows that the material world is prior to the spiritual world from view of temporal and linear. And because man is a being who moves towards spiritual perfection, this perfection is possible only in corporeal world only on the basis of the trans-substantial motion.

So, the trans-substantial motion is the basis of man's perfection from the beginning of creation in this world to enter to the other world. This article tries to shed light on this subject.

What is the nature of man? Knowledge of man's nature has a special place and role in the structure of Sadra's transcendent philosophy. Anthropology is the recognition of man's reality and truth in an extent and general concept that it is done by sciences and knowledge with several methods, and ends. In Mulla Sadra's philosophy, anthropology is considered from the viewpoint of theology, physics, mysticism and religious teachings, in which Mulla Sadra's attention is more focused on man from the viewpoint of natural and divine science. Although man's mystical tendency has also a special property for himself.

In this viewpoint, man is a bearer of divine honesty and trust, and God calls him/her as the aim of creation and its ultimate cause, and Islam has called him as vicegerent of Allah(God) (*khalifa tullah*). Mulla Sadra also has this point in mind, but he doesn't consider man as the noblest of creatures in the sense that the ancient thinkers did. He asks: how will man be the noblest of creatures? While the most of men are imperfect, and even, *perfect man*, has not understood the whole of perfection.

So, man is imperfect in every situation, and he/she doesn't have possible ability to attain that perfection, to become more complete (Mulla Sadra, 2002, A, p 210-211). But at the same time, Mulla Sadra considers only perfect man as the worthy vicegerent of God. Therefore he deems it necessary to know the nature of man's soul, his/her final perfection and faculties for reaching Allah (God).

Mulla Sadra in viewpoint of the mystics, in which man is microcosm(*a'lame saghir*) and manifestation of Allah's name, maintains that man formally is microcosm but in fact and reality, he/she is macrocosm(*a'lame kabir*) and the fruit of existence tree.

In this case, although man formally is placed in the last range of creation, but in fact, he is the first creature, because the aim of man creation is to demonstrate the divine attributes and acts, and man is manifestation of this demonstration (Goharin, 1987, p 116).

On the other hand, Mulla Sadra focuses on the importance of knowledge of man's soul, because in his viewpoint the reality of man is his intellectual soul, and recognition of God that depends on recognition of man's soul. So far as, Mulla Sadra says if any body knows his/her soul, he/she can know the world, he/she can recognize and observe his/her God, because God is the creator the earth and heavens, (Mulla sadrs, 1984, p 245) and Mulla Sadra thoughts that, all the terrestrial faculties, and herbaceous and animal effects are collected in the substance of man. This is the first rank of human ranks which is common among all human beings. Man has stages and ranks in his/her mundane life, including: stage of embryo, stage of actual growth and a potential animal. Man, after his/her birth until formal maturity, is actually animal and potential man, and after maturity, is became actually man and potential archangel, and the age of forty is the first and starting stage of his/her spiritual maturity (Mulla sadrs, 1996, p 11).

In the viewpoint of mulla sadra, because of the same properties, man is the owner of abstract soul, in which man has properties such as formal speech, perceptual faculties and conception of intellectual meanings. Consequently, there is, in man's soul, a characteristic of evolution and abstraction that is higher than other animals and this character is a medium between its corporeal and intellectual aspects, and this soul, although has common characters with acts of growth and animal but it is able to conceive universals, that can't call reason the highest its grade. The reason both has epistemic and voluntary and ethical aspects, from epistemic aspect, man has faculties of recognition of universals and abstracts, and he/she, from voluntary and ethical aspects, is the origin of freedom and can freely make a decision, while this property is not in any existent. Consequently, mulla sadra in the book of *Asrarol Ayat* writes because existence of reason ability and faculty is that man has been worthy of place of divine success or, and the highest character for man is the same as reason and science and wisdom, which is placed him/her as higher than all

archangels. Then, the ability of reason and wisdom is the end of man being and his/her creation (Mulla sadra, 1984, p 254).

Therefore, man in mulla sadra's thought has more characteristics that we can consider them from philosophical, mystical, religious and natural aspects. But what is that common in this approach, it is that man is composed of two material and spiritual realities. That is, any way man is a two dimensional being and each of these dimensions forms the basis of his/her reality. His/her material and corporeal dimensions conforms his/her mundane life, and spiritual dimension builds his/her intellectual. So the reality of man is the same as body and soul that is interpreted as higher rank of soul toward reason.

As a result, the nature of man is not only body or soul, but also composition and unity between them. That is, on the contrary of other beings, specially animals in which also soul exists, man's nature is the result of unity and cooperation between body and soul, with the difference that soul, in man, moves towards spiritual perfection and complete solitude, and soul, for moving, uses body and this is because of final and meaning of man that is called perfect man in mystical explanation.

Afterwards, in Mulla sadra's thought, man is like a prism whose every surface shows one of his/her characteristics. Man in the religious and mystical viewpoint, is the Allah successor on the earth and a divine existence, and he/she, in ethical viewpoint, has freedom and is the owner of free reason, and finally, in philosophical viewpoint is a being with two realities of matter and soul, and this is the result of unity between them in the natural world, while his/her final is beyond the natural world. Nevertheless, function of explanation how man going out from nature and enter to the spiritual world is on the basis of the trans-substantial motion.

Trans-substantial motion and its properties. Before presentation of the theory of trans-substantial motion by Mulla Sadra, some philosophers, such as Aristotle, Farabi, Ibn Sina, Sohrawardi and Mirdamad considered motion only in some accidents. Namely, they believed that motion exists in some categories like quantity, quality, place and position, and so they maintained that motion and change in substances are impossible.

Aristotle was the first philosopher who criticized the definition given by ancient sages and, in his definition he completely took the opposite route. Following

Aristotle, Ibn Sina and most Muslim philosophers excluded terms such as gradual and time from their definitions to support that of Aristotle. They said that neither gradual nor time should be used in the definition of motion, since the meaning of gradual entails the meaning of time, and time itself is the measure of motion and is defined in terms of motion. They maintained that in defining of motion in terms of time and time in terms of motion one enters in a vicious circle. Aristotle defined motion in this way: motion is the first perfection for those existents that have the potential for gaining perfections other than what they already possess. For example, the child has the actuality of childhood and the potentiality to become a youth, sage, scholar, etc., and can gain these perfections through motion; therefore, his/her primary perfection is motion and the attainable ones are his/her secondary perfections. Hence, the perfections of existents are divided into primary and secondary ones. Compared to motion, all perfections are secondary and motion is primary. However, there is only one existent in the world that is actually perfect in all aspects, and free from potentiality for perfection, and it is nothing unless the essence of the truth. Even the intellects and abstract souls have matter and potentiality in a general sense, and the limit of their quiddity and essential contingency is their very matter and potentiality.

Ibn Sina in the book of *Alshifa*, by reference to doubt of lack of permanence subject while occurrence motion in substance, clearly denied trans-substantial motion. In fact, in his thought for occurrence motion in substance must be permanent thing until motion occurs in its attributes (Ibn sina, 1997, p 187-191). The basic point in Ibn sina's theory for denying motion in substance is that he considers moments as temporal non-extended moments such as distances in which distances, Giver of forms grants by proving preliminaries forms of substantial. So in his belief the man's creation is not in the way that are made several forms of sperm, embryo, fetus and etc as an extended and permanent motion in the external world. But it is in this way that special quantitative and qualitative motions of matter accepts a form, and is in this moment that ability of acceptance is received to own perfection point, which Giver of forms diffuse it. Then motion is not in substance because substantial forms are not products of motion, but they are creature by will of the creator out of the natural world (Akbarian, 2000, p 16).

This Ibn sina's thought, that is influenced by Aristotle with composition of metaphysical attitude, exists in philosophers after Ibn sina with little changes, that its another basis, is Aristotle's definition of motion, in which motion is first perfection for thing with the same respect that it is a thing. That is, motion is put in

practice of moveable thing as moveable. The cause of gaining this proper is in contact with a thing that can move, so that motive is influenced by this (Aristotle, 1995, vol. 2 1072a21 and 1073a29).

While in Mulla sadra's philosophy is changed the meaning and nature of Ibn sina's and Aristotle's motion characteristics, that is, in it, Ibn sina's creation and corruption and changing is changed to gradual changing of substance. In fact, Mulla sadra's opinion about motion consists of gradual or acquisition creation and gradual going out from potential to actual, that this gradual motion is in existence of material thing not in its quiddity. Then the meaning of trans-substantial motion is the same as creation in which motive is a thing that its substance is flowing and mobility and instability. So on the basis of the trans-substantial motion, motion and moving are the same in the external world, and mobile and passing are necessary for existence of moving (Mulla sadra, 1999, vol.3, p 85-86).

Therefore, we can say that in Mulla sadra's viewpoint, unlike ancients, motion is not accidental toward a thing, but it, in material beings, is an essential and fundamental part of them. That is, there are no material existence that essentially be fixed and without motion. But fundamentally, materiality is the same as be moving, and so, creation of things by God is the same as creation of motion in them. That is, creating of moving is like the creating of motion and mobile, which does not mean that motion needs another cause and agent. Because motion is essential for moving, and moving doesn't have any identity without motion, so, creation of the existence of moving is the same as creation of its motion.

Hence, we can conclude that in Mulla sadra's opinion motion and flux is not opposite of existence, but motion and becoming itself is a kind of existence and being. That is, because motion exists in essence of a thing, it is not provable and deniable, although only spatial and local motion has such properties. Then motion is a secondary intelligible of philosophical not a quiddity concept, so in fact issue of motion is a metaphysical issue not natural, although it has some natural characters.

In the other hand, Mulla sadra thinks that because motion of a thing is the same as its existence, then motion in substance of a thing doesn't need external subject. Since anything itself is another thing in last and later moment, and also mover, in this motion, is like moving and is not other identity for it. Consequently we can say, trans-substantial motion indicates property of a thing existence which is flux and mobile, and it is also a rank of ranks of existential reality. Because reality of

existence has two ranks, the first is rank of fixed and permanence existence, the second is rank of flux and mobile existence, that motion is a property of flux existence and it is necessary and indispensable and inseparable of it. While, motion in accidents such as quantity, quality and so on are non-essential, and have fixed subject, that motions happen on it, like change of things color or change of their position or change of parts of a set towards each other.

Mulla Sadra's arguments for proving the trans-substantial motion is based on the idea that the existence of an object comprises its whole and that quiddity is a non-factual entity. By accepting the principality of existence, flux is became a mode of existence, and the way of mobile beings coming into existence, which is nothing unless their being, is conceived in a gradual and mobile manner. The question that in the trans-substantial motion what is became is the object itself is a question arisen from the principality of the quiddity approach. According to the principality of existence, the existence of an object is the object itself and motion is the mode of existence. Nevertheless, in the theory of trans-substantial motion, the object itself is the very mobile existence and not something which motion is in it.

Mulla sadra presents several arguments for demonstrating the trans-substantial motion, he shows this subjects, by making uses of motion in accidents and also to survey the nature of time. In mulla sadra's view accident existence, is not independent and itself existence, but accident is a rank of substance existence ranks because accidents don't have any essential independence for themselves, and they only indicate dignity of itself substance existential.

Hence, there is a causal relation in all changes, that is, changing in accidents must have had a cause, and this cause also must be the same as substance, because substance is the cause of accident. Then, substance is the origin of any changing or motion in accident. Now, with observation of several motions in accidents and knowing that the cause of the motions are their substance, we can conclude that existence of motion in accidents is indicated existence of motion in their cause, that is, there is their substance, so, the trans-substantial motion is a real thing (Mulla sadra, 1999, vol.3, p 86-87). Therefore, in Mulla Sadra,s thought, also, with regard the nature of Time, we can aware of motion reality in substance of material thing, Since, in this opinion, Time is the fourth dimension of body that it is essential for every material thing. It means, materiality is connected and attached to temporality, and so, things temporality is the sign of a kind of dimension in their existence in duration of time, and it indicates a deep and substantial motion in their essence. Because, Time itself, is a mobility and instability thing, that its essentiality toward

material things is indicated existence of flux and moving thing in the essence of material things. In other word, reality of time, as dimension of passing and changeable of corporeal beings, shows that motion exists in substance of material things. On this basis, Mulla Sadra considers every material existing as a temporal being and with temporal dimension, means, it has trans-substantial motion. Then, the time, which interferes in temporal phenomenon, is the same as time of trans-substantial motion, and the lack of trans-substantial motion is the same as lack of time, therefore, in this opinion, material world, with all own beings, has fundamental and substantial motion that this motion is the same as world identity.(Mulla Sadra, 1999,vol.3,p. 87).

In addition to the arguments, mulla sadra has another argument that is closer to the first argument. He, in this proof, shows that accidents are caused by forms of species, because their cause is not an abstract thing, and accidents cause, that is forms of species that must be changeable because of existence of quantity and quality changing in accidents. Since the cause of a changeable thing must be a changeable thing, then accidents, that are moving and changeable thing, their substance, that is the same as their forms of species, must be changeable, and this indicates that trans-substantial motion exists in all material things. But at the same time, trans-substantial motion in a thing or body is not in the way that it to bring out some properties and to wear some others, it means, it is not this way that body lose the property which has, and acquires a new property. But, it is wearing after wearing, that, in it, a thing with having a last property, receives a new property that every last form is a matter and background for later form, and this shows evolutionary nature of trans-substantial motion in body.

With considering above points about the trans-substantial motion, some affairs is cleared: firstly, the trans-substantial motion only progresses in all material things and it doesn't progress in abstracts, then the material world, that is the world of material things and man because of existence of material reality in them, are the basic subject of trans-substantial motion. Secondly, trans-substantial motion for every material thing is the same as its essence and entity not accidental property for it, that it be possible to negate it. Then trans-substantial motion is essential for the material world, man and other beings such as plants and animals, and also it is the same as their identity. Thirdly, because of essentiality of time toward material being, in which existence of material being is circulated in time, then trans-substantial motion, in material things, is a circulation motion in time that shows property of temporal entity of things that this is another explanation of continual

and new creation. Fourthly, the existence of evolutionary motion in the substances of material existing must draw their origin and resurrection, that Mulla sadra mentions to temporal creation of world, corporeal creation of soul and its spiritual subsistence, solitude of natural world in final of its evolutionary motion, and corporeal resurrection of man, that we explain these subjects, with axis of man.

Conclusions

To conclude, man is a being who has two fundamental dimensions by itself, namely body and soul: soul and body are temporal creatures. Therefore, man is a temporal and corporeal creature. His/her soul is created by evolutionary motion in corporeal body, and by it travels in his/her evolution way. Then, man essentially is a material and temporal being, and his/her mundane life is possible only in the light of matter and time, and his/her perfection is possible only by the trans-substantial motion. Then man's soul, that first has material properties, can continue to his/her motion evolutionary; only by the trans-substantial motion in own essence to reach to perfect abstraction. In the other word, man creation and his/her life continual and finally his/her passing to future world is possible only by evolutionary motion of substantial in the material world. That this shows that the material world is prior to the intellectual world for man, that this subject is emphasized in religious and ethical texts. As man is born in the earthly world, his/her future happiness is only by his/her finality acting in the material world. In fact, from this viewpoint is blamed monastic and retiring of world. Then this subject shows that there is a relation in length and gradation between the material world and the future world. Namely, in the system of existence, the material world and the future world are not during each other, in which man can choose one of them. But they are in length each other. So man, for acquiring of future happiness, must pass the material world, because it is first passing to the future world. In the other hand, the application of the trans-substantial motion on man's life and world indicates that man's life has aim, which he/she with having of this aim and with using of the trans-substantial motion can reach to the future world and his/her goal.

Certainly, it must be said that researching on this subject is almost a philosophical and rational issue, while Science seeks to gain more insight into the structure of an object, for example, whether it is simple or complex, and what the conditions of its transformation and change into another object are. But science doesn't tell us what motion is and how the existence of something should be in order to be moveable

because it is the right and task of philosophy to speak positively or negatively in this regard.

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