Research Article

Revelation in Mullā Ṣadrā's Political Philosophy[1]

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Abstract

The subject of this article is the analysis and explanation of revelation in Mullā Ṣadrā's political philosophy. It claims that the analysis and explanation of revelation in Mullā Ṣadrā's political philosophy lies in the framework of the tradition of Islamic political philosophy. In the tradition of Islamic political philosophy, analysis of revelation resolves two main issues regarding the political philosophy: government and law. Thus, with regard to analysis and explanation of revelation in Mullā Ṣadrā's political philosophy, it is said that a prophet – the one who receives divine revelation, especially the Prophet Muhammad – enjoys the necessary features for being a ruler. In the next levels, the Infallible Imams also enjoy those features. Human's social life and his social perfection require Sharīʿa (i.e. the religious law). The philosophy of the Sharʿ laws is rooted in acquiring divine knowledge and protecting lives and properties. The Sharʿ laws have been organized on the basis of the correspondence of the worlds, the effect of actions on the souls and the effect of soul's states on body. Therefore, the Sharʿ laws lead, on the basis of the relationship between the worlds of

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sense and ideals and reason, to the mutual effect of the worlds. This article uses the method of analysis of the Islamic political philosophy and Mullā Ṣadrā's political philosophy. The following is among the results of this study: the philosophy of jurisprudence or the legal philosophy, as explained by Mullā Ṣadrā, can have serious results in the realm of jurisprudence, law, politics and legislation.

Keywords

revelation, political philosophy, Mullā Ṣadrā, government, law.

Introduction

One of the first factors that inspired me to study this subject was Imam Khomeini's speech on divine revelation. Regarding divine revelation, Imam Khomeini would say that it is the Prophet (PBUH) who makes the angle of revelation come down.[1] In Mullā Ṣadrā's analysis, as we will see, coming down of the divine revelation is preceded by the spiritual ascend of God's messenger. Thus, prior to divine revelation, there is *the Ascend* of the perfect man. No doubt, Mullā Ṣadrā's analysis is placed in the tradition of the

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1. What is the descent?... what is coming down in the heart? ...what is *Rūḥ al-Amīn* (the trusted angle) and how does *Rūḥ al-Amīn* enter the heart of God's messenger? What is *Laylat al-Qadr*?... (Imam Khomeini, 1389 SH., vol. 17, pp. 489-490).

He has revealed the Quran in Ramadan. The Quran is a revealed [book] that has entered after passing the covers of light in Ramadan to the blessed heart of God's messenger; and revealed again up to the point wherein it is stated by the tongue (Imam Khomeini, 1389 SH., vol. 18, pp. 489).

The blessed month of Ramadan may be blessed for it is the time when God's greatest saint, i.e. God's messenger, has achieved [God's proximity] and after that, he has brought down the angels and the Quran. With his power, the angels come down; it is with his power that the Quran is sent down and the angles come down. The greatest saint achieves the truth of the Quran in the blessed month and in *Qadr* night; and after that, he makes the holy Quran come down through the angels – who are all his subordinates – to the extent that he can say it for the people (Imam Khomeini, 1389 SH., vol. 19, p. 285).

Ramadan is blessed because it is the time when the [divine words] were revealed; or in other words, the spirituality of God's messenger revealed them (Imam Khomeini, 1389 SH., vol. 20, p. 248). Ramadan is a month when the trusted angle, Gabriel, came down to God's messenger; and in other words, the holy Prophet brought down the trusted Gabriel to this world (Imam Khomeini, 1389 SH., p. 249; also c.f. Imam Khomeini, 1394 SH., p. 184, 343; Imam Khomeini, 1392, p. 162).

Islamic political philosophy; and the elements and general framework of his work are under the influence of philosophers such as Fārābī, Avicenna, Sheikh of *Ishrāq*, and Naṣīruddin Ṭūsī. Therefore, in such a framework, Mullā Ṣadrā's view and analysis are mentioned and investigated. Mullā Ṣadrā, like any other thinker, owes to his preceding thinkers. Similarly, he has, like any other great thinker, his own innovations and privileges, which we would mention here. In short, Mullā Ṣadrā, while preserving the framework, the elements and the concepts of the discussion provided by Fārābī, Avicenna and others, has his different analyses and views, which give him a unique characteristic. Clearly, the emphasis on the "tradition of Islamic political philosophy and the total elements and framework of the task" does not refer to the philosophical system.

In the following passage, first the revelation and political philosophy have been defined. Then, the revelation in the political philosophy is dealt with so that the ground is prepared for proposing Mullā Ṣadrā's view. In stating Mullā Ṣadrā's view on revelation, we focus our discussions on two of his works, i.e. *al-Mabda' wal-Maʿād* and *al-Ḥikmat al-Mutaʿāliya.* The discussion in *al-Mabda' wal-Maʿād* is the primary form of the discussions expanded later in works such as *al-Shawāhid ar-Rubūbiyya. Al-Ḥikmat al-Mutaʿāliya* is also Mullā Ṣadrā's main work and its discussions overlap with works such as *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* and *Asrār al-Āyāt.* Following the projection of Mullā Ṣadrā's views and those of other Muslim philosophers, questions arise on the relationship between religion and philosophy, the Prophet and the philosophers, coincidence or non-coincidence of divine revelation in all worlds, etc. In the concluding section, we will deal with these questions.

What is Revelation?

The literal meaning of 'revelation', as appears in *Maqāʾīs al-Lugha,* is 'the hidden infusion of knowledge or other information'. *Maqāʾīs al-Lugha* regards indication, book, letter, and any other forms of infusion to others as instances of revelation. *Miṣbāḥ al Munīr* and *al-ʿAyn* add the meanings such

as 'speed', 'motivating', and 'inspiration' to the above list. *Mufradāt* defines 'revelation' as 'quick indication' (Muṣṭafawī, 1371 SH., vol. 13, p. 55). The author of *al-Taḥqīq fī Kalimāt al-Qur'ān* considers the literal meaning of revelation to be 'infusion of something in the inward of someone else'. This infusion can be genetic or by entering the heart. The subject of the revelation can be knowledge, faith, light or other things. The revealer can be a man, an angel or someone else. Revelation can be done through a medium or directly. Anyway, revelation refers to knowledge and certainty (Muṣṭafawī,1371 SH., vol. 13, p. 56; Yazdānī Muqaddam, 1395 SH., pp.391-392).

The definition of revelation for Fārābī is as follows: "revelation is a process that begins from effusion of active intellect to the theoretical rational soul and leads to its spillage from the theoretical rational soul to practical rational soul, and from those two to imaginative soul, and from imaginative soul to the common sense, and from there to the other senses so on." In this process, the receiver of revelation is, in the first place, the philosopher and the thinker; and in the final place, the receiver is the prophet and the cautioner (Fārābī, 1991, pp. 123-126, 111-116). Revelation can have different forms; it may occur in sleep or wakefulness and be in the form of intelligibles or details; some part of it may be in sleep and some other part may be in wakefulness; some part of it may be in the form of intelligibles and the other part may be in the form of details (Fārābī, 2008, pp. 4-5).

The definition of revelation for Avicenna can be summarized as follows: revelation is the reception of divine truths from *Rūḥ al-Amīn* (i.e. Gabriel) or the active intellect. Since the human's soul, which is from the world of divine command, receives revelation from the angel of revelation who is also from the world of divine command, this reception occurs in the world of divine command; and since revelation is the relationship of the soul with the soul, the communication between them is not in the form of words; rather, it is the monolithic infusion of divine truths to the prophet's soul. This reception occurs in the world of divine commands. Thus, it is timeless. The

active intellect is the divine word, and the divine word is the very truths and sciences infused into the prophet's soul. Therefore, the infusion of revelation is the infusion or immanence of the active intellect (=the divine word= the truths and sciences) into the prophet's soul. This infusion and immanence can be regarded as the simple intellect and without division or synthesis, which is gradually developed in the prophet's soul as required by the needs, conditions and demands, turning into the individual intellect. The simple intellect, which appears in the level of the connection between the imperative being (*mowjūd amrī*) and the imperative being, and is monolithic and timeless, turns into imaginative and sensible things in coming down and spreading to faculties of the soul and gets form, manifesting in the form of words for the faculties of the soul and is presented to addressees. In view of the rational and internally scientific core of the revelation, the people of knowledge and reason find out that the divine prophets consider the divine transcendental truths beyond the appearances of speech, and want to communicate the divine knowledge and truth to human beings (Yazdānī Muqaddam,1395 SH, pp. 162-197).

We continue our discussion by presenting definition of revelation offered by Mullā Ṣadrā. In short, Mullā Ṣadrā has offered a more complete and more detailed form of divine revelation: the prophet's sacred soul receives the divine revelation in all worlds, and then what he has received gets the rational form for him, and the prophet receives the sensible form of the angel and its words through senses. Since the aforementioned worlds are interrelated, what is represented in the worlds of senses is the impression of what is received in other worlds. Therefore, the abovementioned representation is the very manifestation of the matters of the celestial world.

In Mullā Ṣadrā's view, the prophet does not receive revelation from the active intellect; rather, he receives it from the exalted God in His unique position. In other words, the prophet receives revelation in all positions, states and ranks of the existence; and the revelation is emanated to the

prophet in each rank, state and level of existence to one position of the prophet's positions: in the world of intellect to intellect, in the world of ideals to the imagination, and in the external world to the prophet's senses. It seems that the tenets and theories such as gradation of existence, the simple truth of everything, coincidence of the worlds, the soul in its unity is totally strong, unity in plurality, longitudinal look at the universe, and the union of the intellect and the wise and the intelligible, have theoretically provided the possibility of such an analysis for Mullā Ṣadra. In this way, Mullā Ṣadrā's analysis is a different and new one.

What is the Political Philosophy?

The political philosophy is a philosophy about a certain subject, i.e. politics. According to the traditional view of the political sciences, the 'political affair' is related to government. Thus, the questions of the political philosophy are as follows:
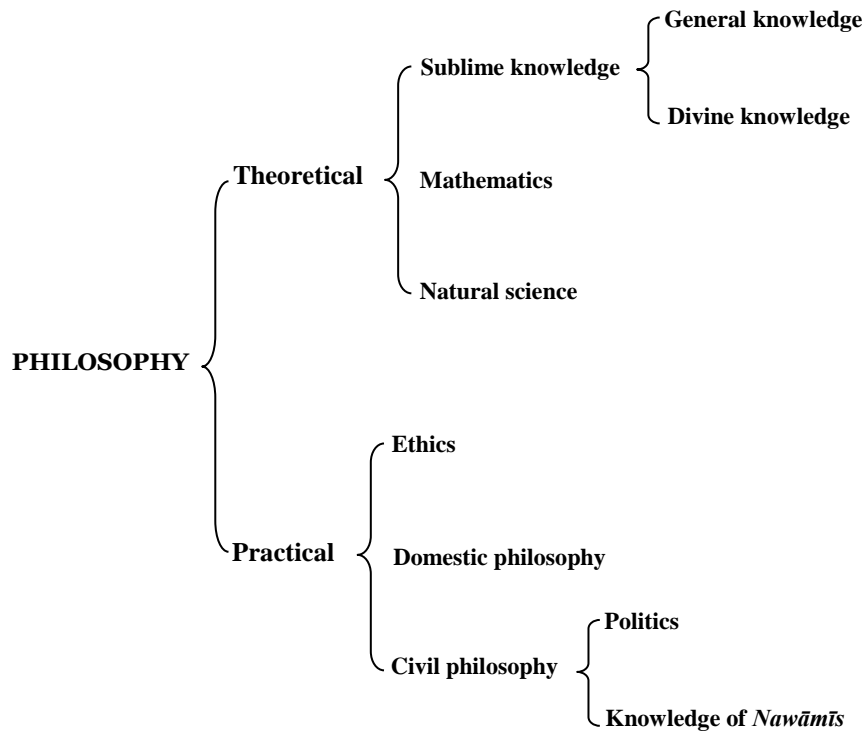
How should government act?

Which moral principles should govern the government's behavior towards the citizens?

What kind of political order should be created by the government?

Thus, the political philosophy deals with a justification of the government and what it must or must not do (Swift, 2001, pp. 21-22). The political philosophy studies the ideal form of the political government and the realm and the nature of what should government do. The abstract philosophical principles discussed in political philosophy prepares a criterion for us to be able to judge about the political institutes, criticize them, and – if necessary – modify or substitute them (Jacobs, 1997, pp. 22-23). The political philosophy seeks to analyze the political concepts (Plamenatz, 1960, p. 48). Two main and central concepts in the political philosophy are government and law (Quentin, 1960, p. 16).

Political Philosophy in Mullā Ṣadrā'a View

In this regard, Mullā Ṣadra divides affairs into practical and non-practical and calls the philosophy pertaining to them the 'practical philosophy' and the 'theoretical philosophy' respectively (Ṣadruddin Shīrāzī, n.d., p.3), and introduces the theoretical philosophy as divided into three types: first, the sublime knowledge that consists of general knowledge and divine knowledge; second, middle philosophy or the mathematics and educational knowledge; and third, natural philosophy. The practical philosophy whose subject is the human soul as having the attributes of morality and habits is divided into three types, because the human's policies and tactics are either specified to one person, which is called ethics, or not specified and are social. The society is either domestic (i.e. pertaining to one's home) or civil. The philosophy pertaining to the former is domestic philosophy and the one pertaining to the latter is called civil philosophy. Mullā Ṣadrā mentions the fourfold division of the practical philosophy and says that some philosophers divide the practical philosophy into four types; that is, they divide the civil philosophy into two types, because the subjects of civil philosophy are of two types; they belong either to ruling and sultanate or prophethood and religious law (*sharī'a*). The former is called the politics and the latter is called the science of *nawāmīs* (i.e. laws). Similarly, the theoretical philosophy is sometimes divided, by classifying the sublime knowledge into general and divine, into four types. Plato and Aristotle each has a book on the *sharī'a* and prophethood, which are called *nawāmīs* (pl. of *nāmūs*). Each of them has another book on politics and government (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, n.d., pp. 4-5). Mullā Ṣadrā considers Avicenna's opinions in this regard (Avicenna, 1360, pp. 1-8; idem, n.d., p. 242-243). The summary of Mullā Ṣadrā's view regarding the divisions of theoretical and practical philosophies is shown in the following diagram:

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                                                                ┌ General knowledge
                                      ┌ Sublime knowledge   {
                                      │                         └ Divine knowledge
                     ┌ Theoretical  {  Mathematics
                     │                │
                     │                └ Natural science
        PHILOSOPHY  {
                     │                ┌ Ethics
                     │                │
                     └ Practical    {  Domestic philosophy
                                      │                      ┌ Politics
                                      └ Civil philosophy  {
                                                             └ Knowledge of *Nawāmīs*
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The basic issue of political philosophy in Islam

For Rosenthal, the main issue of the political philosophy in Islam is the confrontation of the revelational law or *sharīʿa* and the ordinal or non-religious law of the government (Rosenthal, 1958, pp. 110-142). For Rosenthal, the Muslim political philosophers would see the issue of the intellect and revelation as a confrontation between the divine law and the rational human laws and, in an attempt for reconciling the revelation with the intellect, would emphasize that 'truth' is one and that the final goal of revelation and political philosophy is the same. From the Muslim political philosophers' viewpoint, one can claim a harmony between the revelation and the political philosophy (Rosenthal, 1958, pp. 107-108).

For Strauss, the basic issue differentiating the Islamic political philosophy from the modern political philosophy is giving importance to intellect and

revelation simultaneously. This is while the modern political philosophers such as Hobbes, Locke and Spinoza believed that the political order can be founded on the basis of the rational and secular principles. In Strauss's view, one must consider the difference between the Islam and Christianity and their religious doctrines to understand the difference between the Islamic political philosophy and the Christian political philosophy. Islam emphasizes the political feature of the revelation. The Prophet is both the political leader and legislator. Thus, subjects such as the nature of revelation and the nature of prophethood are among the political subjects. The Muslim political philosophers regard dealing with religion and its doctrines as the duty of the political philosophy, because for them religion is a political reality. Therefore, in the Islamic history and civilization, unlike the Christian history and civilization, the science that deals with the religion is the political philosophy, not the philosophy of religion (Riḍwānī, 1385SH., pp. 114, 116-117, 176).

Revelation in the Political Philosophy

Theorizing about revelation in the political philosophy in the Islamic history and civilization goes back to Fārābī's[1] works in the scientific sphere of political philosophy. In the western history of political philosophy, one can see theorizing about the revelation and the scripture, reference to the scripture and adducing it, and discussion about the revelation, prophethood, and the scripture in works written by Hobbes, Locke and Spinoza. With the path covered by the Muslim philosophers and the Islamic political philosophy in a direction opposite to Hobbes[2] and Spinoza,[3] there emerges a

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1. For the Fārābī's views, see Yazdānī Muqaddam (1395 SH), pp. 59-75, 403-413.

2. Hobbes (1380 SH), pp. 122-123, 126, 268-270, 316-318, 329-330, 333-334, 340-353, 360-373, 377, 380, 395, 452-453, 472, 480-481, 491; For Hobbes' view on the relationship between revelation, government and legislation, see pp. 353-360, 396-405, 405-411, 411-479, 479-492.

3. Benedict Spinoza, 1670, pp. 115, 119-123; Leo Strauss, 1989, On a Forgotten Kind of Writing, p. 196; idem, 1989, Progress or Return, pp. 411, 412, 417; idem, 1989, What is political philosophy?, p. 41;

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mutual euphony between revelation and political philosophy. As the Muslim philosophers believe and the Islamic political philosophy says, on the one hand, the prophets have called us to rationality and philosophy, and on the other hand, the political philosophy as a scientific discipline analyzes the revelation and prophethood, giving standards for evaluation of the right revelation and prophethood. With the analysis offered by the Muslim philosophers for revelation, the possibility and necessity of revelation is recognized. In addition, revelation finds a philosophical and theoretical justification, its level of understanding goes higher than the apparent and popular level, and requires a philosophical understanding along with reference to philosophical foundations. Thus, their analysis of revelation leads to a mutual legitimacy of revelation and political philosophy. On the one hand, the political philosophy endorses revelation and, on the other hand, the requirement for understanding revelation is the philosophical foundations and analysis; and this is quite different from the fate of the revelation and political philosophy in the modern discourse. The modern discourse brings about the mutual denial and mutual de-legitimization (Strauss, 1989, pp. 90-95; idem,1989, Progress or Return? The Contemporary Crisis in the Western Civilization, p. 361 on, 405-420). No doubt, the different fate of revelation and political philosophy in the modern discourse has been affected by the real and historical revelation in the hands of the modern thinkers, which is different from the real and historical revelation for the Muslim philosophers.

Mullā Ṣadrā's view on revelation

Mullā Ṣadrā investigates the revelation and prophethood in a number of his works. It seems that he hoped to be able to discuss prophethood in a more detailed discussion. Probably his final form of study regarding the prophethood is what he presents in *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* and other works. Here,

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idem, 1989, 'Persecution and the Art of Writing'; idem, 1989, *Jerusalem and Athens,* pp. 3226 and 365.

we focus our discussion on two of his works entitled *al-Mabda' wal-Ma'ād* and *al-Ḥikmat al-Muta'āliya.* Mullā Ṣadrā's discussion in *al-Mabda' wal-Ma'ād* is the initial form of discussions developed later in works such as *al-Shawāhid ar-Rubūbiyya* in a new form. *al-Ḥikmat al-Muta'āliya* is Mullā Ṣadrā's main work wherein he has presented his discussions in a more complete form. Besides, the subjects and discussions offered by him in *al-Ḥikmat al-Muta'āliya, Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* and *Asrār al-Āyāt* are somehow overlapping.

Explanation of revelation in *al-Mabda' wal-Ma'ād*

Mullā Ṣadrā's Analysis on revelation in *al-Mabda' wal-Ma'ād* is based on the model of Fārābī's analysis in *Mabādī Ārā Ahl al-Madīna.* Mullā Ṣadrā has added his illuminative (*Ishrāqī*) view about the ideal world and his epistemological view as well as the Prophet's threefold features posed by Avicenna, and thus he has completed Fārābī's view and analysis. Similarly, he has made use of Avicenna and Sheikh Ishrāq's analysis in philosophy of legislation.

Mullā Ṣadrā's explanation of revelation in *al-Mabda' wal-Ma'ād* is that human's soul is apt to manifest the truth of things. Some veils hinder the manifestation of truth of things and also hinder the manifestation of what is in the Preserved Tablet (*Lowḥ Maḥfūẓ*) in the soul. If there were no such veils, the truths of sciences would manifest to the prophet's soul from the mirror of intellect or the Preserved Tablet. Removing the existing veil is sometimes done in the hands of the human, and sometimes with the breeze of the divine grace (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1381 SH, vol.2, pp. 807-808).

To achieve the explanation and prepare the addressee's mind, Mullā Ṣadrā starts his discussion from the dream and its definition (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1381 SH, vol.2, p. 781). With the freedom of human's soul from being occupied with sensory inputs and removal of obstacles from the soul, the human's soul is prepared for connection with the spiritual intellectual substances, wherein the roles of all beings are there and is called the Preserved Tablet in the

religious law, or the soul substances, wherein the forms of details are there. The human's soul receives, by connecting to the intellectual or soul substances, the truths wherein the substances are there. If the necessary tools were available and there were no veil, impression of the sublime substances in the soul on the forms is like impression of the form from one mirror in another mirror.[1]

Removal of the veil between the mirror of the soul and the mirror of the sublime substance requires some causes[2] including the purity of natural soul, taking the soul away from the world, scientific austerity, volitional death or the natural death or sleep. Sleep is in short the giving up of using senses and in this regard is the brother of death. If the forms received in sleep are minor and are retained and the imaginative faculty does not interfere in it, the dream is true and does not need interpretation. If the imaginative faculty interferes, then the imaginative faculty turns it into analogy and akin, like turning 'knowledge' into 'milk'. This is because, on the basis of coincidence of the worlds, any rational meaning has a form in the universe. Since the 'knowledge' strengthens the soul, it is like milk for the intellect. Thus, 'milk' which is a delicious and delicate food is the idea and analogy for the 'knowledge'. Mullā Ṣadrā has narrated some of the dreams and the related interpretations, and uses this point to show that interpretation of dreams is something that indicates the use of ideas. The important point is that the divine prophets would speak to people according to this usage of analogies, and it was the prophets' obligation to speak with people in a way that they would understand them. Since the people's intellects are the analogy of the exalted intellects, talking to them must be on the basis of the analogies of the true teachings. The level of the people's intellect is known from the fact that they are asleep, and one who is asleep would not comprehend anything except by analogies. When they die, they would awake and realize that the

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1. We will give some explanation on 'impression' later on.

2. See the initial form of exposition in Fārābī, *Mabādī Ārā Ahl al-Madīna al-Fāẓila,* p.108.

analogy was true.[1]

Analogy means presenting meaning in a form that is true if one considers the meaning, and is false if one considers the form (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1381 SH, vol.2, pp. 781-784, 807-812).

How does the human's soul receive the rational meanings and turn them into forms? The answer is that the human's soul has two aspects: one pertains to the invisible world and the hereafter, and the other pertains to the visible world which is this world. If the former, which Mullā Ṣadrā calls *jahat-e quds* (i.e. the sacred aspect) dominates the human's soul, the truth of things necessarily appears to it and its light illuminates the other aspect which is worldly aspect. The aspect that pertains to the invisible world is the entry of revelation and inspiration, and the aspect that pertains to the visible world creates the images and analogies of the truths.

Imagination is of two types. Sometimes, it is the result of senses, and sometimes, it is resulted from looking at the inner side of the invisible world. In the former, which is the result of sensory look at the visible world, it is possible that the form coincide with the meaning, just like the face of a beautiful person with a bad character whose form is different from his inward. But the form that is resulted from the illumination of the celestial world to the inward of the soul suggests the true attributes and coincides with the true meaning and form of the rational affair. This is because the form of the celestial world subordinates the true meaning and attribute. Thus, the vicious meaning such as Satan is seen in a bad form such as dog and pig, and the beautiful meaning such as angel in seen in a pretty form. This true form rightly represents the meaning (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1381 SH, vol. 2, pp. 785-786, 813-814).

The Three Features of the Prophet

Based on the threefold worlds of ratiocination, imagination and feeling, the

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1. This refers to the following hadith: "The people are asleep. When they die, they would awake."

miracles and miraculous deeds are possible on three bases: (a) *the strong and perfect ratiocination* drives the man towards association with saints and God's friends and attaching to them; (b) *the strong imagination* or *imaginative faculty* leads to observing ideal ghosts and invisible persons as well as realizing detailed news and being informed of past and future events; and (c) *the strong sensory faculty*, which is close to stimulation faculty, leads to passivity of matters and humility of physical faculties and natures. The human's perfection degree is that the three faculties be strongly present in him so that he would deserve to be God's vicegerent (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1381 SH, vol. 2, p. 801).

Philosophy of Legislation

Having analyzed the revelation and prophethood, Mullā Ṣadrā goes to philosophy and legislation and considers the human's social life as an introduction to his discussion. Human being is naturally a civilized creature and his system of life depends on civilization, community and cooperation. Thus, the human beings need, in their transactions and interactions, a law as their point of reference. That law is the religious law or *Sharʿ*.

Therefore, there must be necessarily a legislator that determines their worldly affairs and subsistence and sets a way for achieving the high level of proximity to the Exalted God, reminding them of the hereafter. That legislator must inescapably be a human being (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1381 SH, vol. 2, p. 815-817).[1]

The angel of revelation (i.e. Gabriel) is the medium between God and the Prophet, and the Prophet is the medium between the revelation angel and the Infallible Imams, and the Infallible Imams are the mediums between the Prophet and the religious scholars, and the religious scholars are the mediums between the Infallible Imams and the people (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1381

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1. Cf. Avicenna, 1376 SH, *al-Ilāhiyāt min Kitāb Shifā,* Hassan-zada Āmulī, Qom, Office for Islamic Propagation of Seminary Center, pp. 491-507

SH, vol. 2, pp. 817-818). Mullā Ṣadrā presents in detail an analysis of policies and presidency of the Medina on the basis of Fārābī's analysis in his *Mabādī Ārā Ahl al-Madīna al-Fāḍila* along with some modification and expositions (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1381 SH, vol. 2, pp. 819-828).[1]

Mullā Ṣadrā introduces the purpose of religions to be driving people to proximity of God. This purpose becomes possible by knowing the Exalted God and the divine attributes as well as belief in the angels and the prophets and the hereafter. The purpose of religions in this world is realized and becomes possible with lives and properties. Thus, Mullā Ṣadrā regards the philosophy of religious laws to be knowing the Exalted God and protecting the lives and properties. For him, the purpose of religious laws is refining human beings and making them achieve intellectual perfection, etc. (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1381 SH, vol.2, pp. 829-831).

Explanation of revelation in *al-Ḥikmat al-Muta ʿāliya*

In his *al-Ḥikmat al-Muta ʿāliya,* Mullā Ṣadrā makes use of analyses presented by Avicenna and Ibn ʿArabī. Mullā Ṣadrā's analysis in that book is harmonious with and overlapping his analysis in *Mafātūḥ al-Ghayb.* Mullā Ṣadrā's view, especially his analysis on the Holy Quran's orders and states can be the starting point for a theory of interpretation. It seems that just as we see in the introduction to *Tafsīr al-Mīzān,* ʿAllāma Ṭabāṭabāī seeks to prove some of those orders and states suggested by Mullā Ṣadrā. Mullā Ṣadrā himself has followed his own exegetical view in his *Tafsīr al-Qurān al-Karīm.*

Mullā Ṣadrā regards revelation as the dialogue[2] between the perfect man and the Exalted God, considering it as the most sublime dialogue. In Mullā Ṣadrā's analysis, the perfect man receives, by hearing with the spiritual heart, the emanation of the true knowledge and divine teachings from the

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1. Cf. Fārābī, *Mabādī Ārā Ahl al-Madīna al-Fāḍila.* Pp. 120-130

2. *Mukālima wa Istimā ʿ*

Exalted God, and by realization with the simple intellect,[1] speaks with the true words. The status of the simple intellect is to emanate the detailed knowledge to the soul. Having become the simple intellect, the perfect man speaks of the true knowledge and true teachings, and depicts the abstract objective truths, with his words, in the form of detailed knowledge of the soul, delineating them on the tablet of the soul and the imagination (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1380 SH, pp. 7-8).

Mullā Ṣadrā uses the following terminologies for describing the divine revelation of the Holy Quran: *Kalāmullāh* (i.e. God's words) and *Kitābullāh* (i.e God's book). These two differ. Their difference is that *Kalāmullāh* is simple and from the world of divine command and promptly-coming to existence. But *Kitābullāh* is synthesized, from the world of creation, and gradually-coming to existence. *Kalām* and *Kitāb* are the same from one aspect, and their difference is conventional. That is, when the speaker starts speaking and speaks in terms of the inner wish, his words and phrases have an existential relationship with the agent and a potential relationship with the recipient. His words are *kalām* in view of their existential relation with the agent, and are *kitāb* in view of their potential relation with the recipient. Accordingly, the literal forms are *kalām* in view of their existential relation with the agent, and are *kitāb* in view of their potential relation with the recipient. The soul wherein these rational forms and sensual knowledge are depicted is, from one aspect, the 'book tablet' and, from another aspect, the thinking speaking substance (Ṣadrddīn Shīrāzī, 1380 SH, pp.11-16).

In Mullā Ṣadrā's analysis, the world of [divine] command is the verbal world of divine words and synoptic system, and the creation world is the world of action and is the detailed book corresponding to that synoptic system. *Kalām* turns into *Kitāb* by personification and coming down from the world of commands (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1380 SH, pp.17-18). To explain the beginning and the end of *kalām* and *kitāb,* Mullā Ṣadrā sets a human process

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1. See the simple intellect (*'ql-e Basīṭ* in Avicenna, *al-Ta'līqāt*).

for that as an example and investigates it. In a human process, when someone wants to speak or write a book, (a) the beginning of speech or writing is the simple and synoptic rational form created in his reasoning soul; (b) the effect of that simple and synoptic rational form is created, in the state of rational exposition, in his reasoning soul (*al-qalb al-ma'nawī* i.e. the spiritual heart); (c) an effect of that rational exposition emerges in the imaginative soul (*al-ṣadr al-ma'nawī* i.e. the spiritual chest); (d) the effect of what has emerged in the imaginative soul appears in the form of an external sensible thing, that is the sound, the letter and the page of paper (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1380 SH, vol. 2, p.29).

Mullā Ṣadrā analyzes the mode of coming down of the *kalām* and *kitāb* as follows: with the separation of the human soul from the body and his migration towards God and his purity from filth of sins, pleasures, passions and belongings, the light of knowledge and faith in the Exalted God appears for the human's soul. After the strength and substantiation, this light becomes a scared substance called the active intellect by the philosophers and *Rūḥ Qudsī* by the religion. With this strong rational light, the mysteries of the earth and the heaven and the truths of things are manifested for the human's soul.

If the human's soul who is migrating towards God is a sacred and strong soul, by placing itself in the common limits between the earth and the heaven, one state does not hinder him from another state, and the higher position does not hinder him from the lower position; thus, it takes both sides and its strength covers both sides. This sacred soul receives the divine teachings from the Glorified God; the effect of this reception reaches its faculties and what is observed by the sacred soul is represented for the human soul, emerging from the human soul to the external senses, especially the hearing and seeing. Therefore, the man sees, with his eyes, the divine angel in the form of a sensible person with ultimate beauty, and hears, with his ears the divine words as rhythmic ultimately beautiful eloquent words. This represented thing enjoys external realization and is not the abstract

imaginative form with no existence outside the mind and imagination (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1380 SH, pp.31-33). In his Ascend, the Prophet meets the first line of the angels and observes the sacred soul in wakefulness. When the prophet's soul joins the world of the angels, which is the world of divine revelation, he hears God's words which are the proclamation of truths in real words. This emanation and being emanated occurs in the position of '*qāb qowsayn ow adnā*' (i.e. two bow's length or even nearer), which is the position of proximity and true words. When the prophet associates with the highest ranks of the angels, he hears the sounds of their pens and inspiration of their words, as is quoted from the Prophet. The words of the highest ranks of the angels, who are in the position of proximity to God, are God's words. This is because God's words come down in the places of knowledge of the highest ranks of the angels; that is their essences and intellects.

When the Prophet descends from the position of *qāb qowsayn ow adnā*, the form of what he has reasoned and observed is represented in tablet of his soul, which is there in the world of celestial destiny tablets. The effect of this representation reaches the appearance as well, and this causes some feeling like horror and doziness, because as said before, the sacred soul employs the sensory faculties in the path of the Glorified God. Therefore, when the Glorified God addresses him and informs him of the visible world, in the jewel of prophetic soul [or the jewel of the sacred soul (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1386 SH, vol.1, p.59)] or the 'jewel of the rational soul' [(Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1366 SH, vol.7, p.116)] the impression of celestial realm and the form of sovereignty emerges, and the analogy of revelation and its carrier is manifested for him; the faculty of external sense is attracted towards the celestial world and the form inseparable from the true meaning and soul is represented for him, and is also represented for the formed soul, which is not separated from its true meaning and soul. Thus, the truth of angel is represented in a sensible and proper form for the Prophet, and he sees an angel of the divine angels in a form other than its own form in the world of [divine] commands, hearing the rational revelation in the form of listenable words, or seeing a written tablet

in the angel's hand. Thus, the Prophet is firstly attached to the angel with his intellectual soul and receives divine knowledge, observes the greatest divine signs with his intellectual eye, and hears the words of the Lord of the worlds from the Great Spirit. Thus, when the Prophet descends from that high divine position, the angel is represented for him in the sensible form and streams into his external sense and the outside air. Similarly, *kalām* also descend from the invisible world to the visible and from the inward to the outward. Thus, each of the angel and *kalām* and *kitāb* is taken from the invisible and inward of the mystery to the intellectual faculties. This is not in the form of the motion of the angel of revelation from its homeland and position. Rather, its point of reference is the transfer of the prophet's soul from the invisible mode to the visible. The meaning of coming down of the Book and sending down the Words from the Lord of the worlds is in the way stated (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1380 SH, pp.31-35). Therefore, the Quran is in one status the verses of intellectual words, in other status the tablet book, and still in another status the created being and the listenable words or the written visual impressions in pages. That is, the truth is one, and its manifestations are numerous (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1380 SH, pp.38-39).

The Quran is, like the man, divided into covert and overt aspects, and each of them is divided, in turn, into inward and outward. The outward of the overt Quran is the collection of the pages and the written texts on them. The inward of the overt Quran is what one's inner feeling gets along with quantitative accidents. These two ranks of the Quran are worldly, and any man perceives those ranks.

The outward and inward of the Quran's covert side are two otherworldly ranks and each has orders, ranks, degrees and states. The outward of the Quran's covert side is what one realizes by imagining the limits and truths of meanings without external appendices and effects. This common meaning is realized by human's soul when he detaches from the creation state and reaches the command state.

The orders of perception in human's soul are as follows: (a) the man

sometimes perceives things in the order of body and senses; (b) he sometimes receives the rational knowledge from the world of imagination and individual representation; (c) he sometimes receives the rational knowledge with its rational substance, which is from the world of [divine] commands; and (d) he receives the divine knowledge from the Glorified God without any veil for intellect, which is pertaining to the world of command and policy, or sense, which is pertaining to the world of creation and predestination, because what is above creation and [divine] command is hidden from the sense and intellect. Thus, the light of truth is not perceived except with the light of truth, and one cannot achieve it by strength of command and creation.

The words of the Exalted God, because of being word, before descending to the world of commands – which is the Preserved Tablet – and before descending to the sky of this world – which is the tablet for effacement and establishment – and descending to the world of creation and predestination, enjoyed the divine high status which is not known except by God, and no prophet would find it out except in the position of Oneness. The great verse 7 of the chapter *Āl-i ʿImrān* of the Holy Quran refers to the same fact: "No one knows its explanation except Allah and those who are of sound instruction…"

In sum, the Quran has, like the man, degrees and states. The lowest rank of the Quran is the book inside the cover. The superficial man realizes just the surface of the Quran. He realizes only the superficial concepts, the stated points, the practical precepts and the legal policies. The spirit and the deep mystery of the Quran is realized by the *Ulu-l Albāb* (i.e. the owners of the reason). This is because one cannot achieve the truth of the wisdom except by the compassionate emanation [of God] (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1380 SH, pp.51-55).

Conclusion

As seen before, Mullā Ṣadrā's analysis and explanation of revelation is placed inside the framework of the Islamic tradition of political philosophy. In the Islamic tradition of political philosophy, the analysis of revelation answers two main questions of political philosophy, i.e. government and

law. Mullā Ṣadrā's analysis deals with these two subjects and answers the related questions. The Prophet enjoys the characteristics necessary for a ruler. In the next orders, the infallible imams enjoy the same characteristics. Similarly, the human's social life and his social evolution require *sharīʿa* (i.e. religious law). The philosophy of the religious decrees returns to acquiring the divine knowledge and protecting the lives and properties. The religious decrees have been organized on the bases of the correspondence between the worlds as well as the effect of actions on souls and the effect of souls' states on body. This, in turn, leads to the mutual effect of the worlds on the basis of the relationship between sensory world and ideal and intellectual worlds, as explained by Mullā Ṣadrā in detail. The philosophy of jurisprudence or the legal philosophy explained by Mullā Ṣadrā can result in serious consequences in the sphere of jurisprudence and law, which needs another opportunity to explain in detail. Mullā Ṣadrā's views and those of other Muslim philosophers arises questions regarding the relationship between religion and philosophy, the Prophet and the philosophers, and coincidence or non-coincidence of divine revelation in all worlds. In discussion on results, it is needed to answer some questions.

The relationship between religion and philosophy

(a) Sometimes, by religion we mean the religion revealed by God; and (b) sometimes, by religion we mean what exists or existed by this name among people. Here, we mean the first meaning of the religion; that is the religion revealed by God.

Similarly, (a) sometimes, by philosophy we mean the science that identifies the truths of things; and sometimes, by philosophy we mean the science known by this name among the human beings. Philosophy in the latter meaning may be right or wrong, while in the former sense is necessarily right with no error in it, although it is not clear how much it is accessible in the real world of human beings.

In this case, the religion in the former sense contains the philosophy in the former sense. That is, the religion has a rational core and legislates on the

basis of the truth of things. Now, are the religious people aware of that rational core? Or do those who come after the divine prophets and their legitimate successors, who are the religious scholars, infer and reason on the basis of awareness of the truth of things? These questions are now out of the sphere of our discussion. Regarding the same issue, Fārābī formulates and organizes some questions that, in his view, serve more really for inferring and reasoning inside a religion. In this regard, Mullā Ṣadrā classifies the scholars into numerous groups and explains which group is closer to the truth of religion and reception of religious laws and the right reasoning (Ṣadruddīn Shīrāzī, 1386 SH, pp.774-775; see Yazdānī Muqaddam, 1395 SH, pp.376-379, 388-389).

The relationship between the prophethood and being a philosopher

Considering the two abovementioned meanings for religion and philosophy, one can mention the 'divine prophets' and 'those who are famous as the prophet'. Similarly, we may refer to the 'real philosophers' and 'non-real philosophers'. Fārābī also enumerates groups of philosophers (Fārābī, 1983, pp.94-96). Among them, it is the true philosopher that can be compared to the divine prophets. In this regard, Fārābī enumerates, in his *Fuṣūl Muntaziʿa,* differences between the philosopher and, at least, a group of prophets; and in *al-Milla, al-Siyāsat al-Madaniyya,* and *Mabādī Ārāʾ Ahl al-Madīna al-Fāḍila,* goes more or less towards unity between the prophet and the philosopher. Mullā Ṣadrā has adopted this late view of Fārābī (Ṣadruddī Shīrāzī, 1381SH, vol.2, p.814).

Coincidence of divine revelation in all worlds

Another important issue in explanation of revelation by Muslim philosophers is the coincidence of revelation. Mullā Ṣadrā asserts, many times, the coincidence of divine revelation in worlds on the basis of coincidence of worlds. Such coincidence is found in the comments of other Muslim philosophers as well, because they also believe in a certain order and

arrangements among the worlds of existence and, on the basis of such a view, there is no justification for evading and non-coincidence. Thus, for the Muslim philosophers, the Prophet receives the very truth in the position of God's oneness, "*qāb qowsayn ow adnā*" and the Preserved Tablet in the form proper for the human world and humans' relations, and transfers it in a way that is comprehensible for the human beings as the addressees of divine revelation. The addressees of revelation can, through scrutiny and contemplation, reach the truth of revelation in higher worlds through this reduced revelation. Thus, these revealed words are a way for the human's ascendance.[1] Therefore, from the theorizing and explanation offered by the Muslim philosophers about revelation, one can infer and extract the theoretical foundations and necessary elements for some sort of hermeneutics that must be studied in its proper place.

The difference between Mullā Ṣadrā's view and those of other Muslim philosophers in analyzing revelation

In his *al-Mabdaʾ wal-Maʿād,* Mullā Ṣadrā has made Fārābī's *Mabādī Āraʾ Ahl al-Madīna al-Fāḍila* as his model and, more or less, offers his analysis and his view on the basis of the subject matters presented by Fārābī in that book. Thus, Mullā Ṣadrā theorizes in the framework of Fārābī's political philosophy.

Mullā Ṣadrā processes the issues discussed in *al-Mabdaʾ wal-Maʿād* in a certain way in *al-Shawāhid ar-Rubūbiyya,* and still considers Fārābī's model. As a genuine thinker, Mullā Ṣadrā considers new meanings of past concepts in both *al-Mabdaʾ wal-Maʿād* and *al-Shawāhid ar-Rubūbiyya,* and offers new analyses and views. Here, it should be noted that Mullā Ṣadrā repeatedly mentions in his works that Fārābī's analysis and that of other philosophers, whom he calls peripatetic, is different from his analyses in – at least – two aspects. One is considering the world of ideas in orders of worlds

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1. *Iqraʾ wal-qaʾ* (i.e. 'read and ascend' something said to the reciters of the Quran in Judgment Day according to a hadith.)

– which is the view specific to Sheikh Ishrāq and his followers – and the other is the soul's knowledge of truths of existence in various worlds – whether it is in the form of impression of forms in the soul and the soul's faculties or in the form of creation of proper forms by the soul. Mullā Ṣadrā attributes 'impression' to peripatetic philosophers and offers and pursues his own view regarding knowledge.

The difference between Mullā Ṣadrā's view and other Muslim philosophers on the philosophy of legislation

In analyses and views proposed by Fārābī and Avicenna, the relationship of the intellectual core of religion and religious laws with the *Sharī'a's* laws and regulations is quite clear and its effect on philosophy of legislating religious laws for Fārābī and Avicenna and their works can be observed. They investigate and analyze religion and religious laws in the framework of political philosophy, as it is the Shiite basis and leaning to consider, on the basis of the teachings of the Infallible Imams, religion and religious laws to be rational and argumentative and necessary for fulfilling the human's good. The holy Quran often invites its addressees to think and scrutinize on the divine verses, asking them to judge about the Quranic verses and the Prophet's claims to see whether they are from God or not (the Quran, Nisā, 82). It even offers an empirical way in the form of a challenge (*taḥaddī*) (the Quran, Baqara, 23) for its addressees. In regard with this philosophy of legislation, it should be noted that in Mullā Ṣadrā's analysis and view, we face more with the philosophy of *Sharī'a* than with the philosophy of legislation. However, Mullā Ṣadrā presents a model for legislation and returns religious laws to knowing the Glorified God as well as protecting lives and properties.

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