Ethics as a Branch of Practical Wisdom

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ABSTRACT: After a brief discussion regarding the different meanings of 'wisdom' in Islamic literature, we will focus on its division into theoretical and practical wisdom. By distinguishing practical wisdom from practical reason, the status of ethics as a branch of practical wisdom is explained. The last part of the paper is devoted to the explanation of the concept of akhlaq or 'ethics' and the scope of its subject matter is Islamic ethics.

KEYWORDS: wisdom, divisions of wisdom and ethics

To illustrate the concept and subject matter of ethics we need to engage in a brief discussion regarding wisdom in general and practical wisdom in particular, since ethics is considered to be a branch of practical wisdom.

In Islamic literature, wisdom (or *hikmah*) has four different meanings:

1. philosophy in the narrow sense;

2. intellectual knowledge;

3. knowledge combined with good character and behavior; and

4. the cardinal virtue of wisdom.

1. In one of its meanings, *hikmah* is used as a synonym for philosophy in its narrowest sense, indicating knowledge of things as they are in reality, within the limits of human capacity.[1] Wisdom according to this meaning, and similar to the concept of 'Sophia' in the writings of Aristotle, signifies study

and theory and does not include action. According to Irwin, the idea of 'Sophia' that we find in Aristotle is a form of solid knowledge which concerns only the most exact and excellent things, therefore it cannot deal with practical knowledge and practice.[2]

2. The second meaning is more inclusive and is used for all types of intellectual knowledge.

    Ibn Sina refers to this broader conception of wisdom when he says: "Wisdom is the completion of the soul via the conception and affirmation of theoretical and practical truths, within the limits of human ability."[3]

These two usages are neutral in regards to the character of the person who possesses it. The wise man or philosopher, even the practical (moral or political) philosopher who knows both what is good and what is not may be either a good person or a bad one. He may or may not apply his knowledge in his own life. This wisdom is divided according to the kinds of things which are known. The main division here is between practical and theoretical knowledge.

Wisdom					
Theoretical			Practical		
Metaphysics	Physics	Mathematics	Ethics	Home Economics	Politics

Theoretical wisdom is a sort of knowledge that belongs to things in which their existence is independent of human action.[4] The knowledge of first principles, such as God's existence and the familiarity with the general principles of the physical world belong to this branch of philosophy as well.

Theoretical philosophy in turn is divided into three main branches: metaphysics, which discusses the first principles of the world and the principles of existence in general; physics, which discusses the principles of the physical world; and mathematics, which discusses a type of being which is not actually physical, but which is needed by any physical thing to be existent. According to philosophical divisions, there are three kinds of things: abstract things that can only be grasped by

pure reason, and are immaterial and without form; those immaterial things that have forms whose abstractness is not complete; and finally material things. There are three parts to theoretical knowledge because there are three kinds of entity.

Practical wisdom or philosophy is knowledge of those things whose existence is dependent on the actions of human beings.[5] The things that are discussed in practical philosophy relate to our behavior and dispositions as being conducive to either happiness or wretchedness. Roughly speaking, theoretical wisdom belongs to the realm of Divine Action without any interference from humanity, while practical wisdom belongs to the realm of human action, and so must be particular and contingent. Practical philosophy in turn is divided into three parts: ethics discusses the states of the individual and the way he can find happiness. The science of house holding or home economics discusses the goodness and badness of our behavior at the scale of the family; and the science of politics discusses these matters at the scale of a society.

Regarding the subject matter of wisdom in relation to the second meaning stated above, Ibn Sina says:

> For each science there is a subject matter the condition of which is investigated by that science. Subject matter is of two kinds: the one which depends for its being on our action and the other which does not depend for its being on our action. An example of the first is our behavior; examples of the second are the earth, the heaven, animals, and plants. The intellectual sciences are of two kinds. The one which informs us of the condition of our action is named practical science, because its purposes are to inform us of what we should do in order to organize our affairs in this world properly and to insure that our affairs in the other world will be according to our hopes.[6]

Further Considerations

Abu Nasr al-Farabi, one of the greatest and most influential philosophers in the world, explains the subject matter of wisdom and the end of civil science (*al-ʿilm al-madani*) as follows:

Civil science discusses different voluntary actions and behaviors of human beings and different dispositions, states of the soul, and habits, in which our voluntary actions and behaviors are rooted. This knowledge also discusses the ends for which all our behaviors and actions are done. It states which dispositions are suitable and how he can make his soul receptive of them so that they become properly established in the soul, and so that they may become permanent. This science also talks about the categorization of the ends that are sought by the different behaviors of human beings. It explains that some of these ends are real and others are illusory happiness, that is, it seems as if that they are happiness, but in reality they are not happiness at all.[7]

3. The third meaning of wisdom is a form of knowledge whose result is the good character and behavior of its possessor. A wise person or philosopher is one who knows the truth and leads his life in accordance with this truth. Having wisdom in this sense is a sign of the felicity and flourishing of all aspects of the real dimensions of the self.

Science is a lamp by the light of which an individual can find the way to happiness. But faring this way needs certain actions and behaviors, so that wise people are those who have found the way and travel upon it accordingly.

The Noble Qur'an says:

يُؤْتِى ٱلْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِىَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّآ أُوْلُواْ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ

He grants wisdom to whom He pleases; and he to whom wisdom is granted receives indeed much benefit; but none will grasp the Message but men of understanding (Sūrah 2:269)

The meaning of wisdom in this verse does not point to the mere knowing of what is good or bad or what Allah has asked us to do or not to do. This knowledge is not a benefit which is abundant but, on the contrary, may be one of the elements of wretchedness. The people about whom Allah is speaking in this verse are those who

know the truth and, through their belief in it, travel in its direction. Imam al-Sadiq(AS) interprets the term *hikmah* that is used in this verse as obedience to God, which denotes action as being that, which results from knowledge. Many commentators define *hikmah* as a certain type of knowledge that is firm and definitive. Tabataba'i also takes this approach and says that, even though God asserts that it has much benefit, because it is only knowledge, it may or may not result in proper action. If it were guaranteed to result in right action, it would be absolute.[8]

This usage of the word 'wisdom' can be found in the Old Testament and in many other religions and traditions. In the Book of Proverbs, God says:

> Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding (Sūrah 3:13)

> She (wisdom) is a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her will be blessed (Sūrah 3:18)

This conception of wisdom is not exceptional; indeed, it can be easily seen in different stages of the history of philosophy, especially ancient philosophy. According to this conception, a person who is knowledgeable and is able to increase his knowledge by logical inferences but is unable to direct his life in the way of truth is not wise at all. Indeed, the situation of this person is worse than that of one who doesn't know the truth at all. If somebody has read the ethical books, and indeed, has even memorized them, but has neglected them in practice, then he has not been given any wisdom at all.

Sometimes engagement in the study and research of different sciences, especially ethics itself becomes an obstacle to moral actions. Often in the soul of unpurified and superficial people, this study only results in pride and vanity. The paradox here is that, for some souls who are fascinated with the finer details of wisdom, no real wisdom results from their study, rather it leads to dullness and lack of action, or even improper action.

Imam Ali (AS), with regard to these types of people, says:

> Many a time you can see a scholar killed by his ignorance and his knowledge cannot help him at all.[9]

Imam Khomeini in his ethical book Forty Hadiths' explicitly has scholars in mind that know the good but act contrary to it, or know the bad but cannot keep themselves from doing it, when he says:

> The great Muslim thinker and philosopher Muhaqqiq Damad states that a *hakim* is a person who can discard his body like a dress whenever he wants to. What does he say about *hikmah* and what are we saying! What meaning do they understand from *hikmah* and how do we conceive it? And you, with your pride in your knowledge of a handful of concepts and a few terms, who treat the creatures of God with haughty contempt, it becomes quite clear that you are a petty minded and shallow person.[10]

In sum, only when knowledge is combined with good action and good character can the individual find true happiness, otherwise he has no other fate than wretchedness even though he may have thought that he was happy.

Prophet Muhammad (S) says:

"The head of wisdom is fear of God."[11]

And Muhammad Taqi Majlisi, in his books, *Rawdah al-muttaqin,* says:

> God-fearing is the cause of true knowledge given by God and it includes the performance of obligations and leaving aside forbidden actions and even those that are dubious. This implies the knowledge of all of them and this is the same as wisdom.[12]

This conception was and still is common in many traditions, but unfortunately, in many of the academies and universities of the West; one can see signs of negligence of this conception. It is worth asking why this change has occurred within Western culture.

In the history of philosophy and mysticism, we encounter some famous philosophers like Ibn Sina and Suhrawardi who have stated that the teaching of philosophy be restricted only to those who already have the ability to control their appetites and whose souls are ready for wayfaring. The reason for this restriction is to be found in these thinkers' philosophies.

4. It is taken as one of the cardinal moral virtues, along with courage, temperance and justice.

John Kekes called this meaning of the word the 'moral sense'. He says:

> Wisdom may be understood in both a moral and a non-moral sense. In both senses, it involves deep knowledge that aims primarily at living a good life, whereas in the non-moral sense its primary aim is established by some specific theoretical or practical endeavour ... Moral wisdom is a virtue essential to living a good life. Its possession is a matter of degree; more of it makes a life better, less makes it worse.[13]

Practical Reason and Practical Wisdom

There are two distinctions regarding the theoretical and the practical. They are: (1) between theoretical and practical reason; and (2) between theoretical and practical wisdom. There is no doubt that all necessary and general things in the world can only be discovered through theoretical reason, even knowledge of things related to human happiness and the moral order, like the goodness of justice. However, there is a controversy about whether theoretical reason is able to understand particular contingent things in the world. According to Ibn Sina's understanding of 'knowledge', it seems that there can be no knowledge of particulars, only an experience of them. This is due to the definition of theoretical reason as the capacity to grasp universals, which is metaphorically expressed by saying that theoretical reason looks upward. Practical reason, on the other hand, looks downward and deals with the particular things that depend on the human will.

There is much more to the controversy about practical reason which is very difficult to summarize here. Is it a part of the faculties that discover things or is it related to part of the motivating faculties? There is no doubt that it is not a faculty for seeing necessary and general things; but the debate is more about its power to show us a particular reality. Ibn Sina accepts two functions for practical reason, one to assist theoretical reason by providing the practical needs required for scientific work; and the second to apply general knowledge to particular cases. Although this application can only take place with the help of theoretical reason, it is a practical

task to direct attention to the particular. Mulla Sadra took the same approach with a different style.[14]

The other issue is that whether practical wisdom is identified with practical reason. Because practical reason discusses things the existences of which are dependent upon our will and action, they cannot be necessary, and must therefore be things which are contingent. So, knowledge of the essence of human happiness as a necessary truth, or the goodness of justice in general, are among the topics which are treated by theoretical reason. Practical reason is concerned with concrete, contingent, and particular things; it is the knowledge of the right things to do in particular circumstances through understanding the circumstances properly, knowing what matters, and knowing the effective means to bring about one's goal. If we take into account this definition of practical reason as a description of practical wisdom and philosophy, and then ethics as a branch of practical knowledge, it must contain no general and necessary knowledge. But when we come to the history of ethics and open the first important books on the subject, like the *Nicomachean Ethics* of Aristotle, we find them full of general claims, such as those about the nature of human felicity. General claims, however, are, by definition, to be studied by means of theoretical reason, since they are not dependent on human action.

In this paper we will concentrate on one of the three branches of practical wisdom, namely, ethics. 'House-holding', or, economics and politics, is important for knowing and attaining happiness and the virtues of the family and society; but the most important thing in the way of the felicity and happiness of the individual, and thereby the family and society, is ethics. Indeed, ethics is the basis of practical wisdom and it is for this reason that many Muslim scholars pay more attention to it. However, this special interest in morality sometimes makes them neglect the discussion of family and politics.

Ethics

The Arabic and Persian word for 'ethics' and 'morality' is *akhlaq*. It is the plural form of the Arabic word *khuluq* or *khulq* (disposition). The word refers to an unobservable and inward form of a human being, which is also termed *sirat*, or 'character', in contrast to *surat* (face, outward form). In the same way, the Arabic

word *khalq* stands for the observable, physical 'face' of a human being.[15] It is remarkable that, in the Arabic language, sometimes a difference in the vowel of a word creates a difference in meaning, despite the common root of the words which are manifested in their consonants.

Technically, *khulq* is a psychological quality (*malakah*), which causes an act to take place in accordance with it, easily and without thinking. What is psychically transitory is termed a state, '*hal*', while the permanent, long-lasting psychological condition is called a disposition, or '*malakah*'.[16] The forces of these dispositions are such that they are called a second nature, or *'fitrat thaniyah'*. Based on the technical sense of the word which was already touched upon, *khulq* (disposition) does not apply to the mere ability to do something, because the relation between *khulq* (disposition) and the act is much deeper than a mere potentiality. *Khulq* (disposition) is in relation to action in the same manner in which the writer's skill in writing corresponds to the act of writing, which takes place quite easily.[17]

Additionally, *khulq* (disposition) does not apply to the mere act as performed; rather it applies to the psychical states that prepare one to perform an act.[18] However, some scholars extend the use of the term to connote the sense of the act as well.[19]

Khulq (disposition) may be described as either *mahmud* (praised) or *madhmum* (reprehensible), depending on the role it plays in the attaining of happiness. Nevertheless, whenever *khulq* or *akhlaq* is used without an adjective, it denotes a 'praised' disposition or character.[20]

Due to the technical meaning of *khulq* in the definitions which have been formulated in the works of Muslim moral philosophers, principal attention has centered on *khulqiyyat* (dispositions), *malikat* (psychical qualities), and distinguishing good from evil, regardless of the act per se.[21] The moral status of an act is to be determined derivatively and by reference to its origin in the soul. For example, if an action is performed because of courage, it will be a good act; and if it is performed out of fear, it will be a bad act. This conception of ethics, which takes its final end as the purification of the soul, is comparable to the science of medicine, which takes its final end as the purification of the body and its health. In other words, we have a tradition of spiritual medicine alongside that of physical medicine.

Some of the ethical books in Islamic literature have been given titles that make allusion to this pairing of ethics and medicine. Thus, the task of ethics is to know the health and illness of the soul, to find a cure, and to offer prescriptions for the sick. The assumption is that if a person's soul becomes healthy, then all of its fruits, namely, the actions for which the soul is the agent, will be good, and thus, the agent's worldly life will be appropriate and his afterlife, hopefully, will be felicitous.

The late Shahid Mutahhari says:

> Ethics is related to the individual himself; it is about the way a person manages his natural impulses and instincts. In other words, ethics is the ordering of the natural impulses of the soul; it is how a person makes himself. [22]

Ethics is the controlling of the natural impulses and the allocation of their appropriate portions and shares in accordance with the demands of reason because all the natural impulses of the human being have their own shares. We can find this idea in our narrations. For example, we see certain narrations which discuss the right of our eyes to see or the hand's right to perform an act, or the stomach's right to do something. In sum, all the natural impulses have their rights and one of the purposes of religion is to determine the share of each one. Because reason alone cannot determine the portion of each impulse by itself, religion determines the portion of each one by making obligations. We call this work ethics.

But contrary to this traditional conception of ethics, especially after the appearance of modern philosophy, the human soul was neglected in ethical discussions, or even denied. As a result, ethics came to concentrate on actions rather than the origins of our actions in the soul. In contrast to traditional ethics, some important currents of modern ethics, such as utilitarianism, assess the moral status of an action on the basis of the profit, utility, or proportion of pleasure to pain, either for an individual or for people generally. Actions are judged solely on the basis of their results in accordance with some calculus restricted to material interests.

Some contemporary Muslim scholars, as well as some great Muslim philosophers in the past, have proposed a general, comprehensive definition of ethics that includes the identification of the goodness and evilness of acts per se.[23] This

inclusive conception of ethics is more coherent with ethics itself because paying attention to an action and its effects is a sign of prudence, which in turn is one of the important elements of happiness, and is likewise the basis of other moral virtues. In traditional ethics, prudence, morality and rationality are allied in order to provide agents with a single coherent account of what is to be done, how to live, and what character traits to acquire. Modern moral philosophy, by contrast, often sees these three elements as offering conflicting advice and seeks to adjudicate among them in some way.

The words *akhlaq* and *khulq* are not used in the Noble Qur'an; however, the word *khuluq* is used twice. In one instance, God praises the Prophet in the following words: 'And Verily, You (O Muhammad) have an exalted standard of character [*khuluq*]' (68:4). Another instance is when the addressees of Prophet Hud reply to his invitation to dispositions that are religious and praiseworthy: 'They say, "This is nothing other than customary characteristics (*khuluq*) of the ancients..." (26:137).The verse emphasizes the immediately preceding verse in which they address Hud by saying, "Whether you admonish us or not, we will not have faith". (26:136)

Despite the fact that the word *khuluq* is used only in these two verses, there is no doubt that most of the verses in the Glorious Qur'an are related to ethical and moral issues. This is confirmed, on one hand, by paying attention to the Prophet's statement: 'Indeed I have been made the Prophet to perfect the excellences of character'[24] and, on the other hand, regarding the point that the Qur'an is a document for achieving this purpose. Consequently, in addition to introducing the excellences of character, it must also indicate how to acquire them. There are also certain Qur'anic verses as well, which are specifically related to the realm of ethics and which contain words that have some semantic or conceptual relation with ethics. Examples of such words and verses are as follows: *dass* (pollution) and *tadhkiya* (purification) (91:9); *sa'adah* (felicity), and *shiqawah* (wretchedness) (11:105); *islah* (reform) and *ifsad* (corrupt) (8:1, 26:181); and *hidaya* (guidance) and *dhilalah* (misguidance) (64:6). There are also verses which relate to ethical cases and point to a certain act or disposition, for example: (i) the foulness of theft (5:33); of *riba* (usury) (2:275); of killing (5:29); (ii) the virtue/goodness of *infaq* (spending

in charity) (16:75 and 3:92); and of *sidq* (honesty) (19:41). In addition to the above, most of the verses concerned with and indicative of God, the Divine domain of the heavens, the human being and the natural world, revelation, prophethood, and resurrection have some relevance to ethics.

The Noble Qur'an contains varied and extensive discourses that are concerned with ethics, which, upon reflection and rumination, provide necessary information that may be sought for research into various branches of scholarship on ethics.

Branches of Ethics

We may distinguish here between three kinds of studies that relate to morality in one way or another.

Morals

First, morals – which are also called descriptive ethics, in which the ethical values of any given society or community are analyzed – are based on historical and sociological methodologies. Sometimes this analysis is called the descriptive study of ethics, but because meta-ethics is also descriptive, it is more helpful in this case to follow Frankena in calling it a descriptive empirical inquiry of ethics. He says:

> There is descriptive empirical inquiry, historical or scientific, such as is done by anthropologists, historians, psychologists and sociologists. Here, the goal is to describe or explain the phenomena of morality or to work out a theory of human nature which bears on ethical questions.[25]

Normative Ethics

Second, Normative Ethics are a branch of ethical studies which includes two sub-branches: applied ethics and ethical theory. The first sub-branch deals with the regulation of people's virtues and the removal of vices as well as the recognition of good and evil acts in a more general manner while the second deals with the question of criteria; and there are many articulations of these criteria, which lead to ethical theories like utilitarianism, virtue ethics, and the like. Applied ethics, as a science, depends on the recognition of an ethical criterion; hence it owes much to the study of ethical theory. In applied ethics, a list of virtues and vices can be made, depending

on a correspondence between the criterion discussed in ethical theories and either the '*malakat-i nafsani*', or psychical characteristics, such as bravery, chastity, fearfulness, and covetousness or general acts such as obedience, right action, lying, and treachery. In this way, a list may be made, which al-Ghazzali termed '*munjiyyat*' qualities leading up to salvation, and '*muhkamat*', qualities destructive to the soul. It follows that this branch of ethics is sometimes referred to as practical or moral science *('ilm al-akhlaq*).[26]

Meta-Ethics

Frankena describes this study as follows:

> There is also "analytical," "critical," or "meta-ethical" thinking…It does not consist of empirical or historical inquiries and theories, nor does it involve making or defending any normative or value judgments. It does not try to answer either a particular or a general question about what is good, right, or obligatory. It asks and tries to answer logical, epistemological, or semantical questions like the following: What is the meaning or use of the expressions "(morally) right" or "good"? How can ethical and value judgments be established or justified? Can they be justified at all? What is the nature of morality? What is the distinction between the moral and the nonmoral? What is the meaning of "free" or "responsible"? [27]

This is a branch of ethical studies in which Muslim philosophers like al-Farabi and Ibn Miskawayh wrote.[28] There is no consensus on the issues that fall within the scope of this branch of ethics; some scholars see its precinct as including a wide array of topics such as ethical presuppositions, semantics, epistemology, and criteria of ethics.

Ethics, or moral philosophy, usually includes both ethical theories and meta-ethics, while some consider ethics to be limited solely to meta-ethics.

Acknowledging the importance of ethics (in this sense) in the Qur'an and narrations, Muslim scholars from different perspectives have tried to articulate Islamic ethics in different forms and have left a rich heritage for all humanity.

While the study and research of this enormous inheritance is the task of every student of ethics, it cannot be done properly in a paper like this. We only refer here to some famous schools and books from Muslim philosophers or theologians. We recognize that most of the important issues of Islamic ethics can only be found in books related to jurisprudence, mysticism or even exegesis (*tafsir*); however leaving them aside should not be interpreted as implying a lack of appreciation of their value. Only through a comprehensive study of all these attitudes can one discuss Islamic ethics accurately.[29]

Notes

1. Ali ibn Muhammad Jurjani, *Kitab al-ta'rifat*, ed. 'Abd al-Rahman al-Marashli (Beirut: Dar al-Nafa'ies, 2007), p. 155.

2. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Terence Irwin, 2nd edition, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1999), p. 354.

3. Ibn Sina , (*'Uyun al-Hikmah*), p. 3.

4. What are intended by this definition are such things as the planets and stars, so that theoretical wisdom includes knowledge of the principles of the natural sciences, mathematics and metaphysics. Artifacts pose a problem, since they depend on human action, but they are governed by the principles of the natural sciences which belong to theoretical philosophy.

5. It should be noted that there is some controversy about whether dispositions that are not the result of our actions should be studied within the realm of practical philosophy.

6. Ibn Sina, *The Metaphysics of Avicenna: A Critical Translation and Analysis of the Fundamental Arguments in Avicenna's Metaphysics in the Danish Nama-i 'ala'i*, trans. And ed. by Parviz Morewedge, (London: Rutledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), p. 11. The last sentence of the translation is not correct and should be more accurately translated as follows: 'Inform us of as to what we should do so that our life in this world should become better and our life in the Hereafter should become hopeful'.

7. Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Farabi, *Ihsa' al-'ulum*, tr. Hossein Khadivjam

(Tehran: Bonyad Farhang Iran, 1348), p. 106.

8. Allama Tabataba'i, *Tafsir al-Mizan* (Qom: Ismaeilian), 1392 of hijrah, v. 2, p. 238.

9. Imam Ali , *Nahj al-Balaghah*, aphorism, 107.

10. Imam Khomeini, *Forty Hadiths*, tr. Mahliqa Qara'i and Ali Quli Qara'i (Tehran, 2003), p. 114.

11. Majlisi, *Man La Ya   sur*, v. 4, p. 272.

12. Muhammad Taqi Majlisi, *Rawdah al-Muttaqin*, v. 13, p. 3.

13. John Kekes, '*Wisdom*', in Lawrence C. and Charlotte B. Becker (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Ethics*, 2nd edition (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 1806.

14. Mohsen Javadi, '*Nazarieh Mulla Sadra dar bareh 'aql amali*', Kherad Nameh Sadra, 1385.

15. Al-Raghib al-Isfahani, *Al-Mufradat fi gharib al-qur'an*, p. 297 .s. v. kh-l-q; *Taj al-'arus*, vol. s.v. kh-l-q.

16. Mulla Sadra, *al-Hikmah al-muta'aliyah fi al-asfar al-arba'ah*, vol. 4, p. 63; Ibn Miskawayh, *Tahdhib al-akhlaq*, p. 27; and al-Ghazzali, *Ihya' al-'ulum*, vol. 3, p. 96.

17. Fakhr al-Din Muhammad ibn Umar al-Razi, *al-Mabahith al-mashriqiyya*, vol. 1, p. 509.

18. Ibid.

19. Al-Raghib al-Isfahani, *al-Dhari'ah ila makarim al-shari'ah*, p. 114.

20. Tabataba'i, *Tafsir al-mizan*, vol. 19, p. 366.

21. Akhlaq-i nasiri, p. 48; *Tahdhib al-akhlaq*, p. 27; and *Mi'raj al-sa'adah*, pp. 45, 46.

22. Motahari, Morteza, *Majmoeh Asar*, first Edition, (Tehran: Sadra, 1369), p.185.

23. Mulla Sadra, *al-Hikmah al-muta'aliyah*, vol. 4, pp. 114-16; Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Farabi, *al-Tanbih 'ala sabil al-sa'adah*, p. 21; *Akhlaq dar qur'an*, vol. 1, p. 241.

24. *Musnad al-rida*, p. 131; *Majma' al-bayan*, vol. 10, p. 86; *Bihar al-anwar*, vol. 68, pp. 382-83.

25. William Frankena, *Ethics* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973).

26. Becker and Becker (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Ethics*, p. 80. Becker also adds educational ethics, which concerns the ways of acquiring virtues and avoiding vices. Ethical pathology is a task left for this branch of ethical research.

27. Frankena, *Ethics*, p. 25.

28. Majid Fakhry, *Ethical Theories in Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1991), pp. 61-151.

29. I would like to thank Prof. Hajj Muhammad Legenhausen for assistance in writing this paper.