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## The Philosophical Politics of Happiness in Neo-Sadraian Philosophy

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### Abstract

The description and pursuit of human happiness have been always claimed by various schools and a source of conflict among them. This paper seeks to re-read the nature of happiness in the late transcendental wisdom (neo-Sadraian philosophy), that is, in the view of Mohammad Hossein Tabatabai and Mortaza Motahhari, and to redesign its requirements in the field of philosophical politics of happiness. The philosophical politics of happiness represents essential questions originating from extant schools and ideologies, which have developed under the influence of bigger intellectual and cultural regimes. This policy, with its firm tie to determining the nature of happiness, is indeed a reflective consideration of the questions of freedom, well-being, cohesion and integration, indicating how individual and collective happiness are regarded in any ideology and whether or not the government is justified to support the idea of happiness. This paper focuses on the analysis of the nature of happiness, the logic of human action, and its implications in the use of individual and collective resources to achieve it.

### Keywords:

Happiness, Mohammad Hossein Tabatabayi, Mortaza Motahhari, Good Life, Islamic Government, neo-Sadraian philosophy.

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### **Introduction**

Different systems of thought and political systems offer and pursue different conceptions of happiness. Sadraian transcendental philosophy<sup>1</sup> is one of the schools that has been very important in the history of contemporary Iranian thought, and after the Islamic Revolution of Iran, the views of its important flag bearers (neo-Sadraians) such as Allameh Mohammad Hossein Tabatabayi (1904-1981) and Martyr Mortaza Motahhari (1919-1979) have been referred to; In such a way that they are considered as the intellectual foundations of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Tabatabayi and Motahhari have developed Sadraian philosophy in various anthropological and sociological issues by proposing theories such as "contingent perceptions", "innate inclination", "the originality of both the individual and society", etc. Understanding how the idea of happiness is represented in this school and how it is formulated in the system of political concepts and what kind of system is organized is theoretically and practically important.

The main question of this research is as follows: "How is the nature and philosophical politics of happiness formulated in neo-Sadraian school?" To answer this question, after reviewing and analyzing the basics and nature of happiness from the perspective of Tabatabayi and Motahhari, we needed to explain how to adapt the various dimensions of the concept of happiness and create cohesion between society and politics (Abbinnett, 2013: 14-15). However, here, following explaining some theoretical foundations in this school, we focused on the dimensions of collective happiness and left the Motahhari's formulation of individual and otherworldly happiness and their relation to other dimensions of happiness out of the scope of discussion.

## **1. Theoretical Framework: Neo-Sadraian Political Philosophy and Happiness**

In general, two major perceptions have been made of the concept of happiness: Psychological perception (descriptive and individual) and value perception. The first perception (“Happiness”) is mostly associated with individual happiness, and the second perception (“Well-being”) is mostly involved with collective happiness (Haybron, 2011)<sup>ii</sup>. If the question of the nature of happiness is, the question of what is indeed “beneficial” to people, then, it is a function of “value”, and it is a question of what is “good” for people - those kinds of things that moral theories try to task about. But if the question is about a particular mental or psychological state, then, some psychological assessments (both philosophical and scientific) would be needed. However, there are more general interpretations that can encompass both (White, 2015)<sup>iii</sup>. In the view of Sadra's scholars, both of these can be traced, but these two perceptions are not seen separately.

To refer to this concept, many words have been used (Tabatabai, 1995, vol. 7, p. 63). These words do not deal only with a single component; there are various factors such as pleasure, desire, truth, divine mercy, needs, perfection etc., which have referred to both objective and subjective matters (Tabatabai, 1995 vol. 3, p. 13).

According to Tabatabayi, the category of "pleasure" has a special place in the narrative of happiness and salvation (Ibid, vol. 7, p. 465). He even describes the happiness of that world by the same component (pleasure); (Ibid, vol. 12, pp. 371-493) Of course, being mere happy is not actual happiness, but the happiness that follows human perfection is real happiness (Motahhari, 2017: 82).

Happiness in its normative sense is not only valuable, but it also plays the role of "valuing" other things (Tabatabai, 1995, vol. 8, p. 66-67). Even achieving mundane happiness requires foresight and avoidance of "bondage" in pleasures; (Ibid, vol. 6, p. 272) In particular, it should be noted that since there is a real relationship between action and punishment in the system of evolution, the mundane matter is also valuable in its place (Ibid, vol. 6, pp. 538-539). In this view, there is not only the mental aspect of happiness, but there is also talk of real happiness and its objective aspect (Ibid, vol. 7, p. 64). It is possible that in the absence of some pleasures and in spite of some pains, with a higher degree of perfection and pleasure, one can be considered happy (Ibid, vol. 7, p. 104). Given the role of foresight in distinguishing true happiness, it is necessary to consider the issue of human activism and how human beings achieve far higher pleasures and perfections in "prudential activity".

## **2. Pursuing of happiness**

Man in search of happiness has two categories of activities: the pleasure-seeking activity that is rooted in nature and human instinct, and the deliberative and prudential activity that seeks expediency, pleasure, and satisfaction beyond fleeting pleasures.

In short, the pleasure-seeking activity includes the following steps:

1. Feeling the need;
2. Creating love;
- 3 & 4. Imagining action, and Confirmation of benefit (End diagnosis);
5. Strong enthusiasm;
6. Crediting "ought to";
7. Will;
8. Action;
9. Gaining pleasure.

But in prudential activity, creating love/ hate, is after acknowledging the benefit/ harm of action (Shafiei Ghahfarikhi and Baharloo, 2020: 433-460).

Pleasure as the perpetual element of happiness, is divided into several types, (Tabatabai, 2009, vol. 1, p. 717) but sensory pleasures have strong attraction.

In many cases, pleasures were in conflict, (Tabatabai, 1995 vol. 8, p. 96) therefore, achieving happiness requires recognizing its individual and social resources and prioritizing them.

According to our definition of happiness. i.e., achieving need/ talent to meet need/ perfection, and paying attention to the hierarchy of satisfying needs/ desirable perfections (sensory, imaginary and intellectual) in the logic of human action, examining the sources of happiness and our attitude to foundations of politics, can chart the outline of the theory of happiness and its political implications for the permanence and cohesion of society and the provision of well-being and happiness.

### **3. Social attitude and collective happiness**

According to Motahhari, happiness has many factors and sources, and the felicity will be more perfect and complete with further provided relevant factors (Motahhari, 1997-2005: Vol. 7, p. 65). Society - which, alongside human nature and nature - is one of the building blocks of human personality (Ibid, vol. 15, p. 799) - is recognized as one of the external sources of happiness. Motahhari believes that society is a real matter (thing) with its own special composition (Ibid, vol. 21, p. 217). Thus, collective happiness appears to be a significant and remarkable issue. Since humans have a typical commonality and have the similar powers, instincts, and talents, they benefit from similar happiness, and as they have some differences in their talents, they will benefit from different kinds of happiness (felicity and happiness is absolute in the case of common perfections and goodness, and it is relative in the case of specific perfections and goodness). Man is naturally created to be social, and human society needs a variety of talents to emerge within. The collection of talents required for the progress and development of society is divided among individuals, and the individual and the species

(type), each, have a mission. The mission of the species is to progress and evolve the species - through the blossoming of all human talents -, and the individual's mission is to perform a natural social duty - by flourishing common and specific talents. However, there are differences between the primary and secondary ultimate goals of man. Some talents are created to realize the main and primary ultimate goals of nature, while some are meant to reach secondary ultimate goals. Secondary goals are those objectives that nature pursues to create the ground for primary and intrinsic goals. Man's social talents fall into this group (Ibid, vol. 7, pp. 76-77). Hence, societies can follow a common goal (such as justice) in providing and guaranteeing collective happiness (Ibid, vol. 13, p. 821).

It is crucial to pay attention to the fact that human happiness varies on an individual and social scale (Ibid, vol. 13, p. 823), and it needs to be considered from a social perspective as well. According to Motahhari, taking a social attitude is inevitable even for the individual's happiness since man is a social being, and thus, his happiness, ideals, criteria of good and evil, ways and methods, and the choice of his means, are all entangled with the issues of others. Therefore, man cannot choose his own path independently of others. Rather, he should seek happiness on the highway that leads society to prosperity and perfection (Ibid, vol. 2, p. 57). Thus, evaluating others' actions from a social and historical perspective appears different from an individual point of view (Ibid, vol. 1, pp. 296-297). Choosing to look at things with a macro attitude reveals that society has its own rules and traditions (Ibid, vol. 2, pp. 345-347), based on which, some blessings and goods, including security and wealth, may be seen as evil and bad in larger attitudes, and vice versa (Ibid, vol. 4, p. 257). Motahhari rejects the narrations of the Cynics, Sceptics, and Stoics due to being individualistic,

selfish, and anti-social (Ibid, vol. 22, pp. 48-54), and accordingly, criticizes any kind of anti-socialist worldview and endorses a collective insight (Ibid, vol. 16, pp. 518-519)<sup>iv</sup>.

Paying attention to the social aspects of human happiness reveals the fact that the happiness of the individual and society are interdependent and correlated. People are involved in creating their worldly social life destiny, and can change their status from misery to happiness by their actions, and vice versa (one of the divine traditions) (Ibid, vol. 16, p. 517). Thus, determining the relationship between these two levels of happiness, which is related to the categories of freedom and justice, seems to have a decisive place in the philosophical politics of happiness.

#### **4. Freedom and justice**

##### **4-1. Individual and society**

In Motahari's view, conventional perceptions and utilizing means lead man to form and understand society (as a real personality). In his perspective, individual and community may come to contradictions in human societies, and thereby, the restriction (of freedom) of the individual (and the formation of justice) can happen. However, this is justified when the position of each individual and the community and their relation are determined. In Motahhari's point of view, both the individual and the community are philosophically genuine. Besides, from a legal perspective, sometimes individual interests must be limited and possibly sacrificed for the common good; although this is also in proportion to human nature and can be justified, especially with a monotheistic attitude. This perspective also allows us to speak of social and inter-generation responsibility (Suzanchi, 2006: 41-60).

#### **4-2. Justice**

Collective happiness is realized by paying attention to the category of justice and its provision; in other words, social justice involves the conditions for the realization of happiness in society. Thus, justice is one of the requirements for looking for happiness and can be seen as a common goal of human societies (Motahhari, 1997-2005: Vol. 13, p. 819). Therefore, complete collective happiness will be possible in the rule of justice (and, at its core, reason). On the other hand, oppression and ignorance are seen as causes of man's fall and deviation from happiness (Ibid, vol. 21, pp. 41-50)<sup>v</sup>. But how should justice be defined? "Equality" is the main idea of the concept of justice; however, it matters how to define such equality. It seems wrong to define justice as mere equality since an equal share for all is some kind of inequality. From this perspective, Martyr Motahhari rejects the definition of justice as leveling equality. Another kind of equality needs to be considered in justice, which is to give everyone their own very right (Ibid, vol. 13, pp. 822-823). Accordingly, justice refers to the natural right and is an absolute issue. From political and social aspects, justice is based on "rights and priorities" and "social constructs", and the category of right and priority (or the very avoidance of oppression) plays a central role in it (Ibid, vol. 1, pp. 80-81). This kind of justice is concerned with a discretionary policy (not a desired policy) and arises from a kind of self-exile and avoidance of all kinds of selfishness (individual, familial, and national), which – due to the role of the golden rule of morality in shaping the spirit of society - is consolidated with the attention to the "other one" at simultaneously, limits "equality" and "freedom" (Ibid, vol. 22, pp. 497-500). By criticizing the economics of capitalism (which guarantees the one's happiness at the cost of another's unhappiness) and the economics of

socialism (which implies an inaccurate conception of equality) and by raising issues such as inheritance, ownership, freedom, and economic competition, Motahari believes that an instance of this justice can manifest in the economic perspective of Islam (Ibid, vol. 20, pp. 561-570). Defining justice based on the right and priority is proportional to not defining happiness based on satisfaction. If happiness is defined solely based on satisfaction, not the exercise of the right of every soul or individual, it would bring numerous political and economic corruptions. For example, in such a case, the poor may get along with the status quo and the oppressive relations between the rich and the poor will be justified, while everyone's rights should be granted to him and the importance and priority of work and fight to end oppressive class relations have to be also emphasized. However, the possible satisfaction of the poor with the status quo is also a product of social injustice and the fruit of such an injustice in individual morality (for example, by creating and affirming the promise of unchangeable "luck and fortune") (Ibid, vol. 23, pp. 737-738).

Building justice based on "right" and paying attention to the "other" implies the sense of "responsibility" to the other, and in other words, the accompaniment of right and duty to a level that it will manifest even in the form of sacrifice and martyrdom. This accompaniment of rights and duties is also consistent with taking a position regarding the originality of the individual or the community (Ibid, vol. 16, p. 251). These social responsibilities are themselves considered a kind of happiness that should be appreciated; especially since inadequate attention to these responsibilities in today's civilization has diminished their executive power in providing conditions for happiness (Ibid, vol. 15, p. 1044). A sense of responsibility concerning others naturally arises for the rulers as well. They are responsible

for the happiness of their citizens; for, the territory under their rule has a right that should be fulfilled by them, and this right is the creation of prosperity and the provision of “the means of happiness and comfort and the flourishing of life” for the people (Ibid, vol. 22, pp. 131-132).

The point highlighted by Motahhari is the role of religion and religious motivation in creating and giving meaning to rights, justice, responsibility, and sacrifice. According to him, the “rights” can be merely justified in the divine school and by considering the ultimate of affairs and the relationship between this world and the hereafter. Sacrifices only make sense in this context. In other words, the foundation of morality on theology and self-knowledge brings a scientific (rather than an emotional and inductive) basis for morality. Also, the divine religion and faith in God, while developing hope for the future of humanity and the victory of truth and justice, resolve and reconcile the conflicts of interests and benefits, and individual and community by presenting a narrative of justice (Ibid, vol. 21, pp. 221-224).

#### **4-3. Freedom**

In proportion to the rights, justice, limits equality and freedom. Freedom itself is a right and plays a substantial role in collective happiness due to the acceptance of individualism (in addition to collectivism) while being associated with individual happiness in such a way to observe individual rights meanwhile the collective is prioritized over the individual (Ibid, vol. 25, pp. 256-257). To meet his needs, – under normal circumstances, freely - man hires the others, and this conquest relationship – in contrast to a mandatory relationship that leaves no room for the other’s freedom- also contributes to social bonding and ties. The differences in human talents and the individual talents of each provide the ground for individual freedom and mutual employment and conquest as well as a kind of social and economic

competition (Ibid, vol. 2, p. 115-116). The very same idea of freedom leaves the way open for political fights and revolutions, considering them in some circumstances as conditions of happiness and bliss (Ibid, vol. 24, pp. 172-173)<sup>vi</sup>. According to Motahhari, epistemology (realism, idealism, and materialism) and social ontology (individualism and collectivism) of schools of thought influence their attitudes toward the desirable freedom type. For example, the man not being civil in nature (being civil by constraint) is related to the negative liberal freedom such as what is seen in Hobbes's philosophy (Ibid, vol. 15, pp. 764-765). Also, internal and external freedom (spiritual and social freedom) are two types of freedom that both appear to be necessary and valuable for human happiness from a realistic perspective, while some schools have valued only one of them (Ibid, vol. 25, pp. 170-171).

Paying attention to the various aspects of freedom is proven to be critical to human happiness. Even, as derived from Motahhari's theory of justice, we need to avoid going to extremes concerning the value and importance of freedom and other values, and all of them should be considered under the system of justice (Ibid, vol. 22, pp. 114-119). For example, in the case of (negative) freedom, we cannot imagine an ideal and happy society in which no one has anything to do with the other, no one is caused harm by another, does no harm to the others, and lives only for himself. In such a society, fondness and relationships are ignored, and thereby, it cannot be called happy and blissful (Ibid, vol. 25, pp. 146-148). Therefore, the general notion of justice sets the position of all values moderately.

#### **4-4. Tolerance, bidding for good and forbidding from doing evils**

The discussion of tolerance, bidding and forbidding, as well as impartiality and perfectionism in politics, are among the outcomes of the discussion of

freedom and justice. Humans' free will and ability to change individual and collective happiness are associated with a set of political requirements, which need to be adjusted together such as care, tolerance, opposition, bidding for good, forbidding from doing evils and responsibility for reform (Ibid, vol. 15, pp. 805-807). According to the participation of human beings as members of a society in the worldly destiny (happiness or misery) - which, of course, is also linked to the happiness of the hereafter - and the movement of the organ-like society towards its own ultimate (or in other words, the common good), each person is tied to some kind of responsibility, and thus- in a nutshell - it allows him to judge the other and commanding (the good) and forbidding (the bad), which is even a necessary issue. This intervention sometimes appears in the form of various types of *Jihad* (Ibid, vol. 14, p. 366). On the other hand, this intervention, in addition to the biological human being, is fit for "humanity" and individual and collective "good and expediency" as well (Ibid, vol. 22, pp. 750-751).

Therefore, according to Motahhari, commanding and forbidding aimed at the realization of the common goal of society means participation and is briefly accepted. However, the scope and examples of this issue are among the important controversies in political philosophy. Religious and ideological tolerance is one of the controversial issues among thinkers that Motahhari has opposed it in some cases. He does not consider science, reason, and religion just as the "means" for peace and happiness, but considers that they have objectivity and relevance. Therefore, the comfort and peace brought by ignorance and imagination (and, in other words, satisfaction and desire) are not acceptable. The peace caused by understanding is different from the peace and joy of ignorance; even the pain and suffering due to knowing are superior to the joy and satisfaction brought by ignorance. Thus,

perfectionism and the struggle against ignorance cannot be prevented by relying on these matters (Ibid, vol. 22, pp. 279-282). Moreover, the insights and attitudes resulting from knowledge and awareness (especially accurate religious teachings) lead to optimism, mobility, and virtue, and accordingly, poisonous intellectual foods that are created by “pessimism and discouragement or arousal of lusts and disregard for the rules of chastity and morality or disbelief and promiscuity” (misleading books or movies or the like) should be banned, and this is not in conflict with the principles of freedom (Ibid, vol. 22, pp. 194-196).

Motahhari issues rulings on dealing with ignorance and misguidance by relying on the ultimate goals of the individual and society and the virtues expected of the individuals. He raises a question in this regard as follows: “Given that human beings have commonalities and characteristics, and considering the fact that personal rights are distinguished from public rights, is the issue of religion and monotheism a public matter or a personal matter?”

Motahhari is opposed to placing religion in the private sphere and reducing it to some kind of entertainment. Religion has provided a real path to individual and collective happiness, and accepting a human reality brings responsibility and limitation in relationships. Thus, “One should not say in the real toward the human happiness that a person’s belief, even if it is not based on thinking, is free.” From the same perspective, he criticizes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for ignoring this “reality”. Therefore, religion and monotheism are correlated with human happiness and are not related to personal taste and ethnicity; rather, they are part of the human rights (Ibid, vol. 20, pp. 250-251). On this basis, according to Motahhari, there is a difference between science and belief, and although

freedom of thought is acceptable, freedom of belief is not accepted since “the belief that man chooses may be against man and against himself.” Therefore, human rights and freedoms make sense according to the human ultimate and on the human path (Ibid, vol. 26, pp. 353-357). With these descriptions, where is the place of philanthropy and altruism among all these? According to Motahhari, there is a negative guardianship in Islam, which limits the relationship with non-Muslims, meaning that the relationships between a Muslim and a non-Muslim should not be as much as the relationships between a Muslim and a Muslim. In this case, there would be no contradiction between the principle of mercy and philanthropy with the negative guardianship (that is, between a Muslim doing good to a non-Muslim, and at the same time, does not accept his guardianship) since “philanthropy (humanitarianism) requires man to be interested in the true destiny, goodness, and happiness of all human beings.” But if not everyone has succeeded to be guided, the guided ones should not be sacrificed for others. Motahhari adds that Islam is a humanitarian religion, and even loves the polytheist - because he is a creation of God- and, of course, is sad because he has fallen into the path of misery and misguidance (and this sadness arises from indifference to his misery). Therefore, the love and hate approved by Islam is rational and logical love and hate, not emotional and baseless (Ibid, vol. 2, pp. 259-260). Thus, this restriction is primarily to remove obstacles to the happiness of Muslims, not to create obstacles for non-Muslims.

In some cases, it is not even possible to completely repel the evil of others, and doing good in such a situation is like sacrificing yourself for the enemy. Here, Islam - out of following benevolence, expediency, and bliss - commands all kinds of violence, the highest level of which in the collective

issues is *Jihad*, and in individual issues is *Qisas* (retaliation in kind) (Ibid, vol. 22, pp. 755-756) There is a more precise explanation of this love and hate that is realized by expanding the horizons of man and achieving higher transcendent goals. The breakage of the boundaries of human selfishness is not limited even to human beings and encompasses the entire universe. In this purposivism, man sees his happiness in willing what God wants. In this perspective, loving God replaces philanthropy. However, not everyone can be treated the same here as well. Rather, the very same “public conscience” rules that the obstacles to seeking rights should be removed (Ibid, vol. 22, pp. 684-685). However, most encounters in society do not fit into this format and require other ways, a range of which are included in the meaning of Verse 34 of Sura 41: FUSSILAT<sup>vii</sup>. What are these ways?

Clearly, these paths must be created in a proper context to avoid them from deviating into a valley of indifference. Motahhari illustrates a kind of “spiritual jihad” for collective happiness, which respects the freedom of thought of individuals meanwhile being responsible. The heart of this highway is based on the logic and culture of reasoning that releases man from the condemnation of the external and internal environment and reveals his cultural aspect by recognizing the freedom of thought. From this perspective, coercion and indoctrination are ineffective in education and morality, and faith and monotheism - although are seen as real human rights – do not belong to those things that can be accepted by force and expediency; rather, the levels and degrees of submission of the intellect (logic and reasoning) and the heart (avoiding stubbornness and struggle) - or love and persuasion as the two core elements of faith – should be considered in them (Ibid, vol. 1, pp. 290-291). The spiritual jihad based on a culture of reasoning, which itself contains a kind of tolerance, relies on the possibility

of “dialogue” and is in the direction of a single world community and the unity of cultures that have been defended by Motahhari (Ibid, vol. 2, pp. 366-371).

### **5. The perfectionist government: Law and virtue**

According to Motahhari, spirituality, seeking rights and justice at the social and political levels - including in the form of government actions - are known as the requirements of collective happiness. Thus, ideology and believing in that ideology will provide a harmonious plan for collective happiness. This plan is not only limited to individual ethics but also encompasses the fight for justice and the government’s participation in the realization of social justice. The reason for the necessity of such a school, which is associated with the denial of secularism, is the very inseparability of the happiness of the individual from the community (Ibid, vol. 2, pp. 58-60). Thus, relying on human free will and the fact that the collective situation can be changed, the ideology emphasizes the duty towards the “others” in the form of relationships and encouragement of truth and patience (Ibid, vol. 15, p. 805). Accordingly, religious faith - in the form of an element for improving social relations, shaping the social spirit of the believers, creating optimism about the outcome of actions, and establishing the scientific and logical basis of collective ethics and piety - can act as a supporter of the religious government to bring justice and the conditions of collective happiness; however, religion is seen here as a goal, not as a means (Ibid, vol. 1, p. 178).

The virtues of justice, faith, and religiosity - which encompass a set of other virtues – should be promoted and supported by the Islamic government aimed at providing the conditions for the pursuit of collective happiness through the common and specific actions of individuals (such as a variety of

benevolence and service to the people). This path is in line with the general goals of the prophets - monotheism and social justice as conditions of happiness - and relies on the human nature, which forms the foundations of the united human society and brings together and adapts the spirit of the individual and the community for the consistency of society (Ibid, vol. 1, p. 341). The ruler's sympathy for the people and adhering to a simple lifestyle are the first and simplest requirements of such a policy in limiting individuals (Ibid, vol. 1, p. 177).

The perfectionism and justice-seeking of the government, especially in the modern world, are manifested in the laws more than anything else. The law (and the *Shari'a*) is established for the realization of (individual, collective, and otherworldly) happiness and perfection (Ibid, vol. 1, p. 178). In this era, the law acts as a means for justice and happiness instead of tribes and clans and provides a system of punishment and reward in society, which contains a kind of legal neutrality. The relevant laws and regulations of religion also follow the same logic and govern social contracts (Ibid, vol. 7, p. 72). Accordingly, respecting the laws and the boundaries of other rights and regulations is one of the features of collective happiness and a healthy social life (Ibid, vol. 2, p. 49). The laws and *Shari'a* (religious laws) contribute to the stability of society and the political system in other ways as well. They are formulated by considering the fixed (based on human nature) and variable (based on the requirements of time) affairs and issues of society, and move toward the dynamism of life meanwhile preserving the substantial interests and conditions of happiness. Moreover, the law and *Shari'a* assess the expediency of affairs and prioritize them in the context of regulating the relationship between the individual and the community, and

the choice between the interests of the collective or the individual freedom (Ibid, vol. 21, pp. 130-131).

Human laws have nothing to do with one's spiritual system and spiritual development. However, they come into play to fulfill the guarantees of collective happiness and the moral and spiritual virtues of the individual. Motahhari believes that the main enemies of justice, freedom, security, and happiness are in the human soul, and a lack of attention to faith (as the backbone of morality), inner (spiritual) freedom, and individual and collective piety has taken the executive power and the core guarantee from modern civilization and laws. Whilst mystical asceticism - leading to self-sacrifice and compassion - and piety organize the relationship with the (human and animal) self and others and prevent the moral corruption, which is required for the realization of society's happiness (Ibid, vol. 1, pp. 299-307). Hence, the social circles of happiness are strengthened by spiritual virtues and inner freedom and guarantee the justice and conditions for the possibility and pursuit of collective happiness.

### **Conclusion**

By trying to provide a coherent plan of happiness, neo-Sadraian philosophers reject extremist and deviant narratives. They criticize the secularism of Western materialism, and on the other hand, challenges the asceticism of some religious people who have presented a monastic image of Islamic asceticism. In this view, worldview is the foundation of thought and ideologies are formed based on the requirements of worldview, and the root of the difference between worldviews comes from the issue of cognition. In neo-Sadraian view, man is a being whose realm is vast and broad in the sphere of knowledge, insights, cognitions, and desires, and his divine nature is a basis for explaining his happiness. The complexities of the dimensions

of human worldly and otherworldly life and the tying of his happiness to the happiness of others reveal the need for religion, reason, and morality.

In their view, some important aspects of human life appear in the social arena and human society needs a variety of talents to emerge in its context. The talents required for the progress and development of human society are divided among the individuals, and the individual and the species each have a mission. According to Motahhari, adopting a social attitude is even necessary for the individual happiness of man since man is a social being, and thus, his happiness, ideals, criteria of good and evil, methods and ways, and the choice of means are entangled with the happiness, ideals, criteria of good and evil, methods and ways, and the choice of means of others. Therefore, man cannot choose his own path independently of others. Rather, he needs to seek his happiness and bliss on a highway that leads society to bliss and perfection as well.

Paying attention to the social aspects of human happiness reveals that the happiness of the individual and society are interdependent and correlated. Complete collective happiness would be realized in the rule of justice (and, given the centrality of the reason for justice, leading to the rule of reason and justice). The theory of justice of Motahhari suggests that there should be any exaggeration about the value and importance of freedom and other values, and all of them must be considered under the system of justice. For example, in the case of (negative) freedom, we cannot imagine an ideal and happy society in which no one has anything to do with the other, no one is harmed by another, does no harm to the others, and lives only for himself. In such a society, fondness and relationships are ignored, and thereby, this society cannot be called happy and blissful. Therefore, the general notion of justice sets the position of all values moderately (including freedom). Therefore, the

idea of happiness relies on the simultaneous regulation of freedom (in relation to “happiness” and in relation to “self”) and justice (in relation to “morality” and in relation to the “other”). Therefore, intervening and ordering and forbidding in the direction of the common goal of society also means participating in this regard and has been somehow accepted. Motahhari illustrates a kind of “spiritual jihad” for collective happiness, which respects the freedom of thought of individuals meanwhile being responsible. The heart of this highway is based on the logic and culture of reasoning that releases man from the condemnation of the external and internal environment and reveals his cultural aspect by recognizing the freedom of thought. This spiritual jihad, which itself contains a kind of tolerance, relies on the possibility of “dialogue” and is in the direction of a single world community and the unity of cultures that have been defended by Motahhari.

This plan of the pursuit of happiness is not only limited to individual ethics but also encompasses the fight for justice and the government’s participation in the realization of social justice. The reason for the necessity of such a school, which is associated with the denial of secularism, is the very inseparability of the happiness of the individual from the community. Accordingly, the virtues of justice, faith, and religiosity - which encompass a set of other virtues – should be promoted and supported by the Islamic government. This path is in line with the general goals of the prophets - monotheism and social justice as conditions of happiness - and relies on the human nature, which forms the foundations of the united human society and brings together and adapts the spirit of the individual and the community for the consistency of society.

The perfectionism and justice-seeking of the government, especially in the modern world, are manifested in the laws more than anything else. In Motahhari's view, respecting the laws and the boundaries of other rights and regulations is one of the features of collective happiness and a healthy social life. The laws and (*Shari'a*) are formulated by considering the fixed (based on human nature) and variable (based on the requirements of time) affairs and issues of society and move toward the dynamism of life meanwhile preserving the substantial interests and conditions of happiness. Moreover, the law and *Shari'a* assess the expediency of affairs and prioritize them in the context of regulating the relationship between the individual and the community, and the choice between the interests of the collective or the individual freedom. Human laws have nothing to do with one's spiritual system and spiritual development. However, they come into play to fulfill the guarantees of collective happiness and the moral and spiritual virtues of the individual. Thus, spiritual virtues and inner freedom guarantee the justice needed for collective happiness.

**Notes;**

- i. one of the most important philosophical schools in the Islamic world, founded by Mulla Sadra (ca. 1571–1636)
- ii. See: Dan Haybron, “Happiness”, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, at: <http://plato.stanford.edu> (Jul 6, 2011); Roger Crisp, “Well-being”, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, at: <http://plato.stanford.edu> (Dec 9, 2008); Pier Luigi Porta and Roberto Scazzieri, “Public happiness and civil society”, in Luigino Bruni & Pier Luigi Porta (ed.), *Handbook on the Economics of Happiness*, Cheltenham, UK & Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc., 2007, p. 95.
- iii. The word happiness can also mean well-being. See: Nicholas P. White, *A Brief History of Happiness*, Translated (into Persian) by: Omid Shafiei Ghahfarokhi, Tehran: Imam Sadiq (AS) University, 2015; R. Almeder, *Human Happiness and Morality*, Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Press, 2000; Julia Annas, *op. cit.*; D. M. McMahon, *Happiness: A History*, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2005; N. Noddings, *Happiness and Education*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- iv. See, for example, his analysis of the Islamic ruling on “Crying over a martyr”: *Ibid.*, Vol. 24, p. 467.
- v. However, individual happiness can happen in an unjust society, but only for the rare ones; See: *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 979.
- vi. However, the focus is on training and gradualism. *Ibid.*, Vol. 24, pp. 172-173;
- vii. Good and evil deeds are not equal. Repel with that which is most just, and see, the one whom there is enmity between you will be as if he were a loyal guide.  
(ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ) (34)

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