Creativity of Spirit in Philosophical System of Mulla Sadra

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ABSTRACT: Imagination and creativity as a higher cognitive function, is of a great importance in today’s world. Sustainability of communities and the development of human culture Depends on the imagination and creativity of the people. Educational system should provide the infrastructure necessary for the imagination and creativity, as a gift from God is a full set to all mankind. The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of imagination and creativity of soul in scope of the philosophy of Mulla Sadra Shirazi. Mulla Sadra looks to human and imagination from special perspective Among Islamic philosophers, Mulla Sadra, the founder of transcendent philosophy, has many ideas that can be translated into educational implications for the development of imagination. To achieve this important in the study used of Analytical and deductive methods.

Keywords: Creativity, Philosophy, Spirit, Mulla Sadra

INTRODUCTION

The soul has been the subject of great controversy since the dawn of civilization. This is because its existence has been questioned in many periods during history especially among philosophers. Studying the works of some scholars from Ionia which is the birth place of Greek philosophy and also the view of some philosophers such as Anaximenes, Heraclitus and Anaxagoras about the soul shows the extent to which the issues of the soul have caused diversity of opinions (Copleston, 1983).

Another is Mulla Sadra’s theory. His view on the soul-body relation is quite different from that of any other philosopher. Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi, known as Mulla Sadra (Anawati, 2002) was one of the most profound and influential philosophers in the history of Islamic philosophy among such well-known names as Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Ibn Rushd (Averroes). He presented an innovative theory on this subject, proving that although man’s soul ultimately becomes immaterial in its particular course of development, it is corporeal at the outset of its creation, and is born from the body. He says: “The soul is bodily in its origination, spiritual in its subsistence (jismānīyya al-ḥudūṭ ruhānīyya al-baqā)”(Sadra, 2003).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present experiment has been conducted in research field/farm in Tehran University. To achieve purpose in the study used of Analytical and deductive methods. The current study is included among the qualitative studies. Qualitative research is a type of scientific research. In general terms, scientific research consists of an investigation that:
• seeks answers to a question
• Systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the question
• collects evidence
• produces findings that were not determined in advance
• produces findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study

The aim of this study is to find an answer for the below main question: “What is the quality of the process of human’s creativity in the view of Mulla Sadra?” To achieve the answer in this research, utilizing Mulla Sadra’s well-known theories the human’s creativity is being explored.

Theory of Substantial Motion

Defending the theory of substantial motion, Mulla Sadra successfully challenges the earlier philosophers’ belief in this regard and provides some arguments to prove the theory. From his point of view, the entire world of nature is in continual change and motion, and there is no fixed corporeal substance. This theory has had considerable results in metaphysical discussions.
Mulla Sadra refers to some of the sources of his theory of substantial motion that are mentioned here.

A. The Quran and Prophetic traditions

Introducing the Quran and traditions as his main and most important sources, Mulla Sadra says, “The essences of all material, celestial, elemental bodies and souls are renewing, and they have fluid existence. This issue has become clear to me by meditating on the verses of the holy Quran” (Sadra, 1990).

B. Uthulugia

Mulla Sadra states that earlier philosophers and mystics have believed in the theory of substantial motion and discussed it in their books. He then refers to two paragraphs from Plotinus’ Uthulugia, which, according to his viewpoint, express the aforementioned theory. The first paragraph is as follows: “Every body, whether it is composite or non-composite, and even if it has no soul or spirit, is not stable, for the body by nature is flowing constantly. If all bodies of the world have no soul, then they will be demolished” (Sadra, 1990).

C) Zeno

Quoting Shahrestani’s Melal va Nehal, Mulla Sadra mentions the following passage which he believes is a proof for substantial motion.

D) Muhyi al-Din Ibn ‘Arabi

In many cases Mulla Sadra has quoted Ibn ‘Arabi about the discussion of substantial motion. For example, he writes:

Confirming our view about substantial motion are Ibn ‘Arabi’s words in Fusus al-Hikam, saying, “One of the wonders of the world is that man is continuously developing but because of the delicate veil and the similarity of forms is unaware of it. As God says, ‘They were given something resembling it’” (2:25). In Futuhat, he says that all beings are in continual motion in this world and in the Hereafter, because creation without a creator is impossible. The Essence of Truth continuously owns infinite words and attentions and God’s words that ‘what is with God shall endure’ (16:96) points to the eternity of God’s intellectual words, which are eternal because of His eternity, although their bodily idols are infinite and perishable.’ (Sadra, 1990)

The Philosophical Results of the Theory of Substantial Motion

Mulla Sadra and his followers come to important conclusions from the theory of substantial motion in discussions of cosmology and psychology. One of them are as follows:

Continual Creation

Muslim thinkers have interpreted the theory of “Continual Creation” in different ways. The atomist theory of Ash’ari theologians is one example of its intellectual interpretation. Another example is the renewal of existence (tajaddod-e amthal) of mystics. The theory of substantial motion is a philosophical interpretation of the theory of continual creation.

According to what Mulla Sadra has claimed in this regard every being in this world is essentially contingent, but its contingency is by virtue of need, i.e., existential dependence; on this basis it is nonexistent by itself. Mulla Sadra considers worldly beings as dependent whose existence is their very dependence and if their dependence to their cause is cut for a moment, they will instantly perish due to their essential and existential need.

On the other hand, since according to the theory of substantial motion every material being is changing and renewing in its substance and its existence in every moment is different from that of the previous moment, God the Exalted endows a new existence every moment and His will is always in the process of a new creation.

In the common point of these two questions, existential need of all things and God’s continual emanation, the meaning of “New Creation” or “Continual Creation” emerges. The identity of the world in its essence and in every moment clearly shows its dependency. It shows that not only in appearance and exterior but also in its existence and identity the world is in a state of flux. Indeed the existence of the world is nothing but dependence. Mulla Sadra quotes this holy verse of the Quran to confirm his view: “Every day He is engaged in some work” (55:29) (Sadra, 1990).

A perspective of trans-substantial motion and creativity

Sadra believed that there is motion in substance. It was previously thought that substance has three dimensions, but we know that because of time, it has a flowing dimension too, so it must be assumed that substance has four dimensions: three permanent dimensions and a flowing dimension (sadra, 1981, p289). The
The problem is that it is difficult to imagine a four-dimensional body; we can easily imagine a three-dimensional body, but we have no sense of the fourth dimension and it is not easy to comprehend it. Therefore we are not able to understand motion in substance by our normal sense since we are not able to realize the reality of time (fourth dimension) we simply do not have any cognition of it. We will try to provide a correct image of the fourth dimension with an example (Raker, 1995). Assume that there is an existent which can only comprehend two dimensions. It is not able to comprehend a three-dimensional object, in the same way that we cannot understand a fourth dimension. However, because we are able to understand the third dimension of bodies, then we will be able to compare ourselves with this existent, which will make it easier for us to understand the fourth dimension which is a flowing dimension.

Imagine that there is an existence, which we call the eye, which is living in an infinite two dimensional world (a page) and it is not able to comprehend more than two dimensions. It can understand what occurs on the page but is not able to feel the perpendicular dimension. It has no comprehension of what is above and below itself; in its vision the whole world is the page and what the page includes. This is like us when we can only understand three dimensional things and have no comprehension of the fourth dimension.

Now suppose there is a prism (manshūr) above the page which starts to come down towards the page. Before the prism touches the page (picture 1), what is the eye’s perception of the situation? He will say there is nothing there as there is nothing on the page. The prism comes closer and closer and at a precise time, we will say 8 o’clock for example, comes into contact with the page. Clearly, the prism appears on the page as a triangle. Now how does the eye perceive it? He sees that a triangle was created in the world at 8 o’clock (his world). Again suppose after five minutes the prism passes from the page. Now what is the eye’s perception? His understands that a triangle was created at 8 o’clock and existed for five minute and then became nothing.

However, as we are able to comprehend three dimensions, we firstly remind the eye that there was no triangle; secondly, we suppose it was right and a triangle was created at 8 o’clock, but the eye thought this was a stable triangle that existed for five minutes and then became nothing. This is wrong because it was seeing a new triangle at each moment which was not there before and after its time; thirdly these triangles were not separate from each other; they were continuous. In fact they were hypothetical parts of a flowing two dimensional thing, that is a thing that has two stable dimensions and a flowing dimension and its flowing dimension appeared as a triangle to the eye that existed at the first moment then became nothing and the next one came and replaced it and then the third triangle came and replaced the second and
so on, and after five minutes the last triangle became nothing. We tell the eye that because it was not able to realize the third dimension of this prism, it saw a triangle that became nothing and then another one replaced it (Ubūdīyyat, 2005).

According to Sadra, because we are only able to realize three dimensions, we are seeing a four-dimensional body (jism) - three stable dimensions and a flowing dimension - as a stable, three-dimensional body. Sadra tells us what we told the eye that could see only two dimensions. We said to the eye that there was not a stable triangle, rather, in each time-instant the triangle was changed and replaced with another one. Similarly, Sadra says that a pen that is on table, for example, is not a stable thing. The pen in each time-instant will be renewed with another pen on the table because it has a flowing dimension. All the pens are related to each other and in fact, all of these pens are hypothetical parts of a four dimensional pen which exist throughout all of its time. Sadra states that, there is a four-dimensional pen and we can only comprehend one part of it in each moment and the whole of it exists in the whole of its being. There is actually a whole in the external world, but because of our limitation we cannot comprehend its fourth dimension so we can only comprehend a part of it at each instant.

Sadra begins by claiming that in the natural world there is no permanence and that all material bodies have motion in their substance and their accidents follow the substances in their motion. He says it is impossible for the substance of a thing to change and its features to remain stable.

Sadra divides all creatures into two groups, stable and flowing. By flowing he means the natural world and by stable he means immaterial being. Then in the next step he says that if the natural world is seen from the immaterial view then it can be understood that there is no fluidity, and everything we think is flowing, is not flowing but stable (sadara, 2002).

Imagination World and creativity

The “imagination world” one of the most fascinating of Sadra’s concepts— is the third world that exists in addition to the world of material bodies and the world of intellects. In addition to extended forms and shapes of objects individuated by their matter, there can arise, Sadra says:

By mere volition… imagination forms subsisting in no place, through the imagination power which is separate from this world….Those forms do not subsist in the body of the brain, nor in the heavenly bodies, as some people have maintained, nor in a world of phantasmal images subsisting apart from the soul. Rather they subsist through the soul and exist in the domain of the soul….Although now the being of these forms is weak, they are capable of becoming concrete particulars existing with a being even stronger than the being of material forms (sadra, 1981).

The imaginal power of a man is not dependent on the body and remains despite the decline and failure of this (bodily) frame. The unsoundness and passing away (of the body) do not pertain to its essence and its perceptions,…

After death it may conceive its essence as a man having the shape and dimensions of the form which he had in the world; and its (imaginal) body may be conceived as dead and buried (Ibid, p159).

The imagination world does not exist “outside” the subject but it is not an interior delusion either. The essence of the good man after death is not absorbed into a totality; it creates the totality in which it is situated thereafter:
None of the things that a man sees and directly witnesses in the other world—whether they be the blessings of Paradise, such as …palaces, gardens, trees and streams…or the opposite sorts of punishment that are in Hell- - are outside the essence of the soul and separate form the soul’s being… No one should ask concerning the place and position of these forms, whether they are inside this world or outside it…. The wellspring of all that a man attains and is required with in the other world—whether it be good or evil, Paradise or Hell—is solely in his own essence, in such things as his intentions, thoughts, beliefs, and traits of character.

CONCLUSION

In the works of this philosopher, Beauty and creativity in general means possessing all the good properties. The special definition of beauty and creativity, which includes only sensible objects, is possessing the factors of order, good combination, moderation, and so on. According Mulla Sadra's viewpoint the origin of beauty is absolute beautiful, although their interpretations are different. Creating pleasure and love and wonder are some of the consequences of beauty on the recipient soul. According to him, beauty is an objective thing, although it may have a stable existence in conception. According to Mulla Sadra, some of the origins of art are manifestation of some of God's names, inclination to beauty, love of beauty, revelation, relation with transcendental world, imitative image and so on. Imitative image is According to Mulla Sadra, imagination is the first origin of the work of art. Mulla Sadra believes in the imaginary world to which people relate through sleep.
and mystics through divine inspiration. People and mystics can realize what they have observed in that world into art and create works of art. This Muslim philosopher has also discussed poetry as a kind of work of art.

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