

Relationship of Intellect and Knowledge with Happiness in the Thought of Mulla Sadra

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ABSTRACT

In the philosophical system of Sadr al-Muta'allihin al-Shirazi, intellect, knowledge, and happiness are fundamental concepts, the understanding of whose interrelation is regarded as the key to the principal domain of anthropology and teleology in Transcendent Theosophy. This article, adopting an analytical–descriptive approach, examines the nature of the intellect and its levels (from the material intellect to the acquired intellect), the nature of knowledge as an existential and luminous reality (with characteristics such as gradation, simplicity, and pure actuality), and the nature of happiness as the perception of perfection and harmony with one's disposition. The findings of the research indicate that the relationship between intellect and happiness in this school is one of unity and objectivity, such that the intellect is not merely a path toward happiness but constitutes happiness in its various degrees. The fourfold levels of the theoretical intellect delineate the soul's process of perfection from potentiality to actuality and from darkness to light, and happiness, correspondingly, encompasses levels from the apprehension of self-evident truths to union with the Active Intellect. The ultimate end of the human being, in this view, is the attainment of the level of the acquired intellect and union with the Active Intellect, which is identical with true happiness and complete perfection, and is in no way comparable to sensory pleasures or illusory happiness.

Keywords: Intellect, Knowledge, Happiness, Active Intellect, Transcendent Theosophy, Sadr al-Muta'allihin.

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of happiness, as the ultimate end of human creation, has always been the focus of attention among Islamic thinkers. Among Islamic philosophical schools, the Transcendent Theosophy of Sadr al-Muta'allihin al-Shirazi, drawing on its innovative ontological foundations, offers a profound and original analysis of the nature of happiness and the ways to attain it. In this philosophical system, understanding the truth of the human being and the path of his perfection would be incomplete and unfounded without a precise elucidation of his cognitive faculties, especially the intellect. In Mulla Sadra's view, the intellect is not merely an instrument for reasoning, but an existential and luminous reality upon which human identity and ultimate perfection depend. On the other hand, knowledge in this school is not a merely accidental and mental affair; rather, it is identical with existence and constitutes a reality possessing degrees and admitting gradation, whose relation to happiness is one of unity and objectivity.

Despite the central importance of these three concepts (intellect, knowledge, and happiness) in Sadrian philosophy, the main question is how the relation between "intellect" and "happiness" is to be explained in this philosophical system. Is the intellect merely an instrument for attaining happiness, or does it itself possess a happiness-conferring essence? What relation do the various levels of the intellect bear to the different degrees of happiness? What is the relationship between the ultimate end of happiness—expressed in Sadrian texts as "union with the

Active Intellect"—and the levels of the human intellect? This essay seeks, through an analytical–descriptive method and with reliance on the principal works of Mulla Sadra and the commentators on Transcendent Theosophy, to elucidate the nature of the intellect and its levels, the nature of knowledge and happiness, and, ultimately, the relation among these three concepts. The principal aim of the study is to demonstrate that, in Transcendent Theosophy, intellect and happiness are two aspects of a single reality, and that the end of human creation is the realization of the intellect in its highest degree (the acquired intellect), which is identical with true happiness and complete perfection.

1) Nature of the Intellect from an Anthropological Perspective

In the philosophical system of Sadr al-Muta'allihin al-Shirazi, understanding the truth of the human being and the path to his attainment of happiness would be unfounded and incomplete unless it begins with a precise elucidation of his cognitive faculties, especially the intellect. In this view, the intellect is not merely an instrument for reasoning, but an existential and luminous reality upon which human identity and ultimate perfection depend.

In Transcendent Theosophy, the intellect is defined as one of the principal faculties of the human rational soul. Mulla Sadra holds that the soul possesses two faculties: one by which it apprehends universal matters, called the theoretical intellect, and another by which action is realized and intellectual operations are carried out, called the practical intellect (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 2003, p. 240). Action is any act that proceeds from an animal by intention (Raghib al-

Isfahani, 1991: 587). From this meaning, although these two faculties are inseparable and united with one another, they have distinct functions. The theoretical intellect apprehends matters such as truth and falsehood, necessity and impossibility, and its domain is the cognition of universals that lie beyond the reach of human manipulation and action. In contrast, the practical intellect discerns good and evil, and the moral qualities of particular and practical matters, guiding the appetitive and active faculties (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 2003, p. 240; Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 434). Mulla Sadra assigns levels to the practical faculty: the purification of the outward based on adherence to divine laws and heavenly religions; the purification of the inward and the cleansing of the heart from vile psychic states; the adornment of the inward with practical forms and true religious knowledge; and the annihilation of the soul from its own essence (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 2001, p. 275). The true perfection of the human being depends upon the interaction and harmony of these two faculties, where knowledge is a light that shows the way, and action is the traversing of that path to reach the ultimate end.

Moreover, Sadr al-Muta'allihin, like many earlier philosophers, posits four levels for the theoretical intellect, which represent the soul's gradual perfection from pure potentiality to complete actuality:

1. The Material Intellect (Potential): This stage is the first level of the existence of intellect in the human being. At this stage, the soul, like prime matter, is devoid of any actual intellectual realization and possesses only the potentiality and capacity for receiving intelligible forms. No intellectual actuality has yet been formed in the soul, and it is merely a pure receptive potency.
2. The Intellect in Habit: At this stage, the soul attains the primary self-evident principles, both in the domain of conceptions and in the domain of assents. These self-evident sciences constitute the first actualization of the intellect. The soul thus moves out of pure potentiality, and a habitus for the comprehension of theoretical intelligible—grounded in self-evident principles—is acquired within it. In other words, the capacity for transition from self-evident propositions to theoretical knowledge becomes established in it as a stable habit.
3. The Actual Intellect: This level is realized when the soul, through inference and reflection, derives theoretical intelligible from self-evident principles and actually apprehends them. At this stage, the soul does not need to reacquire these cognitions, as they are present to it in actuality.
4. The Acquired Intellect: This is the highest level of the theoretical intellect. At this stage, the soul encompasses all self-evident and theoretical intelligible that correspond to the realities of the world, and all of them are present before it. The soul reaches such a degree of actuality that it itself becomes an intellectual world filled with knowledge, resembling the objective world. The reason for naming this stage "acquired" is that the soul acquires these sciences from the Active Intellect, which exists outside the human soul (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 117; Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1981, vol. 3, p. 324).

The human being, in the course of his intellectual development, traverses the various levels of the intellect, and the soul is perfected through passing through these stages.

2) Nature of Knowledge in Transcendent Theosophy

As stated, from the perspective of Mulla Sadra's Transcendent Theosophy, knowledge is not merely a superficial and mental quality; rather, it is an objective, existential, and luminous reality that is both the root and foundation of human awareness and the determinant of one's ultimate perfection and end. The investigation of the nature of knowledge in this school is of fundamental importance because of its direct impact on the issues of human felicity and wretchedness.

2-1) Indefinability of Knowledge

Sadr al-Muta'allihin, with a profound and foundational view, considers knowledge to be indefinable and presents several arguments for this claim. First, knowledge is identical with existence, and existence is among the most self-evident of concepts, whose quiddity cannot be comprehended and remains in the utmost hiddenness. Since things that are a kind or degree of existence are likewise indefinable, knowledge is not an exception to this rule. Second, knowledge itself is that by which things are known; just as every being is known through existence, so too everything is defined through knowledge. Therefore, defining knowledge by something other than knowledge is inconceivable, and defining it by itself would result in circularity. Third, in cases where the being of a thing is identical with its essence, that thing has neither genus nor differentia and thus is not definable. Knowledge is among such things (Sajjadi, 2000, p. 353).

Nevertheless, Mulla Sadra, in his various works, provides definitions of knowledge which must be regarded as nominal definitions or definitions by concomitants, not essential definitions, so that they do not contradict the aforementioned view. Among these definitions is: "the occurrence of a thing abstracted from matter and its accidents for an immaterial entity that is independent in existence," which encompasses both presential knowledge and acquired knowledge (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 2001, p. 140). He also defines knowledge as "the presence of an immaterial form before the intellect" and as "an intellectual and existential light that is formal and abstracted from body and its darkness" (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1990, p. 86).

Considering the return of knowledge to the reality of existence, Mulla Sadra attributes the properties of existence to knowledge as well. The most important of these properties are as follows: Gradation: Knowledge, like existence, is a single reality possessing degrees that admit of intensity and weakness. This single reality is predicated on a common sense of all its levels. Imam Khomeini, in explaining this view, states that in the application of the concept of knowledge, no individual has superiority over another; rather, the difference lies in intensity and weakness, perfection and deficiency in external realities. Just as we have substantial, accidental, and relational existence, knowledge too possesses levels—some instances are substantial, some accidental, and some relational. Just as the existence of contingent beings, with its differing degrees, is a shadow of the source of existence, so too the knowledge of contingent beings, with its differing degrees, is a shadow of that source of knowledge (God) (Khomeini, 2009, pp. 375–382). Other properties: Knowledge is an existential

reality and, for this reason, is not material, since immateriality is a privative notion. Knowledge is pure actuality and admits no potentiality. It is also simple, unified, and devoid of multiplicity (Sajjadi, 2000, p. 353). Sadr al-Muta'allihin, considering different aspects, presents various classifications of knowledge: a) Huduri and Husuli knowledge: Knowledge is either obtained through direct presence and immediate witnessing, in which the attainment of knowledge for the knower does not require mediation by another entity, or it is obtained through inference by means of effects and concomitants, in which only a weaker form of cognition is acquired (Khomeini, 2009, p. 375). b) Kashf (mystical unveiling) and Mu'amalah (practical knowledge): The knowledge of kashf is that which is always sought for its own sake, in which the soul's imprinting with the forms of realities and the manifestation of the Real through His Names and Attributes within the soul is the primary aim. This is a form of knowledge that only the people of God and the elect among His servants can attain. However, the knowledge of mu'amalah does not possess intrinsic desirability and is always considered in relation to action, and its ultimate end is the performance of action (Sajjadi, 2000, p. 353). c) Real and non-real: The most important classification of knowledge in Mulla Sadra's philosophy is its division into real and non-real knowledge. Real knowledge consists in knowing the realities of existents as they are. In contrast, non-real knowledge consists in the cognition of changing and variable particulars, as well as matters related to actions and deeds, including narratives and reports (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 587).

One way of knowing knowledge is through knowing its opposite, namely, ignorance. Mulla Sadra holds that knowledge has precedence and superiority over ignorance in all respects. Its precedence in terms of final cause stems from the fact that knowledge is perfection and good, whereas ignorance is deficiency and evil. Its temporal precedence stems from the fact that the human being, before entering this world, possessed an intellectual existence that enabled him to know his essence and the Creator of that essence; however, upon entering the worldly realm, this knowledge is forgotten, and ignorance comes to dominate. Its precedence among nobility stems from the fact that knowledge is superior to ignorance. Likewise, its causal precedence stems from the fact that God, as the ultimate cause of being, has precedence over contingent beings, and the Divine existence is entirely knowledge; therefore, the creation of knowledge precedes the creation of ignorance. Its precedence in rank means that ignorance is the privation of the habitus of knowledge, and privations are known through their corresponding habits. In contrast, knowledge is known through its own essence (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1990, p. 167). Mulla Sadra considers disbelief to be nothing other than ignorance. Accordingly, the disbeliever has reached such a degree of ignorance that ignorance has become a habitual disposition within him, making separation from it impossible. The believer, likewise, is one whose faith is nothing other than knowledge of the principles and foundations (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1990, p. 65). He maintains that whoever engages in knowledge is, in reality, moving within the circulating Paradise, whereas whoever confines himself to ignorance is told: "You have returned to the Fire and taken your share of it, so enter it" (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p.

151). And since veils for the human being are both luminous and dark, Mulla Sadra holds that the intermediate world is divided into luminous and dark forms, and each of them has levels, which correspond to the levels of Paradise and Hell (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, Tafsir Surat al-Waqi'ah, p. 43). 3) Relation between Knowledge and Intellect in Transcendent Theosophy

In the philosophical system of Sadr al-Muta'allihin al-Shirazi, knowledge and intellect are two fundamental concepts, the precise understanding of whose relation plays a central role in explaining anthropology and the doctrine of happiness. Knowledge, as an existential and luminous reality, and intellect, as a faculty of the rational soul, although at first glance appear distinct, are, in Mulla Sadra's final analysis, bound by a deep unity and interconnection.

As stated earlier, Mulla Sadra considers the human rational soul to possess two faculties: one by which it apprehends universal matters and another by which action is realized. The former is called the theoretical intellect and the latter the practical intellect (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 2003, p. 240). An important point is that Mulla Sadra does not accept a real separation between these two intellects and holds that they are united and not truly separable (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1981, vol. 4, p. 418). Since knowledge is realized through the theoretical intellect, and since the theoretical and practical intellects are united according to Mulla Sadra, this unity indicates that knowledge and intellect, beyond their functional distinction, possess a single reality.

In accordance with what has previously been stated, in Mulla Sadra's ontological view, knowledge is identical with existence, and existence is a universal concept and among the most self-evident of things (Sajjadi, 2000, p. 353). The intellect, too, as one of the levels of knowledge and existence, is not an exception to this rule. Knowledge is a gradational reality that admits intensity and weakness, and the intellect, within its own levels, is a manifestation and epiphany of this very reality. Therefore, following knowledge, the intellect also possesses such hierarchical degrees.

As stated in the first section, Mulla Sadra posits four levels of the theoretical intellect: the material intellect, the intellect in habituation, the actual intellect, and the acquired intellect, which, in fact, also represent the stages of knowledge itself. Knowledge at the level of the material intellect exists only as pure potentiality. At the level of the intellect in habituation, it exists as a stable habitus. At the level of the actual intellect, it appears as present actuality. And at the level of the acquired intellect, it is realized through union with the Active Intellect. True knowledge corresponds precisely to this highest level of intellect.

The Active Intellect occupies a key position in Mulla Sadra's philosophical system in explaining the relation between knowledge and intellect. He examines the Active Intellect as the third intellect, through which the material intellect becomes the habitual intellect. The analogy of this agent is like that of light for the eyes and visible things. Just as light is the cause of seeing colors that are in the stage of potentiality and brings them into actual visibility, the Active Intellect likewise brings the material intellect, which is in the stage of potentiality, into actuality (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 117). Mulla Sadra maintains that the study of the Active Intellect, insofar as it exists for our soul, belongs to natural philosophy; but its study insofar as it is a perfection and completion for the soul pertains to divine science. He

regards intellectual existences as the ultimate end and final cause of created existences (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 748). The specific perfection of the rational soul lies in its union with the universal intellect and in the imprinting within it of the forms of all existence. This is true happiness and complete perfection (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 587).

Mulla Sadra also presents a comprehensive and balanced view in explaining the evaluative status of knowledge and intellect. On the one hand, he considers the practical intellect to be in the service of the theoretical intellect (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 2003, p. 199). On the other hand, in his commentary on al-Hidayah, he maintains that the theoretical intellect, since it pertains to divine knowledge and sacred sciences, is superior to the practical intellect. At the same time, however, the rank of knowledge is lower than that of action, because knowledge is a means and action is an end, and the means is always inferior to the end (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 7).

4) Nature of Happiness in Transcendent Theosophy

Happiness, as the ultimate end of human creation, has always been a focal point of attention for Islamic thinkers. Sadr al-Muta'allihin al-Shirazi, through the establishment of Transcendent Theosophy and by drawing upon his ontological principles, offers a profound and original analysis of the nature of happiness.

In lexicographical terms, happiness means felicity and is the opposite of wretchedness. From an ontological perspective, Mulla Sadra considers happiness to be concomitant with pleasure, and in defining pleasure, he states that it is among the psychic qualities and consists in the perception of that which is agreeable to one's nature (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 757). In al-Asfar al-Arba'ah, he defines pleasure as "the perception of the reality and existence of perfection." Accordingly, happiness is the perception of that which is agreeable to one's nature, which is identical with the perfection of the soul. Imam Khomeini, in explaining this view, states: "Happiness is the pleasure of apprehension, when the cognitive faculty attains a pleasurable object and that which is agreeable to its nature" (Khomeini, 2009, p. 450). For example, the happiness of the faculty of taste is that it attains what is agreeable to it. If a faculty of taste were always to perceive what is agreeable to its nature, such a faculty would always be in a state of happiness. Mulla Sadra holds that everything possesses a kind of happiness appropriate to its own essence. The happiness of the soul, according to its intellectual nature, lies in attaining intelligible, becoming a locus for divine forms, and reaching the total configuration. However, the happiness of the soul in conjunction with the body consists in the issuing of actions that lead it toward justice and establish justice as a disposition within it; that is, it renders the human being balanced among conflicting traits (Khomeini, 2009, p. 450).

In Mulla Sadra's ontological thought, existence constitutes the fundamental pillar of attaining happiness. He holds that existence in itself is good and happiness, and the awareness of it is another good and another form of happiness. Existence possesses degrees, and the most noble among them is the First Existence. The existence of each thing, in relation to itself, is pleasurable, and the existence of its cause is even more pleasurable if it is apprehended in its essence, because the cause of a thing is the constitutive element of its essence and the perfection of its identity (Sadr

al-Muta'allihin, 1983, p. 418). Mulla Sadra, in al-Asfar al-Arba'ah, examines this issue in detail and states that existence is identical with goodness and happiness, and that awareness of existence is likewise goodness and happiness. Existences differ from one another in terms of perfection and deficiency and surpass one another accordingly. The more complete an existence is, the greater its purity and freedom from non-being, and the more abundant its happiness. The most perfect of existences is the First Truth (God), followed by the immaterial intellects, then the souls. At the same time, the lowest existents are prime matter, time, and motion (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1981, vol. 9, p. 122). Since existences differ, the happinesses—which are their forms of perception—also differ in degree. When human souls reach perfection, their attachment to the body is severed, and they return to their true essence and origin, attaining a joy and delight that cannot be described or compared with sensory pleasures (Sajjadi, 2000, p. 262). Happiness, in Mulla Sadra's view, is a gradational reality possessing levels:

a) Intellectual and Animal Happiness: Intellectual happiness is realized through intellectual cognition, whereas animal happiness is a perfection resulting from sensory perceptions. Mulla Sadra considers intellectual happiness superior to animal happiness, both in terms of intensity and quantity (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1990, vol. 4, p. 300). The lowest degree of worldly happiness is knowledge of God and His attributes in this world, and the lowest level of intellectual happiness for souls is the acquisition of knowledge of the Divine, the Active Intellects, and the order of the universe in this world (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 2001, p. 367).

b) Material and Spiritual Happiness: Human beings possess a dual nature, and thus happiness is divided into material and spiritual aspects. Material happiness is concerned with providing bodily needs such as health, courage, beauty, and the provision of necessities of life. Spiritual happiness, on the other hand, is concerned with fulfilling the spiritual needs of the human being. In Transcendent Theosophy, the body is the vehicle of the soul, and the happiness of the soul depends upon the happiness of the body (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1981, vol. 8, p. 325).

c) Happiness of the Perfect and the Intermediate: Mulla Sadra posits two levels of otherworldly happiness: the happiness of the perfect and the happiness of the intermediate group. The happiness of the intermediate group consists in an imagination that corresponds to reality. In contrast, the true happiness of the perfect consists in reaching the level of the Active Intellect (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 43). Paradise itself is of two kinds: the sensory Paradise, which is specific to the "people of the right hand," and the intellectual Paradise, which belongs exclusively to the "nearest ones" (al-muqarrabun), known as 'Illyyun (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1981, vol. 9, p. 321).

True Happiness and Its Ultimate End

True happiness pertains to the realm of the hereafter, and the path to it is the attainment and presence of divine realities within the human being. The highest form of the sciences of unveiling is the knowledge of God, which is not a means to another end but is itself the ultimate goal and identical with true happiness. However, as long as the heart is in this world, it cannot fully comprehend its identity with happiness; such realization becomes possible only in the hereafter (Irfan va 'Aref-namayan, p. 76).

This happiness cannot be compared with sensory pleasures,

which are imperfect and mixed with deficiencies (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 587). The specific perfection of the rational soul lies in its union with the universal intellect, such that the form of all existence and the structure of the complete order is imprinted within it. This is true happiness and complete perfection, and its relation to other perfections is like the relation of the intellect to the sensory faculties of animals (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 587). The highest human beings are those who reach the rank of the "preceding ones" among the early angels in nobility and transcendence, until they attain union with the Active Intellect, analogous to the union of the intellect with the intelligible (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 26). According to the doctrine of Sadr al-Hukama', who explains the origin of the soul as motion and flux of matter and form toward human perfection, natural death is the soul's movement toward its own world after completing its human perfections (Ashtiyani, 2002, p. 248).

5) Relation between Knowledge and Happiness in Transcendent Theosophy

In Mulla Sadra's philosophical system, happiness as the ultimate goal of human creation is understood through its precise relation to knowledge. From an ontological perspective, Mulla Sadra holds that knowledge and happiness possess a deep essential unity. He maintains that existence is good and happiness in itself, and awareness of it is another form of goodness and happiness (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1981, vol. 9, p. 122). From this perspective, knowledge—which is awareness of existence—is itself identical with happiness. Every being finds pleasure in its own existence, and if it becomes conscious of its existence, this pleasure becomes even greater. Therefore, the perfection of each being depends on the degree of its awareness of existence (Sajjadi, 2000, p. 262). On this basis, Mulla Sadra considers knowledge to be Paradise and ignorance to be Hell. He holds that whoever engages in knowledge is, in reality, moving within the circulating Paradise, whereas whoever remains content with ignorance is told at death: "You have returned to the Fire and have become its companion; therefore enter it" (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 151). This view shows that eschatological happiness and misery are, in reality, manifestations of human beings' inner knowledge and ignorance.

Since Mulla Sadra considers pleasure and happiness to be identical, he defines pleasure as a psychic quality and the perception of what is harmonious with one's nature (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 757). Knowledge, on the other hand, is perception and awareness of realities. Therefore, the relation between knowledge and happiness is one of identity and unity; knowledge itself is happiness and pleasure. However, pleasures depend on perceptions, and every faculty and instinct has its own specific pleasure. The pleasure of each psychic faculty lies in attaining what is appropriate to its nature (Sajjadi, 2000, p. 431). Hence, the happiness of each faculty also depends on its knowledge of its proper object. The rational soul finds its perfection and pleasure in the continuous and eternal cognition of intelligible realities, such as the Essence of God, His attributes and actions, the universal intellects and souls (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 587).

Mulla Sadra distinguishes between true and non-true knowledge. True knowledge is the knowledge of the realities of beings as they are, whereas non-true knowledge

concerns mutable particulars, actions, and narrative reports (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 587). True happiness is attained only through true knowledge. He holds that true sciences and divine cognitions illuminate the inner being and heart of man, granting it an intellectual life by which it ascends to the world of sanctity and becomes similar in essence to the proximate angels and pure intellects (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1990, vol. 2, p. 162). Therefore, true pleasures belong only to the soul that has been perfected through true knowledge. The lowest degree of worldly happiness is knowledge of God and His attributes in this world. The lowest degree of intellectual happiness for souls is the recognition of the Divine, His mode of existence, providence, knowledge, power, will, and other attributes, as well as awareness of the Active Intellects, which are the angels of God and intermediaries of divine effusion, and comprehension of the order of the universe from beginning to end (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 2001, p. 367).

Knowledge, understood as a gradational reality, possesses various levels. The levels of knowledge can be traced within the framework of the fourfold stages of the theoretical intellect: the material intellect, the intellect in habit, the actual intellect, and the acquired intellect. A corresponding level of happiness accompanies each level of knowledge. Happiness, in turn, following knowledge, also possesses diverse levels and kinds. Mulla Sadra posits two levels for eschatological happiness: one is the happiness of the intermediate group, and the other is the true happiness of the felicitous. The happiness of the intermediate group is nothing but imagination conforming to reality. In contrast, the true happiness of the felicitous consists in reaching the level of the Active Intellect (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 43). The highest human being is the one who, in nobility, honor, and detachment from matter, reaches the rank of the foremost among the earliest of the proximate angels, such that union with the Active Intellect is achieved, analogous to the union of the intellect with the intelligible (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 26). The specific perfection of the rational soul lies in its union with the universal intellect and in the imprinting within it of the form of all existence and the structure of the complete order. This is true happiness and complete perfection (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 587).

Mulla Sadra explicitly states that knowledge is the cause of the realization of Paradise. He maintains that the perfection of pleasure lies in the perception of the beloved, and the ultimate pain and suffering lie in separation from it. However, the beloved of each faculty is that which is of its own kind. Since no pleasure or perfection is higher than the pleasure and perfection of knowledge, and no misery or deficiency is worse than the misery of ignorance, whoever pursues the path of knowledge has in fact traversed the path of Paradise. Every gate of knowledge is a gate to Paradise (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1990, vol. 2, p. 57). Imam Khomeini, in his philosophical lectures, emphasizes that the lowest level of happiness is that a human being knows and understands through the theoretical intellect; in other words, the lowest degree of happiness is that a person acquires a course of philosophy (Khomeini, 2009, p. 453). However, this knowledge must be such that it illuminates the heart and liberates the human being from dark veils.

6) Relation between Intellect and Happiness in Transcendent Theosophy

After clarifying the nature of intellect, knowledge,

happiness, and the relations among them in Mulla Sadra's philosophical system, it is now possible to draw a synthesis regarding the fundamental relation between intellect and happiness. In Transcendent Theosophy, intellect and happiness are not two distinct entities, but rather a single reality with multiple levels, the deep understanding of which reveals the ultimate purpose of human creation.

As has been explained, in Mulla Sadra's thought, the intellect is not merely a cognitive faculty among other faculties of the soul; rather, it is an existential and luminous reality that is itself one of the levels of knowledge. Knowledge, from his perspective, is identical with existence, and existence is pure goodness and happiness (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1981, vol. 9, p. 122). From this viewpoint, the intellect, being a level of knowledge and existence, is itself identical with happiness.

The levels of the theoretical intellect in the human being indicate the gradual perfection of the soul from pure potentiality toward complete actuality. Happiness, correspondingly, possesses various degrees. The lowest level of happiness is knowledge of God and His attributes (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 2001, p. 367), while its highest level is reaching the acquired intellect and union with the Active Intellect (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 26). The happiness of the intermediate group, which is limited to imagination conforming to reality, stands in contrast to the true happiness of the felicitous, which is the attainment of the Active Intellect and the contemplation of the complete order of existence (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 43). This distinction demonstrates that the more the intellect attains higher degrees of abstraction and actuality, the more complete and enduring happiness becomes.

Mulla Sadra considers the ultimate end and final cause of created existents to be intellectual existents (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 748). This means that all levels of existence, in their substantial motion, are moving toward intellectual actuality and ultimately toward union with the Active Intellect. The human being, as the noblest of creatures, has his final goal in attaining this level of intellectuality and happiness. The specific perfection of the rational soul lies in its union with the universal intellect and in the imprinting within it of the form of all existence and the complete cosmic order. This is true happiness and complete perfection, whose relation to other perfections is like the relation of the intellect to the sensory faculties of animals (Sadr al-Muta'allihin, 1984, p. 587). Thus, true happiness is nothing other than the realization of the intellect in its highest level.

CONCLUSION

From Mulla Sadra's perspective, the intellect is a reality possessing degrees of existence, manifesting in the human soul through theoretical and practical faculties. The four levels of the theoretical intellect represent the substantial motion of the soul from pure potentiality toward complete actuality and union with the Active Intellect. This process of perfection finds its meaning not only in the domain of theory but also in the light of action, whose ultimate aim it is. In this philosophical system, the nature of intellect and its levels is not merely an epistemological discussion but a foundation for explaining the ultimate purpose of human creation and attaining true happiness: the attainment of the Active Intellect and the contemplation of existential realities.

Knowledge in Transcendent Theosophy is also explained through an ontological perspective. Knowledge is not merely a psychic quality, but an existential, gradational, simple, and purely actual reality. Although it is indefinable in essence, it can be known through its attributes and divisions. Knowledge has a hierarchical relation to ignorance, standing before it. In this philosophical system, knowledge is identified with Paradise, and ignorance with Hell, and human happiness and misery in the hereafter depend upon the realization of this luminous reality within the human being.

Happiness, likewise, is grounded in Mulla Sadra's ontological approach. Happiness is concomitant with pleasure and consists in the perception of what is harmonious with one's nature, which is itself the perfection of the soul. Existence is pure goodness and happiness, and awareness of existence is another form of goodness and happiness. Happiness is a gradational reality with various levels and types—from animal happiness to intellectual happiness, from material to spiritual happiness, and from intermediate happiness to true happiness of the felicitous. The ultimate goal of happiness in this system is to reach the level of the Active Intellect and to unite with it, where the human being attains the vision of existential truths.

On the other hand, the relation between knowledge and intellect in Transcendent Theosophy is deep and unitive. Knowledge, as an existential, luminous, and gradational reality, manifests in the human soul as intellect at one of its levels. The four levels of the intellect also represent the levels of knowledge, progressing from pure potentiality to union with the Active Intellect. The Active Intellect functions as the mediator of divine effusion, transforming the soul from potential knowledge to actual knowledge. In this system, knowledge and intellect are not two separate realities, but two aspects of a single truth whose ultimate aim is attaining true happiness and union with the Active Intellect.

Moreover, the relation between knowledge and happiness is shown to be one of unity and identity. Knowledge itself is happiness, and ignorance itself is misery. Knowledge, as an existential and luminous reality, generates different levels of happiness in accordance with its own degrees. True happiness is attainable only through true knowledge of existential realities and divine sciences, whose ultimate end is union with the Active Intellect and the contemplation of the complete order of being. In this view, every gate of knowledge is a gate to Paradise, and every step in knowledge is a step toward eternal happiness.

Finally, in Mulla Sadra's philosophical system, intellect and happiness are two aspects of a single reality. The intellect is an existential and luminous reality that itself constitutes one of the levels of knowledge and happiness. The levels of the intellect—from the material to the acquired—represent the soul's journey from potentiality to actuality and from darkness to light. Happiness, correspondingly, extends from the apprehension of self-evident truths to union with the Active Intellect. The ultimate end of human beings in this philosophical school is reaching the acquired intellect and union with the Active Intellect, a stage in which the soul witnesses all existential truths and becomes an intellectual world analogous to the external world. This is true happiness and complete perfection, incomparable to sensory pleasures or intermediate imaginative felicity. Thus, the relation between intellect and happiness in Transcendent Theosophy

is one of unity and identity, in which the intellect is not only a path toward happiness, but itself happiness in its various degrees. This profound view offers a renewed understanding of the purpose of human creation and the path toward it, in which knowledge, intellect, and action harmoniously guide the human being toward ultimate perfection and eternal felicity.

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