

Mulla Sadra's Ethical Theory

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Abstract

Ethical theories are often divided into three groups: Virtue theories, Teleology and Deontology. The Ethical theories of the majority of Islamic philosophers can be considered as Virtue Ethics. Mulla Sadra is one of the greatest Islamic philosophers so it is of prime importance to examine his ethical theory coherently. To this end, the present paper starts with this proposition that Mulla Sadra's ethical theory is a version of virtue ethics. He begins his ethical theory with the happiness (eudemonia) concept. On his own philosophical groundwork, Mulla Sadra, considers being and its perception as happiness. The felicity of each being depends on its level of existence. In broad terms, he defines happiness as the achievement of ontological

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perfection by each being consistent with its intrinsic demands. From Mulla Sadra's point of view, real happiness for human beings is theoretical wisdom, knowledge of facts, observation of ideas and rational luminous beings and alliance with active intellect, but above all the perception of Divine existence and His meeting. But the achievement of this rational happiness is impossible without body happiness defined as self-purification, inner catharsis, control of animal forces by intellectual faculty and being attributed by the property of justice. He accept Aristotelian moderation rule which puts every virtue between two extremes: excess and defect. Mulla Sadra, similar to most Islamic philosophers, believes in the four principal virtues and the eight principal vices.

Key Terms: *Mulla Sadra, virtue ethics, happiness, virtue, wisdom, moderation, justice.*