

The characteristics of the government in the philosophical system of Mulla Sadra¹

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Abstract

In political communities, the states have two basic functions: (a) establishing stable and permanent order and (b) achieving their goals. The former is the philosophy for the existence of all states, but the latter pertains to the goals defined for them by the political schools and philosophies. These goals range from removing the social sufferings, disadvantages, and discriminations to establishing social justice, observing the mutual rights in a society and fulfilling individual beneficial needs as well as public benefits and achieving felicity. Now, what are the functions of the state in Mulla Sadra's philosophical system? Considering Mulla Sadra's systemic attitude towards the man (descending-ascending to transcendence attitude) and towards the state, it is claimed that the state's functions in Mulla Sadra's political philosophy is realized when the members of the society pass through contrasting stage of individual benefits in the animal orders and the lower ranks towards rational orders and to the stage of the man's flowering and his existential promotion to the state of unity with God. In this article, the researcher uses content analysis method to prove this claim through an investigation of Mulla Sadra's philosophical system and his political texts. The achievement of this study is to show how the demands of a divine philosophical system is distinguished in the functions of one state with another state, and how we can evaluate and review the function of the Islamic Republic of Iran with an awareness of the function of Mulla Sadra's favorite state.

Keywords

state, state's function, Mulla Sadra's philosophical system, Mulla Sadra's political philosophy.

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1. Introduction: Mulla Sadra's thinking atmosphere

With the creation of atmospheres opposing reason and philosophy in the 5th and 6th centuries and emergence of Illumination Philosophy as well as the growth of mysticism and Sufism, asceticism and spiritualism became dominant in those centuries. Some considered the man's perfection to be not in interaction with other individuals but in spiritual wayfaring and distancing from the worldly things. Some others indulged in formalism in understanding religious law and others turned to formal sciences (Shirazi, 1361 SH, vol.2, p. 13). This created many problems for Mulla Sadra and he was forced to present an understanding of religion and religious law (i.e. *Shari'á*) and from existence and the man's truth and his existential position, which was appropriate for the needs of the time. On the one hand, he is faced with escaping religion and the prejudice resulted from religious formalism, and on the other hand, he is faced with the formalism that ignores the man's spiritual aspects. Indeed, he observes extreme attitudes towards religion and its teachings. Thus, he feels a risk in ignoring the reality of religion and – faced with those issues – seeks to show, in his views, the reality of religion and religious law and their role in society and social life and in existential promotion of the man and his perfection and his transcendental truth. In this article, the abovementioned issue is investigated through studying the state's functions in the man's existential promotion to divine proximity.

2. The theoretical foundations of Mulla Sadra's philosophical system

In Mulla Sadra's epistemology, there are three main sources of knowledge: reason, revelation (*shari'á*) and mystical states. Using the knowledge acquired from these sources, the man must put his physical faculties at the service of his rational faculty (Shirazi, 1362 SH, p. 568) to achieve high ranks. Diffusion and spread of that knowledge in the

society by the power outside the individuals, i.e. the state, causes the individuals to follow their reason instead of their passion to get away from the worldly maelstroms and listen to the guidelines and instructions of his mystic master to climb to higher mystical ranks (Shirazi, 1361 SH, vol.6, p. 304). Accordingly, the knowledge resulted from the man and the existence gets a spiritual nature, and the noblest knowledge would be the divine knowledge (or theology) for it gives enough information from the superior world, the ranks of the existence and the quality of the worlds. Besides, it plays a basic role in the man's felicity and brings about the highest rational pleasures for the man (Shirazi, 1371 SH, p. 623).

In Mulla Sadra's ontology, all beings have certain destinations and to the extent they achieve their destination, they are divided into perfect and imperfect. The imperfect beings are of various kinds in proportion to their weaknesses and defects. This group of beings forms the beings of three worlds of 'visible', 'apparent' and 'pluralities'.

"When the truth is clarified, it is known that each being's nobility depends on the predominance of unity in it, and the predominance of each unit depends on the predominance of existence in it... thus, the being that is farther from the plurality is nobler and more perfect" (Shirazi, 1361 SH, vol.4, p. 66).

Therefore, the world of pluralities, which includes the men as well, is the world of weaknesses, defects, deviations, clashes, and the spiritual and material differences and contrasts, which must have a tour of unity and link with the perfect beings in the world of unity and world of intelligibles to have a single character (Shirazi, 1981, vol.7, p. 113). Indeed, their ultimate perfection is connecting and uniting with Almighty God, while – due to the civil nature of the man (Shirazi, 1371 SH, p. 212) – removing clashes and contrasts requires order and systematization outside the individuals.

The Perfection of the Beings

In the transcendental philosophy, the beings enjoy – in addition to their initial existence – evolutionary stages of existence that show their next existential stages and ranks in existential perfection. In Mulla Sadra's philosophical thought, one of the beings' causes of existential perfection is their capacity in perceiving their own existence and that of others.

"The essential perfection of any being depends on the level of its perception of existence; and since existences are different, the perceptions are also inescapably different, just as the existence of reasons and rational faculties is nobler than animal faculties such as lust and anger which are specific to cattle. The felicity and pleasure in rational faculties is higher than the animal faculties. Thus, whenever human souls get perfection, and gain existential independence after separating their bodies, and after their connection to the bodies are cancelled, and after their return to the God's essence as their origin, they get a high level of pleasure and happiness that is not comparable to the sensual substance. This is because in that stage, there is mere perception and reasoning, and it is cut off all material connections, turning into mere goodness" (Shirazi, 1371 SH, p. 261).

In Mulla Sadra's anthropology, the human's single soul has two aspects: one is its rational aspect, which has a fixed and permanent substance due to its connection to higher worlds and higher substances. The other is its nature, which has a fluid substance due to its connection to the lower aspect of existence (Shirazi, 1371 SH, p. 555).

Regarding the predominance of the natural or rational aspects of human beings, Mulla Sadra says: "most people are ignorant of the rational pleasures and true felicity or misery due to their being engrossed in sensual pleasures. The human souls achieve the true felicity and pleasures when they free themselves from the material

connections, remove the blemish off their souls, and become abstract to perceive the true rational pleasures. In that case, the sensual pleasure would be nothing except pain and suffering" (Shirazi, 1371 SH, pp. 261-262).

In Mulla Sadra's view, the man is continuously in the state of 'becoming' and this does not stop. Any of the man's moment is different from his previous moments. "...and the man – as he is man – is continuously in the state of progression from one existence to another existence, and from one stage to another stage. He is not fixed in any rank. The existence is a trust in his hands, which must be returned someday to its owner: and that is the day when he meets and connects to Allah the Exalted. And this is what the mystic of Shiraz (i.e. Hafez the poet) says in a poem:

This lent soul entrusted to Hafez...one day I would see Him and return to Him" (Shirazi, 1371 SH, p. 361).

Such a perception of human's perfection based on the substantial evolution makes the man pay attention, and elevates his existential expansion up to the connection to the divine sublime state, i.e. proximity to God. According to the substantial motion, the faculties of the soul are continuously turning from one perfection form to another, to the point of achieving proximity to God. The human's perfection is in travelling through the order of simplicity by exiting the manifestations of plurality, matter and physical origination to spiritual permanence and unity [with God]. In substantial motion, the man moves towards his existential perfection and promotion by going through the physical order to imaginary order and higher orders with two mystical wayfaring, the spiritual wayfaring of annihilation in God and personal unity and the worldly wayfaring among people and with people. For him, there are numerous existential degrees and originations for the man from his creation to his destination. In his first origination, he is physical. However, gradually he gets far from it and covers the

perfection orders so that he may be ready for linking with the Active Intellect and becomes spiritually eternal (Shirazi, 1420 AH, p. 235) and gets out of the lower state of contempt and humiliation to go up to the zenith of perfection and mysticism (Shirazi, 1364 SH, p. 15).

In Mulla Sadra's study of the existential soul, the man's existential promotion in the stages of mystical wayfaring and his moving towards Allah is a single truth with various orders that is – in his essence – continuously in the state of substantial motion. In this way, he may pass through the physical material nature mixed with pains and sufferings towards higher orders by resolving the weaknesses and defects resulted from his plural aspects to unity, and from the ideal abstraction to rational abstraction and, finally, to the state of divine proximity and annihilation in Allah (Tusi, 1393 SH, p. 129).

The man's existential promotion with mystical worldly wayfaring among people is another level. And the man's individual wayfaring in his worldly interaction with other men and the citizens causes him – with its mystical wayfaring nature – to make serving people the basis of his interaction in his fourth journey, i.e. journey from God to people. It is in this stage that the civil persons – while getting away from the worldly embellishments and internal filths such as backbiting and accusation as well as harmful pluralities such as individual worldly benefits – prefers the collective benefits of others to his own ones. In this state, he becomes a perfect man whom Mulla Sadra describes as follows: "the perfect man knows God and divine commands. He has sat in the common limit between the world of intelligibles and the world of sensibles. He is sometimes with God and His affection and sometimes he behaves with kindness and forgiveness among people. Thus, whenever he refers from God to people, he treats them in a way as if he is one of them and does not know God at all. And whenever he is in solicitude with God, he is busy mentioning Him, as if he does not know

people at all" (Shirazi, 1361 SH, vol.6, vol.6, p. 15; Shirazi, 1360, p. 355). In this way, he gains the theoretical and practical perfection attributes to perceive the orders of rational pleasures (Shirazi, 1361 SH, vol.6, p. 15; Shirazi, 1360 SH, p. 355).

Thus, in Mulla Sadra's thought, the man's perfection capacity is up to the point of becoming the manifestation of divine Names, receiving the delicate divine secrets, going higher than the Gabriel's position – as the source of revelation – and association with higher intellects up to achieving the status of unity and annihilation. Therefore, we must use proper educational policies to prepare the ground for flourishing this capacity and actualizing this ability.

"The man's soul is like a mirror which, when it is polished by the sacred intellect for servitude to God, and when the curtains and veils of nature and blemish of sins are removed, the light of knowledge and faith – called *ʿaql mustafād* by the mystics – is enlightened and thereby the divine truths and mysteries are revealed for the man..."

(Shirazi, 1371 SH, pp. 179-180)

As a result, in Mulla Sadra's thought, in the man's existential promotion, the basic attention is focused on purification of the soul so that one observes the beauty of God, the soul achieves the sublime level of proximity and gains the divine grace. "He grants wisdom to whomever He wishes. And he, who is given wisdom, is certainly given an abundant good"¹. (Shirazi, 1364 SH, p. 11). The mystics call this wisdom *ʿaql basīṭ* (ibid). The result of such perfections is the man's passing through material spheres and his entrance into his spiritual spheres from perfect knowledge of God to theism and mysticism (Shirazi, 1363 SH, pp. 211-214). Thus, in Mulla Sadra's philosophical system, the state must consider and aim at this.

1. The Quran, Baqara, 269.

3. The theoretical approaches in Mulla Sadra's philosophical system

3-1. Realistic approach

In this approach, the reality of all beings is a simple single existence whose fluidity of existence is the source of existence for all other beings. Therefore, while the beings are plural, they are single to be able to get the validity of existence and the reality of their existence is due to their unity and simplicity. Thus, in dividing the universe into outer and inner sides, he considers the truth as belonging to the inner universe. In this way, the outer and sensual beings cannot exist except that they are placed under the real and inner beings.

3-2. Moderate approach

In Mulla Sadra's philosophical system, just what is moderate deserves existing, and the more moderate a being is, the more it enjoys existential reality (Shirazi, 1362 SH, p. 314). In the world of elements and composite beings, what is closer to moderation becomes more capable of receiving [divine] grace. The man's existence and his faculties accept grace when they are in moderate state. Indeed, in the moderate state, the effects of life such as feeding, growth, and production are granted to him. Then, the effects of the spirit and wisdom are granted to him so that if he achieves the ultimate end of moderation, or if he comes close to it and the opposition is removed from him, he would become ready to receive the "thinking soul" (*nafs nāṭiqā*), and he can employ all vegetal and animal faculties (Shirazi, 1362 SH, p. 304).

3.1. *Shari ʿa*-centered approach to politics and state

Human being is among the beings capable of both getting an evil, ignorant and vicious nature and enjoying divine and guided nature. Thus, Mulla Sadra believes that politics must be at the service of *Shari ʿa* to gain a divine and humane nature, to promote justice, and to lead to

felicity. For him, the politics that is based on revelation and *Shari'ā* seeks to compile and regulate laws that lead to moderation and transcendence of spiritual dimensions of the soul and spiritual needs of the man. In *al-Mazāhir al-Ilāhiyya*, politics deals with both the management of the worldly life and its development and guiding civil individuals towards mystical wayfaring and path of servitude [to Allah] (Shirazi, 1364 SH, pp. 15-16). Mulla Sadra, therefore, maintains that *Shari'ā* is the most important factor for the society to pass through teasers, and from material formalism and from extremism to the inner truth of the universe and to the true unity, which is the true perfection. "Then whenever the politics follows the *Shari'ā*, the outer of the universe will follow the inner of it, and the sensible things will be subordinate to the intelligible things, and the elements of the universe will move towards the unity" (Shirazi, 1360 SH, p. 366).

3.2. The systemic divine spiritual approach, the systematic approach, the general-specific approach, and worldly-hereafter approach

In Mulla Sadra's view, among all beings from intelligibles and souls to bodies, there is a longitudinal hierarchal link (Shirazi, 1362 SH, pp. 22, 495). This is just as the man – as the minor world – is similar to the major world, and as noble beings of the rational worlds and souls are the causes for existence of the lower beings. "When God created things, He made the noblest being the cause for the existence of lower being and the cause for its survival and perfection and directing it to the farthest destinations and the most perfect goals" (Shirazi, 1981, vol.7, p. 135). Therefore, there must be the continuity, complementary and gradual order among the plural beings of the human world and civil life for establishment of perfection-making unity; and this is done by the state with its certain functions.

4. The functions of the state favored by Mulla Sadra

In Mulla Sadra's philosophical system, the favorite politics is the one subordinate to *Shari'ah*, because following *Shari'ah* would lead to enforcement of law and justice (Shirazi, 1362 SH, p. 557). It gets the outer of the universe away the corruption, making it in line with its inner. Mulla Sadra has taken this criterion for desirability of politics from his former philosophers such as Avicenna and Khaja Nasiruddin Tusi. They believed that politics must be based on law so that the justice is enforced through enforcing law in the light of the political system, and the people's subsistence and their hereafter affairs be organized. By 'law', they meant divine or religious law (i.e. *Shari'ah*) (Avicenna, 1404 AH, pp. 491-495; Avicenna, 1364 SH, pp. 713-718; Tusi, 1359 SH, p. 393). The only difference was that their literature on necessity of law was more political and social than Mulla Sadra, which he mentions in the form of 'purification of the outer world and its union with the inner world'.

Mulla Sadra maintains that the 'transcendental philosophy' is the science of rational organization of the world as far as the man is able to do so that in the light of it the human world may become the manifestation of the divine world (Shirazi, 1981, vol.1, p. 20). The politics appropriate for such a perception must be 'organizing the civil life in line with educating individuals characterized by perfections and divine attributes of the Exalted God'. In that case, such a policy gets an educational and guiding nature in management and organizing (Sadra, 1389 SH, p. 98). And the politics would be the science of preparing the ground for servitude to God and wayfaring towards God (Shirazi, 1364 SH, pp. 15-16).

The term 'state' is of Latin origin and refers to an established, fixed and secure state. In politics, the 'state' is a series of individuals and institutions that enact the dominant laws in a society and enforce them with their superior power (Ranney, 1987, p. 13). With the political philosophical approach, the state is a system that enjoys the superior power to achieve its goal while preserving the order and security in the

political society. In Mulla Sadra's philosophical system, the state is manifested in a ruler who serves as people's representative and prepares for them the lowest level of welfare and tranquility – that is "order" – and considers this as its own function due to the goal and end defined for the human society.

The function refers to the main mission of a system for which that system has been designed and created. In Mulla Sadra's philosophical system, the state's function is what has been defined as the state's goal in that system, and the state is seeking to achieve it through managing and organizing the political life.

In Mulla Sadra's political thought, the spiritual wayfaring and achieving felicity in this world and the hereafter is not acquired except when all what are the symbols of plurality are gone, and the orders of unity appear in the man's thought, practice and behavior. On the other hand, the man's civility and his defects and weaknesses requires the dominant and organizing power and a supervising and guiding one, i.e. the state governing the society so that the disordering pluralities that the individuals create in the sensual and imaginative order before becoming moderate and religious are managed and organized. Then, under the governance of religious laws, the individuals must be directed to wayfaring and go on to achieve the divine proximity as required by the spiritual survival and ultimate true felicity of the man.

Considering the process required by distancing from pluralities and resolving the differences and injustices as well as inclining towards unity, order and harmony based on the religious law up to wayfaring and achieving the ultimate goal, that is the total unity and divine proximity, three functions are defined for the state in Mulla Sadra's system.

Mulla Sadra's state, considering the goals expected from it, has three functions. One is establishing order based on the law and justice of *Shari'ah*. The other is creating the ground for wayfaring based on *Shari'ah*

of the members of society. And the last is felicity and divine proximity and unity with God as the end of existence. Thus, these three functions are studied here under the following three titles: (1) the function of religious-centered worldly order for worldly apparent prosperity; (2) the function of religious-centered wayfaring; and (3) function of *Wilayat*-centered felicity.

4.1. Order and security

In any society, what the society members mostly expect from the state is creating the atmosphere of order and security. In Mulla Sadra's philosophical system, the state establishes justice and makes law dominant to prevent disorder in affairs, injustice and oppression so that the people obtain the least amount of welfare and peace to be able to use other functions of the state and pursue their next perfection motion towards the existential end.

For Mulla Sadra, the society members – in the initial steps of their perfection movement, i.e. the sensual and imaginative stage – are drowned in the anger and in pleasures of lust, eating, marriage, overcoming the enemy for vengeance, and the like, and are locked in opposing pluralities. Consequently, they are ignorant of high goals and transcendental ends. And whoever is in plurality, is far from the track of unity and transcendence. Therefore, just as there is the unity governing the universe, there must be a social and civil unity governing the things to be placed in the track of their perfection and move towards their goal to achieve it.

"Most people – because they are drowned in sensual pleasures – ignore the rational pleasures and real felicity or misery. People's souls achieve the real felicity and pleasures when they free themselves from the material attachments and remove the blemishes of tarnishes from the soul and become abstract to perceive the real pleasures. In this case, they find out that the sensual pleasures are nothing except pain and

suffering. In this world, which is the farm for the hereafter, the men must purify the mirror of their soul and remove the tarnishes and filths off their nature. Mulla Sadra says any vicious deed conducted by human beings – such as oppressions – tarnishes their souls and lowers their souls down to the souls of animals or even lower than that. In this way, they make their own hell and get wretched souls, being deprived of perceiving the real pleasures" (Sajjadi, 1379 SH, p. 261).

Sajjadi continues to say: "The men's duty is to free their souls from all dark attachments related to the material world, and to purify their souls with good conduct and worship (and the like) and adorn it with high orders of knowledge and practice to achieve the perception of felicity and rational pleasures" (Sajjadi, 1379 SH, p. 261).

This is while the goals and purposes of the individual members of society must lead to transcendental purposes, to lead to the survival of species and establishment of virtuous system, and to end with distant goodness and divine transcendental realm (Shiraz, 1378 SH, vol.7, p. 170).

In that level of the function of Mulla Sadra's state, the civil phenomena get away from opposition to one another and achieve harmony and equilibrium (Shirazi, 1378 SH, vol.6, p. 376). The state removes the unjust differences and the differences among the people of appearance, deals with the disagreements among religions and denominations and directs them to unity and one single denomination (Shirazi, 1371 SH, p. 487). Besides, such a state saves individuals from worldly formalism and getting afflicted with indulging in worldly adornments and drowning in material things to direct them towards everlasting truths (Tusi, 1393 SH, p. 147). It repulses the enemies of utopia by fighting with them (Shirazi, 1362 SH, p. 494). "Then if the affairs are left without recorded legal definition – that everyone can refer to – the members of the society would struggle and fight with one another at any moment, which would lead to corruption, cutting the generation and disorder in system" (Shirazi, 1371 SH, p. 57).

In *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, Mulla Sadra expresses the concern for the corrupted relations in social connections as long as law does not govern among them: "We need to have a law to which the public refer and according to which justice is established; otherwise, the community is corrupted and the system is disrupted" (Shirazi, 1362 SH, p. 577). Creating unity among the society members – which is the starting point for the next perfections – is gained by distancing from material and corrupting pluralities and features. Thus, the state sets establishing order and security as his special function. In this way, it may use the proper policies to help the society and its members get away from deviations and pluralities originated from features pertaining to sensual and animal order, and the ground is prepared for going towards unity in interests and in rational perfections.

"If there is no just policy and no authoritative government among the society members in regard with distribution of lands and properties and appropriating a share to each person according to the laws, the subsistence would be difficult for them... And this would make them far from the wayfaring and worshipping God, and they would be negligent of mentioning God" (Shirazi, 1360 SH, p. 363).

Indeed, Mulla Sadra's favorite state is a state that God "has chosen for clarifying realities and revealing meanings and spreading benefits to the near and far..." (Shirazi, 1363 SH, p. 102). This begins with establishing justice and getting away from injustice, pluralities, and oppositions, and preparing the ground for wayfaring and spiritual journeys, and ends with achieving the real felicity.

Therefore, in Mulla Sadra's political thought, establishing order and security and an ordered state is necessary, for he considers the man as a civil being. The civil man's life, survival, and perfection is in collective and civil life, and fulfilling his needs – including material, spiritual, worldly and hereafter needs – is possible in the existence and

establishment of order and security. If the society and civil life is without an ordering government, it would lead to anarchy and there would be a disruption in life system (Shirazi, 1360 SH, p. 363). Indeed, the existence of a system of subsistence is an introductory necessity for other stages of perfection and other orders of wayfaring and proximity to God. It must have its own special system and enjoy prosperity and development. For establishing order and security through enacting and enforcing laws based on *Shari'ah* has a preventive interference in transactions, marriages, and conflicts among society members so that it can prevent struggles and corruption as well as disorders in the system (Shirazi, 1362 SH, p. 488).

4.2. *Shari'ah*-centered wayfaring

The principle of 'essential motion' on the one hand, and the principle of 'physically originated and spiritually survived' on the other hand, have caused Mulla Sadra to maintain that the man enjoys sensual, imaginative, animal, rational and intuitive orders (Shirazi, 1375 SH, p. 466). The abovementioned principles make those policies necessary that are in line with the requirements of the principles for achieving the perfections of wayfaring and the process of moving. And this is possible when the state adjusts the management and organization of this path according to the *Shari'ah*. Otherwise, it would have no result, because – it is said – that politics without *Shari'ah* is useless and leads the society astray (Lakza'i, 1395 SH, p. 256). In this stage, the state prepares the milieu – in the framework of *Shari'ah* – for wayfaring and freeing the souls from sensual shackles (Shirazi, 1981, p. 88) and for achieving the ultimate perfection, superior goodness and true felicity (Shirazi, 1362 SH, p. 560). According to the theory of 'grace' (*'ināyat*), Mulla Sadra (Shirazi, 1362 SH, p. 588; Shirazi, 1371 SH, p. 479) believes that the Prophet led the [human] character from animal position to celestial position, and reminded people of resurrection to direct them from the animal state to the human state. In leaving the

politics to jurists in the Occultation Period, Mulla Sadra – based on the 'grace' rule – attempts not to deprive society members of their need to divine teachings to which the ordinary people have no access. Those individuals who are in the sensual, imaginative and animal orders must go through the process of necessary wayfaring to achieve the rational order. In these orders, the state adjusts – on the basis of *Shari'ā* laws – the subsistence system and the limits and quality of relations and interactions of society members. This is because *Shari'ā* makes people's soul accustomed to justice and law. The souls, then, become moderate and ready for spiritual wayfaring, and covers the orders is spiritual state. Obeying *Shari'ā* gets the outer of the universe away from the corruption, and makes it harmonious with the inner of the universe: "*Shari'ā* reminds the man of the divine world and gets him away from declining towards lust, anger and the consequences" (Shirazi, 1360 SH, p. 365).

For him, when the politics obeys the *Shari'ā*, obedience to reason would also be realized. In this kind of function, the state invites people to doing righteous actions and prepares the ground for it. He says:

"Avicenna's statement that 'the general system of creation would not be completed except with the practical part of the soul' suggests that the man's faith would not be completed except with the righteous actions from the worships, giving alms, jihad with the enemies of religion, pilgrimage to God's House, and accompanying other Muslims in Hajj rites, and other affairs recommended in the right *Shari'ā*" (Shirazi, 1361 SH, vol.1, p. 509).

Therefore, wayfaring is the basis for receiving the divine graces and – consequently – achieving felicity. The wayfarer has two levels of journey in his travel towards God. One is the vertical journey towards proximity to God and annihilation in Him, and the other is a horizontal journey from God to people to serve them, preferring collective benefits to individual ones, avoiding accusation and backbiting, tittle-tattle, and acting according to the demands of *Shari'ā*. This is while in the

literature of the Peripatetic political philosophers such as Farabi, Avicenna, and Khaja Nasir Tusi, the individuals' perfection and proximity to God is highlighted in their civil participation and civil interactions based on the human and civil virtues (Yusefi-Rad, 1399 SH, pp. 255-258).

4.3. Wilaya-centered felicity

The felicity refers to the good and desirable situation now mixed with evil and harms, or it means complete consent of a goodness received by the soul (Saliba, 1366 SH, p. 391). In Mulla Sadra's philosophical system, on the basis of the capacity for "spiritual survival" in human's substance and on the basis of the essential motion, it is necessary for the state to make capacity in the souls of the individual members of the society by educating and guiding them. In this way, we may prepare the ground for the spiritual survival, i.e. the proximity to God and gaining the complete felicity for all members of the society (Shirazi, 1362 SH, p. 560) although some may be unable to achieve that rank.

For Mulla Sadra, the means for human beings to acquire felicity are three. One is knowledge and knowing the existence and its realities. The other is mystical wayfaring through getting away from material things. And the third is getting rid of evils and darkness of the soul (Shirazi, 1361 SH, vol.1, pp. 165-166). In this way, the man would deserve becoming vicegerent to God (Shirazi, 1364 SH, p. 9). Sadra says: "The one who knows himself would achieve the position of divinity." Indeed, such a person would be absorbed in observing God's beauty and grandeur. It seems that Mulla Sadra's all attention in achieving felicity is focused on worldly affairs and its accessories, because worldly affairs create the soul's blemish, depriving the man of perceiving spiritual and hereafter pleasures (Sajjadi, 1379 SH, pp. 261-262).

With such an approach to felicity and considering its requirements, the Prophet as God's friend must take over the presidency of the state

so that he may change people's inner side essentially and play the role of connecting them to God through love and attraction. His comprehensiveness from the viewpoint of threefold perfections (rational, sensual and sensuous) (Shirazi, 1360 SH, p. 474) and contraction and expansion towards people create the Prophet's spiritual attraction as the perfect man/ God's friend (Shirazi, 1360 SH, p. 488) and causes him to govern people's heart. Such a man has achieved the highest rank of felicity and his soul is united with the active intellect (Shirazi, 1362 SH, p. 563) and is aware of what is connected to felicity. Thus, Sadra's state is the one whose function is people's felicity so that people achieve their ultimate goal, which is felicity, in the light of that state's governance.

Conclusion

The reality of the state in Mulla Sadra's philosophy is nurturing natural man mixed with various types of pluralities and turning him into the wayfaring man who achieves proximity of God and – indeed – the perfect man. The politicians in that state are the men whose presence among people is for completion of their human perfection. Thus, the worldly engagements do not get them away from wayfaring; rather, they amplify their wayfaring by serving people and serving wayfarers. In his journey towards God, the wayfarer has two levels of journey. One is the vertical wayfaring up to proximity to God and annihilation in God, and the other is the horizontal wayfaring from God to people among people and with serving them and with prioritizing the collective benefits to individual benefits, and avoiding accusation, backbiting and tittle-tattling and going towards cooperation, sympathy, affection, love and self-sacrifice. In these journeys, the reality of the state is uniting those pluralities disrupting the society so that it may not lead to conflict of interests and end in orders of unity. This state has three functions. The first is preventive feature so that individuals may not stop at sensual, imaginative and animal order. The second function has a

Shari'ah-centered feature to make the outer side of the universe in line with its inner side. The third function has an inner-centered feature to enter the inner world – as the reality of the universe – and achieve the true felicity thereby. In Mulla Sadra's thought, the characteristic of the Prophet's state – as the favorite state – has the capacity of the third function to make its people achieve their existential ultimate goal, i.e. proximity to God and true/ complete felicity.

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