



**PAPER DERIVED FROM THESIS**

## The Position of Intellect in the Fundamentals of Ethics Epistemology in the Thought of Sheikh Saduq

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT	
<p><b>Article History:</b>                      Received: 02 December 2022                      Revised: 01 February 2023                      Accepted: 28 February 2023</p> <p><b>Key Words:</b>                      Intellect                       Rational Good and Bad                       Ethics Epistemology                       Sheikh Saduq</p>	<p><b>SUBJECT AND OBJECTIVES:</b> Companying with revelation and other human faculties like sense and heart, Intellect is the perceptive faculty as one of the most significant fundamentals of human Ma'rifat (recognition). It is important to know the position of Intellect in the epistemic geometry of Islam, especially Islamic ethics which lead human truth. In order to realize Intellect and its position among fundamentals of epistemology, the view of some precedent scholars like Sheikh Saduq is prominent since the proximity of his age to the presence of infallible Imams and finding minor occultation era.</p> <p><b>METHOD AND FINDING:</b> Aiding a descriptive-analytical method, we seek for the position of intellect as one of epistemological fundamentals of ethics and their rank of influence on ethical Ma'rifat based on theological thoughts of Sheikh Saduq. We have defined Intellect from the perspective of epistemology as the source of knowledge. Then, we have dealt with the types of Intellect, including theoretical and practical ones, and finding the particular type considered in epistemology.</p> <p><b>CONCLUSION:</b> Even though, Sheikh Saduq is counted as a textualist thinker but intellect in his thought is considered as an independent source in the scope of intellectual problems, which authenticates the other sources of recognition. Intellect is also mentioned as the primary source of recognition, and in company with revelation is known as the main causes of recognition.</p>	
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## **Introduction**

What we practically expect of ethics is to evaluate human behaviors and habits. Thus, some particular instructions for human behaviors and habits have been specified in ethics based on its theoretical foundations.

Hence, the theoretical fundamentals of ethics are of particular importance, while the difference in the theoretical fundamentals necessitates diversity in ethical instructions too.

Epistemology is considered as a codified science among new sciences whereas its specific terms and subjects have not been found in a coherent format in the works of the ancient scholars. However, some subjects found in their works

consisting of epistemological tinge.

Ibn Babawayh Qomi known as Sheikh Saduq is one of the Shia scholars in the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.H, who is also counted as the most well-known scholar and jurist in the theological and hadith-oriented school of Qom.

It is significant to know his theories due to the short time gap between his and the infallible Imams' era.

Therefore, this study examines the fundamentals of the ethic's epistemology in Sheikh Saduq's perspective, tries to clarify the basic principles and foundations of epistemology in the Islamic ethics system and deals with their influence on ethical recognition.

The role of Sheikh Saduq, identifying his viewpoints and the criterion stated in

respect of the significance of intellect and rationalism in the school of Qom are prominent in order to comprehend the Islamic ethical system.

As a remarkable point, we are in dire need of applying various types of knowledge in order to plan and solve scientific problems. The knowledge which is required prior of dealing with the problems of any science is called as “principles of science” which is divided itself into two following categories:

1. Conceptual (Tasavor) principles
2. Judgmental (Tasdiq) principles

Conceptual principles, i.e. the definitions and elucidations of the nature of discussing objects, are

usually presented as an introduction within the science itself; but judgmental principles of sciences are varied and often discussed in other sciences. (*Misbah Yazdi, 2013, Vol. 1: 87*)

The fundamentals in this study mean those judgmental principles associated in terms of content to ethics and are influential in determining the fundamentals of ethics.

Hence, the fundamentals of the ethic’s epistemology are the basic propositions by which is elaborated the sources of ethical recognition, valid means and methods in studying of this class of recognition. (*Ibid: 137*)

In this study, we look for how Sheikh Saduq, known as a textualist scholar,

looks at Intellect (Aql). Does he consider an independent role for intellect in moral epistemology?

### **The Role of Intellect in Ethical Recognition**

Intellect is one of the sources and means of recognition. Different approaches found out of the Shiite theologians concerning the position of intellect since the era of the infallible Imams up to now.

In the age of Imam's presence, this approach has been consisted of rational and traditional tinge, however, traditional approach has been prevailed in occultation era until the age of Sheikh Saduq. Although Sheikh Saduq, as a representative of the Qom school, narrated many ahadith related to intellect in his works, and

although many hadiths of "*The Book of Intellect and Ignorance*" in "*Usul Kafi*" have been narrated by Qom's narrators and transmitters; but we have not been encountered to none of his works to the subjects entitled by "*The Book of Intellect*" or the virtue of knowledge. He initiated "*The Book of Monotheism*" with the subject of "*Reward of Monotheists*". Furthermore, he applied that as well in his "*The book of beliefs*". (Abedi, 2006: 20)

In addition, Sheikh Saduq has not provided a definition for intellect in any of his available works; but there are two ways in order to determine an eligible definition for intellect ascribed to him.

The First one is through the narrations reported by Sheikh Saduq about intellect and its nature. It has to be realized that Sheikh Saduq would consider the traditions of his book as correct and believed if he did not reject them.

Furthermore, there are some sentences about intellect, its nature, duty and function in his writings and statements by which the intellect can be defined through concluding and right arranging of which.

Some of the propositions that may be inferred out of the discussions stated or the traditions narrated by Saduq regarding the intellect are as follows; He considered intellect as Allah's argumentum over people and distinguishing factor of honesty out of mendacity, good out of

bad, and good out of evil. He took intellect into consideration as the best creature of Allah, as well as the most obedient, the greatest and the noblest one. Worshiping is performed through intellect, and rewards and punishments are given on its basis. (*Ref: Saduq, 2000: 34-391; Ibid, 2014, Vol. 1: 34; Ibid, 2011, Vol. 1: 12*)

According to him, intellect is something by which the Lord, the Merciful, can be worshiped, and the heaven obtained through. (*Ref: Majlesi, 1986, Vol. 3: 95*)

He considered the intellect as the evaluator for the veracity of words and deeds, which rules on their correctness or wrongness. In his opinion, the intellect will not be acceptable if considers something impossible,

does not consider it as valid, or does not accept it for any reason. He acknowledged to the inaccuracy of some propositions due to their being dismissed of rational principles and refusing by intellect.

From Sheikh Saduq perspective, the intellect in company with transmitted knowledge (Naql) can discover recognitions out of beliefs for humans. In some of these issues, he considers the act of intellect as unique and believes the propositions received from the intellect as able to specify or determine traditional propositions.

The following definition about intellect may be ascribed to Sheikh Saduq through the outcome of these propositions:

*Intellect is the distinguishing element between good and evil, able to acquire recognition and perceive the truth, and the evaluator for the veracity of words and deeds. (Berenjkar and Mousavi, 2010: 35)*

Secondly, Sheikh Saduq considered intellect as one of recognitional sources attributed by particular potency to discover and understand some religious propositions and generate recognition for mankind. Intellect is strongly capable to know the Lord which is one of the authenticated causes to. Following the 10<sup>th</sup> hadith of the 41<sup>st</sup> chapter of “*Tawhid Book*” concerning to know God with God, he explained as following:

*The correct word in this chapter is to say we recognized God with God; because if we knew Him through our own intellects, He Himself would bestow them upon us. (Saduq, 2000: 391)*

Stating the above-mentioned point, Sheikh Saduq confessed intellect as one of the ways to know God. Although he, as like as many other scholars, assessed intellect as an independent epistemological cause. But he trusted on the scope of intellect's impact and stated that everything within its domain can be comprehended by which. (*Ibid: 79*)

In his viewpoint, the human intellect is not able to perceive all truths with no association with divine

revelation. (*Ibid, 2011: 54,94&164*)

However, it is compendiously able to know Almighty God. As regards, since God is unlimited, it is impossible to know Him in detail. Therefore, intellect consists of cognitive ability in limited cases; but not an independent element to know the entire truths.

### **1. The Position of the Theoretical and Practical Intellect in Ethics**

We comprehend, according to Sheikh Saduq's total works and thoughts, paying of his special attention to intellect, its function and plenty of applied rational arguments in theoretical intellect, e.g.

In the book "*Ma'ani al-Akhbar*", the relevant chapter



to the hadith of Qadir, Sheikh Saduq benefited by rational deduction and apprehension in rejecting the various lexical meanings of the term Mawla, except for being the owner of obedience, and said, it is not justified for the Prophet to say, whoever I am the cousin of, Ali is his cousin too; because it was entirely well-known and crystal clear whereas its repeating was futile and useless act for Muslims.

Additionally, it is not justified to mean the term Mawla as the consequence, the back or the front; because it involves neither meaning nor benefit. However, we find permissible out of the language when man says, he/she is my Mawla; while he/she is the man's owner of obedience.

Therefore, this is what the Prophet intended by His following statement:

*“Whoever I am his Mawla, Ali is his Mawla too”.* (Saduq, 1983: 162)

In another portion, responding the question on why did not the Prophet, in hadith of Qadir, explicitly express Ali's appointment as caliph in such a way no room for any discussion left later on? Saduq wrote, It is likely that contemplating of implication has been entrusted to the great thinkers in order to deliberate on words. (Ibid: 168)

Saduq declared the ability of practical intellect to figure out the good and bad (Husn va Qubh) of things; (Ibid, 2000, Chapter 61: 629) But it is not thorough cognition because in



Sheikh Saduq viewpoint, the human intellect is not able to perceive all truths with no association with divine revelation. (*Saduq, 2000, 54,94&164*)

Therefore, according to him it can be drawn a conclusion that practical intellect is the source of epistemological cognition in ethics because of knowing the good and bad of things.

Furthermore, it may be pondered as the first step to recognize and consequently, to be able to perform moral duties.

## **2. Rational Good and Bad**

Some researchers believed that the theory of rational good and bad has terminated three historical periods:

- Prior to the emergence of Qadariah and Mu'tazilah in which the reality of which was mentioned but no particular term found for.

- Later than the emergence of Mu'tazila up to the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, when its particular term mentioned and some of their extensions clearly discussed; but not seriously substantiated or criticized.

- Later than the emergence of Ashirate and their objections, in which seriously substantiated and criticized, the supporters provided various arguments to prove it. (*Rabbani Golpayegani, 2012*)

- During the era of Sheikh Saduq, i.e. the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the theory of

rational good and bad had already been brought up, substantiated and criticized. But he has not dealt with it as an independent problem, rather referenced it in the middle of his discussions. Major discussions on good and bad are addressed hereunder the discussion about action (Fi'l). In semantics' outlook, good and bad is considered as one of the major discussions in Islamic theology and, consequently, in the principles of jurisprudence (Usul Fiqh) as well.

- This discussion is provided for normative value of action. The term Qubh (bad) is merely expressed once in the Holy Quran as disfigured

(Maqbuhin) but the term Good (Husn) is mentioned in plenty of verses in the Quran, such as the term most beautiful (Ahsan) versus the term 'Ihsa' and the term Good (Hasana) versus the term misdeeds (Sayi'ah). The process of Husn va Qubh's evolution has been initiated from aesthetics towards ethics. *(Pakatchi, 1991: 643-644)*

- Nasrullah Pourjavadi believes that the term Husn, similar to the term Milahat, is among the Quran's terms, which is meant in Persian language and literature as goodness and righteousness, the antonym of badness *(Ref: Ibid: 528)*

- *Javadi and Mohammadi Sheikhi*, in their semantics'

consideration, have mentioned four major following meanings for good and bad;

- Compatibility and incompatibility with nature: Whatever is agreeable and pleasant for alive being is considered as good (Hasan) and whatever in contrast and unpleasant is bad (Qabih), thus, we call pleasantness and unpleasantness as Husn va Qubh.
- Compatibility and incompatibility with purposes and expediencies,
- Soul perfection and imperfection,
- To praise and blame or the competence for being praised and blamed. (*Javadi and*

*Mohammadi Sheikhi, 1999: 48-78)*

- Saduq in his semantics' consideration believes in Husn va Qubh as the competence for being praised and blamed, since he stated concerning to substantiate the contingency (Huduth) of the universe, that whatever action commanded is praiseworthy and what is prohibited is reprehensible. (*Saduq, 2000: 346)*

- Knowing the ordered and prohibited acts, we perceive actual good and bad (Husn va Qubh Fi'li). Thus, ethical good and bad include those actions which have been commanded and prohibited by Allah.

### 3. Ontology of Husn va Qubh

Saduq believed in essential good and bad (Husn va Qubh Dhati) in ontological aspect because, in the 60<sup>th</sup> chapter of “*The Book of Tawhid*” while describing Allah’s the most advantageous act with His servants, mentioned a tradition in which deduced within to the 44<sup>th</sup> verse of sura Yunus, denied oppression of God and considered Him as the most advantageous doer. (*Saduq, 2000: 403*)

The negation of oppression from God indicates valuation of actions before the establishment of Shari’a law.

Moreover, the following narration reported by Sheikh Saduq in “*The book Ma’ani al-Akhbar*”, transmitted

by *Hind ibn Abi Halah*, the son of Khadijah, when attributing the Prophet, refers to essential good and bad of acts:

*The Prophet counted good things as great and admitted and despised bad ones. (Ibid, 1983: 82)*

This view on essential good and bad is that of moral realism. Based on realism, moral realities are something independent of our beliefs and approaches, which are synonymous or almost synonymous with moral objectivism and moral cognitivism. (*Khawas et al, 2006: 48*)

### 4. Epistemology of Husn va Qubh

In the epistemological aspect, Saduq believed in rational good and bad; because acknowledged the

intellect as capable of identifying good and bad in the field of rational sensuous. Therefore, he has frequently benefited of rational arguments in multiple parts of his works. He presented an exegesis, in process of stating interpretation (Ta'wil) and exegesis (Tafsir) on numerous traditions, while authenticated to one of the principles of practical intellect and the rational good and bad.

Although the terms practical intellect or rational good and bad, in their basic meanings, are of particular ones in philosophy and principles of jurisprudence and conventionalized many years after Sheikh Saduq and Sheikh Kulayni's era; but rational rule has been frequently applied as a

presupposition in the plenty of their interpretations on traditions.

Believing in good and bad is among those negotiated issues by several non-Imamiyah and Ahl Hadith scholars throughout the history of Islam, as far as becoming rational good and bad as one of the most fundamental disputes in theology. Furthermore, the difference between Ash'arite and Adliyyah becomes clear in this discussion, and some subjects such as God's justice is on its basis.

The importance of the discussion is to the extent that Adliyyah were called to because of their belief in Allah's justice based on substantiation of good and bad. (*Muzaffar, 2002: 213*)

Although the principles of practical intellect have been

less directly mentioned in the works of Sheikh Saduq; but we find lots of the issues on good and bad which noticed as a presupposition in the introduction of his discussions. This problem indicates the belief of Imamiyah narrators, versus the Sunni ones, to rational good and bad as one of their features.

For instance, it could be alluded to what expressed by Sheikh Saduq following the 18<sup>th</sup> hadith in presenting the exegesis on the verse 67<sup>th</sup> of *sura At-Tawba*. He, following the verse 51<sup>st</sup> of *sura A'raf* says, we leave them i.e. We do not make them a reward in comparison to one who hopes to meet his day.

Then he predicated this interpretation on a rule

among practical rational rules and elucidated: Leaving is impossible for Allah Almighty. Accordingly, he mentions, "As for God's saying, and left them sightless in a manifold darkness", (*Quran, 2: 17*) means He does not hasten to punish them, and extends them a grace period to repent. (*Saduq, 1958: 102*)

In general, Saduq interprets all the verses related to divine leading astray (*Idhlal*) on the basis that it is bad for Allah whereas the Sunni scholars do not consider it as bad and prefer the exoteric meaning of the verses (*Zahir*) as criterion.

In addition, due to the intellect's evidence on the badness (*Qubh*) of deceit, trickery, mockery and forgetfulness, he found

indispensable to interpret those verses indicated to the abovesaid matters and declared:

*Indeed, Allah, the Exalted, does not beguile, deceive, mock, ridicule and forget. Allah, is the more Exalted than being attributed to. (Saduq, 1993: 26)*

Regarding badness of obligation beyond man's strength he said, *our belief in obligation is that God Almighty did not burden His servants except to what they can bear*, as Allah said in the Quran: "*Allah does not task any soul beyond its capacity*". (*Quran, 2: 286*) and the capacity is other than bearing". (*Saduq, 1993: 28*)

In addition to what frequently and explicitly found in Saduq's books, so

that we explained some of which as examples, he expressed in many issues and made arguments based on rational good and bad, even though did not explicitly express.

In such cases, while sheikh has not explicitly expressed the rule of intellect; but his taking of the rational rule authority as presumption could be figured out with a little precision, so that he stated such on its basis. For instance, we can notice on the cases stated by Saduq in his book *Al-I'tiqadat*. Although there are many examples in this regard; but tried to mention those with more explicitness.

Sheikh Saduq, regarding divine justice, uttered:

*We believe that Allah ordered us to regard*



*justice and treated us with what is its beyond i.e. His beneficence (Tafadhul). (Saduq, 1993: 29)*

He remarked on two rational judgments in the above-mentioned instance. Firstly, it is bad for the one who commands an action if he himself is not the doer of which. Thus, Allah, who orders us to act on justice, must be just Himself, rather, He goes beyond and favors us which is beyond of justice.

Sheikh Saduq defined justice as follows, *to be rewarded for the good acts and punished for the bad ones. (Ibid)* He defined beneficence as something beyond of justice and considered essentiality of Allah's being just. Hence, if He promises a reward for

something, He will fulfill it because breach of promise for reward is intellectually bad.

Noticeably, he implicitly indicates to another rational judgment. However, because breach of promise for punishment is not rationally bad; but beneficence and grace. Thus, Allah favors upon us in respect of His promise of punishment. The argumentation concerning to divine justice is on the basis of rational good and bad, as the pivotal disparity between Adliyyah and Ash'arite.

In this regard, Muzaffar said:

*The well-known discussion of rational good and bad in theology is the major disparity between Adliyyah and Ash'arite, while some issues like believing in*

*Allah's justice and so on are associated to. (Muzaffar, 2002: 213)*

However, according to Ash'arite, whatever the Shari' (Legislator) considers good is good, and whatever the Shari' considers bad is bad, (Muzaffar, 2002: 216) whereas according to the Adliyyah, regardless of the Shari' ruling, actions are encompassed by essential values according to the intellect, so some of which are essentially good, some bad and some others have not been characterize by any of which, and the Shari' merely commands what is good and forbids what is bad.

Therefore, due to the goodness of truthfulness by its nature, Allah commanded to, not for becoming good

because commanded by Allah, and lying is bad by its nature, that is why Allah prohibited it, not for becoming bad because prohibited by Allah". (Nasir al-Din Tusi, 1992: 216)

Accordingly, Adliyyah maintained renege of promise as bad act. Thus, when Allah has promised a reward for something, He will not renege on. Thdrdfnrd, 'Adl (justicd) according to the above-mentioned definition, by Sheikh Saduq, is necessary for Allah. However, since breach of promise for punishment is beneficence to His servants is not considered as bad; but praiseworthy act, so Allah treats us with beneficence. Hence, it is said, "O! My Lord, treat us with your beneficence not your justice"

i.e. Allah forgives sins and rewards whomever deserved to.

In this regard, Saduq reported the following tradition stated by Imam Sadiq, *“Tawhid (Unity of Allah) and ‘Adl (His justice) are the foundations of religion”* then, in order to elaborate the meaning of Tawhid and ‘Adl for the narrator said:

*Tawhid is to not consider eligible on your Lord what is permitted to you, and ‘Adl is to not attribute your Creator to what He blamed you for. (Saduq, 2000: 96)*

Thus, it exactly necessitates Allah’s legislating on the basis of rational good and bad.

In another tradition quoted by Shaykh Saduq in *“The book of Tawhid”*, Abu

*Hanifah* asked *Imam Kadhim*, who commits the sin? Imam in His replying pondered three various assumptions and relied on rational good and bad in the whole of which. Imam replied:

*“It is not devoid of three aspects: Either it might be committed by Allah and not from man, so it is not deserved of All-generous i.e. Allah to punish His servant for what he/she has not performed, or by both Allah and His servant; but it could not be such because it is not deserved of the strong partner i.e. Allah to oppress His the weak partner. Furthermore, it might be committed by the servant, then if Allah punished him, it would*

*be for his sin, and if He pardoned, it would be for the sake of His generosity and munificence”.* (Saduq, 2000: 96)

Noticeably, Imam alluded to the badness of oppression in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> aspects but in the 3<sup>rd</sup> one to Allah’s justice and munificence.

Sheikh Saduq somewhere else hinted on disobedient people who will merely be struggled to Allah’s punishment, so that the punishment is particularly specified for rebellious men. So, the obedient man will never find Allah’s punishment, and this is the meaning of justice. Hence, violating of this principle, i.e. involving of non-guilty ones in divine punishment,

is considered bad and oppression. He said:

*Our belief regarding the Hell is its being as abode of humiliation and revenge against non-believers and disobedient people.*

Additionally, he pointed out that among disobedient people, the monotheists will receive God's grace and mercy, which is beyond of justice, and disobedient and polytheist ones will permanently be in the fire (Hell):

*And none will permanently abide in except of disobedient and polytheist people; but the sinners among monotheists will be expelled out due to His mercy which received to, and the intercession which obtained to. (Ibid, 1993: 77)*

In order to negate oppression from Allah, Saduq clearly expressed the intellectual badness of oppression and stated: *Oppression does not happen except by one who is ignorant of its badness, or one who needs to commit for taking benefit of.*

Then he declared that Allah is all-sufficient i.e. the benefits and harms have no influence on Him, and also, He is all-knowing about the past and current goodness and badness (Hasan and Qabih), thus He does not do but of wisdom and righteousness.

He further stated:

*The one whose wisdom is admitted among us is not expected to act on oppression, even if is needless of, able of its refraining and knowing*

*of its badness. To commit oppression is deserved of blaming but obviously there is no fright for Him if intended to commit bad acts (Qaba'ih). (Saduq, 2000: 397)*

It is understandable that he not only pointed out the validity of practical intellect (Husn va Qubh) among humans; but also considered it executive for Allah and refused His doing bad action.

A remarkable point refers to a kind of distinguishing points he made between rational good and bad and intellectual counting of goodness and badness (Istihsan va Istiqbah Aq'liayn). He distinguished between the two hereunder discussions concerning to the

traditions about children and wrote:

*The argue in cognition of justice and oppression, and the manner to distinguish of which is not referred back to the inclination of nature towards something and its aversion from; but intellectual counting of goodness and badness.*

*Therefore, we are not permitted to have certitude on the badness of an act due to our ignorance of its causes, and to function to dismiss an act out of the boundary of justice based on its outward manifest. (Saduq, 2000: 396)*

Namely, as for being mere counting as bad (Istiqbah) of an act against of nature, we cannot judge

to badness, unjust and cruel for. An objective act consists of various aspects, since many aspects of its truth and wisdom are hidden to us. If they become clear to us, we may not only count that act as bad but also praise its doer. It is adequate if being the wise and just of its doer are reasonably approved to us, then we can rule on it as wise and right act due to being ignorant of its wise cause.

As well, we can rule on certitude about the justice of its doer, even though this particular act is against of nature.

As Saduq said:

*Whenever we are obligated to do nothing but right, wise and what is righteousness in, it would be compulsory upon us*

*to generalize the whole acts based on this proposition, no matter we know their causes or not. (Saduq, 2000: 396)*

Just as, if a father, whose being wise and just are confirmed, is found in progress to cut off a limb of his child while no reason is found for, it would not be allowed to violate him; because there is certitude on his regarding expediency, good judgment and decision for his child.

This is the same about Allah's acts, whose being all-wise and all-just are evidently proven by arguments to us. Because as Sheikh Saduq said: *We recognized our own inability to know the causes of objects and dereliction to dominantly comprehend the*

*meanings of particulars. (Ref: Syedwakili, 2013: 151)*

So, how do some people, despite admitting their inability to comprehend the causes of divine actions, cast doubt on Allah's wisdom and justice, which affirmed for all, by simply being oppose of nature while itself is deserved of questioning?

Saduq stipulated on generality of rational judgment and its impossibility to specify as: *Because there is neither dereliction of the intellects about one species, and not for the other ones, nor specification about one genus, and not for the other ones. (Saduq, 2000: 396)*

In one another chapter of "The book Itiqadat", he dealt with Mahdism and Imam Mahdi and said:



*We believe that is not (rationally) permitted for the promised savior to be other than Imam Mahdi, even though His occultation is too prolonged. (Saduq, 1993: 96)*

Then he clarified regarding this rational impermissibility as follows:

*Because the Prophet and infallible Imams referred to Him through His name and lineage, and to Him they stipulated in their context (Nas) and to Him they gave good tidings. (Ibid)*

We will figure out if pay our close attention to the argument expressed by Saduq, that he did not logically consider permissible if Allah does not implement based on what

His authorities have clearly stated on His behalf.

In other words, the Prophet and infallible Imams i.e. divine authorities, could not rationally lie and make wrong promises because it necessitates leading towards astray which is bad for Allah.

Therefore, divine authorities must be truthful in their promises, and it is not logically lawful to be other than the son of Imam Hassan Askari, one who has already been appointed through explicit denote of context as the promised savior, and this is an intellectual impermissibility not legislative (Shar'iyah).

Not only in the above-mentioned examples but also in many other ones, it can be conceivable that

even though Saduq did not explicitly maintain the principles of practical intellect; but applied plenty of which and considered self-evident presupposition in progress of beliefs' representing.

Then if one hadith mentioned, it would have been usually followed by major principle, conclusion and supporter of rational reason, not in such manner that rational rule is inferred out of the hadith. Therefore, he presumed the axiom of rational judgments regarding good and bad consideration (Tahsin and Taqbih) of actions as an argue to admit actual good and bad. (Syedwakili, 2013: 151)

### **Achievement or Non-Achievement and Quality of Recognizing Moral Rules and Propositions**

Another subject raised in ethical epistemology is relevant to the case of attainment, non-attainment and the quality of acquiring the recognition of moral rules and propositions.

What is evident out of the above-mentioned discussions and the works of Sheikh Saduq refer to his inclination toward moral-oriented fundamentals. Fundamentalism, as a perspective in epistemology, believes in the structure of individual's acceptable beliefs system including foundation and superstructure. (Moser and Mulder, 2007: 162)

Some rules such as the badness of injustice and untruth and the goodness of

justice and truth are axiomatic so that considered as base in order to justify other ethical recognitions. Thus, Sheikh Saduq can be accounted as an epistemological generalist in ethics. In this approach, to recognize ethical attributes is based on fundamental characteristics, and ethical recognitions can be achieved based on fundamental principles. (O'Neill, 1995: 15)

Believing in the referral of good and bad actions to divine knowledge and their being constant, Saduq stated on recognition of goodness and badness which emerged simply by having awareness of an action. In addition, to know non-axiomatic objects is achieved by referring toward axiomatics.

From Sheikh Saduq perspective, being essential and axiomatic of intellect's rules to praise and condemn of actions is manifested towards intuitionism in ethics. Intuitionism in ethics believes that ethical principles and rules are intuitive and self-evident so that no need is for logical and psychological argumentation to justify to. (Frankena, 2003: 215)

In ethical non-naturalism, it is also believed that ethical theorems and rules are as mathematical theorems class. These theorems are always veracious since comprise essential axiom. Therefore, the ethical basic principles and comprehensions consist of essential axiom, and the base to admit them refers

back to intuition. (*Atkinson, 1990: 100*)

### **Perspective and Research in the Thought of Sheikh Saduq**

Some terms such as perspective and research have been frequently applied in the books of Sheikh Saduq. These terms and their meaning are among the terms which have been largely discussed and pondered throughout the history of Imamiyyah and non-Imamiyyah theology, so that everyone has expressed his particular meaning for while ironically criticized others because they have not understood such.

The term perspective, in the works of Sheikh Saduq, has been applied as the meaning of absolute

thought, not philosophical logical argumentation, apprehended out of verses of the Quran.

Allah said:

*“Have they not contemplated the dominions of the heavens and the earth, and whatever things Allah has created?”*  
(*Quran, 7: 185*)

Sheikh Saduq hereunder of the abovesaid verse considered the meaning of the term Nadhar as thought and wrote:

*Have they not contemplated the dominions of the heavens and the earth, and the wonders of their creation?*  
(*Saduq, 1993: 28*)

Then he indicated to the type of this contemplative perspective and stated:

*Have they not contemplated that in an inferential and authentic view? (Saduq, 1993: 28)*

He drew a conclusion that the result of this inferential thought and perspective is to imply the creatures over the Creator and negate anthropomorphism and corporeality from the Lord. As respects, he wrote:

*Thus, they deduced of which for their Creator and Owner. (Ibid)*

Regarding the meaning of the above-mentioned verse, he elaborated again concerning this type of thought in creatures and the transcendental recognition of Allah as follows:

*Have they not contemplated and thought the creatures among the heavens and the earth according to*

*what is observed for, so their consideration of the heavens and the earth and His creation made as of their dominions and Allah's kingdom; because Allah does not create but of which He possesses and is capable of. (Ibid: 27)*

Thinking on the creatures not only considered permissible but also necessary by Sheikh Saduq since necessitates achievement of the transcendental recognition of Allah as well as the creatures denote on their Creator.

As already stated, intellect is accepted by all Shia transmitters and theologians as an esoteric divine argumentum.

Sheikh Saduq took benefit of various arguments in multiple issues e.g. incorporeality, pre-eternity, wisdom, justice, etc. What have been criticized by the Imamiyah narrators and theologians in early eras are Qiyas (analogy) in principle of jurisprudence and intellectual preference (Istihsan) as well as thinking about the essence of Allah, in which various hadiths rejecting it found in the books of the narrators.

It has been negated and rejected by the scholars of Imamiyah, both narrators and theologians, whenever thinking, contemplation and thought meant as thinking about Allah's essence, anthropomorphism and corporeality.

Likewise, it has been criticized by the both

infallible Imams and their companions whenever deduction and perspective meant as analogy (Qiyas), metaphor (Tamthil) and juristic preference, as applied by non-Imamiyah people of hadith, jurists and theologians like Abu Hanifah in jurisprudence.

Therefore, thinking, perspective and deduction as authentically stated in the Quran have never been negotiated by the companions of the infallible Imams and the Imamiyah transmitters of hadith.

Providing entire conditions of contemplation and research i.e. accompanying of intellect and revelation, Sheikh Saduq considered them definitive and rational, like the mentioned arguments as examples in the previous sections.

Research and perspective might be considered as one of the causes to recognize and discover moral rules. Their intellectual obligation in recognition of Allah is executed in other human recognitions, including moral ones. Furthermore, the construction of a recognition from research and perspective is one of the pillars for a belief's moralization. (*Locke, 2003: 440*)

Since to believe in God is categorized in the scope of voluntary and optional human actions, it is classified as a moral act while moral acting in this essential belief requires the application of research and perspective.

### **Knowledge in the Thought of Sheikh Saduq**

In the thought of Sheikh Saduq, knowledge is against of ignorance, and its scope is to be dominant of what connotes to. (*Saduq, 2000: 135*)

Since he believed in knowledge of an object as sign of its creation, declared that human actions are the creatures of Allah because He knows them all. (*Ibid, 1993: 30*)

So, knowledge is from Allah. Sheikh Saduq considered divine knowledge as selfsame of His essence and inaccessible to others. (*Ibid, 2000: 31*)

Allah said:

*“They said, ‘Immaculate are You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, You are the All-*



*knowing, the All-wise”.*  
*(Quran, 2: 32)*

Sheikh Saduq in his commentary on the above-mentioned verse expressed that whatever we have from the aspects of knowledge has been bestowed us by Allah. *(Saduq, 2000: 90)*

According to prof. Morteza Motahari, this knowledge is the intellectual apprehension which is either conception or judgement, either of which is axiomatic or theoretical. Being known of an axiomatic case does not require to think; but the theoretical one needs to.

It is necessary to state this point that Mulla Sadra states four levels for perception. Sensory, imaginary, illusory, and intellectual, that Rational perception is

the highest level of perception. At this level the perceiver and the perceived coincide according to the theory of union of intelligent and intelligible. *(Ref: Salariyan et al, 2022: 169)*

Axiomatic knowledge is the outcome of the intellect's cognition, a divine bestowal. Hence, axiomatic and essential knowledge are as the base to comprehend other knowledge. Eventually, knowledge is categorized into two sections as follows:

- Axiomatic knowledge, obtained out of perception of intellect.
- Acquired knowledge, obtained from research and perspective.

According to the above-mentioned categorization, unlike the actions related to the acquired knowledge, there is no rational good and bad regarding the actions referred to the axiomatic knowledge. Because human free will and authority are deserved of being praised or blamed and play a role in prior one i.e. the actions related to the acquired knowledge, and man is sole morally responsible in this kind of recognitions.

According to Sheikh Saduq's viewpoint about knowledge, in which categorized into axiomatic and acquired ones and considered certain the badness of some issues like oppression and untruthfulness and the goodness of some others like justice and

truthfulness in axiomatic knowledge, we can count on axiomatic matters as the base for other moral recognitions. This view of Saduq is approximate to epistemological universalism in ethics.

Universalism and particularism as two approaches in Meta-ethics present different claims about the position of ethical principles.

Universalists emphasize on the necessity of principles' application in judgment and process of determining and suppose the rationality of moral thought as possible only on the basis of principles. On the contrary, followers of particularism, through denial of the association between principles and moral thought, considered the principles in

ethics as impossible, unnecessary or at least inefficient.

Proponents of this theory believe in possibility for construction of moral attributes recognition on fundamental and strong stable attributes. Additionally, it is possible to achieve moral recognition established on basic principles. *(O'Neill, 1995: 12)*

Therefore, it is reasonable to mention Sheikh Saduq as an epistemological universalist in ethics.

### **Conclusion**

Intellect is one of the means of human recognition, which plays a unique role in epistemology. Examining the topics in the works of Sheikh Saduq, it can be found that he believed in

special position for the intellectual faculty of man in epistemology: Classifying of intellect into practical and theoretical ones.

Sheikh Saduq argues to its some faculties such as contemplating of rational cases, inference, understanding of general concepts and immaterial issues. Hence, the following might be found of the presented contents:

- Sheikh Saduq, in rational good and bad epistemology of the ethics, admitted rationalism in the scope the intellect's perception.
- Sheikh Saduq is an ethical realist in ontology of the ethics, since believed in ethical realities apart from our beliefs and approaches.

- Basing the axiomatic issues, Sheikh Saduq valued non-axiomatic cases through referring towards axiomatic ones. He valued acquired ethical propositions and principles based on the axiom of the goodness of justice and the badness of oppression. Thus, he is included among the non-naturalists of ethics.

- Sheikh Saduq dealt with the axiomatic issues, based on the validity of the intellect in ethical recognition, as well as acquired issues based on confirmative role of revelation in, and considered their arising extensions as authentic. In addition, he admitted the Holy Quran, due to its decisive issuance.

Furthermore, he admitted the single line transmission (Khabar Waahid) and the numerous line transmission (Khabar Mutawatir) reported by Infallibles on the condition of their documents and contents' authenticity and soundness in order to achieve ethical recognition and expressing its rulings and propositions. He has applied consensus (Ijma) as an argument issued against opponents. Furthermore, he has not considered it as an epistemological cause.

- Sheikh Saduq considered Intellect as an independent way of recognition in the realm of intellectual perceptions.

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