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PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENTS FOR BODILY RESURRECTION: Reconsidering Mullâ Shadrâ's Eschatological Thought

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Abstrak: Argumen Filosofis Kebangkitan Jasmani: Mengkaji Ulang Pemikiran Eskatologi Mullâ Shadrâ. Selain meneliti tentang makna kematian, hakikat ruh, bukti adanya kehidupan setelah mati, eskatologi juga mengkaji tentang kebangkitan ruh dan jasmani. Berkenaan dengan ruh, hampir seluruh filosof Muslim menyepakati tentang adanya kebangkitan ruh. Sementara terkait dengan jasmani, sebagian filosof mengatakan akan dibangkitkan dan sebagian yang lain berpendapat tidak mungkin dibangkitkan. Berbeda dengan para filosof essensialis sebelumnya, Mullâ Shadrâ yang menganut aliran eksistensialis menyatakan bahwa sebagaimana ruh, jasmani manusia pun akan ikut dibangkitkan di hari kemudian. Shadrâ berargumen melalui pendekatan filsafat eksistensialis yang bertumpu pada prinsip *ḥarakah al-jauhariyah* (*trans-substantial motion*). Melalui pendekatan ini, Shadrâ berhasil membuktikan secara filosofis tentang keharusan kebangkitan ruh dan jasmani secara bersamaan di hari kemudian.

Abstract: Apart from investigating the meaning of death, reality of soul, proof of life after death, eschatology also studies the sole bodily resurrection. With regard to soul, almost all Muslim philosophers agree on soul resurrection, but they differ however, as far as the body is concerned. Different to the previous essentialists philosophers, Mullâ Shadrâ who adhered to existentialist school argued that as the case of soul, man's body itself would be similarly resurrected in the hereafter. Shadrâ supported his argument by existentialist philosophy approach leaned on the principle of trans-substantial motion. Through this approach, Shadrâ succeeded philosophically in proofing the necessity of soul and bodily resurrection simultaneously in the hereafter.

Key Words: eschatology, soul, body, *mabda'*, *ma'ad*, resurrection

Introduction

The issues of eschatology and the afterlife have always generated a great deal of speculation. People speculate on when it will happen, how it is going to be done, how it is going to affect

them, and if such things really will occur or not. This issue is a very important dimension in all religions, especially Islam. According to Islam, human life has no meaning without resurrection. How can there be purpose if people are born, live, and die and are not judged for their deeds? How can there be justice if everybody is treated in the same way?

To believe in the “last day” is a fundamental instrument of Islamic faith. In Islam, human and cosmic histories have an end just as they have a beginning. The word *ma’âd* (“return” or “place of return”) and *mabda’* (“origin” or “place of origin”) are keywords used to talk about the end and the beginning of human life. The concept of *ma’âd* is closely bound to the concept of *mabda’* (“origin” or “place of origin”).¹ The topic of “the origin and the return” covers everything that connects to a human’s effort in achieving his suitable place in creation or reaching his perfection, whether moral, spiritual, or intellectual.²

Unlike the problem of the origin, the problem of the return is much more controversial and has been studied since the early times of Islam. This topic is not only found in the works of Muslim theologians but also in the works of Muslim philosophers. There are several issues that frequently appear in their works such as the meaning of death, the nature of the human soul, the evidence of afterlife, the eschatological process, spiritual resurrection, and bodily resurrection. Of these issues, spiritual resurrection and bodily resurrection are the most studied by Muslim philosophers. Interestingly, all Muslim philosophers agree as to what is called spiritual resurrection.

However, the Muslim philosophers’ agreement on spiritual resurrection was not followed by an agreement on the issue of bodily resurrection. This issue brought to a head a conflict between Islamic speculative theology (*kalâm*) and philosophy. In a broad sense, there are two major points of view about this topic. Firstly, there are those who believe that there is only a spiritual resurrection. Secondly, there are those who affirm that there is a spiritual and bodily resurrection in the world to come. Such a problem needs to be resolved by doing some philosophical investigation on the issue. Mullâ Shadrâ’s philosophical thought is a good source to begin with. There is no doubt that Mullâ Shadrâ has made a great contribution to the development of Islamic philosophy. His inquiries on Islamic philosophy are believed to be the most systematic that have ever existed.

¹The origin and the return are two major issues in Islamic cosmology. On the whole, Islamic cosmology deals with three main issues which are the problem of origin, meaning, and destiny. Cognizance of the origin and the return is the only way to earn the meaning. Cognizance of the origin is built on the proposition “Allah is the origin of all becoming and motion”, while cognizance of destiny is based on the proposition “everything returns to Allah”. For further information on this topic, see Idris Samawi Hamid, *Islam Dynamic: The Cosmology and Spirituality of Walayah* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2008), p. 133.

²William C. Chittick, *Islamic Spirituality Foundations*, edited by Seyyed Hossein Nasr (New York: Crossroad, 1987), p. 378.

The Soul-Body Problem in Shadrâ's Philosophy

The discussions regarding the soul-body problem may be tracked back to the early period of philosophical inquiry.³ Based on historical sources, there were only two well-known theories regarding the soul-body problem. One upheld the theory of dualism, and the other took one of two antagonistic positions: idealism or materialism. Plato and Aristotle were predecessors to these two opposing views which later on became known as the dualistic and monistic views of man.

Plato, and many other ancient philosophers, held a dualist view of soul and body. He considered the soul to be an immaterial reality independent of matter, which existed before the body and joined it when the body was well disposed to receive the soul. In their outlooks, the soul would accompany the body as long as the latter had necessary power. In this theory, the soul is regarded as the essential part, the essence of the self, which constitutes the mental life of the self and survives the dissolution of the body.⁴

Aristotle and his followers considered the soul to be the form of a being that defines or expresses the being's modes of behavior in the public world. In his elucidation of the relation between the soul and body, he argued that the former was related to the latter as was a form to a matter. It is not dualistic, but in fact, the body is also the very instrument of the soul, for matter is merely potency and exists only in so far as it is necessary for the realization of a form, whereas, the soul is inevitably bound up with the body, and can have no life apart from it. In this sense, Aristotle considered the soul and the body as the two united, but separated in substance. For him, the soul can be known only through the functions of the body. Its capacity to receive the soul gives the body its nature and existential constitution, and it becomes a tool by which the soul goes on to act, that is, the soul gives life, actuality, and form to the body and is in fact tied and connected to the body. Without the soul, man's body is lifeless, and man is not man.⁵

Mullâ Shadrâ, however, introduced a third theory. His theory of the soul can be regarded as a kind of synthesis of Plato and Aristotle theories. In his view, despite what

³Concepts of the soul vary from one religious tradition to another, and from one philosophical system to another. In some systems the term is almost synonymous with 'spirit'; in others, the term virtually overlaps with 'mind'. Some thinkers envisage the soul as existing independently of the body; other atheistic or empiricist thinkers reject both the credibility and intelligibility of the notion. Daniel Dennett, a contemporary atheistic philosopher, for instance, argues against philosophers of mind who still believe that human consciousness arises from an immaterial substance like a rational soul. As an atheistic philosopher, Dennett consistently rejects the Cartesian dualistic model which holds that mind is a nonphysical substance. Instead, he proposes the Darwinian materialism model which holds that human are complex machines, and the mind is just the motion of brain cells and neurological processes. To be more details, see Daniel C. Dennett, *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (New York: Viking, 2006), p. 302-306.

⁴Anthony C. Thiselton, *A Concise Encyclopedia of the Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2002), p. 288.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 289.

had been said by Plato, the soul is corporeal when it comes into being. It is as if oozes from the body and then makes a form for itself. Also, contrary to what the Aristotle and peripatetic philosophers believed, the soul is not a stationary and motionless substance, but a substance which is essentially an outcome of motion, and has motion in itself. At the same time, Mullâ Shadrâ accepted the definition of the soul provided by the peripatetic philosophers who define the soul as an immaterial substance, indivisible in its essence, and not of the same kind as material things. In its earthly or temporal plane of existence, the soul originated with the body, and has an essential and natural unity with that body, and cannot be escaped on this existential level. The connection between the soul and its body is similar to the connection between form and matter in that the two are mutually dependent upon each other for their own realization.⁶

The soul, as defining form for the matter of the body, represents the body's final perfection and, Shadrâ says, is like its very "being" (*wujûd*), while the body is the soul's "existence or existention" (*maujûdiyyah*); that is, the body facilitates the soul's individuated and distinct existence apart from the undifferentiated *wujûd* of the Intellect, just as the soul individuates and distinguishes the body from undifferentiated matter. The body is moreover the means through which the privative soul can reach its own perfection, although Shadrâ cautions that the body should not be understood merely as an "instrument" at the disposal of the soul, as most previous philosophers have argued, for the connection between the soul and the body is stronger and more essential than the relationship between an agent and the instrument of his action.⁷

Through the process of trans-substantial motion, the soul traverses through the various levels or stations of being until it finally attains complete independence of all matter and potentiality and is capable of enjoying immortal life. According to the nature of soul and its various levels or stations, Shadrâ writes:

The human soul has many levels and stations, from the beginning of its generation to the end of its goal; and it has certain essential states and modes of being. At first, it is a corporeal substance. Then it gradually becomes more and more intensified and develops through the different stages of its natural constitution until it subsists by itself and moves from this world to the other world, and so returns to its Lord. Thus, the soul is originated in a corporeal state, but endures in a spiritual state. The first thing to be generated in its state is a corporeal power; next is a natural form, then the sensible soul with its levels, then the cogitative and recollective; and then the rational soul.⁸

⁶Sayyid Muhammad Khamenei, *The Passions of the Soul in the Metamorphosis of Becoming*, edited by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (London: Kluwer Academic Publisher, 2003), p. 18.

⁷Maria Massi Dakake, "The Soul as Barzakh: Substantial Motion and Mullâ Shadrâ's Theory of Becoming," in *The Muslim World*, vol. 94, p. 107.

⁸James Winston Morris, *The Wisdom of the Throne: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Mullâ Shadrâ* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 131-132.

Mullâ Shadrâ delineates the various stages of the development of the human soul from the vegetative soul (*al-nafs al-nabâtiyyah*) to the animal soul (*al-nafs al-hayawâniyyah*), and to the rational soul (*al-nafs al-nâthiqah*) with its practical intellect (*al-‘aql al-‘amali*) and theoretical intellect (*al-nafs al-nazhâri*) and to the subsequent stages of the development of the theoretical intellect from the intellect in potentiality (*al-‘aql bi al-quwwah*) to the intellect in actuality (*al-‘aql bi al-fi‘il*) which finally achieves union with the Active Intellect (*al-‘aql al-fa‘âl*).⁹ Shadrâ identifies the Active Intellect with the Holy Spirit (*al-rûh al-quds*) or archangel Gabriel who is the Angel of Revelation in Islam. In order to attain the highest level of unity with the Active Intellect, human needs the Divine aid and grace.¹⁰

In addition to such process, Shadrâ contends that at each stage of its journey of becoming or ascent from a lower and less intense mode of being to a higher and more intense mode of being, the soul acquires a new set of faculties commensurable to its particular level or mode of being. To illustrate, as a mineral, it has the faculty of preserving its form. As a plant, it possesses the faculties of breeding, growth and the transformation of foreign substances into its own form. Then, as an animal it develops the faculties of motion and various forms of desire and the external senses. As a higher animal, the inner faculties of memory and imagination are added to its present set of faculties. Finally, as a human being, the five inner faculties are developed. These are the faculties of the perception of forms (*hiss al-musytarak*), the apprehension (*wahm*) which perceives meanings, fantasy (*khayyâl*) which preserves forms, memory (*dzâkirah*) which preserves meanings and the faculties of imagination and thought. Mullâ Shadrâ contends that throughout these various stages of development, it is the one single soul which is involved. The faculties are not things added to the soul, rather they are the potential aspects of the soul becoming actualized.¹¹

Turn to the distinction between the soul and the body, Mullâ Shadrâ sometimes refers to the capacity of the soul and the body to acquire forms and to deal with them independently. Following Ibn Sînâ and Suhrawardî, he maintains that the body can bear only one form or quality at a time; and, if it loses a quality, it cannot regain it without an external cause. But the soul can independently preserve, remember and reproduce any intelligible form at any time. It is like a board containing various sciences and knowledge of innumerable objects. He also argues that man is capable of conceiving universals and intelligible forms which cannot be formed in the body. This is because the body is infinitely divisible; whereas an intelligible form is indivisible.

⁹In some extends, the development of the soul from an inanimate thing to vegetation, and then to animality and humanity are similar to the developments produced by heat in coal and iron. When iron is initially heated, it may be likened to the origins of vegetative life, when iron turns to hot red, it can be compared with the origins of animal life, and when iron is burned, it is like the origins of the rational faculty. The phenomenon is the same; it takes, however, various developmental forms. To be more details, see Khamanei, *The Passions*, p. 20.

¹⁰Zailan Moris, *Revelation, Intellectual Intuition and Reason in the Philosophy of Mullâ Shadrâ* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 156.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 106.

Continuing his argument, Mullâ Shadrâ maintains that another evidence for duality of the soul and the body is their “opposite directions” in the process of development. While continuous and intense intellectual activities eventually lead the body to weakness, which may end in death and dissolution, they produce mental perfection and intellectual maturity. It is evident that it would be impossible for the same thing to be the cause of both the perfection and the destruction of a thing at the same time. Therefore, the soul or the mind is something other than the body. This is similar to what is offered in the classical argument in the Peripatetic tradition. They argue that intensive sense-perception eventually weakens the body, while intellectual activity brings the mind to maturity.¹²

In spite of this eagerness to prove a clear duality of the soul and the body, Mullâ Shadrâ attempts to show that an intimate and metaphysical link exists between them. He goes so far as to assert that the body and the soul are two levels of one existent. The body is the state or stage of hardness and heaviness for that being, whereas the soul constitutes a degree of lightness and subtlety. Here, one may ask how these two distinct existents come to be so intimately linked together. Leaving it unanswered, saying that it is a divine secret, Mullâ Shadrâ nevertheless gives an example. He states that just as the material of the wick gets ready to accept fire and then gradually becomes red and bright until it becomes luminous and burning, so the human sperm gets physically ready to accept the rational soul, which is a spark from heaven and then develops until it unites with the Active Intellect. As we shall see, Mullâ Shadrâ attempts to demonstrate that although the soul is an immaterial being, and quite distinct from body, its creation is based on a corporeal origination.¹³

Having said that, Shadrâ demonstrates that to prove the existence of the soul, one is not required to prove a being other than that of the body, for both of them (body and soul) exist through the same existence. Evidently, the body exists, and thus the existence of the soul is proved as well, for the soul is a faculty in the body. Thus, at the beginning of the origination of the soul and the body, the being of the soul is not separated from that of the body. It is like the existence of the accident, which is same as the existence of the substance in which the former is realized. The only difference is that once the substance is destroyed, the accident is destroyed as well; but when the body is destroyed, the soul will not perish, for the way in which the soul grows and perfects itself is other than the way of the body. Their beings are united in origination; in terms of substance, however, the change into two parallel beings.¹⁴

Another issue that is related to the soul is whether it has an eternal pre-existence (*qadîm*), or whether it is created in time (*ḥadits*) just like the body. Moreover, if it is said to be a created existence, one may ask again whether the soul joins the body as a physical thing, which

¹²Abbas Ali Shameli, “A Comparative Study Concerning the Soul-body Problem in the Philosophical Psychology of Mullâ Shadrâ (1571-1640) and Ibn Sînâ (980-1037)” (Thesis, McGill University: Canada, 1995), p. 40.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹⁴Khamanei, *The Passions*, p. 19.

then changes into an incorporeal existent, or it joins the body as a created incorporeal thing. Dealing with this issue, Mullâ Shadrâ maintains that the soul is physical only in its createdness (*huduts*) but changes gradually into immaterial quiddity after it has been created in the body.¹⁵ He argues that it is impossible for the soul to be eternal, since then it must pre-exist either in form of the soul or the intellect (*'aql*). If it pre-exists in the form of the soul, it must be inactive (*mu'awwal*) waiting to connect to a body. If it rather pre-exists as an intellect, how can it bear any new accident when it is actual, without having any potentiality. In addition to this notion, Shadrâ argues that if the soul existed before the body, then there would have to be either a plurality of souls or one soul. The plurality of the souls, he claims, is impossible since in their prior existence they are immaterial and since matter is the individuating principle, these souls cannot be many. However, the supposition of one soul is equally impossible. In this sense, we cannot say that the soul of an individual like Joseph would be identical with soul of an individual like Salomon. If, then, in the supposed prior existence there can be neither a plurality of souls nor one soul, the prior existence of the soul to the body is impossible. Thereby, the soul cannot exist before the body but must exist with body.¹⁶

In line with this argument, Shadrâ explicitly writes in *Kitâb al-'Arasyiyah*:

The soul of Adam has a form of existence preceding the body, without this entailing the transmigration of souls, and without necessitating the pre-eternity of the (individual) soul, which is the well-known view of Plato. This (mode of pre-existence) does not require a multiplicity of individuals of a single species or their differentiation without reference to any matter or (material) preparedness; nor does it entail the soul's being divided after having been one, in the manner of continuous quantities; nor does it presume the soul's inactivity before (being connected with) bodies. Rather, soul's pre-existence is as we have indicated and explained in our commentary on *Hikmat al-Ishrâq* in a way that cannot be surpassed.¹⁷

In addition to soul-body problem, Shadrâ avoids the dualism of his Platonic and *Isyraqi* predecessors, who would see the body as dark, dead, lifeless matter, or as something that imprisons the soul. Rather, for Shadrâ, the body has an organic connection with the soul until the moment of death, which can be viewed as positive and nurturing, rather than simply limiting and inhibitive. He admits that the soul initially depends upon the body for the

¹⁵In *Kitâb 'Arshiyya*, Shadrâ summarized this ideas by saying that the soul originates as body but subsists as spirit; *jasmâniyyat al-huduth rûhâniyyat al-baqâ*. In the beginning, the soul is connected with the body and is a corporeal substance, however, through the process of trans-substantial motion, the soul becomes gradually intensified and its mode of existence or being is likewise transformed until it attains independence from the body and finally subsists as spirit and returns to its Lord. For further information on this topic, see Mullâ Shadrâ, *Kitâb al-'Arasyiyah* (Beirut: Mu'assasah al-Tarikh al-'Arabi, 2000), p. 33.

¹⁶Shameli, "A Comparative," p. 42.

¹⁷Morris, *The Wisdom*, p. 140.

manifestation of its faculties. However, the soul eventually becomes independent of the body, such that the body's passing away does not harm the soul, nor does it in any way compromise those faculties of the soul once facilitated by the body—such as the senses. For Shadrâ, those senses continue on the psychic plane, even after the death of the body. Thus, Shadrâ takes the position that the pleasures and torments of the next life will be experiences purely on the psychic level—not on the physical level as asserted by most Ash'arite theologians, nor on a purely intellectual level, as asserted by many Islamic philosophers.

Shadrâ's Philosophical Reflection on Bodily Resurrection

As we have seen in the above discussion, Shadrâ's theory of the soul and its transformation is characterized above all by the notion of fluidity and the rejection of any notion of ontological divisibility or discontinuity for the soul in its many faculties and levels of existence. He mentions that in the process of the soul's realization of higher states, and at every progressive stage, the soul's *wujûd* becomes "another *wujûd*." This new "*wujûd*" is not really "new" in the sense of being created at every point of progress. Rather, for Shadrâ, all of the levels of *wujûd* are integrally related to one another such that, as we have seen, the relationship between the higher and lower intensities or degrees of *wujûd* is precisely the relationship of the cause to its effect. The lesser intensities of *wujûd* are contained within and emanate from the higher, just as the effect is contained within and emanates from its cause. The movement through higher and higher intensities of *wujûd* is ultimately nothing more than a re-integration of the lower levels of *wujûd* within the higher ones from which they had originally emerged.¹⁸

Accordingly, Mullâ Shadrâ avoids the transmigration of the soul.¹⁹ In line with his theory of trans-substantial motion, he argues that the process of human becoming is an irreversible progress and cannot be seen as a movement from a more perfect or developed to a less perfect and undeveloped rank of existence. A being, like a human soul in a developed human body, is not expected to take an animal body, which is less perfect than a human body and is at a lower rank of being. In other words, demotion in trans-substantial change is not only absurd but impossible.²⁰ However, Shadrâ realizes that the human souls that achieve perfection are very extremely few in number. The vast majorities of individual souls are imperfect and have not accomplished the highest level of intellectual perfection

¹⁸Dakake, "The Soul," p. 122.

¹⁹Shadrâ's denial of the transmigration of the soul is surrounded by certain serious problems, some of which arise from religious texts and others from certain philosophic views concerning the destiny of undeveloped human soul. Among the religious difficulties are statements in the Qur'an that a group of people, because of their bad deeds, were changed into monkeys and pigs by God. The problem is that religious text seemingly recognizes the transmigration of the human souls with another body. To be more details, see Fazlur Rahman, *The Philosophy of Mullâ Shadrâ* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1975), p. 248.

²⁰*Ibid.*

which is united to the Active Intellect. Elsewhere in *Kitâb al-'Arshiyyah*, Shadrâ also rejects Aristotle's and Alexander Aphrodisias's²¹ thought which asserts that only the intellect in man to be immortal and therefore only that part of the human soul which has become actualized in the intelligible world to survive death. The question is how Shadrâ solve this problem?

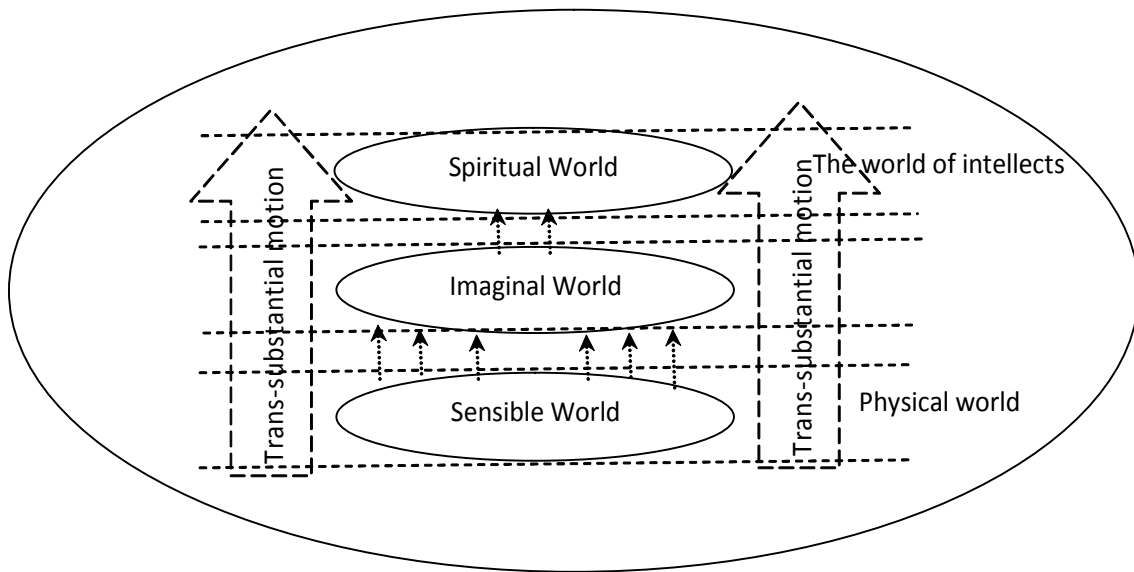
Mullâ Shadrâ's treatment of this matter takes the middle position between the views of those who believe in the survival of the intellect after death, and those who accept the survival of the body as well. According to Shadrâ, Alexander Aphrodisias was wrongly to suppose that there exist only two kinds of worlds: the world of material bodies and the world of intellects. Consequently, there is no place for imperfect souls which have no become fully actualized. In response to this supposition, Shadrâ asserts that there is an imaginal world²² which is intermediate between the spiritual and sensible worlds. All the souls which have not attained perfection or unity with the Active Intellect will be placed in the intermediate world. In *Kitâb al-'Arshiyyah*, Shadrâ explicitly writes:

But it is not like that (Shadrâ is referring to Aphrodisias's supposition). Instead, there is another world of being, alive and sensible (*maḥsûsah*) by essence, unlike this (physical) world—a world that is perceived by these true (inner) senses (*al-ḥawâs haqîqah*), not by these transient external ones (*al-ḥawâs al-dzâhirah*). That world is divided into a sensible Paradise (*al-jannah al-maḥsûsah*) containing the felicities of the blessed (*na'îm al-su'adâ*), including food, drink, marriage, sensual desire and all that could delight the soul and give pleasure to the eyes; and a sensible Hell (*nâr maḥsûsah*) containing the punishments of the wretched (*'adzâb al-'asyqiyâ*), including hellfire, torments, serpents and scorpions. If this imaginal world did not exist, what Alexander Aphrodisias mentioned would be undeniably true and that would mean that the Sacred Laws (*sar'îyyah*) and divine books (*al-kutub al-ilâhiyyah*) were lying when they maintained the resurrection (*ba'ats*) for everyone.²³

²¹Alexander Aphrodisias (*Iskandar Afradisy*) is one of Neo-Platonic commentators whose works were very popular among Muslim philosophers. His commentaries were translated into Arabic along with the actual Aristotelean corpus. They contained some controversial issues among Islamic, Jewish, and Latin Christian philosophers. For further information, see Moris, *Revelation*, p. 149.

²²The central importance of the imaginal world in Islamic metaphysical discourse was brought out for the first time by Ibn 'Arabi and then Suhrawardî. Mullâ Shadrâ expands the metaphysics of this world and brings out its epistemological, eschatological, and cosmological significance in a masterly way. By definition, the imaginal world is the intermediate world residing ontologically between the physical and the purely intellectual. In Shadrâ's philosophy, the exposition of the imaginal world was integrated with his general ontology which are the unity of existence (*waḥdat al-wujûd*), primacy of existence (*awalat al-wujûd*), and gradation of existence (*tashkîk al-wujûd*). For further information, see Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islamic Philosophy from Its Origin to the Present: Philosophy in the Land of Prophecy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), p. 230.

²³Shadrâ, *Kitab al-'Arshiyyah*, p. 44.



According to such ideas, the bodies of the undeveloped souls, the souls that have committed sins, deteriorate at the time of death and are not reassembled as before. In order to survive physically, they create a material body for themselves by externalizing their inner psychic states in the form of a body in the imaginal world, where all psychic states and dispositions are transformed into concrete images. It is in the imaginal world that the souls will experience certain eschatological events described in the Qur'an and the Hadith.²⁴ Shadrâ's classification on spiritual, imaginal, sensible worlds can be illustrated as follows:

In addition to such description, there are two essential themes largely discussed in the *Kitâb al-'Arasyiyah* which are related to the issue of resurrection: (1) the nature of the human soul and its incredible potentiality, and (2) the immortality of the imaginative power of the human soul. According to the nature of human soul, Shadrâ asserts that the human soul is the conjunction of the terminal point of the sensible world and the initial point of the spiritual world. It has capacity to of having control over the sensible world and the capacity of entering into the spiritual world. For this notion, Shadrâ writes:

The human soul is the fastest of all generated things so far as its changes in the physical, psychic, and intellectual modalities of being. In the initial stages of its fundamental generated of nature, the soul is the ending of the sensible world (*nihâyat al-âlam al-mahsûsah*) and the starting of the spiritual world (*bidâyat al-âlam al-rûhâniyyah*). It is the greatest gateway to God (*bâb allah al-a'lâm*), through which one can be brought to the Highest Kingdom (*al-malakût al-A'lâ*). However, it also has all of the gates to the Hell. It is the separator standing between this world (*al-dunyâ*) and the other world (*al-âkhirâh*) because it is the form (*shûrah*) of every potency (*quwwâh*) in this world and the matter (*mâddah*) for every form in another world. Thus, the soul is the junction of the two seas

²⁴Rahman, *The Philosophy*, p. 248.

of corporeal and spiritual things; its being the last of the corporeal realities is a sign of its being the first of the spiritual ones.²⁵

On the immortality of the imaginative power (*quwwâh khayyâliyyah*) of the human soul, Shadrâ contends that it is a substance which is independent of the sensible world; it is immaterial and immortal and it does not die when the body dies. Though the imaginative power is of a substance which is independent of the sensible world, it is not without connection to it. Shadrâ asserts that the imaginative power is not totally independent of the worlds of generated being (*kawnain*) which are this world and the next world. If the imaginative power were to be totally independent of both worlds, then it would be pure intellect (*'aql*) or spirit. In *Kitâb al-'Arasyiyyah*, Shadrâ states:

In man, the imaginal power is a substance which is independent of this world (*jawhar mujarrad*), that is, the world of physical beings (*al-akwân al-tabi'iyyah*), the motions (*ḥarakah*), and transformations of the material things. We set forth decisive proofs about this matter in our book *al-Asfâr al-Arba'ah*. But this power is not totally independent of generated being (*al-kawnain*), since in that case it would have to be pure intellect (*'aql*) and object of intellection (*ma'qûl*).²⁶

For Shadrâ, the imaginative power belongs to or is a part of the imaginal world. The imaginative power has its locus in the human soul. The relation between the imaginative power and the soul is not in the manner is not something inhering in another thing but in the way an act is related to its agent. The fundamental role of imaginative power is to perceive the imaginal forms.²⁷ The complete manifestation of the imaginal forms and the imaginative power will be experienced fully after death when the soul is separated from the body. In the posthumous state, the individual will perceive the full manifestation and intensity of the imaginal forms and come to realize that the sensible forms of the material world are weaker and less real, relative to the imaginal forms. According to such ideas, Shadrâ says:

The complete manifestation of these forms and the perfection of these forms and the perfection of the power of their being occur only after death. This is true to such a degree that compared to the forms man will see after death, the forms he sees in this world are like dreams. This is why the Commander of the truly faithful (Imam Ali) said: "Mankind

²⁵Shadrâ, *Kitâb al-'Arasyiyyah*, p. 42-43.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 36.

²⁷The imaginal form is a level of being which is higher and more intense than that of the sensible world. The imaginal form is a kind of phantom image with objective existence or reality. For majority of the people, the imaginal forms are hidden from them and if manifested in the dream state are often weak due to their souls' immense attachment with the body. According to Mullâ Shadrâ, the degree of manifestation (*zuhûr*) or hiddenness (*khifâ*) and intensity (*shadda*) or weakness (*da'îf*) of the imaginal form which are perceived by the imaginative power is dependent on the strength of the imaginative power itself. To be more details, see Shadrâ, *Kitâb al-'Arasyiyyah*, p. 37.

are sleeping; when they die, they awaken.” Then the unseen becomes immediate vision. This is the secret of the return and the resurrection of the body.²⁸

In observing Imam ‘Ali’s Hadith which is stated above, Shadrâ contends that the natures of forms in the Afterlife, while resembling the imaginal forms experienced in our dream state or in mirrors in this life, are not essentially the same. The existence of things in the Afterlife, although resembling the existence of forms which people see in sleep or in a mirror in one respect, are not so in actuality. This is due to the fact that in the Afterlife, the things people see and experience are imaginal representations of the fruits of their actions in this world. But those forms which appear to us in sleep are not real in the way the images we experience in our waking state are, nor are they real in the way the forms presented to us in the Afterlife will be. Because of these considerations, Shadrâ goes on to say that the existent form which appears in sleep and in the mirror is an impotent thing whose appearance is pure fancy. Dreams imaginally represent to the dreamer the contents of his conscience.

The same idea holds true for objects reflected in mirrors. The reflection of an object in a mirror is not the object itself. At the same time, it does capture something of the true nature of the object placed before the mirror. If it were otherwise, people would not, for example, brush their hair in front of mirrors, nor would they rely upon them for any representations of reality. The forms people receive in their dreams and in mirrors are therefore both real and unreal. In the Afterlife, those things which are the imaginalizations of our actions in this world, or, rather, the things which are represented to us as the physical manifestations of our deeds here on earth, also reflect something of the reality with which we were engaged in the previous world. On the other hand, these forms are not simply representations, as are the objects reflected in mirrors or those images produced in dreams. They are more real than either of these, since these forms belong to a different order of reality.²⁹

The question is how are those forms represented to us in the Afterlife? To this question, Shadrâ states that when the soul is separated from the body, it carries along with itself the perceiving form which enables it to perceive sensible things through its inner sense (*hissi al-bâthin*). Therefore, although at death the soul is separated from the body and the external senses, the soul continues to perceive forms through its inner senses. At the same time, the imaginative power will originate imaginal forms by its own volition (*irâdah*). Concerning the origination of the form, Shadrâ states that it can be created by an individual either with the appropriate material or without the presence of the necessary materials. He supports this notion by giving the example of God’s creation of the planets and heavenly bodies which are created from nothing. In his interpretation, the term *ibda’* which is used

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹Mohammed Rustom, “Psychology, Eschatology, and Imagination in Mullâ Shadrâ Shirazi’s Commentary on the Hadith of Awakening,” in *Islam & Science*, Vol. XXXII, p. 10.

by many philosophers refers to God's act of creating or originating something from nothing. In Shadrâ's account, the soul is endowed by God with a similar power to originate forms from nothing. The imaginal forms which are originated from nothing by the human soul exist in the soul. For Shadrâ, these imaginal forms, once again, are more substantial, more firmly established and permanent in their reality than material forms which are constantly changing and being regenerated.³⁰

Based on such reflective thoughts, Shadrâ rejects the transmigratonists's claims which state that the union of the soul with the body in the hereafter is religiously supported, and since the body will be resurrected is not the same body to which the soul was related in its earthly existence, it clearly implies some kind of transmigration of the soul. To this claim, Shadrâ replies that that body, being a symbolic expression of the soul's inner states, has no potentialities like the earthly body and possesses no existence of its own. It is a mere symbol of the soul and is related to the soul as a reflection or a shadow; it has no independent status or nature of its own. The opponent can say that the statements of the Qur'an apparently say that the body in hereafter will be the same earthly body and not a merely symbolic one. Shadrâ admits that this is so but adds that that body will have the same form as this earthly body and not the matter of the earthly body. Even in this earthly body, its identity is preserved by its form not by its matter, which is continuously changing. The body of a human at any given moment in this life is really its identical form plus an indeterminate matter. In the hereafter, this body will be pure physical form without matter—but that physical form will preserve the identity of this body.³¹

The complete arguments of Mullâ Shadrâ concerning the necessity and the possibility of bodily resurrection could be found in *Kitâb al-'Arşîyyah*. At the beginning of his second illumination about the true reality of the return and the manner of the bodily resurrection, he provides seven philosophical premises which are consistent with our previous discussion. The seven premises³² can be summarized as follows:

1. The subsistence of everything is by virtue of its form, not is matter. In this sense, the form is the actual ground of its quiddity, the completion of its reality, and the source of its ultimate differentia. Thus, although we suppose that form to be separate from its matter, the thing itself would remain regardless of that separation.
2. The individual identity of things is independent on their particular matter. According to Mullâ Shadrâ, the individual identity of a thing is an expression for its particular mode of being, whether it is material or separate from matter. For instance, Zayd is possible

³⁰Moris, *Revelation*, p. 162.

³¹Rahman, *The Philosophy*, p. 249.

³²Shadrâ claims that his arguments on bodily resurrection were built upon the divine book (*al-kitâb al-ilâhiyyah*) and philosophical reflections. At the beginning of his arguments, he quotes some verses of the Holy Qur'an which are related to necessity of bodily resurrection. To see the full version of his argumentations, see Morris, *The Wisdom*, p. 153-157.

to change in position, quantity, qualities, and location in time and space; however, he is still precisely as Zayd.

3. The being remains one throughout the stages of its transformation, and that higher level of being subsume the lower. In order to achieve perfection, individual being always changes and transforms to a higher level of its position. The individuation of a being is an aspect which is continually transformed and intensified in its substantiality through a continuous motion with the property of continuous unity. Since it is one in continuity, it is also one with respect to its being and its individuation.
4. The soul originates forms of being by pure intention, without material preparedness. Without any association with a material container, location and preparedness, the forms may occur by immediate creation thorough the conceptions and formative directions of the maker (God). The forms subsist through the soul and exist in the domain of the soul.
5. The imaginal power of the soul is a substance essentially separate from the body. As has been mentioned, the imaginal power in man is a substance whose being is actually and essentially separate from this sensible body and physical frame. The imaginal power remains regardless the collapse and decline of the bodily frame. The separation of soul and body does not penetrate to its essence and its perceptions.
6. The soul's perceptions are essentially of its own world, only accidentally related to physical forms. The soul's perceptions, whether in this world or in the other world, are not things separate from his essence and different from his individuation. Its perception only exists in his essence, not in something else. The need of material things in perceiving imaginal forms of the soul is only at the very beginning of the development of sensation. Thus, in the state of separation between soul and body, there is nothing to prevent the soul from perceiving all that it perceives and senses in this life.
7. The soul can directly affect the body. The soul can directly cause external affects. In this case, Shadrâ points out some example in our daily lives. For him, frightened, embarrassing, and excitement of something are examples of how soul can directly affect our bodies.

Having provided the philosophical argumentations of the necessity of the bodily resurrection, Shadrâ goes on to discuss the difference in mode of being between bodies in this world and those of the world to come. In *Kitâb al-'Arsyiyah*, he presents six aspects of those differences:

1. Everybody in the other world is animated and alive, whereas in our world, there are bodies deprived of life and consciousness, and where living bodies never have more than an accidental and ephemeral life. In his own words, Shadrâ writes:

...everybody in the other world possesses the spirit of life, and indeed is living by its very essence; one cannot even conceive of a body there not having life. That is quite different from this world, where there are many bodies that do not possess life and

consciousness—and even in those that do have life, their life is something that occurs to them accidentally and is added to them.³³

2. The bodies of this world receive their souls at the end of a process that makes them fit to receive them, whereas the souls of the other world produce their own bodies in accordance with their own needs. In his own words, Shadrâ states:

...the bodies in this world are receptive to their souls by way of their material preparedness, while souls in the other world make their own bodies, by way of immediate affirmation. Here, bodies and materials gradually ascend, according to their states of preparedness and transformations, until they attain to the ranks of souls. But in the other world, the command of creation and life descends from souls into bodies.³⁴

3. In this world, the potentiality is chronologically antecedent to an actuality, while the actuality is ontologically antecedent to potentiality. In the other world, the potentiality is chronologically and ontologically antecedent to actuality. In *Kitâb al-'Arṣiyyah*, Shadrâ explicitly explains, "...in this world, potentiality precedes actuality in time, while the actuality is prior to the potentiality in essence. But there, the potentiality is prior to the actuality both in essence and in being."³⁵
4. In this world, the actuality is nobler than potentiality because it is its fulfillment, whereas in the other world, the potentiality is nobler than the actuality since it is that which produces the actuality. In *Kitâb al-'Arṣiyyah*, Shadrâ states, "Here, actuality is more exalted than potentiality since it is the end (the final cause) of the potentiality. But there, potentiality is more exalted than actuality, since it is the potentiality that actually makes the actuality."³⁶
5. Bodies and volume are in finite in the other world since they originate from the imaginations and perceptions of souls, which are both infinite. According to this view, Shadrâ writes:

The bodies and objects of the other world are infinite, according to the number of conceptions and perceptions of souls. It is because the proofs for the finitude of (physical) dimensions do not apply to that world, but only within the confines and dimensions of material things. Nor (despite the unlimited number of bodies) is there any crowding or interference between things in the other world. And nothing there is in a direction "inside" or "outside" of anything else.³⁷

6. The bodies of the other world and all of its marvels exist through a single being since each of them encompasses these things as a support from God. In his own words, Shadrâ asserts:

³³Shadrâ, *Kitâb al-'Arṣiyyah*, p. 54.

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶Morris, *The Wisdom*, p. 165.

³⁷Shadrâ, *Kitâb al-'Arṣiyyah*, p. 54.

...the bodies of the other world and all of its marvels, including the gardens, rivers, chambers, dwellings, palaces, pure companions, houris, and all of the other attendants, servants, slaves, and retinues of the people of Paradise—all of these exist though a single being, which is the being of each man among the people of blessedness. This is because each of them encompasses these things as a support from God and lodging from the Forgiving, the Merciful.³⁸

In addition to such argumentations, Shadrâ also discusses three more topics which are related to the issue of bodily resurrection. The first issue is concerning the true nature of the other world of the soul. The second issue is concerning of his refutation to those who deny the Return and the resurrection of the body. The third issue is concerning what survives of the parts of a man in the other world. I will not go further on to talk about these issues since they have been discussed intensely prior to this section. It seems to me that what we have discussed so far is enough to know Shadrâ's very basic philosophical reflection on bodily resurrection.

Conclusion

The issue of eschatology and the afterlife is a fundamental instrument of Islamic faith. In the history of Islamic philosophy, there are many Muslim philosophers who have tried to provide the philosophical arguments regarding the necessity of spiritual and bodily resurrection. Of those philosophers, Mullâ Shadrâ (1572-1640) provides the most plausible arguments that we can study today. Mullâ Shadrâ begins his argument by examining the fundamental meaning of reality. In doing so, he turned his philosophy from the primary of essence (*ashalah al-mâhiyah*) to primacy of existence (*ashalah al-wujûd*).

Based on his principle of the primacy of existence, Shadrâ goes on to next principle which is called *al-harakah al-jawhâriyyah* (trans-substantial motion). According to this principle, all existents in the world of nature are essentially transformable, and changeable, and all their parts are continually in the process of creation and extinction. This is what it is called the philosophy of becoming. In line with such notion, Mullâ Shadrâ asserts that the process of human becoming is an irreversible progression and cannot be seen as a movement from a more perfect or developed to a less perfect and undeveloped rank of existence. A being, like a human soul in a developed human body, is not expected to take an animal body, which is less perfect than a human body and is at a lower rank of being. In other words, demotion in trans-substantial change is not only absurd but impossible. However, Shadrâ realizes that the human souls that achieve perfection are very extremely few in number. The vast majorities of individual souls are imperfect and have not accomplished the highest level of intellectual perfection which is united to the Active Intellect. In response to such fact, Mullâ Shadrâ asserts that there is an imaginal world which is intermediate

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 55

between the spiritual and sensible worlds. All the souls which have not attained perfection or unity with the Active Intellect will be placed in the intermediate world.

In his effort to prove the necessity of bodily resurrection, Shadrâ introduces the imaginative power (*quwwâh khayyaliyah*) which is a substance, immaterial, immortal, independent of the sensible world, and does not die when the body dies. The fundamental role of imaginative power is to perceive the imaginal forms. According to Shadrâ, when the soul is separated from the body, it carries along with itself the perceiving form which enables it to perceive sensible things through its inner sense (*hissi al-bathin*). At the same time, the imaginative power will originate imaginal forms by its own volition. These imaginal forms are more substantial, more firmly established and permanent in their reality than material forms which are constantly changing and being regenerated.

With regard to such ideas, the body which will be resurrected in the afterlife is a kind of symbolic expression of the soul's inner state. That is why it has no potentialities like the earthly body and it possesses no existence of its own. However, the body will have the same form as this earthly body and not the matter of the earthly body. For Shadrâ, even in this earthly body, its identity is preserved by its form, not by its matter. In this sense, body of a human in this life is really its identical form plus an indeterminate matter. So, in the hereafter, this body will be pure physical form without matter—but that physical form will preserve the identity of this body.

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