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Investigating Mulla Sadra's Theory of Agency and its Effects on the Role of Happy Man

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ABSTRACT

The subject of happiness has always been a focus of theologian philosophers. Happiness is a concept which Muslim philosophers have investigated in different ways. In this connection, Mulla Sadra has explained happiness based on an ontological approach of his Transcendental Wisdom to define human happiness as the promotion of and achievement of a good life. He establishes a concomitant relationship between pleasure and happiness on the one hand. On the other hand, the perception of pleasure in happiness semantics found his philosophical efforts to interpret this very important issue in the perfectible course of levels of reason, with the perfectibility actualizing from a potentially materialistic body into an immaterial soul. According to this approach and a new perspective on the agency by foreknowledge based on Sadra's theological knowledge, an explanation of a happy man's position can be provided wherein man achieves the acquired reason and unites with the active intellect originating from the agency by foreknowledge to mediate between the creation of the universe and manipulation with it; hence, the role of the happy man can be reasonably explained by a well-established philosophical basis.

Keywords: happiness, active intellect, theologian knowledge, agency by foreknowledge, happy man

INTRODUCTION

Man and happiness or perfection are the principal themes of any theological school. For Muslim philosophers, happiness is defined in two real and unreal spheres. In Transcendental Wisdom, Mulla Sadra emphasizes the definition of happiness to describe the human's ultimate perfection to be the attainment of the position of the proximity of God and enjoyment of divine attributes, which include power over doing things, figuratively called *dignity*, which Suhrevardi, following mystics, describes it to be the position of "Koun²" or "be":

Immateriality has a special position, and it is the forms it takes upon its will; the position is that of "be" (Suhrevardi, 1996, p. 2).

As professor Hasanzadeh suggested, this definition which concerns the happiness of the reasoning soul is a firm expression. The reasoning soul attains the full happiness of the holder of the "be" position; one who possesses the universe and manipulates it whenever it wishes by

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² Be (command form)

the name of the names of Allah the Almighty that it possesses (Hasanzadeh, 2002:166) as agency and emanation of the world of the manifold from God the Sublime constitute the major debates of theology. In other words, what man attains during his perfectibility course, is the achievement of the position of dignity, which is discussed in Islamic mysticism. Islamic wisdom uses the issue of agency to make this theory argumentative and reasonable.

This issue creates and motivates questions that this research seeks to answer: According to Sadra's theory of agency by foreknowledge, how is the created role of a happy man explained within the world of existence? How does analysis and explanation of happiness in this approach transcend? How can human happiness be interpreted based on the divine agency?

This research investigates the basics of transcendence wisdom in terms of happiness and agency to examine the agency by foreknowledge which helps explain the ultimate end of a happy man.

Happy Man in the Sadra's Transcendence Wisdom

A happy man is a concept wherein the human's life perfection is materialized. Understanding this perfection requires understanding the meaning of happiness in Transcendence Wisdom. Mulla Sadra takes a profound look at the principality of existence to provide an epistemological analysis of happiness; the principality of existence is good, and happiness and its perception are another good and happiness. In his works, Mulla Sadra uses the concepts of happiness, intellectual pleasure, good, and perfection alongside each other (Mulla Sadr, 1984:586). When interpreting the Qur'an, he considers human nature to be knowledge of objects that results in attaining happiness and pleasure (Mulla Sadra, 1986:70, vol. 7).

As expressed by Mulla Sadra, intellectual pleasure and happiness are used interchangeably. In the valuable book "Asfar Arba'e", Mulla Sadra writes:

No doubt, pleasure is the understanding of what is compatible and harmonious, and pain is the understanding of what is incompatible and disharmonious; thus, it is clear that compatibility for anything reveals its perfection (Ibid, 1981: vol. 4, p. 142).

Since pleasure and happiness are non-divergent, non-interactive, and non-equated terms, they are believed to be in a concomitant relation (Khadami, 2006:123 & Kavandi, 2012:197).

Mulla Sadra views pleasure and, consequently, happiness to arise from perceptions; thus, pleasure can be regarded as an equivocal matter which requires perception to be achieved. For this, pleasure is considered to have such levels as perception, perceived, and perceiver. Accordingly, in the book "Mafatih Al-Gheib," Mulla Sadra divided pleasures into two types: sensory and intellectual³ (Mulla Sadra, 1984c: 586). Also, in the book "Shawahed Al-Raboubya", Mulla expresses the issue of happiness and references illusionary and imaginary happiness (Mulla Sadra, 1980b:257).

Consistent with the concomitant relation of pleasure and happiness and understanding the meaning of pleasure, the issue of happiness can be investigated. For Mulla Sadra, happiness denotes meeting what nature requires; for every faculty, meeting what is required by a faculty

³ Intellectual happiness is realized on the basis of intellectual perception, and animal happiness refers to perfection as a result of sensory perceptions; Mulla Sadra considers the intellectual happiness to be superior than the animal happiness, because the former has a stronger quality and greater quantity (Ibid, 2004, vol. 4, p. 300).

is referred to as the perfection of that faculty. The perfection of every faculty is the same type or genus as the same faculty. Accordingly, since Mulla Sadra considers the human soul to be what appears to be “in whose unity get together all the faculties” (sensory, imaginary, illusionary, and intellectual faculties) (Mulla Sadra, 1981: vol. 9; pp. 82-84); thus, the happiness and perfection of the human soul are in the intellectual perfection, which is the same perception of real pleasures (intellectual pleasure). The least of this level is knowledge of divine qualities (Ibid, 2000, p. 366).

As referred to in the definition of pleasure, according to Mulla Sadra’s theory of principality of existence, existence is the main element for attaining happiness. From the perspective of transcendental wisdom, existence is happiness, and awareness of it is another happiness; existence, however, has several levels, the noblest of which is the *First Existence*, as happiness varies by differing levels of awareness (Ibid, 2000, pp. 362-363).

Mulla Sadra has investigated this subject in the valuable work of Asfar Arba’*e*, suggesting that existence denotes good and happiness and awareness of existence is also good and happiness. Consistent with the Gradation of Existence Theory, beings differ from each other and are superior to each other due to perfection and imperfection; therefore, the more perfect the beings, the greater their purity and freedom from non-existence, and the greater happiness they attain; meanwhile, the more they are imperfect, the greater they mixed with evil and misery. The most perfect of beings, the noblest of which is the *first Truth*, the Almighty, followed by the *first effusion* (Ibid, 1981; vol. 9, pp. 121-122).

As earlier noted, considering the principality and gradation of existence in Sadra’s philosophical worldview, happiness is also equivocal. It is an existential subject whose hierarchy depends on perception, perceiver, and perceived levels. The more these three are superior, the happiness is superior because the effect with the cause is perfectly compatible with each other; thus, intellectual pleasure, which is the most superior level of pleasure, is considered by the perception of its level of existence, the highest level of pleasures in the *first reason*, which is the most superior level of bounded existence; thereby intellectual pleasure owns the most superior level of happiness due to the concomitance of pleasure and happiness, with other levels of creatures having levels of pleasures and happiness, by the perception of their levels of existence. Therefore, for Muslim philosophers, when man attains the position of reason, he has attained the position of happiness in a way that his conducts in the hierarchy of reasons to the first reason (*active*



intellect) are directed at achieving the superior position of happiness⁴; for this, happy man, as such, is the same perfect human in the Islamic mysticism⁵.

Factors that help a man achieve ultimate happiness in transcendental wisdom

In Transcendental Wisdom, knowledge and action are considered factors that help a man achieve ultimate happiness. Mulla Sadra sees action as one of the wings of the wayfarer to fly out of the satanic paradise and return to the humane paradise (Mulla Sadra, 2000, p. 204). Although Mulla does not dismiss the role of action in human happiness and considers it one of the factors of happiness or adversity, he maintains, as suggested by the prelude to the book “Asrar A-Ayat,” that knowledge precedes action. He likens the knowledge of the scholar and the worship of the worshipper to the light of the moon and the light of the stars because in worship,

⁴ From among the reasons, the one selected to the position of the actual reason, will go higher to the universe of reasons, after death and separation from the body. Some parts of the actual reason will become an intellectual universe; thus, turning similar to and the same as the objective universe, with the universe of being, in its entirety, embellishing this reason. As in the first stage, it was in the arc of descent, in the next stage, it will be in the arc of ascent. This human’s actual reason which is the same as the intellectual universe is, in fact, the same as the external and objective universe, with the same nature, though being different in terms of severity and weakness; however, this does not contradict unity of their nature; thus, this human includes the greater universe and contains what is other than Allah, as if all creatures of the universe of creation, from the earth to the heavens, are signs of Him.

- A) ⁵ The Mutavasseting (People of Ahl-e-Yamin, i.e., those with their sheets of deeds on their right hands): Mulla Sadra has described happiness of the Mutavasseting people (people with moderate level of purity) under the category of Ahl-e-Yamin, suggesting that their souls are cleaned of sins and despicable things; their hearts are stripped of inward diseases; thus, their happiness, although being sensory and include such things as the paradise, Houris and palaces, they are brought out of darkness and remain safe from conflicts inflicted on them by the higher means and the agent universe- without the engagement of the matter and its situational directions. For this, they will reside in the Paradise where there is no corruption. Mulla Sadra argues that since the holy legislator knows that not all humane people will promote to ranks and levels of reason or of cognition, he laid for them austerity and bodily practices as well as assignments that opposed their natural caprice, while protecting their humane forms. For this, He specified a rule for them within the invocations (worships and eulogies) so that they would not forget about it, as it is more inclusive and gives a greater sense. This is because this rule relates to the human appearances and hinders people from being likened to animal people (Mulla Sadra, 1986, vol. 1, pp. 378 and 380; Ibid, 1981, p. 133).
- B) The Al-Sabeghoun Al-Mogharraboun: This group of people are the perfect ones in knowledge and conducts; those whose purity has helped them achieve true knowledge. Mulla Sadra considers the perfect humans as a Pure Tree, the fruition of which is true knowledge and the fruit of which is certain knowledge. He also considers the Tuba Tree to be the happy soul (Mulla Sadra, 2006:141). Accordingly, these people should be considered the happiest of people who have attained the superior levels, receiving divine lights in the divine gardens (Mulla Sadra, 1981, vol. 1, p. 302).



a kind of knowledge that latently associates the worshipper's action is the condition of action (which denotes an intention) (Mulla Sadra, 1989, vol. 2, p. 63).

In transcendental wisdom, "knowledge is not a negating affair like immateriality from matter or an extra thing; rather, it is the same as existence, not the potential existence, but the actual one; not any actual existence, but a pure one, not blended with non-existence; and the more it is free from matter and corruption of non-existence, the more it is stronger and firmer in being knowledge" (Mulla Sadra, 1981, vol. 3, p. 297). According to philosopher Sabzevari, knowledge is like an extending existence in the world of existence; as the extending existence, being the general divine grace, spreads over the external natures and is not essentially substance, accident, soul, or anything else; rather, it is a permissible accident by the substantiality of substance and accidentality of an accident. Also, knowledge in the human universe extends existence over subjective natures, is the grace and illumination of the soul, and is far beyond substance or accident (Sabzevari, 1981. p. 439).

According to the rule of the unity of the knower and the known, man gets united with the truth. Knowledge and perceptions of the soul over the perceived and the known serve as emanation and illumination of light from the Truth over the possibilities, with the soul being the example and sign of the Truth of the Almighty. Thus, as existence denotes the manifestation of nature and demonstration of those natures in the eyes, knowledge also denotes the manifestation of the known (Mulla Sadra, 1981, vol. 6, p. 150).

To Mulla Sadra, the single barrier to knowledge and perceptions of existence is matter and its adjuncts which always cause dispersion, scattering, and absence because components of a matter are distinct from other components, with all being hidden from each other. Thus, where this basic barrier is lacking, the creatures are matter, and the adjuncts are immaterial presence and intuition. Consequently, knowledge and perception are also present, and the immateriality from matter, presence, and perceptions will be greater and stronger. A similitude of matter is one of covering or veils; the more it is unveiled, the more it is represented (Ibid, 1984b, p. 50).

Using a paradox, Mulla Sadr has, on the one hand, considered action to be effective in human perfection and, on the other hand, considered human perfection to be dependent on his levels of knowledge; however, using the principles of transcendence wisdom and contemplation into it, one would say that outcome will, no doubt, consider truth knowledge to be a decent action. Thus, according to Sadra's theory of agency by foreknowledge, perfection in knowledge and perceptions will result in perfection in action. On the other hand, a numerical role should be attributed to human action, and human deeds should be considered as the prelude to the purification and refinement of the inward acquisition of knowledge, with the outcome of knowledge acquisition and conduct of the good deed constituting the perfectibility of the worlds of reason.

Mulla Sadra emphasizes the critical role of knowledge in ethical action, in the acquisition of ethical habits, and in determining the nature of humans; he suggests that "the ultimate end of knowledge is action, as the benefit of the action is the purification of the outward and the inward, and the benefit of the inward purification is the achievement of different forms of true knowledge" (Mulla Sadra, 1964, p. 74).

The salient point would be that Mulla Sadra, in the quote, "there is a great difference between actions of the heart and those of clay, with differences abound," considers the role of knowledge-



based perfections in knowledge-based perfection and, finally, in ethical perfection to be exclusively related to divine knowledge and revelations (Ibid). In the same vein, to determine the ethics of religious leaders, especially the apostles and the infallible Imams (PBUT), one can refer to the essential role of knowledge, including revelations and metaphysical inspirations that have left immense effects on the lives of those great men (Mulla Sadra, 1964, p. 74 & Mesbah Yazdi, 1999, p. 186).

Another key point is that Mulla emphasizes the necessity of acquiring divine knowledge. Determination of bodies of knowledge (e.g., divinity, monotheism, separation, angels, and knowledge of revelations as well as missions, Sharia, and the Hereafter and its details) is seen as a condition for each believer (Ibid, p. 110). In contrast, ignorance of divine knowledge, despite ways and facilities to acquire it, is seen as the top of all adversity, which results in sensual diseases (Mulla Sadra, 2002, p. 5).

Human's material dimension in the course of perfectibility

As earlier mentioned, in the explanation of the position of a happy man, Mulla Sadra provides his philosophical innovation and assigns one part of his valuable book "Asfar Araba'e to discuss the rule "*It is reasonable of the object to become immaterial of matter*" and introduces arguments to prove it (Ibid, 1981 vol. 3, pp. 447-471). Since, in his perspective, perception is impossible without immateriality from matter, he considers not only the reasoning faculty but also the imagination faculty and, generally, the perceiving faculty to be immaterial, thus introducing several arguments for it. He promotes the famous categorization of knowledge into presence and acquired by emphasizing the knowledge by presence. For him, knowledge is either acquired through observation by the presence or through reasoning using adjuncts, which could yield weak cognition (Shirazi, 1981, vol. 1, p. 53). Thus, the less soul belongs to matter and body, conditions for the realization of knowledge by presence, which has full noumenal conformity, will be met. Human knowledge-based and cognitive development helps his course of perfectibility. From the perspective of Islamic wisdom, man is moving toward attaining perfection. Since knowledge and existence are concomitant affairs, the human's cognitive and perfectible course will be one in the direction of the universes of existence.

Therefore, the creatures of the matter world are constantly changing and moving towards actualization and perfectibility, with their final destination being the imaginal world (lower celestial world) and the world of intelligence (almightiness and higher celestial world); thus, the creatures of this world are moving towards immateriality based on a substantial course.

The relationship between these three worlds is longitudinal; i.e., the imaginal world is the inward and truth of the matter world, and the world of intelligence is the inward and truth of the imaginal world. Interpreting the Surah *Waghi'a*, Mulla Sadra founds the trio of the worlds on the human senses, considering the human being in every world with special senses, as he may occupy one of those worlds in terms of his level of perfection and take on forms in those worlds (i.e., he perceives and has his soul imprinted by those forms) (Ibid, 1984a, p. 43). Therefore, the human's knowledge level determines his position in the world of existence. The more a human being enjoys stronger knowledge and perceptions, the his existence will be firmer, thus turning from outward towards inward. In other words, the human soul's perfectible course develops from sensory perception to imaginary and intellectual perception, as the world of intelligence stands at the highest perfection level of the human being. For this, in Shawahed Al-Rabubya,



Mulla Sadra sees the soul-specific perfection in unity with the general reason where all the levels of the bounded existence, from the entire, complete system to the last level of existence, are established, which return to the substance of the world of intelligence:

In sum, the soul's perfectibility course is a movement from faculty into actuality, as the human's intellectual perfection is materialized in the actual conduct. This actuality does not belong to the material body; rather, consistent with the corporality-based theory of Al-Hodouth, Al-Rouhany Wa Al-Bagha, it belongs to the human's reasoning soul. What matter will provide for the perfectible course is the form of potentiality for realizing the soul's perfection and actuality. Thus, a happy man has a sublime reasoning soul, and this sublimity comes from intellectual perfection. This attitude first indicates the views of transcendental wisdom for human perfection and, secondly, refers to the effective role of cognition, knowledge, and intellectual perception.

Philosophical becoming of happiness

As stated, happiness is to attain *compatible nature*, which is the perfection of the soul; this perfection is not realized from the perspective of transcendence wisdom unless it is based on the human's perfection for knowledge and his attainment of the active *intellect*. Attainment of this position is, of course, the first step in intellectual happiness, with the direction leading towards the observation of the Truth the Almighty, which is the position of the Mogharrebin (i.e., those in the proximity of God).

In other words, Sadra regards the ultimate end and the final cause of the created beings to be intellectual beings (Ibid, p. 100), with the unity of the *active intellect* being like the unity of the intelligent and the intelligible (Ibid, 1981a, pp. 116-117).

Philosophers have also focused on the position of active *intellect* in the direction of human perfection of soul/reason levels. According to this theory, soul/reason goes through the following fourfold levels from faculty to full actuality⁶.

1. **Intellectus reason:** In this stage, the soul is the pure faculty devoid of virtues (Ibid, 1981, vol. 7, p. 260). Because it can take on perceptual forms, it is likened to *materia prima*, which is initially an equivocal thing. However, after the soul's journey and establishment of forms, it is a *referred* thing, thereby becoming the entire object through talent (Ibid, vol. 3, pp. 21-22).
2. **Habitus reason:** When the primary intelligible people share is provided for the human being, the primary perfection has been created for the reasoning soul, which is called habitus reason. Thus, the second perfection arises from reason because of its potentiality (Ibid, 1960b, p. 205). By habitus, it means what stands against faculty (Sabzevari, 198, p. 670).
3. **Actual reason:** It refers to the level at which that soul achieves theoretical knowledge using inference from self-evident knowledge and contemplates it; this secondary perfection is passive for a reason and arises from the acquisition of interfaces over habitus reason perception, with the soul observing whatever it wishes without any complexity (Mulla Sadra, 1980b, pp. 205-206)⁷.

⁶ See Kamalizadeh, Taherah, 2014, Meanings and applications of reason in the dissertation "Fi Al-Aghl" by Farabi, Ghabasat Journal

⁷ At this time, reason perceives actually, and the actual intelligible and the actual reason become one united thing (Kamalizadeh, 2011, p. 152). Also, Farabi has written a treatise on this topic and discussed this issue in detail.



4. **Acquired reason:** It is the same as the actual reason wherein the intelligible is observed for binding with the active origin; for this, they are called the acquired reason for using the ideal world (Mulla Sadra, 1980, p. 206). When reason in a human is actualized, he will attain the level of acquired reason using actual reason and full actuality. Above all these stages lies the *active intellect* (Kamalizade, 2014, p. 50).

In all these stages of perfectibility, a holy being, the active intellect, directs the soul. Using the Safir-e-Simorgh treatise of Suhrevari, Mulla Sadra considers the active intellect as a phoenix located on Mt. Ghaaf and that whose whistle awakes the sleepy (Ibid, 1981, vol. 9, p. 145). Mulla Sadra's active intellect is a level of reason by which the intellectus reason turns into the habitus reason, as the analogy of this, as suggested by Aristotle, resembles that of light for the eyes and visibilities, i.e., just as light is the cause of visible colors that are at the stage of faculty, the active intellect has made them actual observer; also, this intellect has turned the intellectus reason, in the stage of the faculty, into the active intellect⁸ (Ibid, 1984c, pp. 116-117).

On the perfection of the soul using active intellect, Sadra suggests:

“Whenever this holy light (active intellect) radiates over this soul, and its rays emit over it and its imaginary perceptions, the sensory faculty becomes the actual intellect and intelligent, and the imagination becomes the actual intelligible, while the intellectual faculty distinguishes what it has achieved, i.e., between their essence of their accidents and their truths of their secrets and their principles of their adjuncts, thus making them immaterial and devoid of numbers and extremity. In this connection, man becomes intellectual because his narrow existence has remained null and void for his severance from belongings and chains” (Ibid, 1981, vol. 9, p. 144).

In sum, in this perfectible course of the soul, the active intellect has a two-way presence on the origin and beginning and ending of the course; it is both the agent cause of the soul's perfectibility which causes it to exit the faculty towards its worthy actuality and the thing to which the end of this course and the complete intellectual actuality of the human being leads, with the human being attaining the level of intellectual human by the guidance of the active intellect.

Thus, in its development, the soul goes through stages, the top of which is unity with the active intellect. Annotating the book “Shwhed AL-Rabubya,” Mulla Hadi considers this unity to be one of perfectible becoming (Sabzevari, 1980, p. 614). On this basis, he considers the ultimate human end, the product of philosophic knowledge, to become from an objective to a cognitive world. This is the same ultimate end of wisdom. In the prelude to the book Asfar Al-Arba'e, wisdom refers to humans becoming into the intellectual world similar to the objective world (Ibid, 1981, vol. 1, p. 20). This philosophic becoming helps achieve the position of the happy man from the view of Transcendental Wisdom. In other words, a happy man for Mulla Sadra is a wise and philosophic one, as the attainment of the position of “be” can be materialized by this philosophic

⁸ It should be stated that in Suhrevari thinking, the active intellect is not only the tenth intellect in the hierarchy of reasons, rather the first light in the longitudinal and transverse hierarchy, being superior to other reasons, and there are as many intellects as there are souls in these two hierarchies (See Kamali Zadeh, 2017, p. 21)

For further study on active intellect: Kamalizadeh, Tahereh, 2016, Active intellect and complete nature in the illumination wisdom and Shia thought, Philosophical Research Magazine

becoming that would result in the created agency of the happy man and emanation of his dignities.

Subject of agency in Mulla Sadra's thinking

Agency refers to action or intervention, especially to produce a particular effect, while the agent is a person or thing that takes an active role or produces a specified effect. In philosophy, an agent refers to a phenomenon that affects and leaves effects from which an action is emanated (Saliba, 2014, p. 492). Philosophers have distinguished between mandatory and volitional agents, considering the former synonymous with cause, suggesting that "*an agent is the one which requires the existence of the effect and makes it achievable*" (Mulla Sadra, 1981, vol. 2, pp. 223-226). If existence receives the essence of existence, it is the "existential agent," and if it acquires an attribute of it, it is the "natural agent" (Ansari, 2008, p. 325).

A major issue in various philosophical schools that concerns the appearance of the world is the quality of the agency of the "created agent"; in other words, the quality of the sublime agency towards the universe. Before discussing the "created agency," Sadra's six types of agencies, taken from the book *Asfar*, are given below: (Mulla Sadra, 1981, vol. 2, pp. 220-224).

1. **Agent by nature:** here, the action occurs without knowledge and power based on nature (Ibid, 1981, vol. 2, p. 427).
2. **Agent by dominance:** the agent is an externally dominant agent who does the action out of imposition (Ibid, 13)
3. **Agent by coercion:** here, the agent has knowledge of their action but not doing it voluntarily (Ibid, vol. 9, 72).
4. **Agent by intention:** the agent's action is based on the will (Mulla Sadra, 1981, vol. 2:222).
5. **Agent by foreknowledge:** The agent's action is a function of his knowledge (Karaji, 2002;217).
6. **Agent by agreement:** Knowledge of the essential causes of the action to emanate (Mesbah Yazdi, 1998:91).

In other words like "Al-Mazasher Al-Elahiya" (Mulla Sadra, 1998:57), Mulla Sadra has divided agents into six categories regarding knowledge and volition. However, in some others like "Al-Mashaer (Ibid, 1984b, p. 58) and "Al-Shawahed Al-Rabubiya" (Ibid, 1980b, p. 55), he has introduced seven types, with the seventh category thought of as agency by manifestation, without providing any special explanations. He has attributed this meaning to Sufism (Mulla Sadr, 1984b, p. 58) and, in some works, to Ahl Allah (friends of God) (Mulla Sadra, 1980, p. 58).

Although Mulla Sadra has considered God's agency as the agency by foreknowledge, in most of his work, there is a serious difference in what divine agency means from his perspective, with approaches responding to the critics who accuse him of self-contradiction in the divine agency being different. In this connection, some have used the agency by foreknowledge in a general sense, including Agha Ali Modarres, who has considered the agent by manifestation as the agency by foreknowledge and agent by agreement, from an essential point of view. Some others, like Allame Hasanzadeh, considered the agent by the manifestation to be the agent by foreknowledge (Anvari & Hosseinnia, 2015, p. 41). The key point here is that the term agent by manifestation in Mulla Sadra's books does not mean agency by foreknowledge, as this reading may have been the work of his philosophical interpreters.



Explicitly speaking, Mulla Sadra considers God to be the agent by foreknowledge or agent by agreement, stating:

Speaking of agency by the foreknowledge and by agreement, the Almighty is the former because the sublime agent is omniscient over all objects before their existence; He is cognizant of the knowledge which is the same as His essence, and His knowledge of the objects which is the same as His essence is the origin of their existence; thus, He is the agent by foreknowledge (Shirazi, 1981, vol. 2, pp. 224-225) and (Ibid, 1999, p. 58).

Thus, Mulla seems to present statements implying the belief in God's agency by foreknowledge; however, in his final attitude and based on his theory of divine knowledge, and following the rule of unity of the intelligent and intelligible, he has come to this theory, i.e., agency by foreknowledge in the second sense (where knowledge is united with the Almighty); in his late work, i.e., "Al-Mabd'a and Al-Ma'ad" which some consider a summary of the second half of the book "Asfar Arba'e, (Khamenei, 2004, p. 33), and as clear from the book "Al-Mabd'a and Al-Ma'ad, the book "Asfar" written before the said book (Sadr Al-Mutallehin, 1976:6), there is no reference made about the agency by manifestation as a perspective adopted by transcendental wisdom.

It appears that the adoption of the theory of agency by manifestation based on the transcendental wisdom faces such problems as the negation of a priori general knowledge of first manifestation/holy emanation, violation of mystics' particular unity due to the necessity of adopting the gradation of being between what is manifested (the manifested) and what is manifested in, precedence of the object over itself in the existence of what is manifested in prior to manifestation and negation of limits in bounded beings; thus, this theory was not adopted by Mulla Sadra, as revealed in his works. It is the occurring problems of the agency by the manifestation of agency foreknowledge that lead to the same reading of these two agencies, as elaborated on by Mulla Sadra's wisdom.

Thus, the agency intended by Mulla Sadra about the Almighty is the agency by foreknowledge; however, it should be seen whether Mulla Sadra's perspective about foreknowledge differs from those of peripatetic philosophers or not.

According to Mulla Sadra's wisdom, foreknowledge or a level of divine foreknowledge refers to the simple a priori general knowledge (Ibid, 1980a, p. 46) which is substantially objective. Unlike peripatetic philosophers who consider foreknowledge to be detailed knowledge and accidental, Mulla Sadra explicates this issue in the valuable book "Shawahed Al-Rabubiya":

Here, based on the definition and theory by Mulla Sadra of divine knowledge, this foreknowledge is a simple knowledge that is self-existent that creates intellectual and sensory detailed knowledge (Ibid, 1981, vol. 6, p. 291). Defining foreknowledge, Sadra introduces the following expressions:

1. Knowledge of God of objects in the levels of essence
2. Knowledge superior to skepticism of possibilities
3. Existence of God in that creature of the world is clear and revealed to Him.
4. Origin of external existence of objects
5. Simple knowledge is essentially self-existent and creates intellectual and sensory detailed knowledge for Him, not in Him (Ibid).

This Mullah Sadra's explanation of foreknowledge and the meaning of that kind of regard for the agency by foreknowledge in transcendental wisdom distinguishes it from other philosophical schools.

Theory of agency in Sadra's wisdom and position of "be" of the happy man

Agency by foreknowledge is a kind of divine agency, with the human's perfectibility course in the Sadra's thinking considered a course of becoming into the position of divinity. In the book "Ayghaz Al-Naemin," Mulla Sadra describes the mystical journey of the wayfarer toward Allah when he attains the position of monotheism:

This monotheism is referred to as the covering of the aspect of servitude by the divinity aspect and the hiding of the wayfarer's essence in the court of the glorious sun (i.e., the Almighty), with the Lord as the appearance and the servant hidden... This indicates the conversion of human attributes to divine attributes without conversion of the essence. Thus, the more an attribute of human attributes is removed, a divine attribute replaces it. As the famous hadith suggests, the attribute will involve his eyes and ears, with God manipulating his existence as He wishes (Ibid, 1983, p. 57).

That said, man can be described by divine attributes and can hold the position of agency by foreknowledge. To Mulla Sadra, types of agents can all apply to the human soul.

Therefore, the soul is the agent by foreknowledge of its actions. As soon as it knows action, it emanates action without redundant purpose over the conception of the action (Hasanzadeh, 1999, p. 176). This emanation of action, if occurs outside the world, will be the same level of unity with the active intellect and the highest level of the worlds of existence. To be clearer, the creation of forms is two kinds: sometimes, it arises in the soul itself, and the other does not see it, and sometimes, it manipulates with the matter of the creatures; i.e., it manipulates with the lands, seas, and hearts, with others seeing it. These manipulations of the happy man are based on his reasoning soul; when it focuses attention or will, the object gets dominated by it (Hsanzadeh Amoli, 2008: vol. 3, p. 606). In other words, the soul creates forms within human faculties; if this reasoning soul attains full happiness, it will possess the position of "be" that allows it to have the entire matter of creatures in a way it wishes; it can manipulate with them in accordance with a name of Allah's names (Hasanzadeh Amoli, 2002: vol 1. P. 171). Thus, as wisdom suggests, the happy man's position is the position of "be." The word "be" is seen as an existential thing, meaning it is the very essence of objects which emerge (Rafigh Al-Ajam, 1999, p. 796). Interpreting the word "be," Allame Tabatabaei considers it a *created* thing, arguing this is a level of divine levels (Tabatabaei, 1994, vol. 17, p. 115). Thus, the happy man possesses divine levels; his agency is no other than God's agency. Ibn Arabi maintains that the happy man's position of "be" refers to his position of becoming into great names of God (Gheisari, 1996, p. 1960).

Suhrevardi considers freedom from matter as a condition to attain this position:

The souls of wayfarers possess positions in the stages of freedom from the bondage of the material body, which makes them able to create self-existent forms of any kind they wish; this position is called the position of "be," "then becomes" (Suhrevardi, 2001, p. 242).

He argues that this position which solely belongs to the theologian philosopher, the *will* for "be" suffices for the happy man to emanate the creatures:



No one can attain the position of a philosopher or gain knowledge of them unless he attains the holy essence of conduct and uses the cover of the body sometimes, and removes it sometimes. If he wishes to ascend to the world of light, or to take any form he wishes... the human soul which is composed of the holy essence can, upon being radiated over by the world of light and wearing the illumination clothes, affect and radiate like light, as the object is created by its will and then actualized (Suhrevardi, 2001b, p. 502).

The position of “be” is also called “intention” in mysticism. The intention here denotes determination and purpose. Thus, intention refers to the *will* of the happy man. To have the will, the mystic must have complete attention and focus on a specific case he handles (Ibn Arabi, 2001, p. 129). The mystic’s *will* is a cause of manipulation of the world.

In his existential exaltation, the happy man, as the holder of the position of “be,” establishes an existential unity with the first effusion and then possesses a holy soul or spirit. The soul is creative to the affairs which are inferior to it; this creativity is called “embodiment,” with the soul becoming similar to the Almighty, thereby wielding authority over creating forms of material and immaterial objects. The soul falls under the celestial world and world of power, with those in the celestial world wielding power over the creation of the self-existent intellectual forms and over-development of matter-existent forms of “be” (Gheisari, 1996, p.11). Thus, since the position of “be” is compatible nature of the reasoning soul of a human being, it is by itself pleasurable for the happy man; thus, attainment of and becoming of the position of “be” is by itself a level of happiness for the happy man.

As previously stated, what a happy man perceives will transform from the world of the subject to the world of the object; however, the created forms of the happy man will be maintained with his permanent focus, which, if the happy man ignores them, they will be made null and perish away in line with the rule “the effect will be null with the nullity of its cause.” Meanwhile, their cause is the knowledge of the happy man. If this knowledge is in the stage of the active intellect, he will constantly be in the position of agency by foreknowledge.

The happy man, endowed with divine attributes, can attain a level of knowledge where he can unite with the active intellect, which is the highest level of human happiness. In this stage which is the result of the cognitive and practical exaltation of the wayfarer to Allah, the soul of the happy man looks upon all the truths and the events of the universe by the radiation of the light of the active intellect. What this man observes is in full accordance with the domain of factuality of the creatures; thus, observance of the affairs, as they are, will be fulfilled for him, and it is this observation that can help him perceive the existential relations between the creatures of the universe. The more the human level is exalted within the levels of the universe and the higher the *becoming* course of the levels of reason, the higher levels the happy man will attain happiness. In this course, belonging to the matter world is one obstacle; thus, real happiness lies beyond the world of matter and the level of the active intellect, i.e., at an immaterial and metaphysical level. Here, at this level, the human endowed with the divine attributes will attain the level of agency by foreknowledge and can create and forge existence by focusing on affairs. The position of “be,” which results in the level of mystic’s dignity, will be the fruit of this becoming. In other words, the mystic/happy man can, in this position, manipulate the affairs of the existential worlds and emanate action based on the agency by foreknowledge. In this



position, the happy man is an intermediary of the divine grace, as he can attain the position of Caliphate of Allah in five stages, as suggested in the book “Asrar Al-Ayat”:

1. Creation (creation out of non-existence)
2. Development/genesis (creation of actions)
3. Thinking (making incomplete things perfect)
4. Control/possession (actions for which creatures are created) and
5. Crafts (human-specific actions) (Asrar Al-Ayat, 109).

In the above affairs, the happy man has seen the intermediary of grace; this intermediation reaches its highest level in the position of a perfect human. The happiest of happy men is, for the transcendental wisdom, the perfect human. In his developmental position, he serves as the first effusion and the only divine effusion based on the rule “the one and possibility of being supreme,” thus being the intermediary of grace for other effusion sources.

In sum, God’s agency is materialized due to the agency of the active intellect and His focus on creatures. For this, in his ultimate end of happiness, man will become the agent by foreknowledge over creatures, which are the same as the absolute existence, and what is interpreted as the dignity of the saints and called the position of “be” can be meaningful for the people of real happiness, i.e., the happy man.

Discussion, result and research method

One of the subjects taken up by every philosophical school seeks to answer is the subject of human happiness. Sadr Al-Mutallehin Shirazi has defined the concomitant relation between intellectual pleasure and happiness in his transcendental wisdom to emphasize the issue of human nature compatibility and considers the ultimate happiness of man, which is the highest level of real happiness, to depend on the level of the active intellect. In this level, the soul becomes the acquired reason, which falls under active intellect. On the other hand, Sadra’s transcendental wisdom gives paramount significance to the agency issue. An evaluation of his works indicates that Mull Sadra considers the agency of God to be the agency by foreknowledge, characterized by action by knowledge. Thus, the relationship between agency by foreknowledge in the semantics of human happiness can be inferred as follows:

1. Man goes through a perfectibility (*becoming*) course.
2. Man has two physical and spiritual dimensions in Islamic wisdom.
3. The body belongs to the world of matter, and Mulla Sadra considers the matter to be always a potential affair; thus, perfectibility pertains to the soul.
4. The soul is a potential reason that goes from the level of intellectus to the level of acquired reason.
5. The end of this course is the attainment of ultimate perfection, i.e., human happiness.
6. The human’s real happiness is the becoming of the human’s soul from the level of intellectus reason to the level of acquired reason which is achieved by the unity with the active intellect.
7. In the position of “be,” which is the position of a happy man, all creatures with bounded, intelligible, and known existence will become a humane soul (reason), and according to the theory of agency by foreknowledge, whatever the human intelligible is in this position will be materialized.



In sum, the end of the happy man is to attain the position of the agent by foreknowledge, as in this position, the happy man can, upon acquisition of agency by foreknowledge, manipulate the objective world; this position is, for mystics, the position of “be.”

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