Mulla Sadra's *Seddiqin* Argument for the Existence of God

An Islamic Response to Hume and Kant

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Preface

This research is about a controversial discussion in the philosophy of religion, namely "Is there any rational argument for the existence of God in which reason can have confidence?" There are many answers to this question that have occupied a major part of traditional and modern philosophies; and in the history of Islamic philosophy there is no exception. One of the most notable answers is the Argument called "*Seddiqin* Argument." This argument has some characteristics and advantages over other arguments. Islamic philosophers have found it a rational way to God and have set forth new aspects in describing it. The most famous version of this argument has been proposed by *Sadr al-Din Shirazi* (980/1572-1050/1640), called also "Mulla Sadra". He set forth his argument and its foundations in detail in his book "*Al-Asfar*". There are some difficulties in understanding his argument and its foundations, which are scattered in this and his other books. This argument is proposed in the framework of Islamic philosophy, which differs from Western philosophy in some aspects. In this research I am going to simplify his argument, propose it in the framework of Western philosophy and survey its power for answering systematic criticisms against arguments for the existence of God.

As some readers may lack information about Islamic philosophy and the position of Mulla Sadra in its history, at the beginning, a preparatory chapters will provide some introductory knowledge about Mulla Sadra and his position in the history of Islamic philosophy, but the work presents the Seddiqin Argument as a philosophical solution to a philosophical question, not a survey of the philosophical theory of one philosopher. Many thanks to Ayatollah Khameneii and SIPRIn Publication to give me the permission to use one chapter of *Mulla Sadra's Transcendent Philosophy* for the explanation of Mulla Sadra's life and work. The book which is written by Ayatollah Khameneii is the last and the best work written for those who want to have introductory knowledge about Mulla Sadra.

Part one:
Mulla Sadra and His Philosophical Views

Background

<u>Later Developments in Islamic Philosophy</u>

The Western world's interest in learning about Islamic philosophy was, in the past, centered on the active influence of Muslim thinkers upon the historical formation of Christian scholastic philosophy in the Middle Ages. In order to study the philosophical ideas of such thinkers as Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus in their historical perspectives one must become acquainted with a detailed and accurate knowledge of the thought of at least Avicenna (980-1037) and Averroes (1126-1198). Any adequate history of medieval Western philosophy, in consequence, should include an important chapter on the history of Islamic philosophy.

Quite characteristically, however, the "history" of Islamic philosophy-viewed from the usual Western perspective-practically comes to an end with the death of Averroes, leaving the reader with the impression that Islamic philosophic thought itself also ceased when that Andalusian Arab thinker died. In reality, what came to an end was only the first phase of the whole history of Islamic philosophy. That is to say, what ceased to exist after Averroes was simply the living influence of Islamic philosophy upon the formative process of Western philosophy. With the death of Averroes, Islamic philosophy ceased to be alive for the West, but this does not mean that it ceased to be alive for the East, as well.

It is important in this connection to remark that even those "histories" of Islamic philosophy written not as a chapter in the history of Western philosophy but for their own sake, have been largely dictated by the idea that the golden age of Islamic philosophy is the period of three centuries extending from Farabi (872-950) to Averroes, and that after Averroes, in the ages subsequent to Mongol invasion, except for few isolated prominent figures (like Ibn Khaldun, for example), the Muslim world produced nothing but commentators and super-commentators-a long series of lifeless and mechanical repetitions, without any spark of real creativity and originality.

That this is not a true picture of the historical facts has amply been made clear by the remarkable work done by scholars like Henri Corbin and Seyyed Hossein Nasr concerning the intellectual activity of the Safawid Dynasty. It is at any rate quite recently that the Orientalists in general have begun to realize that philosophical thinking in Islam did not fall irretrievably into decadence and fossilization after the Mongol invasion.

In fact, the truth of the matter is that we can go to the extent of asserting without exaggeration that a kind of philosophy which deserves to be regarded as typically and characteristically Islamic developed not so much before the death of Averroes as after. This typically Islamic philosophy arose and matured in the periods subsequent to the Mongol invasion, until in the Safawid period in Iran it reached the apex of vigorous creativity. This peculiar type of Islamic philosophy which grew up in Iran among the Shi'ites has come to be known as *hikmat* or theosophy (lit. "Wisdom"). We can trace the origin of *hikmat* back to the very beginning of the above-mentioned second phase of the history of philosophy in Islam.

Hikmat is structurally a peculiar combination of rational thinking and Gnostic intuition, or, we might say, rationalist philosophy and mystical experience. It is a special type of scholastic philosophy based on existential intuition of Reality, a result of philosophizing the Gnostic ideas and visions obtained through intellectual contemplation. Historically speaking, this tendency toward the spiritualization of philosophy finds its origin in the metaphysical visions of Ibn 'Arabi and Suhrawardi. In making this observation, however, we must not lose sight of the fact that *hikmat* is also, at least in its formal make-up, a rationalist philosophy having a solid and strictly logical structure. And in this latter aspect, it goes beyond Ibn 'Arabi and Suhrawardi back to Avicenna in the first phase of the history of Islamic philosophy.

Hikmat, having as it does these two distinctive aspects, must be approached from two different angles, in order properly to analyze its formative process: (1) as a purely intellectual activity, and (2) as something based on trans-intellectual, gnostic experience-*dhawq* "tasting" as the mystics call it - of the ultimate Reality.

Mulla Sadra and the development of Islamic philosophy[1]

More than any other factor, the discovery of Sadr al-Din Shirazi (known usually as Mulla Sadra) has been responsible for the new awareness in the West of the continued vitality of Islamic philosophy after the so-called medieval period. While the name Mulla Sadra (or sometimes even Sadra) has been a household word in Persia, Afghanistan and the Indian subcontinent during the past centuries, he remained nearly completely unknown in the West until the beginning of this century. The only exceptions to this were a few passing references to him by European travelers to the East and the important pages devoted to him by Comte de Gobineau in his now classic *Les philosophies et les religions dans l'Asie centrale.*[2] Then during the early decades of this century, Muhammad Iqbal, Edward G. Browne and Max Horten[3] turned the attention of the community of Islamicists in the West to him although the students of Islamic and medieval thought had as yet to awaken fully to the importance of his works.

It was only the discovery of Suhrawardi and through him of Mulla Sadra by Corbin that finally provided the key for the serious introduction of Mulla Sadra to both the orientalists and the philosophers in the West. When Corbin first journeyed to Persia after the Second World War in quest of the teachings of Suhrawardi, he was not aware of the rich philosophical tradition of the Safavid period to which the writings of the master of the school of Illumination *(ishraq)* would naturally lead him. But soon he discovered a world of metaphysics and traditional philosophy of men such as Mir Damad and Mulla Sadra to which he devoted most of his energy for two decades.[4] Besides his numerous other studies on Mulla Sadra, he was the only scholar up to his day to have translated a complete work of his into a European language.[5]

Following Corbin, the English writings of Toshihiko Izutsu[6] and the works of Seyyed Hosein Nasr[7] have further spread the interest in Mulla Sadra. Finally, some years ago the first book in English devoted completely to Mulla Sadra saw the light of day, written by the Pakistani scholar, Fazlur Rahman. The book itself is the first fruit of the new interest which over a long period the works of the authors cited above had begun to awaken in him. This interest is now shared by other scholars.[8] Moreover, numerous

studies, translations and analyses of various aspects of the writings of Sadr al-Din are now under way in both Europe and America, as well as in the Islamic world, particularly in Iran where a major revival of interest in his works is under way.

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The study of the writings of Mulla Sadra presents certain difficulties which are not easy to surmount and which have driven many scholars away into less forbidding and more familiar fields of research. There is first of all the question of the availability of his writings. Until about thirty years ago, only the most famous works such as the *Asfar* and *al-shawahid al-rububiyyah* were available in lithograph editions of such formidable character that to find the beginning of a particular chapter or discussion itself required long periods of study. However, many of Mulla Sadra's works remained either in manuscript form or in unsatisfactory editions. Even his most important *opus*, the *Asfar*, does not possess a critical edition despite the indefatigable efforts of 'Allamah Tabataba'i who over a period of nearly ten years edited nine volumes of this vast work.

It is also important to recall the extensive nature of Mulla Sadra's writings - over forty works covering thousands of pages and dealing with nearly every question of metaphysics, cosmology, eschatology, theology and related fields. As we shall see later in this study, the writings of Mulla Sadra are devoted not only to traditional philosophy but also to Quranic commentary, *hadith*, and other religious sciences. Moreover, in the domain of traditional philosophy, they deal not only with one school of thought, but with the whole heritage of Islamic intellectual life. These factors, added to the innate difficulty of the doctrines involved, have made it well nigh impossible even for scholars who are specialists in Mulla Sadra to have well-grounded knowledge of all of his writings. It takes nearly a lifetime to gain intimate knowledge of even one or two of his basic works. Practically no scholar could claim to have carefully studied and mastered all of his works. For a long time, Sadrian studies will continue to be different glimpses of a vast mountain from different perspectives, rather than an exhaustive survey. The more serious studies are those which penetrate in depth into certain aspects or particular works of the Master. One can hardly expect today a study which is at once profound and all embracing, even by those who have spent a lifetime in the study in Mulla Sadra.

Another major problem in the study of Mulla Sadra which would be understandable and acceptable to the Western reader is his relation to the whole tree of the Islamic tradition of which he is a late fruit. It is of course possible to discuss Sadr al-Din's metaphysical ideas and doctrines in the light of their innate truth, but by and large the Western reader expects the author of these doctrines to be related to the traditional background from which he rose. Mulla Sadra often quotes from a vast spectrum of authors -from the pre-Socratics, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus to the early Islamic philosophers, as well as from Sufis, the Illuminationists, theologians and religious authorities in the fields of Quran and *hadith*. One could and in fact should compose a separate work on Mulla Sadra as a historian of ideas and philosophy. But even if one is not specifically concerned with this aspect of Mulla Sadra, one can hardly succeed in expounding the teachings of Mulla Sadra without recourse to such figures as Ibn Sina, Suhrawardi, Ibn Arabi and Damad. Ideally, the writings of Mulla Sadra should be expounded in the West only after scholars have elucidated fully the metaphysical and philosophical teachings of all of these and many other of the earlier masters of Islamic thought, a situation which is very far from being the case.

A final problem in presenting the teachings of Mulla Sadra is the question of language. Because Ibn Sina and other Prepatetics were translated into Latin, it is not difficult to develop an adequate vocabulary to discuss their works in modern European languages. The problem becomes more difficult with Suhrawardi and Ibn 'Arabi because for several centuries Western languages have been little concerned with metaphysical and gnostic doctrines of order connected with the schools of these masters; in fact these schools have developed in quite the opposite direction. With Mulla Sadra, the problem becomes yet more difficult because of the total lack of precedents in expounding such doctrines in modern languages. There is a danger of reducing, through the use of inappropriate language, a doctrine of great metaphysical sublimity to a bland and harmless philosophical teaching, as the word "philosophical" is understood in its purely human and profane modern sense. To write of Mulla Sadra's doctrines in English is to forge the container as well as to pour the contents from one vessel into another; and this is what I want to do with an important subject of his philosophy in this research.

Despite all of those obstacles and problems, the teachings of Mulla Sadra have to be and *can* be presented to the contemporary world.

Notes:

1. In these three pages I have had some benefit of one part of the book, *Sadr al-Din Shirazi and his Transcendent Theosophy,* written by Seyyed Hosein Nasr in 1978 (1357 A.H. solar) and is published secondly in Tehran by Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies in 1997. However, I thank the publisher for his permission to bring briefly these pages from the book.

2. See Comte de Gobineau, *Les religions et Les philosophies dans I'Asie centrale,* Paris, 1866 and 1923.

3. Iqbal in his *Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, London, 1908, devoted much effort to expounding the writings of Sabzawari, specially his *Asrar al-hikam*, but, since Sabzawari is the commentator *par excellence* of Mulla Sadra, this study naturally helped to focus attention upon Mulla Sadra himself. Browne in the fourth volume of his monumental *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. IV, Cambridge, 1924, new edition 1969, pp. 429-32, also spoke of the sage from Shiraz and was instrumental in spreading his name although he knew little of his actual teachings.

Max Horten was the first European to devote a complete work to Mulla Sadra and in fact composed two separate books on him. See Horten, *Die Gottesbeweise bei Schirazi*, Bonn, 1912, and Horten, *Das philosophische System von Schirazi* (1640), Strassburg, 1914. These works did not, however, receive as much attention as one would have expected.

4. On the intellectual life Corbin and his discovery of Mulla Sadra, see S.H. Nasr, "*The Life and Works of the Occidental Exile of Quest of the Orient of Light*". *Sophia Perennis,* vol. III, no.1, 1977. pp. 88-106. On the works of Corbin see S.H. Nasr (ed.), *Melanges efforts a Henry Corbin*, Tehran, 1977, pp. iii-Xs.

5. See Corbin, *Le livre des penetrations metaphysiques*. Tehran-Paris, 1964, which contains the French translation of Mulla Sadra's major epitome of ontology, the *Kitab al-masha'ir.*

6. See especially his *The Concept and Reality of Existence*, Tokyo, 1971

7. See S.H. Nasr, *Islamic Studies,* Beirut, 1966. "Mulla Sadra" in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*; and S.H. Nasr (ed.), Mulla Sadra *Commemoration Volume*, Tehran, 1380/1961.

8. See Fazlur Rahman, *The Philosophy of* Mulla Sadra, Albany (N.Y.), 1977. This book, although quite scholarly, is based completely on a more or less "philosophical" interpretation of the writings of Mulla Sadra without recourse to the living oral tradition connected with his school and without consideration of the intellectual and spiritual background from which he rose or of the gnostic and mystical elements which are essential to his teachings.

Fazlur Rahman's book contains three parts. Part one: "Ontology" in five chapters: (1)The Metaphysics of Existence; (2) Essence; (3) the Nature of Causation; (4)God-world Relationship; and (5) Movement, Time, and World-Order. Part two, "Theology". (1) God's Nature; and (2) God's Attributes. Part three, "Psychology: Man and His Destiny" with chapters: (1) Nature of the Soul; (2)Theory of Knowledge: I; (3) Theory of Knowledge: II, Perception and Imagination; (4) Theory of Knowledge III; The Intellect, and (5) Eschatology.

The Intellectual Background

The appearance of an intellectual figure of the dimensions of Sadr al-Din Shirazi during the Safavid period indicates the presence of a strong living intellectual tradition whose deepest currents he was to bring so brilliantly to the surface. Mulla Sadra (as he is usually called) is a metaphysician and sage of outstanding stature who cannot be taken in isolation and separated from the tradition that produced him. The historical and philosophical research of the past twenty years has only now begun to reveal some of the features of the intellectual tradition to which Mulla Sadra belonged.[1]

The tree is, however, judged by the fruit it bears, and even if we do not as yet know all the branches of the tree we can judge from the fruit the nature of the long tradition that finally produced Mulla Sadra. In order to learn something of this tradition we must go back a few centuries to the fourth/tenth and fifth/eleventh centuries when the early phase of Islamic intellectual life reached to its peak both in philosophy with Ibn Sina and in Sufism and theology with such masters of the Seljuq period as Khwajah `Abdullah Ansari and Sana'i in Sufism and Imam al-Haramayn Juwayni in *kalam* or theology. The teachings of these early masters of Sufism and *kalam* have become a permanent heritage of the Islamic world, perhaps most of all through the writings of Ghazzali.

This early period of Islamic intellectual history is mush better known than the later epoch with which we are concerned. We know how the Peripatetic *(mashsha'i)* school reached its early phase of maturity with Ibn Sina and continued during the fifth/eleventh century with his immediate disciples like Bahmanyar and Juzjani. We also know that at time the political centralization brought about by the Seljuqs and the re-strengthening of the Abbasid caliphate combined with the spread of the Nizamiyyah *madrasah* system favored the study of *kalam* over philosophy and brought into being a period of nearly two centuries during which the center of the intellectual stage was occupied by theologians of great stature and acumen who severely attacked philosophy. Some, like Ghazzali, were also Sufis and others like Fakhr al-Din Razi were first and last theologians.[2]

It is the later phase of the intellectual life of Islam, especially in the eastern lands of *dar al-islam*, that is not as well known and remains a *terra incognita* waiting to be

explored. The West still accepts the view that Ghazzali in the *Tahafut al-falasifah (The Incoherence of the Philosophers)*, put an end to philosophy in Islam except in Andalusia where it survived for some time through the influence of Ibn Rushd.[3] Unfortunately, despite all the evidence that has been discovered during the last decades, this fallacious view continues to be taught in both the West and in those Muslim universities where the concept of Islamic philosophy is adopted from Occidental sources.[4]

What remains much less known, however, is the revival of Islamic intellectual life in the eastern lands of Islam, especially in Persia. During the sixth/twelfth and seventh/thirteenth centuries, this was made possible by the establishment of new intellectual schools by Suhrawardi and Ibn Arabi, followed by the resurrection of Ibn Sina's teachings during the middle decades of the seventh/thirteenth century by Khwajah Nasir al-Din Tusi. The background of Mulla Sadra must be sought in these schools as well as in the Sunni and shi'ite schools, of *kalam* as developed from the seventh/thirteenth to the tenth/sixteenth centuries.

The four classical schools of the post-Mongol period, namely, the peripatetic *(mashshai)*. the Illuminationist *(ishraqi)*, the gnostic *('irfani)* and the theological *(kalam)*, with all the inner variations contained in each of them, developed extensively during the four centuries preceding Mulla Sadra and also approached each other, preparing the ground for the major synthesis be brought about. To understand the background of Mulla Sadra, it is necessary to delve into the development of each of these schools as well as the interactions that occurred between them during this very rich and at the same time most neglected period of Islamic intellectual life, from the seven/thirteenth through the tenth/sixteenth centuries.

Let us begin with the Peripatetic school. The works of the earlier masters of this school, especially those of the outstanding spokesman of the Muslim Peripatetic, Ibn Sina, underwent a thorough criticism and attack at the hands of both Sufis and theologians. The Sufis such as Sana'i and Rumi criticized in a general way the rationalistic tendencies of the human mind and the attempt made by the philosophers to reach Divine Knowledge with the help of the Aristotelian syllogism. Certain theologians like Ghazzali made the attack more pointed by selecting specific topics which they analyzed and refuted with the claim that these views went against the tenets of religion. Or they chose specific works of the philosophers which they likewise sought to criticize through textual analysis. This last

method was carried out by Fakhr al-Din Razi, who chose the last masterpiece of Ibn Sina, the *al-Isharat wa'l-tanbihat (The Book of Directives and Remarks)* for detailed criticism, analyzing every page and nearly every word and phrase.

During the seventh/thirteenth century, Nasir al-Din Tusi revived the school of Ibn Sina by answering these attacks, especially in his *Sharh al-isharat (Commentary upon the Directives and Remarks)*, which is a landmark in the revival of mashsha'i philosophy. This monumental work matches Ibn Sina's own writings as an authoritative source for the doctrines of this school. Nasir al-Din also wrote many works of his own following the teachings of Ibn Sina. Nor was he alone in this undertaking. Nasir al-Din's own students and colleague, Qutb al-Din Shirazi, although not only a Peripatetic philosopher, wrote the voluminous philosophical encyclopedia *Durrat al-taj (The Jewel of the Crown)* in Persian, following the model of the *Shifa' (The Book of Remedy)* of Ibn Sina, while his student, Qutb al-Din Razi, wrote his *Muhakamat (Trials)* as a "trial" between the commentaries of Fakhr al-Din Razi and Nasir al-Din Tusi upon the Isharat.

As for the *ishraqi* school, it was founded by Shaykh al-ishraq Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi.[5] Despite a short life of thirty eight lunar years he established a new intellectual perspective and exercised an immense influence in the eastern lands of Islam, and especially upon Mulla Sadra. Suhrawardi created a theosophy based on illumination, but also in a certain sense based upon Ibn Sina's philosophy. He also created an isthmus between discursive thought and mystical intuition. The school founded by him soon found capable followers and commentators, although Peripatetic in Tendency. He commented upon Suhrawardi's *Hayakil al-nur (The Temples of Light),* while even Nasir al-Din before him was influenced in certain aspects of his thought by Suhrawardi. Mulla Sadra was deeply cognizant of this tradition and in fact wrote glosses upon Qutb al-Din's commentary of the *Hikmat al-ishraq.*

When we come to consider gnosis or *'irfan*, the seventh/thirteenth century marks a golden age and a kind of return to the beginning of Islam and its spiritual intensity.[6] Such spiritual giants as Ibn 'Arabi, Sadr al-Din Qunyawi, and Jalal al-Din Rumi were nearly contemporaries. It is, however, especially the Sufism of the school of Ibn 'Arabi with its doctrinal and highly intellectual form that was of great influence upon Mulla Sadra.

As for *kalam*, both Sunni and Shi'ite theology underwent an important phase of development at this time. As far as Sunni *kalam* is concerned, the centuries immediately

preceding Mulla Sadra represent a major creative phase after Fakhr al-Din Razi, during which the works of such men as Qadi 'Adud al-Din Iji were produced, codifying *kalam* in a form that continued until the twelfth/eighteenth century in the subcontinent. In fact it continues to be taught to this day in many Sunni schools.

Shi'ite *Kalam* in its systematic form was born during this period. It was, however, Nasir al-Din Tusi who with his *Tajrid* produced the first systematic work on Shi'ite *kalam,* to be followed by his student 'Allamah Hilli and many other scholars who at this time hailed mostly from Hillah and Jabal Amil. In fact, a very large number of commentaries and glosses were written upon the *Tajrid* before Mulla Sadra, from that of Hilli to glosses of Fakhri and of others who belonged to the period one or two generations before Sadr al-Din. These commentaries, still for the most part neglected, form the border line between theology and philosophy and contain in themselves four centuries of the history of an important aspect of Islamic thought.

It was at this time that the four schools of thought mentioned above were penetrating Shi'ite thinking, this very significant phenomenon prepared the ground for the Safavid renaissance with its specifically Shi'ite color. The foremost figure of this period is Seyyid Haydar Amuli, who sought to harmonize Sufism and Shi'ism and to show their essential unity, a theme which forms the basis of his major *opus, Jami'al-asrar (The Sum of Divine Mysteries)*. But he was also a commentator of the *Fusus al-hikam (Bezels of Wisdom)* of Ibn 'Arabi and represents an important instance of the remarkable process whereby the teachings of Ibn 'Arabi became absorbed into the intellectual perspective of Shi'ism.

Sayyed Haydar Amuli was not the only figure in this process, although he was perhaps the most important one. Some Shi'ite theologians turned towards *ishraqi* and *mashsha'i* philosophy and some tried to harmonize them, as can be seen in the case of Sa'in al-Din ibn Turkah Isfahani, author of *Tamhid al-qawa'id (The Preparation of Principles)*, who was the first person to synthesize the teachings of Ibn Sina, Suhrawardi and Ibn 'Arabi, thereby anticipating in a certain way the achievement of Mulla Sadra.

During the period stretching from the Mongol invasion to the establishment of the Safavid regime, we thus see, on the one hand, a development of the classical Islamic intellectual schools and, on the other, attempts to bring these schools together. During this period it is possible to observe all kinds of combinations of these schools. Through the

development of each of these disciplines as well as their interplay, the ground was prepared for the Safavid renaissance and the synthesis brought about by Mulla Sadra.

The immediate background of Mulla Sadra is to be found in the first generation of Safavid sages, who finally prepared the stage for his vast intellectual synthesis. With the coming of the Safavids, the state religion of Persia became Shi'ism, and Shi'ite scholars, brought from many places including Bahrayn, Iraq and Jabal 'Amil in Lebanon, soon strengthened Persian Shi'ite centers of learning and caused the religious sciences to flourish. The revival of Shi'ism itself made possible the renaissance of the intellectual sciences *(al-'ulum al-'aqliyyah)* because they had been intimately linked with the Shi'ite dimension of Islam from the early centuries of Islamic history.[8]

Of course a certain amount of tension between the scholars of the exoteric sciences and the sages *(hukama')* continued and is reflected in Mulla Sadra's autobiographical treatise, the *Sih asl (The Three Principles).* This was an inevitable consequence of the presence of a philosophy that had turned toward Sufism and gnosis and had gained an esoteric color. But the revival of this theosophy, or *hikmat-i ilah* as it has been known in Persia and the subcontinent, was not in spite of Sihi'ism but because of it, notwithstanding the difficulties caused in certain cases by the exoteric authorities. The connection between this *hikmat-i ilahi* and the Shi'ite vision of the Universe is too deeply rooted to be disregarded. There is a causal link between them, although Shi'ism, because it possessed an exoteric as well as esoteric aspect and had become the official state religion, reacted to a certain extent in its exoteric aspect against some of the purely esoteric formulations of theosophy such as the transcendent unity of being *(wahdat al-wujud).* This reaction was similar to that which has been observed in Sunni circles among some of the jurisprudence *(fuqaha').* But it was also Shi'ism which integrated this theosophy into the curriculum of its *madrasahs*, so that to this day traditional theosophy is taught in such schools, and the traditional masters of Islamic philosophy are for the most part products of these schools. Moreover, to the structure of this theosophy is linked in general in a most intimate manner Islamic esotericism. Without the inspiration and spiritual vision that can come only from the esoteric dimension of Islam, this theosophy could never have come into being or been able to resuscitate in the light of a living gnosis the sapiental doctrines of the ancients.

In the tenth/sixteenth century, within the bosom of the new Shi'ite atmosphere of Persia, a series of outstanding philosophers and theosophers appeared, some of whom were the

teachers of Mulla Sadra. A few of these figures have not been studied at all, until now, while others like Mir Damad, Mir Findiriski, Shaykh Baha' al-Amili and Sayyid Ahmad Alawi are very famous at least in the East, although most of even their works have not been fully studied. Among these figures Mir Damad is especially important as the founder of the "School of Isfahan" in which Mulla Sadra was trained.[9]

Mir Muhammad Baqir Damad was able to light once again the torch of traditional philosophy in Isfahan and at the same time to stave off the possible criticism of some of the exoteric authorities. He brought to life a Suhrawardian interpretation of Avicenna's philosophy, about which he wrote many books and which he taught to a generation of students in Isfahan, among them Mulla Sadra.

When the young Mulla Sadra came to Isfahan, he entered a climate where the intellectual sciences could be pursued alongside the "transmitted" or religious sciences *(al-ulum al-naqliyyah)* and where there were in fact masters who were authorities in both domains. This was due most of all to Mir Damad, but the other outstanding figures of this era such as Mir Findiriski and Shaykh Baha' al-Din 'Amili also shared this distinction. The Isfahan of Mulla Sadra's day, and also to a large extent his own Shiraz and other major cities of Persia, were now able to provide a traditional education where, within the matrix of Shi'ite religious studies, *hikmat-i ilahi* could also be studied and mastered. Most of the teachers of this "divine science" were in Isfahan, but other cities were not completely deprived of them, least of all Shiraz.

When, therefore, we look back upon the intellectual background of Mulla Sadra, we observe nine centuries of Islamic theology, philosophy and Sufism which had developed as independent disciplines in the earlier centuries and which gradually approached each other after the seventh/thirteenth century, becoming steadily more integrated within the matrix of Shi'ism. Mulla Sadra was an heir to this vast intellectual treasure and was fully conscious of its doctrines, methods and problems. He thought and lived with questions such as the relation between faith and reason that had occupied Muslim thinkers from the early Mu'tazilites and al-Kindi onward. He meditated upon metaphysical and cosmological problems within an intellectual space whose dimensions were charted by such figures as Ibn Sina, Ghazali, Suhrawardi and Ibn 'Arabi.

Mulla Sadra studied the past fervently, not as dead past, but as permanent intellectual perspectives that continued to be relevant within the living tradition of Islam.

Having absorbed these teachings thoroughly, he then set about to create a synthesis and a new intellectual dimension, the "transcendent theosophy" (*al-hikmat al-muta 'aliyah*), which was not just an eclecticism, a putting together of different theories and views, but a new school based upon a fresh interpretation of the traditional verities. It was a school that was at once new and traditional, such as can be produced only by a veritable reviver *(mujaddid)* of traditional teachings, who is able to renovate a doctrine because of a new and fresh vision of the transcendent truths which the traditional doctrines reveal and expound. Mulla Sadra was a *mujaddid*; through the prism of his luminous intellect a new intellectual perspective was born which was at once profoundly Islamic and attuned to both the logical demands of the mind and the requisites of the spiritual vision that made possible through the opening of the "eye of the heart" *(the 'ayn al-qalb or chishm-i dil).* Mulla Sadra possessed that rare combination of perfect religious faith, acutely logical mind and a "heart" inclined by nature towards the contemplation of the supernal verities that made possible the founding of a school such as that of the "transcendent theosophy". He created a body of teachings in which the theological, philosophical, mystical and gnostic schools in Islam were at last harmonized after they had undergone their full elaboration. Seen in this light, Mulla Sadra represents one of the crowning achievements of nearly a millennium of intellectual life and restates in an explicit and outwardly manifested form the unity that dominates the Islamic message and has been implicit and ever present from the very beginning of the Islamic revelation in all the true expressions of Islamic intellectuality.

Notes:

1. Foremost among scholars who have studied the few centuries preceding Mulla Sadra is Henry Corbin, who has devoted many monographs to the period between Suhrawardi and Mulla Sadra and has also edited a major text (with Osman Yahia) of Sayyid Haydar Amuli which belongs to this period. See Sayyed Haydar Amoli. *La philosophie shi'ite*, ed. by H. Corbin and O. Yahia, Tehran-Paris, 1969. This large volume contains the Arabic text of *Jami al-asrar.* , which is a major document of the intellectual tradition preceding Mulla Sadra. There is also an important

introduction on the author and his influence. Other works concerned with the centuries preceding Mulla Sadra include Mustafa Kamil al-Shaybi. *al-Silah bayn al-tasawwuf wa'l-tashayyu,* 2 vols., Baghdad, 1963-64; al-Shavbi, *al-Fakr al-shi ï wa'l-naza'at al-sufiyyah,* Baghdad, 1966; S.H. Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1964 and Albany, 1976; S.H. Nasr, *Islamic Studies*, Beirut, 1966; S.H. Nasr, "Suhrawardi" in M.M. Sharif (ed.), *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, Wiesbaden, 1963, pp. 372-98; Sadr al-Din Shirazi. *Risalah si asl,* Tehran, 1340 (A.H. solar), introduction by S.H. Nasr.

2. Nasr *Three Muslim Sages,* Chapter I.

3. Even this early period of Islamic philosophy is usually studied without taking into consideration all its richness. See H. Corbin (with the collaboration of S.H. Nasr and O. Yahya). *Histoire de la philosophie islamique,* vol. I, Paris, 1964).

4. See S.H. Nasr, *Islamic Studies*, Chapters 8 and 9.

5. Concerning Suhrawardi see the three prolegomena of H. Corbin to *Opera Metaphysica et Mystica* of Suhrawardi, vol. I, Tehran, 1976; vol. II, Tehran, 1977; vol. III, Tehran, 1977, the first two volumes edited by Corbin and the third by S.H. Nasr. These are new editions of these volumes which had appeared earlier in Istanbul and Tehran-Paris. See also S.H. Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages,* chapter II; Nasr, "Suhrawardi" in M.M. Sharif, op. cit.; and Nasr's Persian preface to *Majmu'ay-i athar-i farsi yi Suhrawardi (Opera Metaphysica et Mystica,* vol. III). See also Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. II, Paris 1972; and his *Sohravardi, L'Archange empourpre,* Paris. 1976.

6. This important question, which concerns the "return" of a tradition to its golden age during a particular phase of its development, which is also a "fall" from its origin, has been discussed by F. Schuon in several of his works. See, for example his *In the Tracks of Buddhism*, trans. Marco Pallis, London, 1968, p.153; and *Islam and the perennial philosophy*, trans. J.P. Habson, London, 1976, PP. 25-26. For a general but penetrating treatment of this question see also his *Light on the Ancient Worlds,* trans. by Lord Northbourne, London, 1965.

7. On Ibn 'Arabi see T. Burckhardt, *La sagesse des prophete*s. Paris, 1955 and 1976; Corbin, *L'imagination creatrice dans le soufisme d'Ibn'Arabi*, Paris, 1977; T. Izutsu, *A Comparative Study of the Key Philosophical Concepts in Sufism and Taoism* - Ibn 'Arabi and *Lao-Tzu, Chuang-Tzu*, Part One, Tokyo, 1966; Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages*, Chapter III.

8. On the relation between Shi'ism and the intellectual sciences see S.H. Nasr, *Science and Civilization in Islam,* New York, 1970, introduction; and S.H. Nasr. *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, London, 1978, introduction.

9. Concerning Mir Damad and the school of Ispahan see H. Corbin. "Confessions extatioues de Mir Damad". *Melanges Louis Massignon.* Damascus, 1956, pp. 331-78: his "Mir Damad et l'Ecole Theologique d'Ispahan au XVII Siecle". *Etudes Carmelitaines,* 1960; pp. 53-71; Corbin. *En Islam iranien*, vol. IV, Paris. 1973, pp. 9-53; S.H. Nasr, "The School of Ispahan", in M.M. Sharif (ed.), *A History of Muslim Philosophy,* vol., II, Wiesbeden, pp. 904-32. We have dealt with the general history of philosophy, theology and Sufism in the Safavid period in a long chapter that is to appear in volume six of the *Cambridge History of Iran.* No extensive monographic study has as yet been published on Mir Damad. S. 'A i Musawi Bihbahani, S.I. Dibaji and M. Muhaqqiq (Mohaghegh) are preparing the critical edition of his *Qabasat*, which will be the first of his works to have a modern critical edition. On the background of Mulla Sadra see also the two introductions of Sayyid Jalal al-Din Ashtiyani to Mulla Sadra's *al-Shawahid al-rububiyyah*, Mashhad, 1346 (A.H solar),

Sharh risalat al-masha'ir of Mulla Sadra by Mulla Muhammad Jafar Lahijani (Langarudi 1964/1384), and several other studies contained in various introductions to his works cited in the next chapter.

Life and Works

Introduction

From Chair of Mastership to Corner of Seclusion

Mulla Sadra's Teachers, Children and Students

Mulla Sadra's Works

An Analysis, Critique and Study of Mulla Sadra's Books

<u>Mulla Sadra's School of Thought: Transcendent Philosophy</u>

part two:
The *Seddiqin* Argument: Its Foundations and Developments

Introduction

It is usual assumed that the arguments for proving the existence of God are just as Kant's classification and they are in Western tradition. The main arguments are ontological, cosmological and design arguments. There are also some more arguments posed after this classification like arguments from religious experience, moral arguments and etc. But all of them are not as important as the first three ones. Every book in philosophy of religion has allocated an important chapter for the arguments for the existence of God. There is also a long adventure for these arguments: some philosophers have developed them and some others have criticized them. All the debates centers on these three as if there is no other attempt in this regards.

The adventure of arguments for proving the existence of God in later development of Islamic philosophy has quite different line from Western philosophy of religion. These philosophical works in this respect are unknown for Western thinkers. The necessity-contingency argument has different path in Islamic philosophy nowadays from cosmological argument especially in Leibnizian reading of this argument that is based on "sufficient reason".

Seddiqin argument is a notable argument for the existence of God that is ignored by Western thinkers and is quite different from all of those arguments in Western philosophy. Mulla Sadra has presented the most important version of this argument. The mystical background of Mulla Sadra prepared some important notions for him that enabled him to mature his philosophical ideas. He studied deeply mysticism, especially Ibn Arabi's teachings, as one of the main sources of his philosophy. He had also a good background in philosophy, theology and Quranic studies. All of these teachings bring about a philosophical thought that he expressed as *Hikmat* (Wisdom). Therefore *Hikmat* is a combination of all of those schools.

The most important teachings of mysticism in his era were on existence instead of categorical views of philosophy. Mystics have emphasized on intuition rather than understanding concepts philosophically. They also taught that existence in itself, first of all, point to God then other existent beings that have existence figuratively. But these views can be captured only by intuition and it is not demonstrable. It was Mulla Sadra that could bring

a coherent philosophy that can have the advantage of mystical thought along with demonstrations that satisfy logically all who think of rational acceptance.

He achieved a changing point in philosophy in the light of importance of existence in mysticism. This changing point was "fundamental reality of existence" or "principality of existence" that refers to the truth of existence not its notion. All philosophers before him had based their ideas on the different conditions of quiddity or thing-ness which means the anticipation of quiddity to the existence that, in their views, is regarded after categorical explanation of all <u>things</u>. If we consider truth of existence in every thing prior to its quiddity (thing-ness) as only fundamental real, then every philosophical explanation will change. He has argued for this important philosophically changing point then he has examined, deeply, all other philosophical subject in the light of this principality of existence. Therefore, all philosophical studies like causality, change and movement, unity and multiplicity and etc. would have new and deeper meaning by acceptance of fundamental reality of existence.

In the light of principality of existence we will have a new philosophical perspective of the world that is deeper and more real. In this light we will have the vision of occupation of real world only of existence and nothing else. All other meanings arise from this vision and they should have their fundamental reality in this light. If we may think in this manner we do not think of meaning of existence (like what happened in ontological argument) but we encounter the truth of existence. This truth is quite different from all starting point in Western philosophy of religion for proving the existence of God. The truth of existence, first of all, refer to its nature that is pure existence, which is not any thing other than richness, then to other limited existent beings, which are not any thing other than poor-ness (not a poor existent being). This is what *Seddiqin* argument wants to demonstrate.

Therefore, in the light of fundamental reality of existence not only we may obtain a deeper idea of God and his relation to the world and a valuable argument for proving His existence but also we may think of other philosophical subjects in a new and deeper meaning and demonstrations.

Although Mulla Sadra was in 17th century, contemporary philosophical achievements nowadays show his high position in philosophy. Mulla Sadra's philosophy anticipated in different solutions for philosophical problems to other philosophies in the West. The examination of his philosophical ideas in other philosophical subjects must be done in other works. In this book I only focus on his *Seddiqin* argument for proving the existence of God.

I hope the reader will try to accompany this argument with patience and deep attention to the core of philosophical foundations of this argument. I believe that if we may contemplate on philosophical subject not as only empirical facts of the world but deeper contemplation in reality it will be possible for us to capture this new vision.

Chapter 1

Philosophical Foundations of the "*Seddiqin* Argument"

Introduction:

The "*Seddiqin* Argument" offered by Mulla Sadra is the result of the development of previous philosophical views in the history of Islamic philosophy. Since the "*Seddiqin* Argument" can have no useful result without its philosophical foundations, the study and scrutiny of these foundations is important to the explanation of the argument and have rendered argument strong in opposition to many criticisms that had troubled others before and after Mulla Sadra. If there are problems in his arguments it must be in its foundations, and if there are strengths in his arguments against the systematic criticisms to the arguments for the existence of God, these should be found also, in his philosophical foundations. Thus, in this research we will propound, at the beginning, the basic views of Mulla Sadra's philosophy.

We will explain in this study, only these parts of his philosophy that are useful for the "*Seddiqin* Argument", and then we will set forth his demonstration.

The main character of Sadra's philosophy is the "fundamental reality of existence" and its results, which affect deeply other parts of philosophy. His viewpoint provided different solutions for many philosophical problems[1]. Hence, his philosophy is called "a philosophy of fundamental reality of existence" because it is the result of precise study in the circumstances of existence. Distinguishing between the "notion" of existence and its deepest reality is the main subject of his metaphysics because, in his view, confusion between the "concept" and "reality" of existence and their specifications will cause basic mistakes. It will be shown that many problems that caused difficulties for others - both Western and Islamic philosophy - arose from this confusion. Therefore, accuracy is needed as to which specifications belong to the "notion of existence" and which other belong to the "reality of existence".

Since Tabatabai (1902-1981) has developed Sadra's viewpoint and made it stronger, We will use has commentary of Sadra's philosophy in many parts of this research.

Existence

Existence is self-evident

To Sadra the "notion of existence" is one of the best known concepts. It is self-evident and is reasonable by itself, because it is self apparent and makes others apparent. There is no need for any other thing to make its notion clearer; because a defining term must always be immediately known and clearer than the defined term. But nothing is more evident than existence. All defining terms of existence are but explanations of the word; they can neither be a "definition" nor a "description." Since existence is absolutely simple - as will be explained -, it has no specific difference or genus, and hence has no definition. It can not have any description, because a "description" is obtainable only by an accidental property which is part of the five universals whose division itself is based on the thing-ness of quiddity, while existence and its properties are derived from an entirely different source[2].

The deepest reality of existence has in the extremity of hiddenness[3]. Because its deepest reality is external, if its reality were to come to our mind as one thing among others this would loose its reality, because the reality in so far as it is reality -in contrast to its notion- must be external and remain outside the mind. Furthermore, if its reality such as fire were the actualized in the mind in contrast to its effects would also be actualized - and in our example our mind would be burnt by the fire!-

Mulla Sadra says[4]:

"The truth of existence is the clearest thing in appearance and presence; and its essence is the most hidden thing in grasping and understanding the depth of its reality"

In another book, entitled "On the explanation of grasping the truth of existence" he says[5]:

"It is not possible to conceive the reality of existence and its depth of truth, neither by a definition that consists of genus and differentia nor by a definition that consists of genus and special accident nor by a meaning equal to existence. Because, the conception of the truth of external truth of every thing is acquisition of that thing in the mind and the transition of that meaning from the external to the mind. This action is obtainable about every thing other than

existence (i.e. quiddities), but it is not possible about existence (because the transition of existence from the external to the mind, would annul its truth, and what is grasped from of by the mind is a phantom of the truth of existence not its reality). Therefore, it is not possible to have a way to the truth of existence, unless via intuition by inner insight not by way of definition and limiting, by demonstration and reasoning, as by understanding by words and terms..."

Existence and Quiddity

When we study some evidence of reality like the existence of "I", of "the earth", of a "tree", or of "whiteness" and so on, we realize that we have many conceptions of things like "tree", "earth" , "I", "whiteness" and so on, and each of them differs from the others. But, in spite of their differences they have one similarity, namely that "all of them exist and have reality outside mind." So, we know that we have two notions of things, one of them is notions like tree, whiteness, earth, etc., and the other is the notion of existence or reality that is connected to all of those notions. We name the first one thing-ness, or "quiddity", and the second one "existence".

If we observe carefully we will realize that our mental concept of existence is contrary to the concept of things like tree, the earth, whiteness, etc. to which we ascribe existence. Our reason abstracts quiddity - which is said in answer to the "what of definition" - from existence, conceives it, and then ascribes existence to it in the mind. This means that existence is additional and like an accident to quiddity in the mind, and the concept of that existence is not the same as that of a quiddity or any part of it. This difference can be realized just by surveying our mind and its conception of existence and quiddity. There is no need to demonstrate it, but we can argue for it as follows[6]:

1- It is possible to negate existence from quiddity. If existence is identified with quiddity or is a part of it, then negating this from that can not be true because it is absurd to negate something or any part of a reality from itself.

2- Predication of existence to quiddity needs reason. Therefore, it cannot be identified with quiddity; and since there is no need to prove the essential characteristic of

something. But as quiddity does need a proof for its existence, existence is not a part of quiddity.

It must be added that existence has two aspects, one external and mental. But even in the mind the separation of quiddity from existence is not conceivable. It is obtainable only by rational analysis and laboring, because what is in the mind is a "mental existence" just as something in the external world is an "external existence". But it is of the very nature of the intellect to notice quiddity in abstraction, totally discarding both modes of existence by not taking them into consideration rather than by simply negating them. In other words, if as a result of hard work by the mind we separate quiddity from both kinds of existence then quiddity would not be existence.

3- Quiddity in so far as it is quiddity has the same ascription to existence and non-existence. If existence is identified with quiddity it can not be ascribed to non-existence which is its contradictory.

The "notion" of existence has a univocal meaning.

When we say "man exists ", "Brussels exists", "a tree exists" and so on, the concept of "existence" in these sentences is the same. Although concepts of "human" and "Brussels" and "tree" are different, existence is predicated to each of them in the same meaning[7].

Fundamental Reality of Existence[8]

In some cases, when we ascribe something to another, there are external referents for each predicate and subject in the external world just as they have reality in the mind. For example, when we affirm that "this paper is white" or "this surface is square" or "that water is warm", just as each word -paper, white, surface, square, water and warm- has its special concept in the mind, so, in reality each one has special and different reality. Although each reality is connected to others, like the reality of whiteness which is connected to the reality of paper, but at the same time, each one has its own reality and special applicability.

In some other cases, when we predicate one predicate of a subject the matter is not like this. In these cases each predicate has not special and different reality; there is no duality in reality between predicate and subject, and their unity can be found only externally, so that multiplicity arises only from mind. In other words, the mind divides one concrete unity into numerous matters by its analytical power; and produces different concepts and numerous meanings from the one external reality that has no multiplicity outside the mind.

One of those concrete units is quiddity and existence. When we say "tree exists", the subject and the predicate (the concept of tree and the concept of existence) certainly have multiplicity in mind, and there is contrariety between them. As it was explained above, existence is additional to quiddity in mind. But, undoubtedly in the external real world one's appearance is not made by another, or belongs to another. It is the mind which makes two different concepts from those external units. In the real world, quiddity and existence like tree and the existence of tree, or man and existence of man are not two species of realities. How can one reality have two separate realities consisting of itself and its existence or reality? Everything is identified with its existence externally and totally, which totality is in the mind which constructs a unity. The duality is the result of the analytic power of the mind where quiddity and existence are not fundamentally real.

On the other hand, both quiddity and existence can not be unreal and be only mentally posited, just as both of them can not be real. For this would lead to a mere sophism that supposes nothing is outside of us, and there is no concrete things. We shall discuss this supposition later in reply to criticisms. Therefore either quiddity or existence can be fundamentally real, because both can be neither fundamentally real nor unreal and be mentally posited.

Some philosophers are of the opinion that what is fundamentally real is quiddity, that there are quiddities of things in the concrete world; and that the mind by observing real things abstracts the concept of existence from them. So, existence is only a mental concept and has no reality. This opinion at first appears to be true, and through great efforts of the mind we think that in reality there are things and we have the notion of existence by abstraction.

But Mulla Sadra changed the philosophical approach by holding that in the external world there is only existence (its reality not its notion); and our mind by observing the limitations of existence or reality makes some concepts of things that are different from each other. So, what is fundamentally real is existence, and quiddity is a mental posit. This is because:

1- If we consider reality with either quiddity and existence, we shall realize that quiddity has similar ascription to existence and none-existence; in so far as it is quiddity it may exist or not. We have quiddities which do not exist in reality. Although they have mental existence this is the existence by which the mind ascribe to quiddity that it is real and has reality. In other words, existence means just being in external reality, for the supposition of unreal reality or of existence without existing is totally absurd. So, it is existence that is fundamentally real and constructs concrete world, not quiddity which is a mental form for the limitation of existence. Every external real unity by reality is real and if we suppose elimination of the reality of existence from it, it will be annihilated and will be only an imagination.

2- Quiddity exists sometimes by real existence and sometimes by mental existence. In the first case, it has its effects like burning for fire, but in second one it does not have any kind of such effects. If quiddity was fundamentally real, then that would not be any distinction between the external and the mental because quiddity has both modes of being without difference.

3- If existence was not fundamentally real, unity would never be obtained, because quiddity is the source of multiplicity, and by nature it causes difference. Quiddities by themselves are different from each other and multiple; they spread the dust of multiplicity.

In predication, which we predicate something of another, like "paper is white" we know paper in so far as it is paper is quite different from whiteness in so far as it is whiteness. But we affirm a unification of these two different essences in the sentence "paper is white". Therefore, this real unity can only be the result of existence; the paper-ness and whiteness both are in one real existent being.

There are some other arguments for the fundamental reality of the existence. But these three -specially the first one – can be enough.

The fundamental reality of existence has influenced some other important parts of philosophy, such as necessity and possibility, movement, cause and caused, knowledge and soul, which are not matters of concern for this study.

Some other philosophers[9], such as illuminative philosophers who are of the opinion that it is quiddity that is fundamentally real, have criticized Mulla Sadra's opinion. They argue[10]

that if quiddity is posited mentally and the existence is the fundamental reality then in every proposition ascribing existence to a quiddity (like "the elephant exists"), before ascribing something to a subject that subject must first be or exist in order to be possible to ascribe something to it. In other words, the ascription follows the subsistent of the subject. Therefore, before ascribing existence to a quiddity, the quiddity must exist or have (another) existence and so on *ad infinitum*. That is, according to the philosophical rule that "the subsistence of a thing for another thing is after subsistence of that other thing for which the subsistence is going to be proved", i.e., the subsistence of the existence for quiddity is after the subsistence or existence of quiddity. Hence the quiddity must be subsistent or have existence for the possibility of predicating existence thereto.

Mulla Sadra answers[11] that the philosophical rule applies to the subsistence of a thing for another thing, not for the subsistence of a thing itself. Therefore, all propositions in which existence is predicated of a quiddity differ from where that something is predicated of some other thing; that philosophical rule applies in the latter but not the former case. This matter will be explained further in the third part.

We may add one further matter at the end of this section, namely as the fundamental reality of existence demonstrates, it is the existence that is externally real; by nature it must be external rather than mental. Because of this externality, it cannot be obtained by mind; we cannot grasp its reality. However, we have knowledge about it. Thus,

we said at the beginning that its notion is one of the best known things and it is reasonable in itself; but, its deepest reality is in the extremity of hiddenness.

Existence has Analogical Gradation

This is due to the fact that the reality of the existence is "one" and at the same time "many"; it is known also as "unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity". Therefore, it is related to the unity and the multiplicity of the existence. As mentioned, some of properties ascribed to existence are only about notion of existence; some of them are about the concrete reality of existence, while others are about both. Here, the unity and multiplicity of existence is only concrete, about the external reality of existence. It concerns the whole existence of the world.

By observing reality, we find that there are some species of reality like trees, earth, humans, sun, stones, number and so on, which exist. The first belief of mind that there is being, changes to this fact that "there are beings". Here, we want to study whether this multiplicity, which is grasped by mind, is real or fictitious. The question is: "Does this mental multiplicity shows a real multiplicity of beings, or is there no real multiplicity and the mind makes up multiplicity?"

In terms of the fundamental reality of existence, the quiddities that the mind supposes to be real beings are mentally posited; the only real thing is existence or reality. Therefore we must see the problem in the light of existence, and quiddity has no role in solving the problem; real multiplicity and unity must be discussed at the light of existence.

If we admit that quiddities are real and concrete, and by this opinion try to answer this question, then it will be obvious that these quiddities which are multiple in our mind by their essence, must be just multiple and distinct also in concrete reality, because according to this view only these multiple things are. But if we accept that the existence is real and the quiddities are mentally posited then we can discuss the unity and the multiplicity of reality because, in our mind, existence has one concept and things appear multiple. So, it can be discussed:

- Whether the truth of existence which rejects non-existence and constitute the real world, as "one" or "many"?

- If it is "one", then how can this "one" (in all aspects) be the basis for the abstraction of multiple and distinct quiddities, it means that, why does our mind receive many species and different individuals?

- And, if it is "many" then what kind of multiplicity of existence is this? And why has it only one concept in our mind?

All of these questions are posed in this three-fold question: " Does reality of existence have mere unity, or mere multiplicity, or both unity and multiplicity?"

This question has been answered by three different groups of philosophers:

The first, i.e. the view of "the unity of existence", is ascribed to mystics[12]. As this view seems far from reality, we will not discuss it directly.

The second, i.e. the view of "the multiplicity of the existence", seems more intelligible and popular. According to this viewpoint, external world consists of "beings", and according to the number of quiddities of individuals, there are "existent beings". Every being essentially differs from another, and there can be no correlation between them. The only participation between them is the fact that mind abstracts from them one concept, namely, the concept of existence. There is no similarity between concrete beings. This view has two aspects of which we affirm the first and reject the other.

1- Existence is not "one" from all aspects such that it rejects every kind of multiplicity in its essence, but it is many. This is against the mystics.

2- All of these multiple "beings" are quite different and distinct, and there is no similarity and homogeneity between them.

The first position supported by the fact that although the multiple quiddities in our minds are mentally posited, the mental multiplicity refers to real multiplicity because mental quiddity refers to and arises from external existence. Just as it is not possible that no reality can be found in real world and that mind arbitrarily makes the concept of reality in itself, also it is not possible that the external reality can be a mere one and, that mind arbitrarily abstracts multiple quiddities from that real one. If the existence which is the only real truth was merely one, then our different sensory and intelligible concepts would be

arbitrary. If we accept those multiplicities as arbitrary, it would lead to another aspect of sophism, which we deny.

The reason for the second position is the simplicity of existence, that: If we are to find any identifying factor between two or more things then there must be a distinguishing or multiplicity factor in each. This means that the truth of each of them must consist of a unifying factor and a distinguishing or multiplicity factor, that is, there must be "one" unifying factor in "two" things. The unifying factor can be found only in those things that are composite in their truth, not those that are simples. But, as it has been demonstrated that existence is simple; the existence of every thing can not consist of a unifying and a distinguishing factor; composition is the property of quiddities, not of existence. Therefore there can not be any unifying factor between one existence and another. As the result, we must assume that every existent being is completely distinct and independent from others.

The third view is "the unity in multiplicity and the multiplicity in unity". This view asserts that existence which is the only fundamental and concrete reality, has one truth but its truth has gradations and is analogical. The different and multiple quiddities presented to the mind are not arbitrary, but are abstracted from the gradation and degree of perfection of existence.

On one hand, existence is not merely "one", for there are "beings" in the concrete world. But on the other hand, these existences are not completely distinct from each other; but are degrees of one truth and have a unifying factor. Although this requires having distinguishing and multiple factors, this does not require that the distinguishing factor be distinct from the unifying factor. Therefore unification would not be inconsistent with simplicity of existence - which is definitely true. In existent truths the unifying factor is the same as the distinguishing factor, and differences of "existence" are due to the intensity and weakness, the perfection and imperfection, or priority and posteriority. In fact, intensity and weakness are only about degrees of the one truth in which the unifying factor is the same as distinguishing factor.

In fact, the second view that the unifying factor must be distinct from the distinguishing factor arises from comparing existence to quiddity, or concrete reality to

mental concepts, because analyzing the concepts into unifying and distinguishing factors is based on the properties of the mind.

The mind confines concrete reality, so that "perceiving" is nothing but limitation of the concrete reality in the mind. For example, the mind by its power makes the concept of "non-existence" and then ascribes this notion to things in the external world. But it is obvious that non-existence has no reality in the external world; it is nothing, but in mind it is abstracted by comparing one degree of existence to another. Hence, non-existence in the external world is a relative matter which enters our mind by relating the existence of one content to another.

The relativity of non-existence manifests the ability of the mind to elaborate concepts. The concept of multiplicity or the distinction of concepts or quiddities in the mind is the same as the concept of non-existence. Quiddities are the basis for multiplicity, but concrete reality, in spite of the simplicity of existence, has all of those distinct and multiple matters in itself, though in another manner. How can one thing represent multiplicity for the mind? This matter may become clear by example of sea and its waves or shapes that is produced on its surface. Each shape that is produced on the surface of sea is quite distinct from another, but the sea which all of these distinct shapes are its representations is "one".

We name this character of existence "analogy". There is nothing similar to this kind of analogy to serve as an example for it because this is one of characteristics of existence. However, we can use some examples to approximate the matter, in order to help understand how unifying factor may be at the same time a distinguishing factor:

1- "Light" is close to existence, because it is self-apparent and makes others apparent; this is the reality of existence which both is self-apparent and makes others apparent. Sensible light also has the analogical character of various degrees as it becomes strong or weak. The difference between various lights is a difference in terms of intensity and weakness, which feature is actualized in every degree of light and shadow, so that weakness does not prevent a weak degree from being a light. Intensity and moderation are essential conditions or constituent factors only for particular degrees in the sense that they include intensity and moderation neither of which prevents the particular degrees from being lights. Thus, a strong light is a light just as a moderate one or weak one is a light. Light then has a wide variation of degrees in their simplicity, each of which also has a range with

regard to its relation to its various recipients. In the same way the reality of existence has various degrees in terms of intensity and weakness, priority and posteriority, etc., in its very reality, because every degree of existence is simple. It is not the case that a strong degree of existence is a composite formed by its reality and intensity; likewise a weak degree is nothing but existence, just as it is not composed of light itself and darkness or another thing. Therefore, the unifying factor of strong and weak light is just light, and the distinguishing factor of those two is also intensity of light which is nothing other than the entity of light.

2- The degrees of "numbers" which are infinite is another example. In these degrees the identifying factor in being numbers is the same as the distinguishing factor, which is the priority and posteriority that constitutes the nature of numbers. Those two factors are not distinct from each other.

3- Another better example is fast and slow movements, both of which are movements. Their unifying factor is movement, and fast movement is necessarily differs from slow movement. Their distinguishing factor is velocity, which is nothing but movement. In other words, fast speed is only increase of movement. Therefore, the unifying factor in fast and slow movement is this same distinguishing factor.

Now, after this explanation of the analogical gradation of existence, we must present our reasons against the second view that assumes "beings are quite distinct from each other[13]:

1- If existent beings are distinct truths, then there must not be any real relationship between them. But, there are real relationships between "beings" like causality which constitutes a strong relation between the cause and the caused. This relation is not only mental but real in the external world between the existences that constitute reality. This relation will be discussed more later.

2- Quiddities are classified in more or less ten categories. This means that we could find some unifying factor between them, so that every category is a unifying factor for some species and genuses. This classification is the work of the mind that makes concepts;

and it can not be assumed that concrete reality is so, or is in the form of the categories. However, this classification that makes some quiddities under a genus and some genuses under a category can not be arbitrary; it must have some basis in reality. If existences were merely distinct things, then all quiddities must be completely distinct from each other, and each concept should be independent category. In other words, just as we reject the mere unity of existence that mystics believe because multiplicity and distinction of quiddities refer to a kind of multiplicity in reality, likewise the unity and participation of quiddities in one genus and in one category refer to a kind of unity and participation in reality and existence. Of course, the unity of existences is different from the unity of quiddities which result from the character of the mind.

3- We have one notion of existence in our minds which is conformable to all concrete beings. It is clear that conformity of one concept to an application can not be arbitrary. This means that there must be some aspects in the application that causes the conformity of that concept to this application. Was it not so, then any concept could conform to any application. The notion of existence is conformable to all existent beings necessarily, but if these beings were quite distinct from each other, there could not be a common aspect which causes conformity of the concept of existence to its applications. Therefore, we must admit that the reality of existence has real unity, and that this unity is just existence; we should accept also that it has real multiplicity, and that multiplicity is in the existence so well, because there is nothing other than existence in reality. This view can be formed due to analogicity of existence in which the unifying factor is the same as distinguishing factor. Therefore, existences differ from each other by intensity and weakness or priority and posteriority or perfection and imperfection.

Types of Existence[14]

All types of existence are not the same as others. For example, we see a white paper and we know both paper-ness and white-ness exist, but one of these existences - i.e. white-ness - is "existence-for-something-else" while another -i.e. paper-ness - is "existence-for-itself" because, the first one is accident to the latter which is substance. The difference between substance and accident is due to their existences. The first is the one whose existence in reality and requires no substratum, but the second one is existence in reality

requires a substratum. So, they named these two, "existence-for-itself" and "existence-for-something-else".

In another division, "being" is divided into what its existence is in-itself which is named "independent existence", and what its existence is in-something-else which is named "copulative existence". When we survey the sentence "John is a scientist" we can confirm the reality of each subject and predicate, and we can find their existence independently. But, there is another existence which differs from subject and predicate, and that is the relation between John and scientist-ness. This can be found, also, in compound words like "hand of John." We use such sentences to indicate another real truth which can be found neither in the subject nor in the predicate, but is connected to the subject, on the one hand, and to the predicate, on the other. This type of existence is only the relation between those two. Therefore, it exists on both sides and stands by those two; it is not out of them, without being just those two or part of them or separated from them. But, those two sides have another existence we name the "existence-in-itself" or "independent existence", the first being "existence-in-something-else" or "copulative existence."

From this explanation of the "copulative existence", the following can be concluded:

1- If the content of existence of the two sides of "copulative existence" is external then the content of that existence will be external, and if the first one is mental then copulative existence will be mental. This is because the nature of copulative existence is only relation, which differs from the existence of two sides, but is in the same way that those two.

2- Copulative existence causes a kind of existential unification between the two sides, because its truth is in two sides and it is not distinguishable from them.

3- In analytic sentences like "man is man," there is no real, external relation between the two sides and their relation is only mental. This kind of predication is named, in Sadra's philosophy, "primary essential predication."

Also, in sentences whose purport is affirmation of the existence of something, like "man exists", there is no real relation. In these sentences we do not affirm that something has a relation to something else, only the existence of something. Because these sentences do not have the meaning that existence is something and the quiddity of that thing is something else, these are two things in reality and then are related. We know that what existence adds to quiddity is only mental, but in reality there is only existence. By such sentences we affirm existence, which has the two aspects of quiddity and existence in the mind. Therefore, no copulative existence can be affirmed in those sentences, because there is no relation between something and itself.

4- Copulative existences have no quiddity, because quiddities are independent in their notion, but copulative existences have no independent concept.

5- Is it possible by another concentration and attention of the mind to separate the "copulative existence" which has only dependent meaning, from its independent meaning? Can this existence be considered as independent meaning? The answer is "yes", but not the kind of copulative existence in predication. It is possible in another kind of copulative existence which, in so far as it is copulative, is just like that in predication.

It will be discussed in the section "cause and caused" that the need of the caused for the cause is in the essence of the caused. This requires that the caused be nothing but need, its essence stands only by the existence of the cause, and it has no independence in existence. This requires that the existence of the caused must be copulative in relation to its cause by attention to this relation. But, with relation to itself and by attention to itself alone, it will be an independent existence. So, the type of existence of the caused is due to our attention: from one aspect it is copulative, and from another it is independent.

How can one thing have both dependent existence and independent existence? An example is the meaning of "propositions" like "from". Here the meaning is the same as the kind of existence, because the word "from", for example, has its meaning in the sentence and before a noun dependently. When I say "I went from home to the university by bus", the term "from" here means that beginning of my going was home; it has its meaning by word "home" but dependently; its meaning depends on noun (or verb) which has its meaning independently. But, the word "from" alone has no independent meaning. In spite of the

dependent character of the word "from," it can have independent meaning through another approach such as saying the "word from is used for the meaning of beginning". So, "from" has dependent meaning by one attention, and by another it has independent meaning.

This kind of copulative existence -i.e. copulative existence in the cause and the caused- is of two kinds. In the first kind, copulative existence stands on two sides like the existence of relations in predications or in some compound words. In another, copulative existence stands only on one side like the existence of the caused in relation to its cause; this latter sometimes is named "illuminative relation."

6- The existence of substance and accident both are "existence-in-themselves" or "independent existence".

Causality

Introduction:

It was proposed that there is multiplicity in reality that is not other than existence. This arises the following question; "Do the different beings have any relationship? Does the existence of some of them depend on existence of others or not? If so, how many kinds of relationships and dependencies are there? And, what are their characteristics?"[15]

The notion of cause and caused:

The word "cause" in philosophy is used to define two concepts; general and special. Its general concept is: "a being on which the reality of another being is dependent, although the former is not sufficient for the existence of the latter," and its special concept is: "one being which is sufficient for reality of another." In other words, in its general meaning, "cause" is something without which the existence and reality of another being would be absurd. In special meaning, the "cause" is something whose existence necessitates the existence and reality of another being. The first meaning is more common than the second, because the first includes all of the conditions and preparatory causes and other incomplete causes that are necessary for the existence of caused, but are not enough for bringing the caused into existence. However, in the second one, the cause is sufficient for the existence of the caused.

The dependent being is called caused only because of its dependency and only in that respect, not because of another respect and not due to another being. The cause, also, is named cause only because of the dependence on it of another being not due to any other respect. For example, heat is caused in the respect of its dependence on fire not in other respect; and fire which is the origin of heat coming into existence is its cause, not any other respect. So, it is not inconsistent that a supposed being is a cause for something at the same time that it is caused by another being. Therefore, heat that is caused by the fire can be the cause for existence of another fire. It is also not inconsistent that a being in addition to be "caused" in one respect, has another respect which can be stated by another concept such as substance, body, changeable and etc. while none of them is the same as causality.

How the mind obtains the notion of causality

As was explained in the meaning of cause and caused, these notions do not point to something in reality whose essence is cause or caused like other quiddities. These notions are not merely conceptual with no "qualification" in the external world; they are intellectual concepts whose qualifications are in the external world. In order to abstract these concepts, two real beings must be compared and the character of dependency of one on another should be considered. Without this consideration, these notions cannot be abstracted. If one sees the fire thousands times and does not compare it to the heat that arises from it and does not consider the relationship between them, one cannot ascribe the notion of cause to the fire and caused to the heat.

Here, a question arises: "How does our mind recognize these notions and this relation between beings?" Some philosophers supposed that the notions of cause and caused are derived from consideration of the pursuit and concurrence of two regular phenomena. They argue that when we see that the fire and the heat come into existence successively or simultaneously, we abstract the notions of caused and cause from them. The purport of these two notions is only the regular simultaneity or succession of the two phenomena. This can not be true, because there are cases of regular succession or simultaneity which can not be considered as cause or caused. Day and night, for example, come to existence successively, as of light and heat, but none of them is the cause for the other.

Other philosophers have pointed out that when a phenomenon is experienced repeatedly and is regarded not to happen without another being, then the notions of cause and caused are drawn there from. But others reject that and argue that we know that all who experience a phenomenon believe in advance that the relation of causality is a fact between phenomena and that the purpose of this experiment is to clarify what phenomenon is the cause of another and to recognize the special cause and caused of the experienced phenomena. Now, the question is: "How have they realized the notions of cause and caused before experimenting? How have they known that there is this kind of relationship between beings, so that they can find special relations of causality?"

According to Sadraian view[16] human beings first find this relation in themselves by intuition. Man considers that his psychological activities and decisions and the production of

some imaginations to be the results of his acts or acts of his will, and the existence of them is dependent to his existence while his existence is not dependent to those; so, he abstracts the notion of cause and caused from these. Then he generalizes these notions to other beings (as will be explained in more detail).

Divisions of cause:

Some problems in this field are the result of confusion between different types of cause, and something which is presumed as a cause without really being such. Therefore, there should be some kinds of differentiation between types of cause in order to have a better understanding of the concept because the dependency of one existence to another existence can be considered in different manners. If the general term "cause" applies to all of those dependencies, then these divisions will be as follows:

1. Complete and incomplete cause: a complete cause is sufficient for the truth and the existence of the caused which is not dependent on any other being. In other words, if the existence of the caused is necessary given the existence of the cause, then that cause is a complete cause. On the other hand, if the cause is such that, alone it is not sufficient for the existence of caused, yet without it the caused would not exist, then it is an incomplete cause.

That is to say that if each of a_1, a_2, a_n is necessary for the existence of b (caused) and when the sum of ($a_1 + a_2 +...+ a_n$) exists, the caused (b) necessarily exists, then the Σa_k is named the complete cause and each of a_1 or a_2 or ....., a_n or every sum of a_1, a_2, ..., and a_n which is less than Σak (like ($a_1 + a_2$) or ($a_3 + a_7 + a_n$) or ($a_n + a_{n-1} + a_{n-2} + a_5$) or ...) is named incomplete cause. For example, the light of a lamp which is caused (b) is dependent on the existence of lamp (a_n), wires (a_{n-1}), the special metal of wire in the lamp (a_{n-2}), the vacuum in the lamp (a_{n-3}), the electricity which is continually reaches to the lamp (a_{n-4}), the perseverance of some physical laws and etc. (...,a_1). To have light from the lamp each of those (a_k) must exist, without any of them the existence of (b) is absurd, but if one or two of those (like a_{n-1}, a_{n-3}) exist it does not necessitate the existence of caused (b). Only the sum of ($a_1+a_2+...+a_n$) makes the caused to exist necessarily. If all of ($a_1+a_2+...+a_{n-1}$) exists (b) will not exist. This is a_n that makes the cause efficient for the necessary existence of the caused. The existence of the last part (which can be any part instead of a_n) on which the existence or nonexistence of the caused depends for its existence or nonexistence is very important. It

shows itself in some cases as the only factor in the existence of b and makes other incomplete causes be ignored or unimportant. The first attempt of sciences is to recognize this last part (like a_n) then they attempt to know other parts of complete cause (like a_{n-1} or a_{n-2}). To do this attempting they preserve that last part (a_n) then examine another part (like a_{n-1}); if they see that the existence or nonexistence of the caused is depended on the existence or nonexistence of that new last part, then they conclude that this is another incomplete cause. However can every scientist contend that he has recognized all the parts of an efficient cause? Are all the causes that he knows really the parts of the complete cause? It would seem not because, at first he can only speak about what can be experienced and experimented, and he can omit or preserve one factor and examine the dependency of the caused on that factor. But in some cases he can not examine this, either due to the limitation of his instruments or because it is not an experimentable factor such as an immaterial factor. Because he can not recognize some of those parts, he can not say anything about such other factors that perhaps a philosopher might treat. The development of every science has convinced us that all parts are not known and that all the parts are not simple parts but they can be sums of smaller causes.

Furthermore, in some cases the cause is existence -given to a caused- like when you imagine an apple in your mind, all of these parts depend on one thing -in our example, on me. This means that all the causes (parts) are not the same, and in some cases each part depends on a being that is quite different from each part.

2. Simple cause and composed cause: a simple cause is not composite as a cause, like the "I" in the example of last paragraph (when I imagine an apple in my mind) or God or intellectual entities. Composed cause such as material causes, have different parts.

3. Direct cause and indirect cause: In for example, the will of a man in movement of his hand can be accounted as a direct cause, but in the movement of a pen that is in his hand is accounted as an indirect cause.

4. Real and preparatory cause: Cause can be considered to that in which the existence of the caused is really dependent so that caused can not be separated from it. Such separation would be absurd like that of mind (or soul) from will and mental imaginations

which can not exist in separation from mind (or soul). We name these "real cause." Sometimes we ascribe cause more generally to a being that is effective in preparing the background for the coming into existence of the effect or caused, though the existence of the effect has no true and inseparable dependency on it, like father as a cause of son, or artist as a cause of painting. This kind of cause is named as "preparatory cause." Indeed in these cases the real cause is a composed one consisting matters and physical laws and etc. For example, in the painting, the matter of colors and their physical and chemical properties must be conserved continually and then the existence of painting as a painting will be conserved. In any moment were one of these parts of the composed cause to cease the efficient cause would be less than efficient and the painting will be destroyed.

Another division of causes is: material, formal, agent or agency and final.

We do not want to assert this division which in some cases is disputable. The only important cause in this division is agent or agency cause, by which the caused comes into existence. This agency is used in two terms: The first one is "natural agent" which is the origination of movements and changes of bodies. The second is "divine agent" or "immaterial agent" that is discussed in theology. This agent is one being that brings caused into existence and gives it existence. This agent is nearly like the human being as the agent of his imaginations - like an apple that has its existence by the one who imagines it. This agent can be found in immaterial beings; material agents cause only movements and changes in things and there is no material being that can bring another thing into existence from nonexistence.

The principle of causality:

As was explained above, the principle of causality is accepted by man as a common and universal postulate. If one does not accept this principle he can not have any scientific experience because any attempt to formulate an experiment requires previous acceptance of causality in order for the experiment to render a general law. Hume truly contends that the necessary relation between cause and effect can not be derived from sensible experience which is based solely on senses. Kant, also correctly accounted this principle to be *a priori*.

The following concerns the content of this principle and its value and validity. The principle of causality expresses the need of the caused for a cause the caused can not exist

without a cause. This proposition which is about reality may be stated in this form: "Every caused need to have a cause" and its purport is that if a caused exists externally, then it needs a cause. As there is no being that is described as caused and comes to existence without any cause, the existence of something caused shows that a cause has brought it into existence.

But this proposition is an analytic one in which the purport of the predicate are derived from the purport of its subject. Therefore, it is evident and does not need any demonstration; the mere concepts of subject and predicate are enough for its judgment. However, this proposition does not show that in the external world there are things that are caused, not can it be prove that there are beings that need to cause in the world. It declares only if there is something caused in the world it must have a cause.

If we add the fact that there are effects in the world that are evident by intuition of things causeds internally the will and its action, by generalizing this fact to the external world we can have the following propositions: "Causeds that are in the external world need causes." This proposition is evident because it consists of two other evident propositions (one analytic and another synthetic). However, this proposition, can not declare the instances of causeds either. It expresses that there are beings in common sense of the term to whom the term "caused" is ascribed and that they need a cause. However, this proposition cannot specify what being has this ascription. Therefore, recognition of instances of cause and caused, except those understood by intuition, are not evident and requires demonstration. Finally, only if external beings are described as cause and caused, can instances of cause and caused be distinguished.

Some philosophers considered the principle of causality to be that: "Every existent being needs a cause" which it follows that all beings must be caused. However, this proposition cannot be accepted because it is not evident; existent being by its nature does not need a cause because it has existence. Furthermore, this proposition immediately outside another famous problem, namely, "Therefore, God must have a cause because God is an existent being." The subject of the principle of causality can not be merely existent being because in that case not only is it not evident, but also it cannot be demonstrated. Even its contrary can

not be demonstrated by demonstrations that God, in spite of having existence, does not need to a cause.

Basis of the need for a cause:

Why does something need a cause? Why must something be accounted as caused? One answer to this question stated above was that to have existence is the criterion for having a cause. We explained that this can not be true, for existent being does not absolutely need a cause. Therefore, an existent being in so far as it is an existent being is not a criterion of having a cause.

Some Islamic theologians argued that "coming-into-being" is the criteria and basis of the need for a cause for a being. Every being that did not have existence in a moment, but then comes into existence in another moment needs a cause. Therefore, "pre-eternal" being like God does not need to a cause.

Islamic philosophers, on the contrary, argued that "possible-beings" in so far as it has possibility, needs a cause. Every being that has essential possibility of non-existence and for whom the supposition of its non-existence is not absurd will need a cause. The need of this being is not only in the moment that comes into being, but this need is derived from its possibility every moment it exists. Therefore, the effect needs a conserving cause and the originating cause is not sufficient. The shortness or length of the life of an existence does not increase due to its need for a cause; rather the length of its life makes it the more in need of a cause. Hence, it is not intellectually absurd that there be a pre-eternal caused being.

In this later view, the possibility that stipulates the need for a cause can be an attribute of quiddity which demands neither existence nor non-existence. In other words, its ascription to existence is the same as to non-existence. There must be another thing to expel quiddity from this equality of ascription; and this thing is cause. Hence, these philosophers assume "being-quiddity possibility" as the basis of the need for a cause of a being.

This view is compatible with the opinion of those who believe that it is quiddity that is fundamentally real. However those who believe that existence is fundamentally real and quiddity is mentally posited need to found their philosophical statements on "existence", not

on "quiddity." So, Mulla Sadra held that the basis of the need of a caused for a cause is its kind of existence. Because causality is a real relation between beings and in reality there is nothing other than existence -as was explained in the last chapter. Therefore, causality cannot refer to anything other than the existence of a being; so the need of the caused for a cause which is a real property is only in the existence of the caused, not anything other because there is nothing really other than existence. In other words, if we assume that A is the cause of B, A and B have two aspects; one is "A-ness" and "B-ness" (quiddity of A and B) and the other is "existence of A" and "existence of B" (existence). As we explained before, what is fundamental in reality is existence, like the existence of A. Quiddity (like A-ness) is mentally posited, that so, the mind by its action and consideration of the limitations of existence of A presumes the notion of "A-ness". Therefore, "A-ness" and "B-ness" are not fundamental real, but are as actions of mind. Causality is not essentially between those notions, but is in their reality which is their existence is graded in its reality. Therefore, the only basis and criterion of the need of some beings (as caused) for other beings (as cause) is an "existential need" (or in Sadra's terminology "existential poverty") and "essential dependency". This is the existential need or essential dependency of the caused upon another existence (viz. cause) which must not have this need or dependency, but rather must be an independent one or an existence without need. So, the subject of the principle of causality is dependent beings or beings in which are poor in their existence. The proposition will be something like this: "Every being-poor- in-existence or dependent being needs a cause." When the analogical gradation of existence is considered; since every weaker grade is dependent on a stronger grade of existence; therefore the subject of that proposition can be "weak being," and the basis for the need of a being for a cause will be "weakness in the degree of existence."

It can be understood from the statements of Mulla Sadra that: (1) The relation of causality must be found between the existence of a cause and the existence of a caused, not in their quiddities (thing-ness). (2) Being caused or dependency of the caused upon another being is essential for the existence of the caused; dependent being will never be independent and can never be without need for a cause. The essence of the caused is being caused and having being that is dependent in relation to another being; without this dependency there is no caused being. Not caused can be a supposition even without this dependency; in other words, the existence of the caused is just its dependence and belonging to a cause that gives

existence to it. This is what was said when existence was divided into "existence-in-itself" (independent being) and "existence-in-something-else" (copulative existence).

Truth of the relationship between cause and caused:

When it is said that "cause gives existence to the caused," the mind imagines in the beginning that someone gives something to another and that the latter receives it. In other word, it is assumed that in this process there are three things and two actions. First is the cause that gives existence. Second is the caused which receives existence. Third is existence that cause gives to the caused. Fourth is the act of giving that is ascribed to cause, and fifth is the act of receiving that is ascribed to the caused. However, this is not the case.

The truth is that there is nothing in the external world but cause and caused. An example helps to understand the subject: when you imagine an apple in your mind you are its cause and it is the caused. In this causality there is nothing but you and your imagination, viz. the imagination of the apple. It is clear in this example that the apple is not anything which receives something that is existence from another being, viz. yourself. Nor is it that you do something like giving as that the apple does another thing which is taking. Nor can it be accepted that cause (like yourself in the example) gives existence to the quiddity or the caused (like the quiddity of apple); because quiddity is mentally posited and is not real. Before the existence of the caused there is no receiver to take existence and after the existence of the caused receiving existence from the cause would be meaningless.

Here, the question is: "what is the relation of the caused to the cause?" From the previous example it can be understood that the relation between the apple and you is not a relation between two things; there are not two things you and that apple, nor after your imaginative causation of apple is there a new relation between what were two independent beings. If one assumes that this relation stands on two sides (cause and caused) one can suppose this neither before nor after the existence of cause and together with it because before its existence this relation which must stand on two sides can not stand on the caused on one side because the caused does not exist. If we assume that this relation exists after or together with the existence of the caused, then the caused cannot have any essential relation to the cause and this external connection connects two things like a string. Furthermore, if this connection was concrete then it must be a caused and the question about its relation to its cause will be repeated, and so on *ad infinitum*.

In fact, this relation is not concrete one, nor does it stand on two sides; but only on one side. This relation is like the relation between a lamp and its light. In fact, the existence of the caused is a radiation of the cause. The existence of the caused is just the relationship of dependency and belonging to the cause. Was the existence of the apple in my imagination anything but relationship belonging to me? The conception of belonging and relationship is understood from the essence of its existence. This kind of relationship that is between cause and caused is named "illuminative relation." So, the existence of the caused is an illuminative relation of the existence of cause. This dependency of caused in existence is due to its cause, and its cause is independent being. If the cause itself caused by another being then it will have dependent existence due to its cause. Therefore, a being due to its being caused has both an independent and a dependent existence. The absolute independent being is a cause that is not caused by another being. This is what we said about analogicity of existence and its gradation.

How the causal relationship can be known?

The causal relationship analyzed above concerns is about an existential cause that gives existence to its caused; this kind of cause does not involve preparatory and material causes. Here, there are two questions: First, how can that relation between existential causes and their effects be known and some of its instances be recognized? Second, how can causal relation between bodies or material beings that are not existential in kind be known?

As was explained, human beings find some instances of cause and caused in themselves by intuition. When they compare direct acts of the soul such as will, construct some mental concepts and brings about some changes in them with themselves, and recognize that they are dependent on the soul, then they abstracts the meaning of cause from soul and the meaning of caused from its acts. Then, they generalize the meanings of cause and caused to everything that has any kind of dependency on another.

In other words, finding some instances of cause and caused leads the soul to abstract a universal meaning from them. This meaning (cause) that is abstracted from soul is not recognized from the special manner of its existence and is not known also from its being soul; but this abstraction is from the respect of dependency of another being upon it. Therefore any such other being will be an instance of cause material or immaterial, either

contingent or necessary. Similarly the meaning of caused is abstracted from its dependency on another being; and everything that is such will be an instance of caused.

For abstracting a universal meaning, recognition of one or some instances is enough; but, this is not enough for the recognition of other instances of that universal concept. Therefore, for the recognition of other instances that are not known by intuition, another criterion must be found. The causal existential relation between a cause that gives existence and its caused must be demonstrated beyond the soul. Why does this kind of causal relation exist beyond the soul? Why is the existence of other beings derived from another existent being? Can the universe stands on its own in existence without any need to another existence? These questions must be answered by the intellectual demonstration.

Since the "existence-giving-cause" can not be found in material beings, and experimental methods have no way of reaching the immaterial realm, therefore the recognition of this kind of cause and causal relation outside of the realm of intuitional knowledge is possible only by an intellectual method. This means that it is not possible to know the existence-giving-cause of materials by laboratory instruments, changing their conditions and controlling the changes. Furthermore, in experimental methods, one changes some conditions and then tries to find some other changes modes to conclude that some changes are causes of other changes, but it is not possible to remove immaterial being and then consider what will be removed by such a removal. So mere rational demonstration is the only way to recognize the intellectual properties of these causes and by those properties their instances can be known. In this they are unlike material causes and causeds that can be recognized by experimental methods.

In brief there are three ways to recognize the causal relationship: firstly, intuitional knowledge in the realm of soul and its acts and mental phenomenon; secondly, mere rational demonstration about immaterial beings and thirdly rational demonstration that is based on the experimental premises, which is about material causes and effects.

Characteristics of the Cause and the Caused or Effect

As proposed, the recognition of cause and caused and their relation can be clearer in the light of Mulla Sadra's philosophy based on such principles is: (a) existence is fundamentally real, (b) the caused has copulative existence in relation to its cause, and (c) existence has analogical gradation. According to these principles, the caused is a weaker

existence than its cause, so that the caused depends on - nay is a dependence of – the cause, while this is not so of the cause. On the other hand, the cause is a stronger existence in comparison with its caused, and it is more complete in the existence. The cause, also, can be a weaker grade in existence than another being which is its cause and which is more complete than it in existence. This series continues until there is no weakness in a being. At the end of the series there is a being that has no weakness, no incompleteness, no deficiency and no limitation in its existence; in other words, it must be infinite in completeness. This being can not be an effect of any other being.

Therefore, the characteristic of caused is its weakness in degree of existence in relation to another being; while the character of cause is strength in degree of existence in relation to its caused. The character of absolute cause is to be infinitely complete without any incompleteness. Therefore we may not be able to recognize every particular cause (existence-giver-cause) and caused one by one in the external world, but we can comprehend that every cause (like M) is more complete and stronger in existence than its caused (like N), and it (M) is more incomplete and weaker than its cause (like L). So far as there is any existential weakness and limitation, it must be the character of the caused or effect.

The main question is how can we prove that the material world is weak in existence and incomplete, so that it needs a more complete being? How can we demonstrate that there is a more complete being than material bodies which is their cause? The answer is that being caused is an essential property of the existence of caused, and no caused being can escape this. As was explained the relation between cause and caused is called an "illuminative relation"; and the caused is nothing but dependency on the cause. This dependency is not an accidental property; and it is essential for caused to be a dependent being. If it is possible for something to be a caused being it will be a caused being inevitably and it is not possible for it to be uncaused. Because, if it is possible for it to be uncaused, it means that its existence, essentially, does not require to be caused, and being caused is not essential for its existence; while it was proved that being caused is essential for a caused. No being can have the character of being caused as possible, because the character of being caused is the essential property of its existence. To have three sides is essential for triangle (not for a figure or for a being), while having three equal sides is not essential for it. If we know that (1) it is possible for a triangle to have three sides and (2) the property of having

three sides is an essential property of triangle, we will conclude that it is not possible for triangle not to have three sides, and it certainly has three sides. This is because, if it is possible for triangle not to have three sides, it will be possible both having and not having three sides, consequently it will not be essential for triangle to have three sides (like equality of that three sides that is not essential for triangle), and this is opposite to our first assumption.

The example of the triangle is not a very good one to show our purpose because the triangle is a quiddity that is far from existence. The following explanation makes our purpose clearer: All have heard the wish of some people that they were another person with a better condition or they wish their father and mother were other persons instead of their real father and mother. Let's examine to see whether it is possible or not. For example, Tom wishes his father (A) and mother (B) who are not rich and intelligent were other persons like Dick's father (A') and mother (B') who are both rich and intelligent. Tom thinks that if A' and B' were his father and mother he would have a better life. If he concentrates on the meaning of this proposition he will understand that this sentence is meaningless, because if his father and mother were other persons he would not be Tom. Tom is an existent man whose father and mother are A and B. If A' and B' are father and mother of a person it will not be Tom who wishes so, but will be e.g. Dick who exists with this character. Tom wants to preserve his characteristics that necessitate having A and B as his father and mother, and at the same time not to have A and B as his parents. This is absurd. All of these are the necessary conditions for the existence of Tom. Even, every event that happened in the past of Tom's life is a necessary condition of the present existence of Tom and determines his essential characteristics.

Human beings, in spite of having free will for constructing his present and future, have been obligated by his past. No one can change the previous conditions of his existence, but can change only the result of his act in the past by another present action. He can not change the necessary condition of his past of which his existence is the result. No one can either omit a condition from his past or add another one to it. He is necessarily himself with his past.

Now, if it is possible for a person to have in the past in a specific time a certain condition, he must have this condition necessarily. For example, if it is possible for a person to have M and N as his father and mother, they must be necessarily his father and mother.

Because, if they are not really his father and mother it is absurd or impossible for them to be his father and mother. If they are really his father and mother his personality can not be otherwise, and he necessarily will have this condition. Therefore, only the possibility of having those two persons as his father and mother makes it necessary.

This is similar for the caused. Since it is essential for a caused to have a dependent existence and incompleteness in its existence, therefore if it is possible for an existent being to be a caused being and incomplete existence, it must necessarily be a caused being. Every being that has the possibility of being caused will be necessarily a caused being. A caused being, according to the analogical gradation of existence, has a more incomplete existence than its cause. So, any being for whom a more complete being can be supposed will have the possibility of being caused, and necessarily will be a caused being. The weakness of existence of a being implies the existence of another stronger being with this strength in existence.

There are some evidences that indicate a weakness of existence and by these evidences, the fact of being's being caused can be known. Some of these evidences are limitation in time and space, changeability, ability of movement and destructibility. These are the characters of material beings which show their weakness in existence. Therefore, material beings must be caused beings and has more complete being or beings as their cause. These beings (causes) must be more complete than material beings, so that they do not have any or all of these limitations. For these, we must search for the cause (or causes) of material beings in the immaterial world.

Necessity and Possibility

"Necessity and possibility" shape an important part of Sadra's philosophy. He distinguishes between several types of "necessity and possibility". Here we refer only to those types which are essential for understanding the *Seddiqin* Argument:

Philosophical Essential Necessity and Logical Essential Necessity

Necessity in logical meaning is only about propositions, while in philosophical meaning it is about reality and existence. In logical meaning there are two kinds of this necessity. The first is "descriptive necessity" which is necessity in propositions when the ascription of the predicate to subject is necessary not absolutely but in the special situation in which the subject has a special attribute or condition. For example, when we say: "The moon is in lunar eclipse necessarily when the earth settles between the moon and Sun" this necessity is not for the moon absolutely; only in the situation of the settling of the earth between sun and the moon does it become necessary. This is a descriptive necessity.

The second one is "essential necessity". This necessity is in a proposition in which the ascription of a predicate to a subject is necessary absolutely without any special condition that makes this ascription necessary. "The triangle has three sides necessarily". In this example, to have three sides is necessary for triangle not in any special stipulation, but in all situations, because having three sides is an essential character of triangle. However, in spite of the unconditionality of "essential necessity" to any certain situation, there is a stipulation for this necessary ascription. This stipulation is preservation of the essence of subject. The predicate in these propositions is ascribed to the subject so long as the subject exists and its essence remains. The triangle so long as its "being triangle" is preserved has three sides necessarily. Therefore, in descriptive necessity there are two stipulations for necessity of ascription of predicate to subject: the special condition and the preservation of the essence of subject; while in essential necessity only preservation of the essence of subject is enough.

In a philosophy of which existence and reality is its main subject, this necessity is viewed in another framework. Everything which has existence so that the negation of existence from it is absurd has existence necessarily. In Sadra's philosophy, since negating existence from every existent being is absurd, therefore, all existent beings have existence necessarily. But, this necessity can be of two kinds. Some beings have this necessity by something else as its cause that has given this necessity to it. This necessity is called "necessity-by-something-else". The second is what has this necessity through its essence. This kind is named "necessity-by-essence" which is not the result of any external cause. This philosophical division is only about reality, not about the quality of constitution of propositions. In logical view, necessity is not about any specific predicate and subject, but is general, while in philosophy the predicate is only existence and the necessity is about the existence of something. So, philosophical essential necessity is when a being has existence necessarily and does not have this necessity by any external cause. In other word, it must be an independent and uncaused being that stand in itself, while "necessity-by-something-else" is about an existent being which has existence necessarily but its necessity is the result of an external cause.

Philosophical essential necessity requires the eternity of that which has this necessity: if a being has existence necessarily by essence, and it is uncaused and is an essential existence that stands in itself, then it should inevitably be an eternal being because in no condition can it even be supposed not to exist. Therefore, philosophical essential necessity is called "eternal necessity", whereas, logical essential necessity does not require the eternity of subject, because the ascription in logical essential necessity is conditioned by preservation of subject. If the subject disappears then the ascription of predicate to subject will cease to remain, so there will be no such necessity.

Philosophical essential necessity, in philosophical terminology, is the opposite only of "necessity-by-something-else". But, in a broader terminology which consists of both the logical and the philosophical ones, three kinds of necessary ascription can be identified: "descriptive necessity", "essential necessity" and "eternal necessity". The essential necessity is just logical essential necessity and eternal necessity is philosophical essential necessity. In descriptive necessity there are two stipulations for necessary ascription: having that description, and preservation of the essence of subject. In essential necessity there is one

stipulation and that is preservation of essence of subject. But in eternal necessity there is no stipulation and condition for ascription of the predicate (which can not be other than existence) to the subject. Therefore, absolute necessity is only in eternal necessity whereas the others are conditioned.

Philosophers try to prove the eternal necessity of God. Necessary Being, in their view, is He who has necessary existence eternally, not essentially in logical meaning.

Possibility and Ontological Poverty[17]

How can we explain necessity and possibility in the light of fundamental reality of existence that is proposed by Mulla Sadra? According to his view quiddity is mentally posited, and reality is not other than existence. Hence, we can not ascribe possibility and necessity to a quiddity as real properties, but they must be ascribed to existence. They can be ascribed to quiddity figuratively, but not really. Before Mulla Sadra, possibility was ascribed to quiddities like the tree, the horse, etc., which were considered as beings that have existence by essential possibility. In so far as ascription of existence and non-existence to them is the same, quiddities have essential possibility. But according to the fundamental reality of existence we can not ascribe existence as real, to quiddity as mentally posited. The reality, not the concept, of existence is ascribed to existent beings necessarily (as was explained above). Some of these beings have existence necessarily but from something else, whereas the other has this necessity through itself. Those which exist necessarily by something else are caused beings that are not other than dependency to another more complete being. They have essential need for their cause and as was explained, they are not other than that need, while the necessary being that has necessity through itself is an independent existence that is not a caused being. Since caused being is just need and dependent relation to cause, Mulla Sadra named this existence as poor existence that is not other than poverty (in opposition to rich existence). So, in Sadra's view possibility is not in a being that may either exist or not, nor is it in a being to which the ascription of existence or non-existence is the same. It is about an existent being whose existence is dependent. However, in so far as it is an existent being, ascription of existence to it is necessary. The first meaning of possibility which is based on quiddity is called "quidditive possibility"; the second is named by Mulla Sadra "ontological poverty"[18].

Notes:

1. Some of these philosophical problems given a new solution by Mulla Sadra are as follows:
   a: the unity of the intellect and what is intellected, that is important in the subject of "knowledge".
   b: contingency and necessity
   c: substantial movement
   d: causality that is in the existence of beings and the relation between cause and caused
   e: matter and the form and their unity
   f: individuality
   g: mental existence
   h: grades of existence
   i: copulative existence
   j: The duality of mind and body

2. See Mulla Sadra *Al-Asfar* pp. 23-27 , 68-69; and *Al-Shavahid al-Robubiyyat* pp. 7,8; and *Al-Masha'ir* pp13-19; See also Sabzavari Mulla hadi *Sharh al-Manzumat fi al-Hikmat* in its translation by Mohaghegh Mehdi and Izutsu Toshihiko, *The Metaphysics of Sabzavari* p.31.

3. Mulla Sadra *Al-Masha'ir,* p.12.

4. Mulla Sadra *Al-Shavahid al Robubiyyat,* p.7-8.

5. *Ibid.*, pp.14-17, M.H. Tabatabaii *Bedayat al Hikmat* p.13 , *Osoole Falsafeh wa Raveshe Realism (The Principles of Philosophy and Method of Realism)* p.29 with its footnotes of Motahhari.

6. M.H. Tabatabaii *Bedayat al-Hikmat,* p.13

7. *Ibid.*, p.11

8. More about this subject can be found in: Mulla Sadra *Al-Asfar* p. 38, he has a long chapter with a detailed explanation and demonstrations in *Al-Masha'ir* pp. 28-68, and has seven arguments for fundamental reality of existence in this book. See also Tabatabaii *Bedayat al-Hikmat* p. 14-16 and *Nihayat al-Hikmat,* p. 21-48 and *Osooli Falsafeh wa Ravishi Realism* and its footnotes, p. 29-39.

9. Some of these philosophers are: Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi (Shaykh al-Ishragh), Mir Muhammad Baqir Damad, Mulla Mohsen Feyz Kashani, Mulla Abd al-Razzagh Lahiji, Sheykh Rajab'ali Tabrizi, Ghazi Sa'eed Ghomi and Fayyaz Lahijani.

10. You can find some of these arguments in: Ghazi Sa'eed Ghomi, *Kelide Behesht (The Key of Paradise),* p.54; Mir Damad, *Ghabasat,* p. 26; Shahab al-Din Suhrawardi, *Hekmat al-Eshragh*; and *Hayakil al-Noor.*

11. You can find that distinction (between two parts propositions and three parts propositions) and the illuminative philosophers' objection against fundamental reality of existence and Mulla Sadra and his disciples' answers in these books: Mulla Sadra *Asfar I* p.40-47, *Al-Mashaiir* p.135-138, Tabatabaii *Bedayat al-Hikmat* p.20-21

12. See Mulla Sadra *Al-Asfar,* pp. 36-37, and Tabatabaii *Bedayat al-Hikmat,* pp.16-20; *Nihayat al-Hikmat* pp.48-58, *Osoole Falsafeh wa Ravishi Realism III,* pp.42-54 with its notes written by M. Motahhari; and M. Mohaghghegh T. Izutsu, *The Metaphysics of Sabzavari,* p. 39.

13. See Mulla Sadra *Al-Asfar,* pp.78-82; and Tabatabaii, *Bedayat al-Hikmat* pp. 43-45, and *Nihayat al-Hikmat,* pp. 69-79.

14.This section has been written according to the views of Mulla Sadra, but is not just his difficult words. His views have been simplified and has made compatible with new philosophical terminology. I use, in this section, Mesbahi Yazdi's writings in his book *Amoozeshi Falsafeh (Teaching Philosophy)* for this simplification. See Mesbahi Yazdi, *Amoozeshi Falsafeh II,* pp. 16-79

15. Mesbahi Yazdi *Amoozeshi Falsafeh II,* pp. 46,47,29.

16. The term 'povertly possibility' is the translation of *'Imkan Faghri'* for which I cannot find a better translation; *Faghr* means poverty and *faghri* means 'what is ascribed to poverty' and it is a kind of possibility that something has because of its poverty in existence.

17. Mulla Sadra *Asfar I,* PP. 157, 158; and M.H. Tabatabai, *Osoole Falsafeh wa Raveshe Realism (The Principles of Philosophy and Method of Realism),* pp. 82-86 with its footnotes of Motahhari.

Chapter II

The Seddiqin Argument

Explanation of the argument

As mentioned in the beginning of this research, the *Seddiqin* argument in Mulla Sadra's view has some philosophical foundations which should be known for an understanding of this argument. In the previous chapter these foundations were explained in detail. Now, in order to propose the argument these foundations will be repeated in brief:

1-   Existence has both a notion in the mind and a deepest reality in the external world. The deepest reality and the truth of existence is the most apparent, because it is not other than appearance, and others have their appearance and reality by it. But, the essence of the reality of existence is in the extremity of hidden-ness. Since its deepest reality is external, it cannot be grasped by mind. In this argument the truth and reality of existence is considered, not its notion which is different from its reality.

2-   There is only existence (its truth not its concept) in the external world. By observing the limitations of existence and its boundaries with non-existence[1] our mind makes some concepts of things that are different from each other which these concepts are quiddities. Therefore, what is fundamentally real is existence; quiddity is mentally posited as that which has existence only figuratively. The fundamental reality of existence is the main basis of this argument.

3-   The reality of existence is one in all beings; in different beings there is not different truth, but all refer to the one truth. Simultaneously, there are multiple beings that have multiplicity in this reality of existence. Since there is nothing in reality other than the truth of existence, so the unifying factor is the same as the distinguishing factor; both are

existence. The reality of existence is "one" at the same time that it is "many"; it has unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity. So, differences of existence are due to intensity and weakness, to perfection and imperfection, or to priority and posteriority. In fact, intensity and weakness are only about degrees of one truth in which the unifying factor is the same as the distinguishing factor. This view is called "analogical gradation"; therefore, the existence has analogical gradation in reality.

4-   The relation of cause and caused in the light of the fundamental reality of existence: the cause is what gives existence to the caused. It is not only a mental ascription, but a real external relation between cause and caused. However this does not mean that there are three things (cause, caused and what that cause gives to the caused) and two actions (giving by the cause and taking by the caused). The caused is not other than what the cause brings into existence, which is just the act of giving, nay, the act of bringing into existence. Therefore, the caused is just what is given by the cause, what takes existence from the cause, and the act of giving and taking. It is our mind that considers causality in several aspects compares it with other things, and then creates several notions within it. In fact, there is nothing in reality but the existence of the cause and dependent existence of the caused. That the caused is a dependent being does not mean that it is a being that has its dependency added like an accident; rather it is not other than dependency and need, the cause. It is just a need, so that its relation to its cause is an illuminative one which has only one side, not a categorical relation that is based on two sides. In the light of the analogical gradation of existence, the caused is a weaker degree of existence than its cause which gives existence to it continually. The cause has some perfection that the caused does not have, because its essential need makes it posterior to its cause. The dependent identity of the existence of the caused that is naught but need posits it in a situation at the boundary of existence and non- existence. As soon as this relation is eliminated, it will be in non-existence, nay it would not be any thing to non-exist. Consequently, being caused produces a kind of limitation that makes the caused tangent to non-existence; the quiddity of the caused is what results from these limitations by the mind.

Based on the above foundations two different interpretations have been derived from Mulla Sadra's statements about his *Seddiqin* Argument.

a: Mesbah Yazdi (1931-   ) has posed the rest of Argument as follow[2]:

a.1- The criterion of the need of the caused for the cause is just the dependency and copulation of its existence due to the cause namely to the weakness of its existence. As long as there is any weakness in a being, it will be necessarily caused and will need essentially a more complete being without any independence on a cause.

a.2- Different degrees of existence, with the exception of the highest degree that has infinite completeness and absolutely no need and is independent, are just dependency and relation. If that highest degree was not a real existent and did not have truth, then the other degrees would not exist at all; because if it is supposed that they exist without existence of highest degree, it would imply that those degrees one independent and have no need; whereas their existential character is just copulation, dependency and need.

b: M. Motahhary (1921-1981) in another interpretation of the argument has explained the rest of the argument as follow[3]:

b.1- The truth and reality of existence does not accept non-existence. An existent being in so far as it is an existent being will never be non-existence. Likewise non-existence[4] in so far as it is non-existence will never be existence. The truth of becoming non-existence in existent beings is the limitation of special existences. It does not mean that existence accepts non-existence which is its contradiction. Non-existence is not a real thing; we comprehend the meaning of non-existence by comparing one degree of existence or its limitations with another degree and its limitations. This is a relative matter.

b.2- The truth of existence without any respect, relation and dependency that may limit and condition it, is equal to perfection, absoluteness, rich, intensity, actuality, unlimited-ness and glory. But, all of deficiency, weakness, conditionality, poverty, possibility, limitation and determination are not from the essence of existence, but from non-existences that are the result of being caused. A being, in so far as it is a limited existence and joined to non-existence, has these qualifications, all of which arise from non-

existence. The pure truth of existence is opposite to non-existence; the circumstances of non-existence are outside the pure truth of existence and are negated by it.

b.3-   The pure truth of existence exists, because it is just existent; non-existence is absurd for it. The truth of existence in its essence, i.e. in being existent and in its reality, is not conditioned by any nor does it depend on any stipulation. Pure existence exists because it is existence, not by any other criterion or by the supposition of the existence of any other thing. Pure existence in its essence is not conditioned by any condition. On the other hand, completeness, glory, intensity, richness, actuality, being unlimited and independence arise from existence, and have no reality but existence. Therefore, the truth of existence in its essence is equal to unconditionality in relation to any other thing, i.e. eternal essential necessity. It is, also, equal to completeness and independence, etc. Consequently, the truth of existence in its essence without any external determination joined to it is equal to the eternal existence of God. Thus, the fundamental reality of existence guides us directly to God, not to any other thing. This does not result in: "God exists": the result is that "truth of existence in essence is not but God". Other realities than God, which are nothing except His acts, effects and manifestations, must be explained by other reasons.

Motahhary's view can be clarified by an example which in some respects clarifies the argument, but is not similar to our subject in all respects. If we suppose that there is only a luminous source that shines by itself as such (note that to be luminous in essence does not require that this source be unique), then will be a light in the world, but all the lights that we can see do not come directly from the source. There are many other things that have light so they can be seen, but all of these lights that come from different things are dependent lights that are the result of reflection and absorption of the light of the source. Since everything has some characteristics like special shape and quality, so its light will be limited in shining and color. Some of these things reflect the light directly from the source, some others reflect this first reflection, and i.e. they reflect the light of source indirectly. Every lighted thing itself can be a source for other things and makes them bright. When the sun shines, some things get light from it directly and shine - like earth and the outsides of buildings. Some other things get their light from these things which can be the cause of the brightness of others, and so on until there may be a very weak light in

the most inner parts of a house (for example). So, some things have light directly from the source, some others indirectly with one, two, three or more intermediaries.

It is evident that every thing like B that has its light from other thing like A as its cause, has a weaker degree of light than the light of its cause. If its cause is combined of three colors, the caused can not be combined of other colors. The color of that which is caused can only be equal or less than its cause and certainly of a lesser intensity. For a thing which has light in a caused manner this light must be limited and weaker. The limitation and weakness is essential to a caused light and indicates that it is caused as to light. However, the source that has light as such has no limitation in its shining. In physics every source of light shines spherically in all directions without any differences. The philosophical demonstration of spherical shining is that no direction has advantage over others which would make light shine in one direction stronger than another. If it does not shine in one direction there must be an external obstacle. If its shining is not spherical, there must be some reason for it; but spherical shining does not need any reason; the essence of the source of light is unconditional in this respect.

Therefore, there are two types of lights. The first type is light in itself and from itself, and the second is light by something else (that is dependent light). The latter is really the light from a source; it is a representation of the light of the source which in other things is limited.

Now, it can be asked why a certain thing is a special degree of light with a kind of limitation, but there is no way to ask why the source, which is light in itself not by something else, has light. It is unconditional light without any limitation in essence. Every one - even blind people - that only know and believe that there is light in the external world recognize the two kinds of light: first light-by-something-else and second light by essence. It is evident also that light by essence has light, nay, it is light and others have light and appear by it. What is disputable is why a certain light is a weaker grade of light and is limited by darkness. The answer is in the fact that it is light, not in itself, but by something else and this light is caused. Dependency or being caused is the essence of this light; every light that can be supposed to be a caused light will be caused.

Light is similar to existence in some respects, with the difference that there is nothing other than existence externally. There is no limiting factor other than existence, while in the example of light there are many things with their special properties that cause some

limitations for light. There are some other differences including that existence in itself requires unity, while light does not.

The above was an interpretation of Sadra's philosophy from the point of view of two commentators with some more explanation and example. He himself stated the argument as follow in his famous book " *al-hikmat al-muta aliyah fi l-asfar al-aqliyyat al-arba ah* " ("The Transcendent Wisdom Concerning the Four Intellectual Journeys of the Soul") which is called briefly "*Asfar*"[5] :

> "The existence, as it was said before, is one, real and simple truth that there is no difference between its individuals in its essence except in completeness and deficiency and intensity and weakness or by additional matters as in individuals of species. And ultimate of its perfection is what does not belong to something else. Any thing more complete than it is not conceived. Because, every deficient (thing) belongs to something else and needs for being complete. It was explained in anticipation that completeness anticipates to deficiency, and actuality anticipates to potentiality, and existence anticipates to non-existence; and it was also explained that completeness of the thing is just the thing and what is added to it. So, the existence is either needless to something else or need, in its essence, to something else.
>
> The first one is necessary being and it is the pure existence that there is no complete (being) rather than it; and neither non-existence nor deficiency taints it. The second one is what is other than it (and that is one) of its acts or effects. There is no firmness for what is other than it except by it. This is because of what was said previously that the truth of existence has no deficiency; and deficiency is joined to it because of being caused. This is because of the fact that it is not possible for caused to be in excellence of existence the same as its cause. If the existence is not made by a forcible that bring it into existence and make it acquired - as it requires that - it can not be conceived that it has a kind of shortcoming (deficiency) because the truth of existence - as you have known - is simple and unlimited, and have no determination other than pure actuality. If it is not so, then there will be a kind of composition in it or it will have a quiddity other than being existence. It was said previously that if existence is a caused one then it is made in itself as a simple making and its essence will depend essentially on a maker; and its substance and essence will belong to its maker. Therefore, it is proved and is made clear that the existence is either complete in its truth and necessary in its identity or needy in its essence to that and belongs substantially to that. So according to each kind it is proved and explained that the existence of necessary existence is independent identity on every thing other than He. This is what we purposed."

Mulla Sadra then compared his argument's foundations with the view of "illuminationists" (*Ishraqiyyon*) who are a group of Islamic philosophers; then he concludes that his argument and its foundations has the advantages of that philosophy without suffering its deficiencies. Then he answers the two questions of the illuminationists explaining that such questions arise from their inability to conceive the meaning of the analogical gradation of existence and confusion of existence with quiddity. Afterwards, he says that[6] :

> "Oh, you that seek (the truth); light of the truth shined from horizon of this statement that strikes your hearing (and it is the fact) that since the truth of existence is a simple matter, without any quiddity and there is not any thing that make it firm (or stand on it) and limit it, it (the truth of existence) is just the Necessary that requires the most complete perfection that does not have extremity in intensity. This is because every other grade of existence in intensity is not the pure truth of existence but it is existence with some shortcoming, and shortcomings of every thing are necessarily something other than it. Shortcomings of existence are not existence itself but it is the lack of existence which is attendant to existence not for existence itself but for being in the next grade and thereafter. So, shortcomings and lacks are essential to the secondaries in so far as they are secondaries. So, the First is in His most complete perfection that has no limitation and nothing can be conceived to be more complete than it. The shortcoming and dependency arise from effusion and creating, and those two will be complete by Him because identities of secondaries belong to the First, and its shortcoming is compensated by its completeness, and its need and dependency is compensated by its richness and independence."

He adds some other explanations about the results and advantages of his argument which will be mentioned later.

The Name of *Seddiqin*

There are several ways to prove the existence of God. Kant classified these arguments in three kinds: teleological, ontological and cosmological. The cosmological argument, also, has some variations, all of which begin with a fact in the world that is used as a premise for argumentation. Some of these in the view of some philosophers begin with such premises as:

- Plato: Things move (as can be established by observation)[7]

- Aristotle: Things do changes (established by observing movement the most obvious form of change)[8]

- Augustine: There are timeless and immutable truths[9] .

- Anselm: 1- Good things exist[10] .

　　　　　2- Some beings are more nearly perfect than others.

　　　　　3- Something exists.

- Alfarabi: There exist things whose essence is distinct from their existence[11].

- Avicenna (in one of his arguments): There are possible beings.

- Thomas Aquinas: 1- Things do move[12].

　　　　　2- There are efficient causes in the world.

　　　　　3- There are beings that begin to exist and cease to exist.

　　　　　4- There are different degrees to perfection among beings.

- Duns Scotus: Some being is produced.[13]

- Descartes: I am doubting[14].

- Leibniz: The entire world is changing[15].

- Christian Wolff: The human soul exists[16].

- Taylor: The Universe as a whole does not explain its own existence.

In the teleological arguments the main premise is: "There is a great design in the world." The ontological argument will be discussed later.

The basis of all of these arguments is that our understanding that in fact there is a universe which is limited, incomplete and dependent helps us reach God who is

unlimited, complete and independent. How can a weak and defective being have a complete explanation that leads us to the highest being? We can transcend by these arguments, but it is difficult to reach thereby a most high existence. This is the main base for dispute between philosophers and mystics. Junayd Baqdadi, to one of the great mystics when asked about his argument for proving the existence of God answered: "We don't need a candle to light the day[17]"; the light of candle cannot make the sun clear. So, some philosophers tried to transcend these kinds of argumentation. They are not inclined to begin their arguments from an act or effect of God for proving His existence. For reaching God, mystics did not like to use a rational way of argumentation but offered intuitional knowledge possible through refining the soul. However, some philosophers introduce a rational way and explanation that begins from considering the essence of God which is not other than the mere truth of existence by explanation and argumentation that existence directs us first to God, then to other beings which are his acts and effects.

Avicenna first used this kind of argumentation, and called it *Seddiqin* Argument *(borhani Seddiqin)* which means the argument of the sincere men or the truthful ones. He characterized this as a kind of argumentation used by those who are truthful. Since truthful persons, whose argument is pure truth with no taint of untruthfulness in their argumentation, use this argument it is called the argument of the truthful or *Seddiqin* Argument. They witness to essence of Truth by an argument that begins from the essence of Truth.

In his book *" al-Isharat wa-al-Tanbihat"* he argues[18]:

> "Consider how our statements in proving The First -almighty- and His unity and His acquittance from all deficiencies did not need anything other than existence itself; and there is no need to consider His creatures and acts. Although they are, also, some reasons for His existence, but this kind of demonstration is a stronger one and has a higher position. This means, when we survey the mode of existence we consider that existence, in so far as it is existence, witnesses to the existence of God, then it witnesses to other beings."

He gives evidence from the Qur'an for this kind of demonstration: "Is it not sufficient as regards your Lord that He is a witness over all things?" (Surah 41, ayah 53) He called this judgment the type of the judgment by there who one truthful.

However, Mulla Sadra did not accept Avicenna's Argument as a *Seddiqin* kind of argumentation, but only that it is near to it in character. Mulla Sadra prefers his argument which he states as follow[19]:

"Oh! Know that the ways to God are numerous because He has numerous virtues and directions... but some of them are more confident and more honorable and more luminous than others. The strongest and most honorable argument is one in which the intermediate is not really but him, therefore the way toward purpose is just the purpose. This is the way of truthful men who call witness to Him by Him, then call witness by His essence to His attributes and by His attributes to His acts one by one. The others, like theologians and scientists and others, resort for having knowledge of Him and His attributes to intermediating another matter than him, like contingency of quiddity, or coming-into-existence of creatures or motion of bodies or something else. Those are, also, reasons for His essence and evidences for His attributes, but this way is firmer and more honorable. It is indicated in the Divine Book (Qur'an) to those ways by his -almighty- words: *'We will soon show them our signs in the Universe and in their own souls, until it will become quite clear to them that it is the Truth.'* And to this way by His -almighty- words: *'Is it not sufficient as regards your Lord that He is a witness over all things?'* This is because those who love God regard the existence and consider its truth and know that it is the origin of every thing, then they conclude - by considering it- that it is, due to the origin of its truth, Necessary Being. But possibility and need and being caused and others join to it not because of its truth in so far as it is truth, but because of deficiencies and lacks which are out of the origin of His truth. Afterwards, by considering what is requirement of necessity and possibility they conclude the unity of His essence and His attributes. Then, they conclude from His attributes to quality of His acts and effects. This is the way of prophets as it is in His -almighty- words: *'say this is my way, I call (people) to God by insight.'* "

Avicenna's *Seddiqin* Argument:

The proof for the existence of God is proposed in three of Avicenna's famous philosophical books viz. *Al-Shifa'* and *Al-Negat* and *Al-Isharat wa-l-Tanbihat.* In the first two books his argument is shaped in a cosmological manner. Although Avicenna's argument in the first book is brief, it depends on his previous detailed philosophical essays in the book. In *Al-Shifa'*, after a careful survey, he explains his argument based on the character of necessary and contingent being and the four kinds of cause; agent, material, final and formal. He notes that the agent causes can not continue one after the other *ad infinitum,* there must be a cause that is not caused which is necessary being. Then he argues for the finitude of the three other causes one by one. All four causes must end in an absolute cause that is distinct from all beings and is the origin of the existence of all beings. These propositions seem to be the major premise of his proof for the existence of God. Although he does not propose directly his minor premise that there are some beings in reality that have the character of being caused and need formal, agent, final and material cause, it can be understood from his writings in this book that he assumes this minor. By adding this minor to that major he concludes the reality or existence of necessary being. By this minor, his argument constitutes a cosmological type of proof for the existence of God.

Afterwards, he argues that necessary being, in the rational division of existence, does not have any cause and contingent being is a caused being. Then he elaborates the characteristics of necessary being: unity, simplicity and inchangability. All of these are worked out by reasoning on the meaning of necessary being[20].

Avicenna's argument in his second book, *Al-Negat*[21], is nearer to his *Seddiqin* argument. This argument begins with the minor that "there is no doubt that there are existent beings." By this fact he attempts to prove the existence of necessary being. Then he adds the major premise that "every being is either necessary or possible. If it is necessary it is just our purpose. And if it is possible we will explain that every possible being must depend entirely in existence on a necessary being."

In this argument, Avicenna begins with a real fact in external world that there are some beings that have existence. He does not explain how we obtain this certainty or how we

can divide existence into necessary or possible? Is this division in the concept of existence that we have by a universalization in our mind, or it is in the real existent being? If this division is in the concept of existence, then it can prove the existence of necessary being in the mind, but it is difficult to conclude from existence that is gained from some contingent beings and by a generalization that the real existence may be a necessary one. If this division is in real existence we must know firstly that there are both contingent beings and necessary being externally by a kind of knowledge. If it is so, then there is no need for demonstration; because we know in advance that there is a necessary being. So, the term "if it is necessary it is just our purpose" will be meaningless, because it proves just what we first assumed. There is no need for the rest of the demonstration either, because the demonstration for the existence of necessary being from contingent beings is without any utility because it is also assumed that we know the existence of the necessary being. The only result of this second division (viz. of real existent beings into necessary or contingent) is, after knowing that there are contingent being and necessary being, the reliance of all those contingent beings on that necessary being that we are sure of their existence. Therefore this is not an argument for the existence of God or Necessary Being, but for the dependence of contingent beings on Necessary Being and it explains the kind of relation between those two kinds of existence.

However, in another respect the argument has a more logical meaning. Avicenna may intend to divide not existence, but our knowledge about existence. He means that if somebody knows that there is necessary being externally then there is no need to argue for the existence of necessary being because it is known certainly. But how can one know directly the existence of Necessary Being; who has this knowledge? These questions may be answered if we do not restrict knowledge to sense and empirical knowledge or knowledge gained indirectly in a rational manner. One can contend that he has a direct knowledge by intuition. This is the claim of mystics and gnosis. Some mystics believe not only in intuition and direct knowledge of God, but also in the fact that there is nothing externally (and internally) but God.

Avicenna, then, says that if anybody does not know the existence of Necessary Being directly and he knows the existence of contingent being, then he can know the existence of necessary being by a rational argumentation that he will propose later. He has explained previously meaning of necessary and contingent being in detail[22]:

"Necessary existence is the existence that if assumed non-existent, causes absurdity; and the contingent being is a being that if assumed non-existent does not cause absurdity."

As was said before, this division can be neither in the meaning of existence nor in the reality of existence. This division must be in the ascription of existence to a being. If we compare existence with a being, what kinds of ascription can be set in this comparison? Some beings can have existence essentially while others can have it accidentally. The first is called necessary being, the second is called possible being. For example, if you see wet clothes and say "these clothes are wet"; you can compare wetness with the clothes. You see that wetness is not necessary for the clothes; the clothes may or may not be wet; wetness is not in the truth of clothes. But in the proposition "The water is wet", if we compare wetness with the truth of water, it can be known that water has wetness essentially; it is absurd that water may be without wetness. Wetness is necessary for water both in reality and in the mind. Therefore, wetness is essential for the truth of water while it is not essential for the truth of clothes. Although wetness is not essential for the truth of clothes, it is necessary for wet clothes to be wet because it is wet. But this necessity differs from the previous necessity that is ascribed to wetness of water. This wetness is necessary for these clothes while they are not necessary for the clothes in so far as it is clothes. This necessity does not come from clothes-ness but from another thing that has made this wet clothes wet, namely, water, while the necessity of wetness for the water does not come from another thing but from the essence of water itself. Therefore, there are two kinds of necessity, necessity by essence and necessity by something else. If something that has necessity by something else is considered from its essence, then that attribute (like wetness) will be not a necessary but a possible attribute.

Existence, like wetness, can be compared and ascribed to a being; this ascription can be either contingent or necessary and is either by essence or by something else. If existence is compared with a being it may have existence essentially and necessarily or contingently. For example when existence is ascribed to a certain existent book, it has existence possibly in so far as it is a book and the essence of book does not require its existence. But it has existence necessarily in so far as it is an existent book, but this necessity does not come from its essence while another existent being can have

existence both necessarily and by essence. Therefore, possible being in one respect is just necessary being by something else in another respect, while it differs basically from necessary being by essence.

The division of existence either in the mind or in the reality into necessary and possible may be accounted as arbitrary or without result. But if we survey the kind of attribution of existence to existent being (like wetness to wet beings), then the division will be logically true.

In *"Al-Negat"*, Avicenna, does not refer directly to his intention in this division. Although he distinguishes necessary by essence and by something else after defining the necessary being and possible being, but this precise attention to the kinds of division and his choice is not mentioned in this book. But it can be understood indirectly that he has attended the last division. By this explanation we want to show that the argument for the existence of God introduced in this book is not in a cosmological type of argumentation and it is near to the *Seddiqin* type of argumentation explained directly in his third book.

In *"Al-Negat"*, his argument continues as follow after his first explanation:

"There is no doubt that there is existent being, and every existence is either necessary or possible. If it is necessary it is just our purpose. And if it is possible we will explain that every possible being must depend ultimately its existence on a necessary being."

Therefore, if he wants to argue for the existence of necessary being he must demonstrate that the existence of a possible being accepted as an existent being depends on the existence of necessary being, and hence that the existence of necessary being must be accepted too; the existence of possible being refers to the existence of necessary being. For this demonstration he first sets forth two introductory arguments[23]:

"It is not possible that, in one time, for every possible-being-in-essence to have possible-being-in essence causes ad infinitum."

and

"It is not possible, also, that it has finitude number causes and each of them can be possible-being-in-essence but it is necessary by another so that it makes a circle."

He proves these two statements in details and demonstrates his rejection of every assumed way for another answer to those statements. Then he argues that every possible being must be an existent coming-into-being or occurs in existence, that it must be conserved after coming into being; and that it must have a conserving cause by this statement that[24]:

> "The conservation of coming-into-being- existence and its existence after coming-into-being is because of a cause that extends its existence; and its existence in essence is unnecessary."

and

> "The caused beings need a cause for conservation of their existence."

After these introductory statements he concludes that[25]:

> "A necessary being must exist, because possible beings, if they exist and their existence is conserved, must have a cause for the conservation of their existence. The cause for coming-into-being of that being can be either the cause for conserving it in existence or another one. But all of them must end, undoubtedly, to a necessary being, because we explained previously that the causes can not continue ad infinitum and can not make a circle."

This was Avicenna's argument in *"Al-Negat"* that we set forth briefly, but he does not introduce it as a "*Seddiqin*" kind of argumentation in this book.

In his third book "*Al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat"* he sets forth his "*Seddiqin* Argument" and calls it such. He proposed his argument in the second chapter of this book viz. Theology, in the fourth section *(Namat)* "The Existence and Its Causes". In this section, first of all, he argues that existent beings do not restrict sensible beings. Then he distinguishes the cause of essence and the cause of existence. According to him, sometimes, we know and understand the meaning of something like triangle, then we doubt its existence in reality. In this case, the cause of essence of a triangle exists, but the cause of its real existence does not exist. He emphasizes that he wants to survey the cause of existence. Then he proposes his argument for the existence of Necessary Being as follow which will be explained afterwards[26]:

> "[1] Every existent being, when it is respected in so far as its essence and without any other respect, is either a being whose existence is necessary or it is not so. If it is necessary, then it will be the Truth by its essence, and it is everlasting.

And if it is not necessary, it is not permitted to say it is impossible after it is assumed as an existent being. But if, in respect to its essence, a stipulation is allied to it, like either stipulation of non-existence of its cause, it will become impossible, or stipulation of existence of its cause it will become necessary. And, if it is not allied a stipulation to it, neither presence of cause nor non-existence of it, it will remain for it in its essence the third matter, and it is possibility; and it is in respect of its essence, a thing that is neither necessary nor impossible. Therefore, every being is either necessary being in its essence or possible being due to its essence."

"[2] [Every thing] that its truth in itself is possible, does not become existent being by its essence; because its existence by its essence is not prior to its non-existence, in so far as it is possible being. If one of those two becomes prior, then it must be because of either presence of a thing or absence of it. Therefore, existence of every possible being is from another one."

"[3] That [the need of possible being to another being] can be either succession ad infinitum [or vicious circle that is evidently impossible, or end to a necessary being that is our purpose; if it is an infinite series,] then every one of this series will be possible in its essence. And [since] the whole belongs to those [ones], therefore it is also unnecessary, and will be necessary by another one. We must add some explanation to this."

"[4] Every whole that every one of its unit, is caused, demands a cause that is out of its units. This is because:

"either it does not demand any cause at all, then it will be necessary and uncaused; and how can it be so, while it is necessitated by its units? Or it demands a cause and this cause is all of units, then it will be caused if its essence; because that whole and the all is one thing. Or it demands and it is all in the meaning of every one, then the whole does not necessitate by it. Or it demands and it is a part or one of the units, then [it is not possible too, because] a part of units is not prior to another part when every one of them is [also] a caused; because its cause is prior to that [i.e. to be cause of the whole]. Only one assumption remains: the whole demands an external cause that is out of its units."

"[5] Every cause of a whole that is other than its units, is firstly the cause of those units then [the cause of] the whole. If it is not so, then the units do not need it. Therefore, the whole that is completed by its units does not need it. If it is assumed that a thing [external cause] is the cause of a part of the units [not all of them and] not another part, then it [i.e. that external cause] will not be the cause of the whole absolutely."

"[6] Every whole that is arranged from causes and causeds successively, and contains an uncaused, will be an ultimate side; because if it is an intermediate then it will be caused."

"[7] It was made clear that every series that is arranged from causes and causeds -either finite or infinite-, when there is not except caused beings in it, needs an external cause,

but it conjoins inescapably an ultimate side. It was also made clear that, if there is a being that is not caused then it will be entire side and ultimate. Therefore, every series ends at necessary being in essence."

This was what Avicenna said in his *Seddiqin* Argument. It needs explanation and more classifications in order to become clearer.

His argument runs in following titles:

(1) The division of existence into possible existence and necessary existence.

(2) The need of possible existence for another being for its existence.

(3) This other being is either necessary or possible existence; in the second assumption it constitutes either a vicious circle, an infinite succession, or ends in a necessary being.

(4) The infinite succession of an existential series is not possible because:

a) The series as a whole needs a cause.

b) This cause can not be all of those possible beings or one of them or a part of them, therefore:

c) It must be out of series It results that:

1. this cause of the series is the cause of those possible beings one by one before being the cause of the series.

2. This cause must be ultimate.

d) This cause can not be possible being, because it is ultimate; therefore:

(5) Every series of cause and caused -either finite or infinite- must end ultimately at a necessary being.

(6) The existence either is necessary or end ultimately at a necessary existence.

We return to each of these titles to see what can be understood from Avicenna's intention:

(1) As it was seen in his previous argument -in the *Al-Negat*-, the division of existence in reality or mind constitutes some difficulties for the proof of the existence of a necessary being. But the comparison of existence to an existent being and surveying whether it is necessary or possible, does not have those difficulties. We saw that he did not pose his criteria of this division in his previous book, *Al-Negat*, but he declared clearly his

criteria in the book, *Al-Esharat wa al-Tanbihat*. He said that if we survey existence in essence of every existent being only in so far as it is existent being -not in other respect-, it can be either necessary in essence or possible in essence.

This is because it can not be impossible existence because it is assumed to be an existent being; and if existence is in its essence so that it necessitates existence in its essence like wetness for water, it will be necessary being in and from its essence; and if it does not require in its essence existence and non-existence it will be possible existence in its essence which will exist by its cause and will be non-existence without its cause.

Avicenna did not survey existence in a special existent being that has existence certainly but he compared existence with the essence of every existent being in so far as it is existent being, like when you survey redness with the essence of apple in so far as it is apple. It is clear that redness is not in the essence of apple, although a special red apple is certainly red.

In this division he did not take account of special beings, but he respected every being in so far as it was an existent being. Therefore, no special being -either one or many or whole- is the base of this argument so that this special imperfect being helps us to reach the existence of most perfect being, viz. God. Because of this fact Avicenna named his argument *Seddiqin*. He begins with existence and its kinds in every assumed existent being without any regard to special existent beings. He says at the end of this chapter of *Al-Esharat wa al-Tanbihat* that[27]:

> "Consider, how our statements in proving the First -Almighty- and His unity and his acquaintance from all deficiencies did not need anything other than existence itself, and there is no need to consider His creatures and acts. Although they are, also, some reasons for His existence, but this kind of demonstration is a stronger one and have a higher position. This means, when we survey the models of existence we consider that existence, in so far as it is existence, calls witness to the existence of God, then it calls witness to other beings."

(2) Since possible being does not have its existence from its essence, therefore, it must have it from another being; like when you say, since clothes do not require wetness in their essence, a wet clothes must have wetness from another source than its essence. Avicenna argues that: 'Since the possible being, in so far as it is possible, does not require existence, and existence is not preferred over non-existence in its essence, therefore, if one

of them (existence or non-existence) is preferred to another, it must be because of the presence of another being or its absence.'

(3) That other being can be either necessary or possible. If it is necessary we will reach our purpose that there is a necessary being that has its existence through its essence. If it is possible it will either end at a necessary being, or will depend on another possible being in a vicious circle, or will continue *ad infinitum.* Avicenna explains the third assumption. He tries to reject infinite succession; therefore he concludes the first assumption that there is a necessary being. Since the rejection of the second assumption that there is a vicious circle is clear for him, because it requires priority of a being to itself which is absurd, therefore he does not explain it directly; his argument for rejecting infinite succession is set up in a way that it is also an argument for rejecting a vicious circle.

(4) For rejecting infinite succession, he demonstrates that the series of possible beings as a whole -either finite or infinite- needs also a cause to be a series; and this cause can not be an internal one in the series, therefore it must be out of the series that has been gathered of <u>all </u>possible beings. This outer cause can not be anything other than necessary being because:

a: If the series does not need any cause at all, since it exists or has existence, it must be a necessary being that is an uncaused existence. But it is impossible that the series can be a necessary existence because it needs its units to be a series. Therefore it needs a cause.

 b: However, this cause cannot be either all of its units, or one of them or some of them. Since all of the units is not other than the series, therefore, it can not be its cause because it will be the cause of itself, which is absurd because than it would be prior to itself, which is impossible. The cause of the series cannot be, also, every one of the units; because every one does not require the existence of all (otherwise the series of all will exist by the existence of every one). The cause cannot be one of the units because since we assumed that every unit is possible and is a caused being without any difference from another one in so far as it is possible and caused, then every one that is assumed as cause of the series has certainly a cause and its cause prefers to it to which would have priority in being the cause of the series; therefore no one can be the cause of the series.

c: Since the cause of the series can be neither all of its units, nor every one of them, nor one of them, therefore, it must be out of the series and it must be absolutely the cause of the series therefore:

1) This cause must be, firstly, the cause of every one in the series. For proving this statement he demonstrates by *Reductio ad absurdum* in the following statement that if every one does not need this cause then the whole that is constructed from all of those units will not need the cause of the series because if all of them exist, the whole and the series will exist without any need for that cause, while it is proved that the series does need a cause. On the other hand, if some of those do not need it, then the cause of the series will not be the cause of the series absolutely, but it can be the cause of a part of them not of all of them as a whole.

2) The cause of the series which is outside of the series must be on the ultimate side of the series because were it an intermediate it would be caused one, for an intermediate cause is one that is both the cause of a being and at the same time caused of another being.

d: Since all possible beings are gathered in the series, the cause of the series is not in the series but it is out of the series as its ultimate side; therefore it can not be a possible being.

(5) Every series of cause and caused or possible beings -either finite or infinite- needs a cause that is not in the series and which it must be a necessary existence.

(6) Therefore, either the existence is necessary, or it ends ultimately at a necessary being.

This was the *Seddiqin* Argument in Avicenna's writings. Thereafter, he set forth some arguments for the unity of Necessary Being and proves its attributes and acts, one after one. As he has emphasized at the end of this chapter of the book *Al-Esharat wa al-Tanbihat,* in this argument he does not use any special and incomplete fact to prove the existence of God, but erects his argument only on the existence in an absolute sense without pointing to any special existent being.

As seen, Avicenna's *Seddiqin* Argument did not depend on special finite fact in the world. It was good to set forth an argument which leads us first to God then to other

beings as His acts. But the power of his argument have may be doubted, especially his argument for rejecting an infinite succession of causes, though he had proposed stronger arguments for this rejection in other places, specially be famous "The intermediate part and ultimate side" argument.

The Advantages of Mulla Sadra's *Seddiqin* Argument over Avicenna's:

First of all, it must be noted that Avicenna had two kinds of argumentation for the existence of God, the first one is a cosmological type of argumentation that begins with the fact that there are some possible beings in external world. This is what has been known in Western philosophy as Avicenna's argument for the existence of God. The second one is a *Seddiqin* type of argumentation. Here he did not apply a certain fact of beings, but analyzed existence without any specification. Then he divided it in a rational way into necessary and possible, and concluded that it is either necessary or possible. If the existence is the first one it is just his purpose that there is a necessary being, and if it is the second one it is obligated to reach a necessary existence because of the absurdity of infinite succession in this matter. In view of its commentators the *Seddiqin* Argument as posed by Mulla Sadra has the following advantages over Avicenna's *Seddiqin* Argument:

1- In Avicenna's philosophy the argument begins with the concept of existence not in so far as it is a concept but in so far as it is a concept about reality; but in Sadra's philosophy the discussion is about the truth of existence that is fundamentally real, not its notion. In the first one, the division is in concept of existence while in the second one the division is in the reality and truth of existence.

2- Avicenna's intention of possibility is "quidditive possibility" while Mulla Sadra differentiated between "quidditive possibility" and "ontological poverty" and used "ontological poverty" in his argument. The concept of existent being in the view of Avicenna is ascribed to both necessary being and existent quiddities, while in Sadra's philosophy the truth of existence does not include quiddities that are only mentally posited. The truth of the highest degree of existence is independent by essence, in the lower degree it is a relation or dependency on Him by essence.

3- Since in Avicenna's philosophy "quidditive possibility" is discussed, he needed to demonstrate the absurdity of infinite succession in proving the existence of God, while in Sadra's view in which the ontological poverty of limited beings is mentioned there is no need to demonstrate the absurdity of infinite succession in *Seddiqin* Argument. After proposing his argument Mulla Sadra himself spoke about this advantage[28]:

"This way that we measured is firmest and most honorable and simplest one so that the disciple of Him does not need any intermediate thing other than Him for having a knowledge about His essence and attributes and acts; and there is, also, no need to annul infinite succession and circular causality..."

Some commentators of Sadra's philosophy themselves held and ascribe this view to him, that not only does this argument not need to rule out infinite succession, but itself is a proof for the impossibility of infinite succession[29].

4- By the *Seddiqin* Argument of Mulla Sadra, the unity of Necessary Being can be proved directly, and the argument can also be an argument for the unity of God, while in Avicenna's argument the unity must be proved by another argument. As Sadra demonstrated, existence is one truth that has analogical gradation in intensity and weakness. Hence, the multiplicity of existence arises from weakness of existence, whereas in its essence existence has no deficiency and hence no multiplicity in its infinitude. Mulla Sadra said at the end of his argument[30]:

"Therefore the existence of Necessary Being is proved by this argument. It is also proved by this argument His unity. Because the existence is one truth that due to its essence has no taint of deficiency, and no multiplicity can conceived in his infinitude."

5- Sadra's *Seddiqin* Argument gives a better description about both the attributes of God and the relation between Him and His creatures. His explanation will be presented later at the end of this book.

The Development of the *Seddiqin* Argument

The *Seddiqin* Argument was defined as an argument that proves the existence of God and His attributes by a meditation in the truth of existence. Since this kind of argumentation has more advantages than other kinds of reasoning, some philosophers had tried to state it in other ways. Mehdi Ashtiani in his book *"Ta'liqah Ala Sharh al-Manzumah fi al-Hikmat"* enumerated nineteen statements of the *Seddiqin* Argument as posed by several philosophers[31]. However, this argument obtained a new and promising articulation by Mulla Sadra. After him, two philosophers developed his *Seddiqin* argument and posed it in a new form. Here, we only explain its two statements by Sabzavari (1797-1828) and Tabatabaii (1902-1981).

Sabzevari

Sabzavari has a commentary on Sadra's famous book, Asfar. He stated his argument in his commentary on Sadra's explanation of the *Seddiqin* Argument[32]. He noted that all of the foundations that are used by Mulla Sadra for his *Seddiqin* Argument are not necessary for proving the existence of God, although they are useful for the result of this argument, viz. for proving the attributes of, God and explaining the kind of relation between God and creatures. These, however, are not necessary in the basic argument. Moreover these foundations also make proving the existence of God difficult and need to be stated with great precision in order to be understood. As was explained, the *Seddiqin* Argument in Sadra's philosophy is based on some foundations like (1) the fundamental reality of existence, (2) the analogical gradation of existence and (3) the simplicity of existence; the argument itself is explained by a meditation on the truth of existence. Sabzavari posed his argument by using only the first foundation of Sadra's argument i.e. the fundamental reality of existence. Therefore his argument is shorter than Sadra's argument. His argument run as follows:

After admitting fundamental reality of existence it can be said that the truth of existence is just the external and the fundamental truth of reality while quiddity is its

function and representation. Hence quidditive existent beings are not that truth itself, but a kind of manifestation of it. So, the truth of existence itself is an absolute truth, not a limited or conditioned truth. It would be absurd for this truth, though not for its manifestations, to accept non-existence because every thing that has a contradictory and opposite does not accept its contradictory and opposite. So, the mere truth of existence rejects non-existence essentially (note that this is not conditioned by 'as long as its essence remain', because if this rejection is conditioned by the term 'as long as its essence remains' the mere truth of existence will not be a mere and absolute fact). Therefore, the mere truth of existence is necessary being by essence; and this necessity is not an essential (logical) necessity, but an eternal necessity (or essential philosophical necessity). So, that truth of existence is essentially necessary being.

The main character of Sabzavari's argument is the distinction between "existence" and "what has existence". We can easily have the notion of existence by abstracting the meaning of existence from all existent beings; but, then, what we grasp is its notion not its reality, whereas what he referred to as the truth of existence was that of which existent beings are representations. They are limited and bounded existences. What is meant by the truth of existence is that reality (not notion) that in other beings is bounded is limited. This truth in other beings is the same while its limitations or boundaries are different. If the reality of existence is attended in a certain existent being, its truth will not be that other beings also represent it, but it will be a manifestation of that truth which is represented in that being (indeed, that being is a representation of it). If we can eliminate those limitations (that are different in each being) then we can attend to that truth merely and absolutely. The conception of existence in its absolute meaning is far from the mere truth of existence. The mere truth of existence is represented in existent beings which because of their limitations generate quiddities in the mind. The mind abstracts from beings the notion of existence as a concept which is different from quiddities and adds or ascribes to quiddity in the mind; then the mind conceives it as absolute meaning. Although this absolute meaning in some way refers to a fact in reality, it is far from that mere truth. It must be noted that existence is a fact that is different from other meanings and realities. Some problems arise from comparing existence to quiddity. If we consider existence as a quiddity that, in some viewpoints, is the same in the external and the internal, then it will

immediately lose its truth. Because of this fact, some Islamic philosophers have this opinion that the problem in proving the existence of God is not in affirming His existence, but in conceiving what is meant by God. They believe that the existence of God is evident and does not need a proof, because it is evident that existence exists. The difficulty is in conceiving the truth of existence, since the mere truth of existence is not a meaning in the mind (as are quiddities), so we should not try to bring it into our mind, but must go toward it. Therefore, they do not view all rational arguments for the existence of God as proofs for His existence, but as attention and notes focusing on His existence.

Sabzavari's interpretation of *Seddiqin* Argument requires a profound concentration on the mere truth of existence in order to be understood.

Tabatabaii

Sabzavari's argument made *Seddiqin* Argument shorter than that offered by Mulla Sadra, because there was no need for analogical gradation of existence and its simplicity. The only foundation for Sabzavari's argument was affirmation of the fundamental reality of existence.

However, Tabatabaii made the argument shorter even than Sabzavari, for in Tabatabaii's argument there is no need for any philosophical foundation even for the fundamental reality of existence. His argument can be posed as a first subject in philosophy. He posed his argument in his notes on Sadra's explanation of *Seddiqin* Argument in the Asfar[33]. Tabatabaii's argument can be explained as follow:

> Before discussing about external reality (that it is existence or quiddity), the reality is accepted. This argument begins with the truth of reality. First of all, it is inescapable for every intellectual to accept reality. Reality cannot be proved, because it is essentially evident. Tabatabaii did not assert that reality is just what we conceive, but he argues that everybody believes that there is something real externally, whatsoever it is, regardless to its specifications or numeral characteristics. If we try to prove the truth of reality we have confessed previously that there are a speaker, a listener, an argument and a relation between premises and result. All of these are realities that are supposed in advance. Therefore, the fundamental reality - in general - is evident and cannot be proved.

This truth of reality can not decline and does not accept any kind of disappearing; and rejects essentially annulment. Because, if this reality in every condition or stipulation or time or state declines, then there must be really a time or state or condition that this reality has declined in that situation. So, we must accept some other realities by rejection of reality. Even if we do not state those conditions and say that this reality may decline and become non-reality, we also affirm the reality, because if it declines really and truly then there is a reality and its declination is a reality; and if it does not decline really and we imagine that it declines then the truth of reality will remain and will not disappear. Therefore, it is not possible that the truth of reality declines or accepts nihility even in supposition. Everything that supposition of its declination requires its existence, its nihility must be essentially absurd. If its nihility is absurd then its existence and truth must be essentially necessary. This essential necessity is a philosophical one (not a logical one), and is just eternal necessity. Therefore, there is an essential necessary being which is real in eternal necessity. In studying every being, we understand that neither one of them nor all of them are the truth of reality, because they can be supposed as non-existence while it is not possible to suppose necessary being in this argument as non-real. Those are not the absolute reality but they have reality by that truth of reality. (The reality may not also be the matter of the universe, because it is possible to suppose it as non-real in a special situation. The truth of reality is what is real even in case of supposing all other beings as non-existence). All beings that have reality need it essentially for their reality. They need it to be real and their realities or existences depend on it.

Tabatabaii continued that it became obvious for those who concentrate on this argument that the existence of essentially necessary being is necessary in human belief and arguments that prove his existence are, in fact, give special attentions and notes.

Like Sabzavari's argument, in this argument the difficulty is not in proving the existence of God, but in perceiving the truth of the reality which is called God, for it is difficult to separate "reality" from "what has reality". However, Tabatabaii identifies the reality of existence as God (not God the as reality of existence). His argument needs a precise meditation not about his proof, but about what he intends by the reality of existence that is different from those which have it but are not just it.

Notes:

[1] . We use the words 'boundaries with non-existence' in this argument, but this is not intended to mean a real thing in such wise that non-existence is a thing and the boundaries is a line between the two things, i.e. existence and non-existence. This meaning is quite rejected, because there is nothing but existence. Non-existence is bereft of reality because it is non-existence. We use boundaries of existence and non-existence figuratively, whereas there is only existence with some limitations that can be grasped by comparing one existent being with another.

[2] - Mesbahi Yazdi, *Amoozeshi Falsafeh II,* pp. 342.

[3] -. See footnotes of M. Motahhari in *Osoole Falsafeh wa Raveshe Realism IV (The Principles of Philosophy and Method of Realism),* pp. 117-124.

[4] - See note No. 1.

[5] - Mulla Sadra, *Asfar VI*, pp.13, 14, 15.

[6] - *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 24.

[7] - References to Plato are taken from *Plato: the Collected Dialogues*

[8] - Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book XII, ch. 8.

[9] - Augustine, *On Free Will II*, 1-15.

[10] - Anselm, *Monologion,* chs. 1-3.

[11] - See Armand Maurer, *A History of Medieval Philosophy,* pp. 95-97.

[12]- Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* 1,2,3.

[13] - Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings,* pp. 39-56.

[14] - Descartes, *Meditations III*

[15] - Gottfried Leibniz, *Monadology,* pp. 32-39
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[16] - See James Collins, *God in Modern Philosophy,* pp. 137-138.

[17] - Mohammad Lahiji, *Sharhi Golshani Raz,* p. 69.

[18] - Avicenna, *Al-Esharat wa Al-Tanbihat, vol. III* P. 66.

[19] - Mulla Sadra, *Asfar VI* , pp. 12-14.

[20] - Avicenna, *Al-Shifa' (Al-Elahiyyat),* pp. 37-43, ed. by Ebrahim Madkoor, (Qom, Iran Najafi Library).

[22] - Avicenna, *Al-Negat,* p. 566. "The Chapter about the Proof of Necessary Being", ed. by Daneshpazhooh, (Tehran: University of Tehran).

[23] - *Ibid.*, p. 546.

[24] - *Ibid.*, p. 567.

[25] - *Ibid.*, p. 571.

[26] - Avicenna, *Al-Esharat wa Al-Tanbihat, vol. III,* pp. 18-28.

[27] - *Ibid.*, p.66.

[28] - Mulla Sadra*, Asfar VI,* pp. 25-26

[29] - See A. Javadi Amoli, *Sharhe Hekmat Mota'alieh Asfar Arba'ah,* sec.1, vol. IV, p. 134, and M.T. Mesbahi Yazdi Amoozeshe, Falsafeh, PP. 79-80, 343.

[30] - Mulla Sadra*, Asfar VI,* pp. 24-25.

[31] - Mehdi Ashtiani, *"Ta'liqah Ala Sharh al-Manzumah fi al-Hikmat",* pp. 488-497.

[32] - See footnotes of pages 16 and 17 of *Asfar VI,* written by Sabzavari.

[33] - See footnotes of pages 14 and 15 of *Asfar VI,* written by Tabatabaii

Chapter III

The Differences between the Ontological Argument and the *Seddiqin* Argument

The ontological argument has a strange history. On the one hand, it attempts to show that the proof for the existence of God is an evident fact which does not need to use a real fact in the external world to help us reach to the existence of God. On the other hand, some philosophers like Arthur Schopenhauer assert[1] that the ontological argument is a "charming joke," a kind of ontological sleight of hand, because it assumes the existence of God and then pretends to arrive at it in the conclusion: the rabbit was in the hat all the while. Or, to use Schopenhauer's own illustration, the chicken was already in the egg the theist was brooding over. Whatsoever the ontological argument will be, it is an argument that attempts to prove the existence of God through a scrutiny of the meanings of existence and necessary existence without any reliance on a special fact in the world, like motion, contingency, etc. The conclusion is that the very meaning of necessary existence or most complete being necessitates its real existence. Has this argument been successful or not? The answer needs another survey that is not related to this research, but the attempt to prove the existence of God not through a special incomplete fact but through the meaning of God makes this argument an attractive one. This means that the argument is so evident that everybody, even a fool, must accept it[2]. Therefore, the argument makes the bridge between faith and reason to be very short, not a bridge which is incomplete and weak in which poor facts make us to reach to a most complete being, nor in the least from believing in Him. St. Anselm, himself, did not want to introduce an argument for believing in God, but an argument for manifesting his belief. He sees his endeavor in ontological argument as the following[3]:

> "I do not endeavor, O Lord, to penetrate thy sublimity, for in no wise do I compare my understanding with that; but I long to understand in some degree thy truth, which my heart believes and loves. For I do not seek to understand that I may

believe, but I believe in order to understand. For this also I believe, -that unless I believed, I should not understand."

These beautiful words can be said only through an ontological attitude, not through cosmological argumentation.

The *Seddiqin* Argument seems, firstly, to be an argument like the ontological one and perhaps as another kind of this argument; but, in spite of some similarities, it differs from the ontological argument. The *Seddiqin* Argument is similar in that it tries not relying on incomplete, weak, poor facts in the world to prove the existence of the most complete being and to make the argument for proving His existence more evident than other beings that are His effects. Yet it differs from the ontological argument in the following ways:

1-The ontological argument begins with the meaning of existence, then the meaning of necessary existence all of which are conceptions in the mind; then it endeavors to make this meaning real outside the mind by some reasons. But in the *Seddiqin* Argument begins with the reality of existence, not its notion; and it continues by searching in this reality. In other words, the pyramid of existence in the ontological argument is built in the mind then the head of this pyramid - the necessary existence- comes out of the mind and is projected into the reality; in contrast in the *Seddiqin* Argument this pyramid is a building in reality; stands on its head, which is also real working in the very reality of existence rather than its notion, and its accuracy in the distinction between the notion and the reality of existence have vaccinated this argument against most of the criticisms that have created troubles for the ontological arguments.

2- The problem in the ontological argument is a problem of judgment, while in the *Seddiqin* Argument the problem is to some extent a problem of presentation and perception. In all kinds of ontological argument that have been proposed in the view of Anselm, Spinoza, Leibniz, Hartshorn, Malkolm and Plantinga the conception and meaning of God or the Necessary Being is assumed by a definition, and then the argument begins to prove His existence and gives a judgment

for its listener about the reality of this meaning. But, the *Seddiqin* Argument tries to provide a good presentation of God by some philosophical surveys into the reality of existence that is important for having a good perception from what is intended from God. If someone can have this presentation (that may need some intuitional knowledge), then the judgment about its reality will be clear and evident without any difficulty in proving it. Therefore, the problem is to give a correct and suitable conception of God through the fundamental reality of existence and its analogical gradation and copulative and independent existences and possible poverty in caused beings and so on. After these presentational surveys there is no problem in having a judgment about its existence that had been made clear through previous presentations. That is why some Muslim philosophers believe that[4] "The problem of proving the existence of God lies at the level of presentation, not of judgment. In other words, what is difficult is for the mind to have a correct presentation of that conception; when it reaches this purpose its judgment will be easy. This contrasts to in other types of knowledge where the presentation of the meanings and conceptions is easy, but the difficulty is in the judgment and affirmation.

In the ontological arguments the proposition that must be proved is: "God or necessary existence exists", but in the *Seddiqin* Argument the proposition to be affirmed or proved is: "The pure existence or reality is God and others are His representations." It means a conversion in the proposition, where the subject and the predicate have changed their places.

3- The purpose of those scholars who developed *Seddiqin* Arguments was not only to present an argument for proving the existence of God, but also to give a suitable view of the relation between Him and His creatures. This relation is not a "categorical one" that stands on two sides like the relation between subject and predicate which are two different things, but an "illuminative relation" that stands on one side, the other side being only this relation. According to ontological and cosmological arguments, God is a necessary existence that must exist necessarily; other existent beings are contingent existences whose existence depends on that necessary existence. In this view there are two kinds of being: one of which depends on the other; this is a categorical relation. But, In the *Seddiqin* Argument this relation

is an illuminative one. We explained previously in the section "the types of existence" the difference between "independent existence" and "copulative existence". It is said that the relation between cause (not preparatory cause) and its caused is a copulative one, and that the caused is not a being that needs a cause but is just need. Let me repeat that paragraph:

It will be discussed in the section "cause and caused" that the need of the caused to the cause is in the essence of the caused, and this requires that the caused is nothing but need, its essence stands only by the existence of the cause, and it has no independence in existence. This necessitates that the existence of the caused must be copulative in relation to its cause by attention to this relation. But, with relation to itself and by attention to itself alone, it will be an independent existence. So, the type of existence of the caused is due to our attention. From one aspect it is copulative, and from another it is independent.

In this view the relation between God and other beings is like a thing and its shadow, or like a man and his picture, one is real and the other is relation to that real[5]. In other words, other beings are representations of God. He is the real existence and the others show Him before showing themselves. Tabatabaii has a beautiful analogy to show the relation of other beings to God[6]:

"Suppose: you are sitting in a quiet place with a tranquil mind, and you are focusing your attention on this moving world and regarding it and looking at every up and down, inner and outer, small and big thing in it and gloating this world. It is a boundless space...

Let's come nearer: The earth and its blue horizons, thick jungles and roaring seas, extensive deserts, living animals and their inner organizations, the vital relations of human beings and their comprehensive thoughts, the elements and compositions, condensed atoms and countless molecules, individual and social activities... To sum up, you are looking at this strange discipline with all of its dependencies...

At a single instance, you are shocked by an inner attention, and realize that all of these that you are regarding are in the mirror not in your last supposition that you are looking directly.

Now, in consequence of this circumstance how will your situation be? It is obvious that all of that you were observing and remembering will change; but not in a manner that all of your previous knowledge and observations -not even one of them- change to be false or non-existence; no, never it will be so. However, the

secondary transfer [the realization that all of those are in the mirror], in spite of preserving all of those essences and their activities that is observed, takes only the existential independency from your first observations.

Each of your observations has independency before that transfer so that it acts in its area of action; and after that transfer all of those scattered independencies gather and focus in one place (the mirror) without that one of those independencies disappear or a small part of those observed activities is decreased."

Notes

[1]. From *The Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*, translated by Mme. Karl Hillebrand, revised edition. (London).

[2] . St. Anselm sets his argument in a title like: "Truly there is a God, although the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God". Therefore he believes that even a fool must accept God.

[3] .Anselm prefaced his ontological argument by this statement in his *Proslogion* see *Anselm's Basic Writings*, translated by S. N. Deanse.

[4] . See for example the introduction which is written by M. Motahhary on Tabatabaii's book, *Osoole Falsafeh wa Ravishi Realism V* p.34.

[5] . See footnotes of M. Motahhary on *Osoole Falsafeh wa Ravishi Realism V*, p. 69.

[6] . *Ibid.* pp. 68-74.

part three:

The Replies of the *Seddiqin* Argument to the Systematic Criticisms Against the Arguments for the Existence of God

Introduction

In this chapter we want to examine the *Seddiqin* Argument to show its strength *vis a vis* the main criticisms proposal in the history of philosophy against the arguments for proving the existence of God. Since the most important and powerful arguments for the existence of God are cosmological and ontological arguments with their philosophical foundation, and since the *Seddiqin* argument is in some aspects like cosmological argument and in other aspects like the ontological one, we will study only the basic criticisms posed against these arguments.

In the history of philosophy, the most famous philosophers who attacked and have some criticisms against these arguments are David Hume and Immanuel Kant. These criticisms influenced deeply philosophers who came after them until recent years. Thus these criticisms have been standard or classical problems against proving the existence of God. This chapter will focus on these criticisms and then examine some others. The key criticisms can be classified as follows:

a: Objections to the ontological arguments:

I- Hume's objection[1]:

1- There is no being whose existence is rationally demonstrable because:

(1). Nothing is rationally demonstrable unless the contrary implies a contradiction (for if it leaves open any other possibility, then this position is not necessarily true).

(2). Nothing that is distinctly conceivable implies a contradiction (if it were contradictory, it would not be distinctly conceivable; it can not be possible).

(3). Whatever we conceive to exist we can also conceive as non-existent (the existence or nonexistence of things can not be ruled out conceptually).

(4). There is no being, therefore, whose nonexistence implies a contradiction.

(5). Consequently, there is no being whose existence is rationally demonstrable.

II- Kant's objections[2]:

1- First, he objected to the fact that we have no positive concept of a necessary being. God is defined only as that which cannot *not* be.

2- Necessity does not apply to existence but only to propositions. Necessity is a logical, not an ontological, qualifier. There are no existentially necessary propositions. Whatever is known by experience (which is the only way existential matters are knowable) could be otherwise.

3- No contradiction is involved in rejecting both the idea and the existence of a necessary Being, just as there is no contradiction in rejecting both the triangle and its three-side-ness. Contradiction results in rejecting only one without the other.

4- Existence is not a predicate, as though it is a perfection or property that could be affirmed of a subject or thing. Existence is not a perfection of an essence but a positing of that perfection. Kant implies the following argument to support this point:

(1). Whatever adds nothing to the conception of an essence is not part of that essence.

(2). Existence adds nothing to the conception of an essence (i.e. no characteristic is added to an essence by positing it as real rather than as imaginary; a real dollar does not have any characteristics which an imagined one lacks)

(3). Therefore, existence is not part of an essence (i.e. it is not a perfection which can be predicated of something).

b: Objections to the cosmological arguments:

I- Hume's objections[3]:

    1. Only a finite cause needs be inferred from finite effects. The cause need only be adequate to the effect. And since the effect (the world) is finite, one need only posits a cause sufficient to explain that effect. Hence, the best one could conclude from the cosmological argument is a finite God.

    2. No proposition about existence can be logically necessary. The opposite of any proposition about experience is always logically possible. But if it is logically possible that anything known by experience could have been otherwise, then it is not rationally inescapable that it be the way it is. It follows that nothing based on experience is logically demonstrable.

    3. The words "necessary Being" have no consistent meaning. It is always possible to conceive of anything, including God, as not existing. And whatever might not exist does not need to exist. That is, if its nonexistence is possible, its existence is not necessary. Hence, it makes no sense to speak of something as a logically necessary Being.

    4. If "necessary Being" means only "imperishable," then the universe may be the necessary Being. If the universe cannot be a necessary being in the sense of being imperishable, then neither can God be imperishable. Hence, either the universe is a necessary being or else God is not imperishable.

    5. An infinite series is possible. An eternal series cannot have a cause because cause implies priority in time. But nothing can be prior in time to an eternal series. Therefore, an eternal series is possible.

    6. There is no way to establish the principle of causality. Existence does not provide us with the necessary connections needed to establish the

cause/effect relationship. Events are conjoined, but never connected. Only after constant (habitual) conjoining does the mind assume that there is a cause/effect relationship. Hence, causality is built on custom. We know B occurs after A, but not because of A: the sun rises after the rooster crows, but not because the rooster crows. The cosmological argument is built on a post hoc, ergo proper hoc, fallacy.

7. The universe as a whole does not need a cause, only the parts do. The world as a whole does not call for a cause; only parts need a cause. The whole is the explanation of the parts. The principle of sufficient reason applies only to parts within the universe but not to the universe as a whole. The parts are contingent and the whole is necessary. And the whole universe may be necessary in only a mathematically accidental sense, such as the products of 9 always use 9 (e.g. 9*41=369 and 3+6+9=18 or 2*9)

8. Theistic arguments convince only those who like abstract reasoning. Only those with a "metaphysical head" are convinced by theistic arguments. Most people are too practical to be swept away with such abstract reasoning. Even the arguments that begin in experience soon fly into the thin air of pure and unconvincing speculation.

II- Kant's objections[4]:

1. The cosmological argument depends on an invalid ontological argument. In order to arrive at a logically necessary conclusion, the cosmological argument leaves the realm of *experience* with which it begins and borrows the *concept* of a necessary Being. Without this ontological leap from the *a posteriori* to *a priori*, the cosmological argument cannot complete its task. The leap is necessary but invalid. There is no way to show that it is logically necessary to conclude a necessary Being (one which *logically* cannot *not* be) unless one leaves experience and enters the purely *conceptual* realm.

2- Existential statements are not necessary. The conclusion of the cosmological argument purports to be an existentially necessary statement. But necessity is a characteristic of thought, not of being. Only statements are necessary, not things or beings. The only necessity that there is resides in the logical, but not in the ontological realm.

3. A noumenal cause cannot be derived from a phenomenal effect. The cosmological argument illicitly assumes that one can move from an effect in the realm of *appearance* (the phenomenal) to a cause in the realm of *reality* (the noumenal). Things-to-me are not things-in-itself. One does not know what reality is (only *that* it is). Causality is merely a category of the mind that is superimposed on reality, but it is not constitutive of reality. Whatever necessity the causal connection has is made by the mind; it is not found in reality.

4. What is logically necessary is not ontologically necessary. Flowing from the former criticism is the implied objection that the rationally inescapable is not necessarily the real. It might be necessary to *think* of something as being so when in *actuality* it is not so. Hence, even a logically necessary Being would not necessarily exist.

5. The cosmological argument leads to metaphysical contradictions. If one assumes that categories of thought do apply to reality and proceeds with cosmological argumentation, then one eventuates in contradictions such as: there is both a first cause and there cannot be a first cause (both of which are logically demanded by the principle of sufficient reason).

6. The concept of a "necessary Being" is not self-clarifying. It is not clear what the meaning of "necessary Being" actually is. The concept does not clarify itself. Without conditions no concept of necessity is possible. But necessary Being is conceived of as having no conditions for its existence

whatsoever. Hence, the only way it could be meaningful is eliminated by its very definition in the theistic argument.

7. An infinite regress is logically possible. There is no contradiction in the concept of an infinite regress of cause. Indeed the principle of sufficient reason demands it. For it says that everything must have a reason. If this is so, there is no reason to stop asking for a reason when we arrive at any given cause in the series. In fact, reason demands that we keep on asking for a reason, ad infinitum. (Of course, reason also demands that we find a first reason, which grounds all the other reasons. But this is precisely the contradiction one gets into when he applies reason beyond the senses to reality.) So far as logical possibility is concerned, an infinite regress is possible.

Some of these objections are more important than some others. I will study firstly these objections whose solution can help to the solution of other objections. The problems of existence posed by Kant are the core objections and have been repeated in various shapes by some later philosophers as Bertrand Russell and Norman Malcolm[5]. Mulla Sadra's view is that these objections are not invalid in all aspects. These objections contain some insights which are very helpful for a good understanding of the problem. Kant's statements manifest new philosophical awareness neglected by earlier view of philosophers this eases the way for solving the problems, especially in the light of Mulla Sadra's view about existence and its fundamental reality. Therefore, have I will not reject all the criticisms posed by Kant but try to show the strengths and weaknesses of his view. Some aspects of his views in these criticisms are very near what had been stated in Mulla Sadra's philosophical view about existence while others are rejected by Mulla Sadra's view which has some extra distinctions regarding existence that are neglected by Kant. In reply to Kant's objections I will try to show both the consistency and inconsistency of his viewpoint with Mulla Sadra's in order to understand what is missed in Kant's thought.

The Rejection of both the Idea and the Existence of God

One of the accurate distinctions in Kant's statements is between existence and other properties, while in the ontological arguments there is a confusion of predicates concerning perfection and existence. Existence differs from every other predicate. Kant focuses his criticisms on four forms of the ontological argument in the view of Descartes and Anselm. Each of these philosophers has two or three forms of this argument to which Kant objects the argument that can be stated in summary in a logical shape as the follows:

a: Anselm[6]:

First form of the argument:

1. Whatever can be affirmed (predicated) of the most perfect Being possible (conceivable) must be affirmed of it (otherwise, by definition, it would not be the most perfect Being possible)

2. It is possible to affirm a real existence (outside of the mind) of the most perfect Being possible.

3. Hence, a real existence of the most perfect Being possible must be affirmed.

Second form of the argument:

1. It is logically necessary to affirm of a necessary Existent what is logically necessary for its concept of it.

2. Real existence is logically necessary for the concept of a necessary Existent.

3. Hence, it is logically necessary to affirm that a necessary Existent exists.

b: Descartes[7]:

First form of the argument:

    1. It is logically necessary to affirm of a concept whatever is essential to the nature (definition) of that concept (e.g. a triangle must have three sides).

    2. Existence is a logically necessary part of a necessary existent (otherwise it could not be defined as a necessary Existent).

    3. Therefore, it is logically necessary to affirm that a necessary Existent does exist.

Second form of Descartes' argument for Caterus:

    1. Whatever is of the essence of something must be affirmed of it.

    2. It is of the essence of God that He exists (for by definition His essence is to exist).

    3. Therefore, existence must be affirmed of God.

Kant objects to these formulations of the argument two main criticisms. Firstly he tries to show that it is not necessary to affirm the existence of a necessary existence. This means that there is no contradiction involved in rejecting both the idea and the existence of a necessary being. He assumes, in the beginning, the predication of existence in a proposition but he denies that it is *necessary* to affirm existence of a necessary being. His attack, in this criticism, is aimed at this necessity. This objection paves the way for the next objection, namely, that the existence is not a real predicate. We will survey and analyze this latter independently in the next objection. The objection is based on the following objection which I will analyze for it,

Necessity does not apply to existence but only to propositions. Necessity is a logical, not an ontological qualifier.

To examine this objection, we must study the necessity of existence in Kant's view. He firstly explains necessity by the fact that in analytic propositions the predicate is ascribed to subject necessarily so that the affirming subject with rejecting predicate constitutes a contradiction. He says[8]:

> If in an identical judgment I reject the predicate and retain the subject, there arise a contradiction, and hence, I say, that the former belongs to the latter necessarily.

But rejecting existence from a subject and its predicate cause no contradiction[9]:

> But if I reject the subject as well as the predicate, there is no contradiction, because there is nothing left that can be contradicted. To accept a triangle and yet to reject its three angles is contradictory, but there is no contradiction at all in admitting the non-existence of the triangle and of its three angles.

Then he extends this rule to the necessary existence[10]:

> The same applies to the concept of an absolutely necessary Being. Remove its existence, and you remove the thing itself, with all its predicates, so that a contradiction becomes impossible. There is nothing external to which the contradiction could apply, because the thing is not meant to be externally necessary; nor is there anything internal that could be contradicted, for in removing the thing out of existence, you have removed at the same time all its internal qualities. If you say, God is almighty, that is a necessary judgment, because almightiness cannot be removed, if you accept a deity, that is an infinite Being, with the concept of which that other concept is identical. But if you say, God is not, then neither his almightiness, nor any other of his predicates is given; they are all, together with the subject, removed out of existence, and therefore there is not the slightest contradiction in that sentence.

Kant tries to show that reality and "___ exists" differ from the concept of existence and that the concept has no power to posit reality. He does not use existence and non-existence for understanding the meaning of "something exists". Instead, he uses the word "admit" for "exist" and "reject" for the word "not exist". This terminology makes the difference between notion of existence and its reality clearer.

He has another correct accuracy in the meaning of necessity especially in logical usage of this word. That is the conditionality of necessity with the stipulation of "if its subject exists". The triangle has three sides necessarily if there exists a triangle; but if there is no triangle at all there will be nothing to have three sides necessarily, and removing both three sides and triangle is not a contradiction. Then he extends this matter to necessary being. Necessary existence has its essential attributes like almightiness necessarily, but this necessity depends on the stipulation: "if there exists externally a necessary Being. "Were

there no necessary Being, the rejection of existence from its essence would not constitute a contradiction.

In explanation of the origination of the meaning of necessity, he says[11]:

> ...People have imagined that by a number of examples they had explained this concept, at first risked at haphazard, and afterwards become quite familiar, and that therefore all further inquiry regarding its intelligibility were unnecessary. It was said that every proposition of geometry, such as, for instance, that a triangle has three angles, is absolutely necessary, and people began to talk of an object entirely outside the sphere of our understanding, as if they understood perfectly well what, by that concept, they wished to predicate of it.

He continues that this necessity, that is about judgment, cannot be extended to existence[12]:

> But all these pretended examples are taken without exception from judgments only, not from things, and their existence. Now the unconditioned necessity of judgments is not the same thing as an absolute necessity of things. The absolute necessity of a judgment is only a conditioned necessity of the thing, or of the predicate in the judgment.

then, he explains the conditionality of logical necessity by the stipulation: "if the subject exists in reality"[13]:

> The above proposition did not say that three angles were absolutely necessary, but that under the condition of the existence of a triangle, three angles are given (in it) by necessity

We said before in the section on necessity and possibility that all logical essential necessity has the stipulation: "if the subject exists or remains in existence." This necessity is in analytic propositions that the essence or essential properties of a thing are ascribed to the thing itself. Therefore, in the negation of subject, no contradiction takes place. But we said that in the light of the fundamental reality of existence, if we ascribe existence to real existence or to the truth of existence, this will not be a logical essential necessity (that is ascribed to quiddity and a quidditive meaning) but a philosophical essential necessity. The difference from logical necessity is indicated by Kant in his statement that "the unconditioned necessity of judgment is not the same thing as an absolute necessity of things".

Kant looks at every necessity as a logical one, while this necessity is about quiddities in so far as they are quiddities, not about real existence in view of the fundamental reality of existence. In logical propositions the necessity is stipulated by the existence of the subject. But in existential propositions the reality of existence and its truth is just its subject or a part of it- not like triangle or another quidditive concept. The ascription of the reality of existence to this subject (as its predicate) is undoubtedly necessary, because it predicated of it what is essential to the subject. Therefore, the negation of existence and reality from its subject involves a contradiction. It is clear that, this or that existent being -in so far as it is the reality of existence and the mind abstracts quiddity from its existential limitations- have existence or exists necessarily, because it is existence. Therefore, the negation of existence from this kind of subjects causes a contradiction. Is it possible, in this case, to reject or remove the subject -in Kant's terminology- i.e. to negate real existence (that is the reality of existence) from this kind of subject without involving contradiction?

The truth of existence is necessarily the truth of existence, and removing existence from this subject constitutes a contradiction. Therefore, in these existential propositions, there is no way to reject the subject as well as the predicate, so no contradiction is involved. This means that the claim of Kant "if I reject the subject as well as the predicate, there is no contradiction" applies only to logical propositions, not to existential propositions.

Fortunately, Kant points to propositions whose subjects cannot be removed, but he says that he cannot accept these kinds of subjects:[14]

> We have seen therefore that, if I remove the predicate of a judgment together with its subject, there can never be an internal contradiction, whatever the predicate may be. The only way of evading this conclusion would be to say that there are subjects which cannot be removed out of experience, but must always remain. But this would be the same as to say that there exist absolutely necessary subjects, an assumption the correctness of which I have called in question, and the possibility of which you had undertaken to prove. For I cannot form to myself the smallest concept of a thing which, if it had been removed together with all its predicates, should leave behind a contradiction; and except contradiction, I have no other test of impossibility by pure concepts *a priori*.

Why can't Kant accept a subject the removal of which constitutes a contradiction, while we said before that the removal of existential subjects causes a contradiction? This is because he searches his concepts to find these propositions and as we said before, what can be found in the mind is quiddity not reality of existence, and that quidditive concepts can form only logical propositions not existential ones; there is no logical proposition the removal of whose subjects constitutes a contradiction.

Furthermore, he is in a position that cannot accept that the mere idea of necessary Being cause it to be real, the matter whose correctness is in question -and I agree with him. Therefore, he neglected existential propositions that may not be constructed through conceptions like necessary Being.

It must be noted that one should distinguish between reality of existence and concept of existence, the matter that had made serious trouble for the ontological arguments. The confusion of reality of existence and its notion opens some windows for Kant to penetrate, and to pose some correct criticisms against this argument. Although these criticisms are not complete and neglect some other philosophical affairs, and although Kant does not distinguish clearly between reality and notion of existence, his statements pave the way for this distinction.

After showing that the rejection of the concept of necessary Being with all his attributes causes no contradiction, Kant proposes an objection against his position, and replies. The objection is that his view may be avoided by the most real Being. Kant states this objection with an argument for this position as follow[15]:

> Against all these general arguments (which no one can object to) you challenge me with a case, which you represent as a proof by a fact, namely, that there is one, and this one concept only, in which the non-existence or the removal of its object would be self-contradictory, namely, the concept of the most real Being (*ens realissimum*). You say that it possesses all reality, and you are no doubt justified in accepting such a Being as possible. This for the present I may admit, though the absence of self-contradictoriness in a concept is far from proving the possibility of its object. Now reality comprehends existence, and therefore existence is contained in the concept of a thing possible. If that thing is removed, the internal possibility of the thing would be removed, and this is self-contradictory.

This is a restatement of Leibniz' argumentation of the ontological argument that can be formulated as follow[16]:

1- If it is possible for an absolutely perfect Being to exist, then it is necessary that it exist, for,

      a. By definition an absolutely perfect Being cannot lack anything.

      b. But if it did not exist, it would be lacking in existence.

      c. Hence, an absolutely perfect Being cannot be lacking in existence.

2- It is possible (non contradictory) for an absolutely perfect Being to exist.

3. Therefore, it is necessary that an absolutely perfect Being exist.

In support of the crucial minor premise Leibniz gave this argument:

1. A perfection is a simple and irreducible quality without any essential limits.

2. Whatever is simple cannot conflict with other irresolvable simple qualities (since they differ in kind).

3. And whatever differs in kind with another cannot conflict with it (since there is no area of similarity in which they can overlap or conflict).

4. Therefore, it is possible for one being (God) to possess all possible perfections.

Kant firstly argues his position that "the absence of self-contradictoriness in a concept is far from the possibility of its object" by these statements found in the footnote of this paper[17]:

> A concept is always possible, if it is not self-contradictory. This is the logical characteristic of possibility, and by it the object of the concept is distinguished from the *nihil negativum*. But it may nevertheless be an empty concept, unless the objective reality of the synthesis, by which the concept is generated, has been distinctly shown. This, however, as shown above, must always rest on principles of possible experience, and not on the principle of analysis (the principle of contradiction). This is a warning against inferring at once from the possibility of concepts (logical) the possibility of things (real).

Then he begins to reply to this objection against his position by the argument that the proposition "the most real Being exists" is either an analytic propositions or a synthetic one. If it is analytic, there is no more knowledge about the most real Being, while we need a new knowledge about His existence and if it is synthetic, there can not be any contradiction in rejecting it such a contradiction can happen only in an analytic proposition by admitting the subject and rejecting the predicate. He says[18]:

I answer: Even in introducing into the concept of a thing, which you wish to think in its possibility only, the concept of its existence, under whatever disguise it may be, you have been guilty of a contradiction. If you were allowed to do this, you would apparently have carried your point; but in reality you have achieved nothing, but have only committed a tautology. I simply ask you, whether the proposition, that *this* or *that thing* (which, whatever it may be, I grant you as possible) *exists*, is an analytical or a synthetical proposition? If the former, then by its existence you add nothing to your thought of the thing; but in that case, either the thought within you would be the thing itself, or you have presupposed existence, as belonging to possibility, and have according to your own showing deduced existence from internal possibility, which is nothing but a miserable tautology. The mere word reality, which in the concept of a thing sounds different from existence in the concept of the predicate, can make no difference. For if you call all accepting or positing (without determining what it is) reality, you have placed a thing, with all its predicates, within the concept of the subject, and accepted it as real, and you do nothing but repeat it in the predicate. If, on the contrary, you admit, as every sensible man must do, that every proposition involving existence does not admit of removal without contradiction, a distinguishing property which is peculiar to analytical propositions only, the very character of which depends on it?

Then Kant argues against the opinion that reality or determination cannot be contained in a concept, because this predicate enlarges the subject[19]:

I might have hoped to put an end to this subtle argumentation, without many words, and simply by an accurate definition of the concept of existence, if I had not seen that the illusion, in mistaking a logical predicate for a real one (that is the predicate which determines a thing), resists all correction. Everything can become a logical predicate, even the subject itself may be predicated of itself, because logic takes no account of any contents of concepts. Determination, however, is a predicate, added to the concept of the subject, and enlarging it, and it must not therefore be contained in it.

Investigation: Leibniz as well as Descartes and Anselm saw a difference between the most real Being and all other beings. They hoped this difference would help them to an a priori argument for the existence of God. The characteristic that differs from all other ones that can be ascribed in the world to every other being was so bright and important for them that they thought they can use it as a proof for the existence of God.

We shall study this matter in the view of Mulla Sadra. He, also, differs necessary existence from all other beings, but his position is not to use this matter as a

proof for the existence of God, but as only the real distinction between God and other beings in the light of the fundamental reality of existence. Based on his view, real existence is ascribed necessarily to every real existence that has occupied reality in every existential proposition, whereas quiddities are mentally posited and are not fundamentally real. Therefore, every real being, either necessary or contingent, has existence necessarily. But, this necessity is of two kinds, one is possible beings which have this necessity by-something-else, while the other is a necessary being-by-essence. In the former the existential necessity depends on another being, hence it need not exist in every time. This necessity remains until that "something-else" necessitates it, while in the latter there may not be any thing to limit this necessity. And as this necessity does not depend on another being it can not be removed from it in any time, situation or condition. As we said before, this "necessity-by-essence" was named "eternal necessity" because this kind of philosophical necessity requires the eternity of what has this necessity. If a being has existence necessarily by essence, and it is uncaused and is an essential existence that stands on itself, then it must inevitably be an eternal being. Because, in any condition, it may not even be supposed that it does not exist. The difference between eternal necessity and logical essential necessity is neglected in Kant's view. He does not distinguish these two kinds of necessity. His claim that "if I remove the predicate of a judgment together with its subject, there can never be an internal contradiction" applies only to the logical essential necessity that does not require eternity of subject, because the ascription in the logical essential necessity is conditioned by preservation of subject. If the subject disappears then the ascription of predicate to subject will cease to remain, so there will not be such a necessity; but in eternal necessity there is no stipulation or condition for ascription of predicate to subject. Therefore, absolute necessity is only in eternal necessity and others are conditioned.

Although the necessity of necessary being differs from the logical necessity, this difference has no power to prove the real existence of God. Mulla Sadra did not apply this difference in proving the existence of God in the *Seddiqin* Argument. It is an argument for proving the eternal necessity of God, not one for proving God through eternal necessity. All that was said in the *Seddiqin* Argument was premises for proving the Necessary Being. But those philosophers that posed this argument intended to set forth an argument to show

that the eternal necessity of absolute existence is real, but what must be proved is the eternal necessity of this Being, not its logical necessity.

What is wrong in the ontological argument that places its power for proving the existence of God in question? Before answering this question, we must study another important distinction in Mulla Sadra's view that is as a key for solving some famous philosophical questions. By this distinction we can analyze this Kant's objection and the next one.

Primary Essential Predication and Common Technical Predication

Predication is a kind of unification between two things, because it means "this is that". This meaning requires, also, a kind of differing factor between those two, as well as that union, in order to be two things that have a kind of union. If this is not so, there will not be two things but one, and there is no meaning for unification. Therefore, in every predication there must be a unity from one aspect and a difference in another aspect to make that predication true. Hence, there can not be a predication between two completely distinct things, because there is no union between them, nor can there be a predication between a thing and itself, because it does not differ from itself (unless one thing be regarded from two points of view, when there will be two things and this unification may happen).

Now, this union is either in the meaning of two things or only in their external reality. The former is named "primary essential predication" and the latter is called "common technical predication" by Mulla Sadra[20]. Therefore, the primary essential predication is that kind of predication in which the subject happens to be the same as the predicate with regard to "concept", e.g. "man is man", or as can be said in the definition of man "man is a rational animal". The difference, in this case, between subject and predicate is for the points of view like compendium and detail. The common technical predication is that in which the subject is the same as the predicate only with regard to "existence" (mental or external existence) or concrete object, while with regard to conception they are different from each other, e.g. "man is animal". The meaning of "man" is different from "animal", but the existential sample of man or its object is also an animal.

This distinction between the two kinds of predication is important in some paradoxes be which, in the beginning, some double correct propositions seem to be contradictory. That is, it seems that one of them must be true and the other should be false, while both of them can be true with regard to the two kinds of predication. I cite some of these propositions to prepare the explanation of these two predications in the ontological argument:

(1). preparatory example: When you say "verb is verb" this proposition is true by a primary essential predication that means the meaning of verb is just a meaning of verb as well as an existential sample of verb is just a verb.

But, when you say "verb is a noun" it means the word "verb" as it is a word for naming a kind of words is a noun. This example is not an example for those two kinds of predication, but is only for showing the difference of points of view for predication.

(2). Mulla Sadra sets forth in a section about "non-existence" and its affairs[21], a proposition that "the absolute non-existence may not be informed" and that he has some demonstration for proving this proposition, but if it were true then the predication "may not be informed" would be an information about absolute non-existence. Therefore this proposition would involve a self-contradiction.

Mulla Sadra replies: The absolute non-existence, in so far as it is mere non-being in reality, may not be informed, while the absolute non-existence in so far as its meaning is a kind of conception in the mind has a mental existence, therefore it may be informed about it by this predicate "...may not be informed."

Thus, absolute non-existence by way of common technical predication (that refers to its existence not meaning) may not be informed, while absolute non-existence by way of primary essential existence (that refers to its meaning in the mind) may be informed by "may not be informed."

(3). We can divide all beings into two kinds: "being subsistent in the mind" and "being non-subsistent in the mind". The latter, in spite of being non-subsistent in the mind, is subsistent in the mind, because we know it as a meaning in the mind and ascribe something to it. It is a rational being and mental existence. Therefore, the being non-

subsistent in the mind is not subsistent in the mind by way of primary predication; but it is subsistent in the mind by way of common technical predication.

(4). Of The "particular" by definition. It is absurd to suppose that its truthfulness is more than one, like Brussels, this book, that man etc. By this definition the "particular" has many samples (more than one); therefore it is not a particular but a "universal". Based on this matter, we say "particular is particular by way of primary essential predication, and particular - in so far as it has a meaning in the mind and a mental existence that involves all beings that have that character- is not particular (but universal) by way of common technical predication".

(5). Our intellect has the power to recognize the impossibility of a "partner of the creator" by saying: "a partner of the creator is impossible" in spite of the fact that predicating something to some other thing depends on the representation of the latter (i.e. the subject), while whatever is established in the intellect or imagination is an "existent" which must be judged as "possible", so it is a being that must be created entirely by God. Therefore, a partner of the Creator is not a partner of the Creator by way of common non-primary predication but it is a creature of Him. This proposition does not involve a contradiction; while a partner of the creator is such by way of primary essential predication.

The problem in all of these examples is the result of confusion between "concept" and the "referent of concept". By distinguishing these two, it can be understood that any concept which is actualized, whether in the mind or in the external world, does not cease to be that concept, and the boundary of its "essence" does not become transformed; nay, "existence" brings it out just as it is.

Returning now to survey the ontological argument, the problem in this argument is the confusion of "concept of existence" and the "referent of the concept". With regard to distinguishing these two, or the difference of existence by way of primary essential predication from existence by way of common predication, the confusion and fallacy of the ontological argument can become manifest. Because, if we negate the concept of existence from "most perfect being" in the concept of God by way of primary predication

(that refers to its meaning) then it involves a contradiction. But if the "most perfect being" did not exist (in external world) by way of common predication then it would not result in the negation of existence by way of primary predication. In the ontological argument it is said that "existence is a logically necessary part of the concept of a necessary Existent, therefore it is impossible to negate that a necessary existent does exist." If, in this claim, the existence is predicated to necessary being by way of primary predication, then it is impossible to negate existence (its concept) from it; but this predication does not require its external reality and does not prove existence by way of common predication for the Necessary Being. If the predicate, in this argument, is the referent of the concept of existence (as in the result of the argument it is so claimed) and it is being existence in common predication, then there is no impossibility in rejecting existence in common predication from the concept of necessary being or negating this perfection from its concept, and there is no contradiction involved. If the most perfect concept that is the concept of unlimited and infinite existent lacks the referent of this concept, then it will not entail any contradiction. Moreover, the contradiction happens when the same predicate is affirmed and rejected of the same meaning at the same time, but if there are two predicates or one from two points of view, then the affirmation and rejection of those two will not result in any contradictions. The concept of unlimited and most complete existence is the most complete existence by way of primary predication. It is a mental concept in common predication that exists in mental existence but it is not necessary that it have a referent in the external world, for it is like what we said about "partner of the Creator". The contradiction will happen if the predicate is the same as the subject either both are primary or both are common.

The confusion of the concept and the referent of the concept in some other arguments of Muslim philosophers (which they supposed to be a *Seddiqin* kind of argumentation) put the validity of their argument in question. All the problems arise when one wants to find the referent of the concept by the concept; but if an argument begins from reality (not from its concept) and then set forth an argument, it will not suffer from this confusion -just as is done in the *Seddiqin* Argument.

That Existence Is not a Real Predication

Kant carefully distinguishes existence and all other perfections in ontological arguments based on the sameness of these two. His attack is aimed toward ontological arguments that use existence like other perfections. He shows the error of this supposition by scrutinizing in the meaning of "__ exists". I set forth his view then I will compare his view with Mulla Sadra's on the fundamental reality of existence where the consistency and inconsistency of these two views can be observed.

Kant's view can be formed like this[22]:

Existence is not a predicate, as though it were a perfection or property that could be affirmed of a subject or thing. Existence is not a perfection of an essence, but a positing of that perfection. Kant implies the following argument to support this point:

(1). Whatever adds nothing to the conception of an essence is not part of that essence.

(2). Existence adds nothing to the conception of an essence (i.e. no characteristic is added to an essence by positing it as real rather than as imaginary; a real dollar does not have any characteristics which an imagined one lacks)

(3). Therefore, existence is not part of an essence (i.e. it is not a perfection which can be predicated of something).

If Kant's last criticism is solid, it invalidates at least the first form of the ontological argument given by Anselm. In Kant's point of view, Anselm's argument would really amount to this:

1. All possible perfection must be predicated of an absolutely perfect Being.

2. Existence is a possible perfection which may be predicated of an absolutely perfect Being.

3. Therefore, existence must be predicated of an absolutely perfect Being.

According to Kant's criticism, the minor premise is wrong. Existence is not a perfection which may be predicated of anything. Existence is not a predication of a characteristic but an *instantiation* of a characteristic or thing. Essence gives the definition and existence provides an *exemplification* of what was defined. The essence is given in the

conceptualization of something; existence does not add to this conceptualization but merely provides a *concretization* of it. Hence, existence neither adds nor detracts from the concept of an absolutely perfect Being. This has been a standard objection to the ontological argument since Kant.

He says[23]:

> *Being* is evidently not a predicate, nor a concept of something that can be added to the concept of a thing. It is merely the admission of a thing, and of certain determination in it. Logically, it is merely the copula of a judgment. The proposition, *God is almighty*, contains two concepts, each having its object, namely, God and almightiness. The small word *is*, is not an additional predicate, but only serves to put the predicate *in relation* to the subject. If, then, I take the subject (God) with all its predicates (including that of almightiness), and say, *God is*, or there is a God, I do not put a new predicate to the concept of God, but I only put the subject by itself, with all its predicates, in relation to my concept, as its object. Both must contain exactly the same kind of thing, and nothing can have been added to the concept, which expresses possibility only, by my thinking its object as simply given and saying, it is. And thus the real does not contain more than the possible. A hundred real dollars do not contain a penny more than a hundred possible dollars. For as the latter signify the concept, the former the object and its position by itself, it is clear that, in case the former contained more than the latter, my concept would not express the whole object, and would not therefore be its adequate concept. In my financial position no doubt there exists more by one hundred real dollars, than by their concept only (that is their possibility), because in reality the object is not only contained analytically in my concept, but is added to my concept (which is a determination of my state), synthetically; but the conceived hundred dollars are not in the least increased through the existence which is outside my concept.

Kant, in these statements, argues for showing that "existence does not add anything to the concept of a thing." Although this is a correct fact, his statements must be surveyed in all of his claims that in some other aspects are not complete. I compare his claims with Mulla Sadra's view.

(1) Kant says: "Being is not a real predicate". Mulla Sadra and his disciples accept that Being is not a predicate like other predicates and that it differs from other predicates, but they do not have this opinion that the existence cannot be a predicate. Someone that has never seen an elephant can recognize the meaning of elephant by its definition and its characteristics; afterwards, he asks "does the elephant exist." Then he will

have new knowledge by the answer that "yes, the elephant exists"; therefore, the sentence "the elephant exists" will be a proposition because it is a knowledge that may be false or true. No one can doubt that this sentence is a proposition. But, according to Mulla Sadra's view, these propositions differ from other propositions in that something is ascribed to some other thing. In this latter the structure of proposition is constructed from three things, the subject, the predicate and the relation and ascription of predicate to subject; while in the former, i.e. existential propositions, the proposition is constructed from two things, the subject and realness of this subject that is the predicate of the proposition. Therefore, propositions are of two kinds, three-parts propositions and two-parts propositions. In three-parts propositions there are three things in the proposition (subject, predicate and ascription of predicate to subject), whereas in two parts one there are two things (subject and ascription reality to it).

This distinction solves some other philosophical problems like what is argued against the fundamental reality of existence by Illuminative philosophers. If quiddity, they say, is mentally posited and the existence is fundamental real they, then in every proposition that we ascribe existence to a quiddity like "the elephant exists", before ascribing something to the subject there must be or exist firstly the subject so that it will be possible to ascribe something to it. In other words, the ascription is after the subsistence of the subject. Therefore, before ascribing existence to a quiddity, the quiddity must exist or have (another) existence and so on *ad infinitum*. That is, according to the philosophical rule that "the subsistence of a thing for another thing is after the subsistence of that other thing for which the subsistence is going to be proved", the subsistence of existence for quiddity is after the subsistence or existence of quiddity. That means that the quiddity must be subsistent or have existence in order that there be the possibility of predicating existence of it.

Mulla Sadra answers[24] that that philosophical rule applies to the subsistence of one thing for another thing, not to the subsistence of a thing. Therefore, all propositions in which existence is predicated of a quiddity differ from others in that something is predicated of some other thing, so that in the latter the last philosophical rule applies while in the former this rule can not apply.

I set forth this problem and Mulla Sadra's answer in order to show that existence can be predicated to a quiddity and that there is nothing wrong in this predication.

But those objections posed by Kant are in the supposition that three-part propositions are the same as two-part propositions. Perhaps the word "real" in Kant's statement "being is not a real predicate" points to Kant's opinion that it can be a predicate but not the same as other predicates when we assume a thing or attribute to be a predicate, whereas existence is not an independent thing or attribute, so that it can be an additional property.

(2) Kant writes: "It [existence] is merely the copula of a judgment"; he continues that "the proposition, *God is almighty*, contains two concepts, <u>each having its object</u>, namely, God and almightiness". In the light of the fundamental reality of existence, this "having its object" is just the real existence, that is, reality outside the mind. This existence is not a copula but a reality; it is not for relating two parts of a proposition but is the real existence of each of those parts. We said before, in the section "types of existence", that in addition to independent existence there is, also, copulative existence in reality, that is, for example, real relation between subject and predicate (and in the existence of a caused being). Therefore, the existence is not only the copula of a judgment, but is either an independent existence or a copulative existence. Mulla Sadra's philosophical view as developed in the second part was a demonstration of those both kinds of existence[25].

(3) From one point of view, Kant's view that the existence is not an addition to a concept, is just what Mulla Sadra argues. Because the fundamental reality of existence is that there is nothing in reality but existence; the quiddity is its limitations grasped by the mind; and all attributes have quidditive meanings that differ basically from existence. Therefore, in reality there is nothing other than existence that can be added to it. Kant says[26]:

> By whatever and by however many predicates I may think a thing (even in completely determining it), nothing is really added to it, if I add that the thing exists. Otherwise, it would not be the same that exists, but something more than was contained in the concept, and I could not say that the exact object of my concept existed.

But, from another point of view, the meaning of existence in the mind (that differs from its reality) can be added to quiddity. We argued this additionality with its demonstrations in the section "Existence and Quiddity".

(4) Kant argues that a hundred real dollars do not contain a penny more than a hundred possible dollars. Then he concludes that "but the conceived hundred dollars are not in the least increased through the existence which is outside my concept"[27].

> By whatever and by however many predicates I may think a thing (even in completely determining it), nothing is really added to it, if I add that the thing exists. Otherwise, it would not be the same that exists, but something more than was contained in the concept, and I could not say that the exact object of my concept existed. Nay, even if I were to think in a thing all reality, except one, that one missing reality would not be supplied by my saying that so defective a thing exists, but it would exist with the same defect with which I thought it; or what exists would be different from what I thought...

This opinion is compatible with Mulla Sadra's view that the quiddity, in so far as it is quiddity, is in reality the same as in the concept. The quiddity sometimes appears in external existence and at other times has mental existence. Therefore, the externality of a quiddity does not make it greater or more than its mentality. In explaining existence and quiddity above it was noted that[28]: "...Here, it must be added that existence has two aspects, one external and another mental. But even in the mind the separation of quiddity from existence is not conceivable. It is obtainable only by rational analysis and laboring, because what is in the mind is a "mental existence" just as something in the external world is an "external existence". But it is of the very nature of the intellect to notice quiddity in abstraction, totally discarding both modes of existence, by not taking them into consideration, not by simply negating them. In other words, if as a result of the hard work of the mind we separate quiddity from both kinds of existence, then quiddity would not be existence." This means the sameness of quiddity in the mind and in the external world.

(5) Quidditive meaning, in so far as it has the same ascription to existence and non-existence, must be a contingent meaning in relation to both mental and external existence. Therefore, every being that has a quiddity (that is the result of abstraction by mind from limitations of a real being) must be a possible being. This is also compatible with Kant's statements[29]:

> If, then, I try to conceive a being, as the highest reality (without any defect), the question still remains, whether it exist or not.

and

> If, however we are thinking existence through the pure category alone, we need not wonder that we cannot find any characteristic to distinguish it from mere possibility.

But if we are concerned with the reality of existence, the qualifier changes to necessity. Every existent being, in so far as it is existence, is ascribed existence necessarily; and in so far as it has a quiddity, existence is ascribed to its quiddity contingently. Therefore, the ascription of existence to the quiddity needs reason, and that necessity does not make the quiddity real. Although the pure existence exists necessarily, this necessity, according to *Seddiqin* Argument, does not conclude that it exists. The *Seddiqin* Argument is an argument for proving the <u>eternal necessity of existence,</u> not an argument for proving the realness of the concept of a necessary being. Every concept can be possible even the necessary being, otherwise we may not doubt its reality. The work of the cosmological argument is to prove the reality of this concept; and this attempt is meaningful. The difference of the *Seddiqin* Argument from ontological argument is that the ontological argument tries to prove the reality of the meaning of necessary being through its meaning, and after constructing that concept; while the *Seddiqin* Argument tries to prove the eternal necessity of the reality of existence, which afterwards will be named God.

Mulla Sadra, also, accepts what Kant says[30]:

> Whatever, therefore, our concept of an object may contain, we must always step outside it, in order to attribute to it existence.

and

> The concept of a Supreme Being is, in many respects, a very useful idea, but, being an idea only, it is quite incapable of increasing, by itself alone, our knowledge with regard to what exists.

It must be added that possibility belongs to quidditive meanings, but if something does not have a quiddity -grasped through limitations of existence- then it may not be conceived as possible. This matter will be explained afterwards.

(6) We said that the meaning of existence is an additional meaning to quiddity, while its reality is not an addition to quidditive concept, but just the reality of that concept. Kant refers to this second additionality and correctly rejects it. How do Mulla Sadra and his disciples explain this addition?

They divide propositions into two kinds: "the predicate extracted from the subject" and the "predicate by way of adherence"[31]. The first is abstracted and extracted from the bottom and depth of the reality of the thing while the second one is a predicate whose abstraction from the subject means that one essence or external reality adheres to the essence and reality of subject.

The first one is more general than "analytic" in Kant's terminology, because it contains, beside essence and the essential character of subject, the meanings abstracted from the reality of the subject. Their main character is that they do not have any referent distinct from the subject, like the meaning of "oneness", "causality", "existence" and "individuality".

It is obvious that the meaning and concept of "oneness" is different from meaning and concept of the quiddity that is predicated of it. But the quiddity does not need any referent and reality distinct from the referent and reality of "oneness" in order for the quiddity to be qualified by "oneness"; likewise "causality", "individuality" and "existence". Although the meaning of causality differs from that of the essence that is cause, it has no referent and reality other than the reality of the thing that is qualified by causality.

The predicate by way of adherence is opposite to the predicate extracted from the bottom of subject. It is a predicate whose ascription to the subject depends on the reality of another referent distinct from the subject. That referent is allocated to the predicate, and at the same time is unified with subject, like for example "white" (in referent to bodies) and "knowing" (in referent to souls), for they cannot be attributed to the subject as predicates except through the meditation of "whiteness" and "knowledge" which are external and additional to the reality of what is white and of the one who knows. Whiteness is from category of quality, while white thing is a substance; therefore, these predicates must be predicates by way of adherence.

Let us study existence as a predicate in Kant's terminology about propositions which he divides into analytic and synthetic. Is the proposition that existence is predicated of a subject analytic or synthetic? If this predication is about reality and referent of a thing it will not be synthetic, but analytic. If this predication concerns the meaning of a (quidditive) subject and the concept of existence it will be a synthetic, because the meaning of that subject is different from that of existence. But if the meaning of subject is not a quidditive meaning or a meaning that is not different from existence, but is the existence

itself or something that contains the meaning of existence, then the predication of the meaning of existence to this kind of subject will be analytic, i.e. the predicate is abstracted from the essence of subject.

Hence, "predicate extracted from subject" that can explain also the predication of existence, differs from "analytic" in Kant's terminology.

That the words "Necessary Being" have no consistent meaning.

This objection is posed by Kant against ontological arguments that are based on the meaning of "necessary Being"; these arguments try to extract the reality of necessary Being from its meaning, which must be clear in order to be a strong foundation for the rest of the argument. Kant believes that these words are understood by a negative definition that has not enough power to give it a consistent meaning. He says[32]:

> People have at all times been talking of an *absolutely necessary* Being, but they have tried, not so much to understand whether and how a thing of that kind could even be conceived, as rather to prove its existence. No doubt a verbal definition of that concept is quite easy, if we say that it is something the non-existence of which is impossible. This, however, does not make us much wiser with reference to the conditions that make it necessary to consider the non-existence of a thing as absolutely inconceivable. It is these conditions which we want to know, and whether by that concept we are thinking anything or not. For to use the word *unconditioned*, in order to get rid of all the conditions which the understanding always requires, when wishing to conceive something as necessary, does not render it clear to us in the least whether, after that, we are still thinking anything or perhaps nothing, by the concept of the unconditionally necessary.

This objection renewed in some statements of contemporary philosophers like Bertrand Russell[33], John Hospers[34] and Mackie[35]. Philosophers who work in realm of analytic and linguistic philosophy have been interested in this question.

However, this inconsistency of the meaning of necessary Being that can produce some difficulty for ontological argument does not apply to the *Seddiqin* Argument. Because the *Seddiqin* Argument is based not on the meaning of necessary Being, but on the reality of existence that must indicate to the richness and independence of the most real and complete existence.

But, how do we have the meaning of God as the pure, rich and most real existence in Mulla Sadra's view? As said above, this meaning is not a negative but a positive meaning. It may be useful for some negations to have this meaning; but the essence

of this meaning is positive and real. Those negations do not construct this concept; the way of negation is only a way for grasping this meaning. On the other hand, how clear is this meaning of God? The clarity of the meaning of God, according to Mulla Sadra, is based on the clarity of existence that we explained previously at the beginning of the introduction of his philosophy, which we recall here[36]:

According to Sadra the "notion of existence" is one of the best known concepts. It is self-evident and is reasonable by itself, because it is self apparent and makes others apparent. There is no need of any other thing to make its notion clearer. A defining term must always be immediately known and clearer than the defined term. But nothing is more evident than existence: all defining terms of existence are but explanations of the word; they can be neither a "definition" nor a "description." Since existence is absolutely simple - as will be explained- it has no specific difference or genus; hence it has no definition. It can not have any description, because a "description" is obtainable only by an accidental property which is part of the five universals whose division itself is based on the thing-ness of quiddity, whereas existence and its properties are derived from an entirely different source from quiddity[37].

But the deepest reality of existence is in the extremity of hidden-ness[38]. Because its deepest reality is external; if its reality should come to our mind this would be a refusal of reality, because in so far as it is reality -not notion- it must be external and outside mind. Furthermore, were its reality to be actualized in the mind -like the reality of fire- its effects also would be actualized - and in our example our mind must burn!

Mulla Sadra says[39]:

"The truth of existence is the clearest thing in appearance and presence; and its essence is the most hidden thing in grasping and understanding the depth of its reality"

And in another book under the title "On explanation of grasping the truth of existence" he says[40]:

"It is not possible to conceive the reality of existence and its depth of truth, neither by a definition that consists of genus and differentia nor by a definition that consists of genus and special accident nor by a meaning equal to existence. Because, conception of the truth of external truth of every thing is acquisition of that thing in the mind and the transition of that meaning from the external to the mind. This action is obtainable about every thing other than existence (i.e. quiddities), but it is not possible about existence (because the

transition of existence from the external to the mind, cause annulment of its truth, and what is grasped from existence by the mind is a phantom of the truth of existence not its reality). Therefore, it is not possible to have a way to the truth of existence, unless via intuition by inner insight not by way of definition and limiting and demonstration and reason and understanding by words and terms..."

Therefore, although the referent and reality of necessary Being is completely hidden, its notions is most clear and obvious. A. Javadi Amoli, in explanation of this meaning says[41]:

... That being whose existence is necessary and that reality conditioned by no stipulate, although they do not have any categorical and quidditive meaning, but are constructed from some general concepts so that, apart from the manner of abstraction and perception, are very evident and people understand them very clearly.

That the Cosmological Argument Depends on an Invalid Ontological Argument.

This criticism posed by Kant is an objection to the cosmological argument that can destroy the cosmological argument by destroying its foundation. In surveying this objection, I shall attempt answer some questions each of which is sufficient to reject Kant's claim: first, whether the cosmological argument depends on the ontological argument; second how and in what part the ontological is based on the cosmological? third what kind of cosmological argumentation depends on ontological one? (should Kant's claim be true); fourth whether this objection may be applicable to the *Seddiqin* Argument, that differs from cosmological argument.

The cosmological argument appears to proceed partly *a posteriori*. Its starting point is the empirical premise that something exists. It thus appears different in kind from the ontological proof, which proceeds entirely *a priori*. as Kant notes[42]:

> In order to lay a secure foundation for itself, this proof takes its stand on experience, and thereby makes profession of being distinct from the ontological proof, which puts its entire trust in pure a priori concepts.

But Kant goes on to claim that this is mere pretense[43]:

> ...the so called cosmological proof really owes any cogency which it may have to the ontological proof from mere concepts. The appeal to experience is quite superfluous;...

There seem to be two claims here: first, that the cosmological argument depends on the ontological argument, and that if the latter is not cogent then neither is the former; and second, that the appeal to experience in the cosmological argument is superfluous, that because of the dependence just mentioned the ontological argument alone is sufficient to give the desired conclusion of the cosmological argument.

Kant isolates a certain proposition which he claims is assumed in the cosmological argument. Of this proposition he says[44]:

> ... this is the proposition maintained by the ontological proof; it is here being assumed in the cosmological proof, and indeed made the basis of the proof; and yet is an assumption which this latter proof has professed to dispense.

and a bit later[45]

> ... this is precisely what the ontological proof has asserted and what the cosmological proof has refused to admit, although the conclusions of the latter are indeed covertly based on it .

Kant characterizes the first part of the cosmological argument as follows[46]:

> It runs thus: If anything exists, an absolutely necessary being must also exist. Now I, at least, exist. Therefore an absolutely necessary being exists. The minor premise contains an experience, the major premise the inference from there being any experience at all to the existence of the necessary. The proof therefore really begins with experience, and is not wholly *a priori* or ontological.

In any case, the present objection is not Kant's. The superfluousness he has in mind does not lie in the attempt to use *a posteriori* means to establish a necessary being[47]. He writes[48]:

> ... experience may perhaps lead us to the concept of absolute necessity, but is unable to demonstrate this necessity as belonging to any determinate thing.

And just before that[49] :

> ... the cosmological proof uses this experience only for a single step in the argument, namely, to conclude the existence of a necessary being. What properties this being may have, the empirical premise cannot tell us.

In both these passages Kant seems not to object to using empirical premises to establish the existence of a necessary being. Nothing is claimed to be superfluous about that[50].

The real problem comes later. The cosmological argument is supposed to be a proof of God (or an *ens realissimum*, etc.), not just a necessary being. How can we tell what sort of properties belong to this necessary being? How do we get from necessary being to God? To answer this, i.e., to complete what we are calling the second part of the argument, we must resort to reason alone. We can no longer rely on experience:[51]

Reason therefore abandons experience altogether, and endeavors to discover from mere concepts what properties an absolutely necessary being must have, that is, which among all possible things contains in itself the conditions essential to absolute necessity. Now these, it is supposed, are nowhere to be found save in the concept of an *ens realissimum*; and the conclusion is therefore drawn, that the *ens realissimum* is the absolutely necessary being.

And he continues:

But it is evident that we are here presupposing that the concept of the highest reality is completely adequate to the concept of absolute necessity of existence; that is, that the latter can be inferred from the former. Now this is the proposition maintained by the ontological proof; it is here being assumed in the cosmological proof, and indeed made the basis of the proof; ... For absolute necessity is an existence determined from mere concepts. If I say, the concept of the *ens realissimum* is a concept, and indeed the only concept, I must also admit that necessary existence can be inferred from this concept. Thus the so-called cosmological proof really owes any cogency which it may have to the ontological proof from mere concepts.[52]

Kant tells us how this further commitment comes about. He writes:[53]

If the proposition, that every absolutely necessary being is likewise the most real of all beings, is correct (and this is the *nervus probandi* of the cosmological proof), it must, like all affirmative judgment, be convertible, at least *per accidents*. It therefore follows that some *entia realissima* are likewise absolutely necessary beings. But one *ens realissimum* is in no respect different from another, and what is true of *some* under this concept is true also of *all*. In this case, therefore, I can convert the proposition *simpliciter*, not only *per accidens*, and say that every *ens realissimum* is a necessary being. But since this proposition is determined from its a priori concepts alone, the mere concept of the ens realissimum must carry with it the absolute necessity of that being; and this is precisely what the ontological proof has asserted and what the cosmological proof has refused to admit, although the conclusions of the latter are indeed covertly based on it.

As we have seen, Kant, in this criticism, attacks the cosmological argument offered by Leibniz and some others that begins with the meaning of necessary being then endeavors are directed to prove that this meaning is a real one and has reality. Whether this criticism is valid or not, whether and the cosmological arguments are as Kant says, was the core of some replies by some of philosophers of religion; and we shall not introduce them at this point. However, there are some other cosmological arguments that begin not with the

meaning of necessary being, but with the real existence of something in the world, like that offered by Norman L. Geisler. He believes that Kant's criticism does not apply to his restatements and another new form of the cosmological argument.[54]

> ... This [dependency of cosmological argument on the ontological one] is not true of the argument given here. It begins with existence, not thought (e.g., it begins with "something exists" not with "that than which nothing greater can be conceived"). It proceeds with ontologically grounded principles and not with mere rationally undeniable thought (i.e., it proceeds with "Nothing cannot cause something" rather than "Everything must have a sufficient reason"). Our restated cosmological argument concludes with a real Ground of all finite being as opposed to a logically necessary being (i.e., with "unlimited cause of existence for all limited existence," as opposed to "a Being which logically cannot not be"). The restated cosmological argument does not begin with the *a priori* and at no point does it borrow from the purely conceptual to complete its task. It is not based on the invalid ontological argument.

However, does this criticism apply to the *Seddiqin* Argument? Is this argument based on ontological argument? There is no need to waste more in response to these questions; it is sufficient to note that the *Seddiqin* Argument, in spite of some similarity, is neither a cosmological argument nor an ontological one. This argument that begins with the "fundamental reality of existence", not with the meaning of necessary being or with any incomplete fact in the world. Therefore, this criticism can not apply in it.

That there is no being whose existence is rationally demonstrable.

David Hume laid down what has become a standard objection to the ontological proof as well as to any alleged proof for God's existence. It has the following basic logical form:[55]

(1). Nothing is rationally demonstrable unless the contrary implies a contradiction (for if it leaves open any other possibility, then this position is not necessarily true).

(2). Nothing that is distinctly conceivable implies a contradiction (if it were contradictory, it would not be distinctly conceivable; it can not be possible).

(3). Whatever we conceive to exist we can also conceive as non-existent (the existence or nonexistence of things can not be ruled out conceptually).

(4). There is no being, therefore, whose nonexistence implies a contradiction.

(5). Consequently, there is no being whose existence is rationally demonstrable.

It seems that there is no need to add more explanation in reply to this criticism in view of all said above about two kinds of predication in Mulla Sadra's view: <u>primary essential predication</u> and <u>common technical predication</u>.[56] It is sufficient to note that necessary existence as a concept that has a mental existence is not necessary, but it is a meaning whose existence is possible. But necessary existence (if there is a referent for it) is necessary; indeed, every existent being exists necessarily. But this necessity is not the result of that meaning, but it must be concluded from an external reality that is not its meaning.

Therefore, the third premise of Hume's objection that "Whatever we conceive to exist we can also conceive as non-existent" does not apply to the *Seddiqin* Argument. A. Javadi Amoli, one of the contemporary disciples of Mulla Sadra, says:[57]

> "... Existence and external reality does not come from essence and essential characters of the meaning of necessary existence that is a mental concept. The necessity that is

considered in necessary existence is not a necessity that is in the relation between subjects and predicates, but it a necessity that is equal and just the external existence; and the meaning of necessary being that indicate its reality, has not this necessity. Although the concept of necessary existence is necessary existence by way of primary essential predication, but it is a mental affairs by way of common technical predication that comes into existence in the content of perception and awareness of existence as a possible reality..."

There is further explanation in the reply to the next criticism.

That Existential Statements Are not Necessary.

This objection is a very famous criticism against cosmological argument and has been repeated in the statements of most philosophers of religion since Hume's time. That existential necessity and its meaning be understood in some other way than logical necessity is important for the cosmological argument. But this causes some other criticisms which I will note here in the views of Hume and Kant and some other contemporary philosophers. I will explain Mulla Sadra's view about this necessity whose correct explanation is necessary for the cosmological argument. Afterwards, I will note that the *Seddiqin* Argument is a real existential proof that depends on a necessity different from the cosmological argument, i.e., necessity-by-itself. In other words, the words independent or rich existence (as opposed to dependent and poor existences) must be used instead of necessary existence (in the cosmological argument that can also be true) as opposed to possible beings.

The various forms of this objection are:

Hume:

No proposition about existence can be logically necessary. The opposite of any proposition about experience is always logically possible. But if it is logically possible that anything known by experience could have been otherwise, then it is not rationally inescapable that it be the way it is. It follows that nothing based in experience is logically demonstrable.

Kant:

Existential statements are not necessary. The conclusion of the cosmological argument purports to be an existentially necessary statement. But necessity is a characteristic of thought, not of being. Only statements are necessary, not things or beings. Necessity resides only in the logical, but not in the ontological realm.

What is logically necessary is not ontologically necessary. Flowing from the former criticism is the implied objection that what is rationally inescapable is not necessarily real. It might be necessary to *think* of something as being when in *actuality* it is not so. Hence, even a logically necessary Being would not necessarily exist.

To reply to this criticism (which is against the cosmological argument), I will explain first Mulla Sadra's view about the origin of the meaning of necessity, and then the reply from his point of view.

Mulla Sadra argues[58] that "necessity" in logic and philosophy (ontology) has the same meaning. This means that the meaning of necessity that is applied in logic, is, also, used in philosophy and is ascribed to external existences and realities. Nay, necessity is an evident meaning that proves its reality and truthfulness, originally, by philosophy; logic uses the result of that philosophical investigation as a postulate; then it explains its thirteen kinds in the realm of concepts and qualities of propositions like the essential, the descriptive, the conditional, the temporal and etc.

He argues that "necessity", "possibility" and "impossibility" are some evident meanings and do not have an actual definition. But the investigation of their reality and the division of things into necessary, possible and impossible or into necessary and possible is a philosophical division because the subject of philosophy is existence and beingness, and the comparison of every thing with existence by two exclusive disjunctive propositions results in the division of all things into necessary, possible, and impossible (or the division of existence into necessary and possible by one disjunctive proposition results in two kinds of being).

That exclusive disjunctive proposition is nothing other than the law of non contradiction. Because, the impossibility of gathering or removing two contradictories implies that every thing, as regards existence, has either necessary existence or not. The first is necessary being; if it does not have this necessity, then it will have either necessity of non-existence or not. The former is impossible and the latter is possible. (Likewise all existent being divides into necessary and possible.)

Necessity is considered first in philosophy, or is recognized in reality; then logic determines its referent in its own realm, namely mental concepts.

Some of Muslim theologians like "*Ghazi Azodi Iji*"[59] suppose that the necessity in philosophical necessity differs from that in logical necessity. If these two, they say, had the same meaning, then, in all conditions that essential characters of a thing are ascribed to it, this would require that the thing be a necessary being; for example, since number four is an even number necessarily, therefore it must be concluded that number four is a necessary being.

Mulla Sadra answers[60] that the meaning of necessity is the same, but the difference of meaning is with regard to predicates not with regard to the meaning of necessity that is the mode of the proposition. Therefore, that necessity requires that number four must be necessary in <u>even-ness,</u> not in existence.

Logic does not utilize philosophy only in the application of necessity. It makes use of philosophy in some other affairs, like predication as follow: Being is divided, under the title of unity and multiplicity, into "one" and "many", each of which divides into some other division like specific, generic or accidental unities and also pure unity and the unity that is ascribed to a multiple that is in identity. This identity is predication (that is either "primary essential" or "common technical"). Logic utilizes predication that is the result of above philosophical divisions as a postulate, and organizes its special matters accordingly. Otherwise, logic cannot prove the origin of predication.

Logic depends on philosophy not only in many of its postulates but also in the origin of its subject, that is knowledge and concept or presentation and judgment. Consequently, "necessity" is an evident meaning, and the judgment about its reality is a philosophical (ontological) matter; logic <u>applies</u> this philosophical meaning in the realm of relations and connection of propositions.

"Necessity", in spite of its unitive meaning, has various orders in different cases. The objection arises from two things:

Firstly, when "necessity" is considered merely in a logical sense its philosophical application that refers to external realities is neglected.

Secondly, when "logical necessity" is limited to analytic propositions every demonstration that results in a necessary conclusion must be in the realm of concepts. Mulla Sadra argues against this supposition that "necessity" is not restricted in essential property in analytic propositions. But includes also some other essentials he calls "essentials of section of demonstration". Those essentials are more general than essentials

in analytic propositions that come from analyzing a thing and finding its essential properties.

"Possibility" is a meaning that is not in the essence of any quiddity. It is abstracted only after comparing quiddity with existence and non-existence, and then is predicated of that quiddity. The meaning of "possibility" does not include essence or essential characters of any quiddity to which this meaning is ascribed.

The "need" for another being is not a meaning that can be taken from essence or essential characters of a possible being. Therefore, the "need" as well as possibility is from the "essentials of the section on demonstration".

The cosmological (necessity and possibility) argument (in Mulla Sadra's view) depends not on mental analysis of meanings and quiddities which are conceived, but on intellectual analysis of realities that exist externally. In this argument, even the meaning of existence does not appear in so far as it is a mental meaning, but the meaning of existence is attended to as regards its referent and reality. The real referent of existence is an evident judgment for any one who is not a sophist.

A possible being which exists externally (i.e., an external referent of possible being) needs another being in external reality to remove its need, and that being necessarily exists externally.

The external referent and reality of necessary Being does not have any quiddity other than His reality and existence: His quiddity is just His reality and external existence. His necessity has no referent distinct and separate from His reality and it is not other than intensity of existence. Consequently, the necessity of God as necessary being is not like necessity in analytic propositions, i.e., it is not like logical necessity (like essential or conditional necessity) that refers to quality of connection of a predicate to subject; rather it refers directly to the intensity of reality that has no truth other than external-ness or reality.

Since Kant holds that necessity is a merely logical concept in the realm of analytic propositions, he supposes that if God, as necessary Being, has the necessity of external existence, then the external existence must be taken in His meaning. Thus negation of its existence (i.e., negation of referent and external existence) requires a contradiction as a negation of the essence and essential character of a thing.

A. Javadi Amoli, one of the contemporary disciples of Mulla Sadra says:[61]

"... Existence and external reality does not come from essence and essential characters of the meaning of necessary existence that is a mental concept. The necessity that is considered in necessary existence is not a necessity that is in the relation between subjects and predicates, but it is a necessity that is equal to and just the external existence; and the meaning of necessary being that indicates its reality, has not this necessity. Although the concept of necessary existence is necessary existence by way of primary essential predication, but it is a mental affairs by way of common technical predication that comes into existence in the contain of perception and awareness of existence as a possible reality..."

The necessity-possibility argument (as a kind of cosmological argument) in Mulla Sadra's view uses the "need" had by possible being for its external truth to another being. Therefore, if a possible being has reality externally, then this need has also external truth; consequently, the other which removes this need has real referent.

Therefore, although the meaning of necessary Being can be understood apart from its referent (even in the case that requires the supposition of non-existence of the world) to deny Him, there is no way to deny Him in external reality and truth. Because, if reality is not necessary (because it possesses some characteristics inconsistent with the character of necessary being), it must be possible being (because of the disjunctive proposition which announces necessity or non-necessity of existence for existent beings). But the reality of possible being without a necessary being as cause is a contradiction.

This was Mulla Sadra's view about necessity in the words of his contemporary commentators. All said above removes the criticisms stated about necessity in the cosmological argument, but not in the kind of argument posed by Leibniz but that is named as necessity-possibility argument based on Mulla Sadra's philosophical investigations in this argument.

However, the *Seddiqin* Argument differs from the necessity-possibility or cosmological argument, because the latter is based on quidditive possibility, while the former argues through "poverty possibility", that is, really existential poor-ness and the word possibility is ascribed to it figuratively. The mere truth of existence, based on the fundamental reality of existence and its analogical gradation, etc., has some characters like completeness, rich-ness, unlimited-ness, etc. Those poor existences must depend on Him because they are not other than poor-ness (not a being that have poor-ness accidentally).

Therefore, what is stated by Kant and Hume not only does not apply to necessity-possibility argument, but also cannot penetrate in the *Seddiqin* Argument.

That an Infinite Series Is Possible.

In most such argumentation, the defenders of the cosmological argument, needs to demonstrate the absurdity of an infinite succession of causes in proving the existence of God. In all cosmological arguments which is argued by following philosophers there is one premise that indicates this absurdity, namely:

1- Aristotle:[62]

    ... An infinite regress of actualizers is impossible (for the whole series would not be actualized unless there is a first actualizer)...

2- Alfarabi:[63]

    ... There can not be an infinite regress of causes of existence...

3- Avicenna:[64]

    ... There can not be an infinite series of causes of being, but there can be an infinite series of causes of becoming (like father begets son, who begets son, etc.) ...

4- Thomas Aquinas:[65]

    a. The argument from motion: ... There can not be an infinite regress of actualizers or movers. ...

    b. The argument from efficient causality: ... There can not be an infinite regress of (essentially related) efficient causes. ...

    c. The argument from possibility and necessity: ... There can not be an infinite regress of necessary beings each of which has its necessity dependent on another. ...

5- Duns Scotus:[66]

    ... There cannot be an infinite regress of productive beings, each producing the being of the one following it. ...

6- Leibniz:[67]

    ... There cannot be an infinite regress of sufficient reasons. ...

In all these cosmological arguments one premise that must be proved is the impossibility of infinite regress in causes. Yet this is not possible in the view of Hume and Kant. I am not, here, in a position to examine all the demonstrations for proving the impossibility of an infinite regress of causes in response to the criticisms of Hume and Kant. Perhaps, some kinds of these demonstrations are not valid (like demonstrations for annulling preparatory causes), and some others which differ in kind have no trouble with those criticisms. I am, here, examining *Seddiqin* Argument with this criticism. As we said before in the section "the advantages of Mulla Sadra's *Seddiqin* Argument over Avicenna's", (and, also, in Sabzavari and Tabatabaii's view) this argument does not need a proof against the infinite regress of causes. To repeat:

Since in Avicenna's philosophy "quidditive possibility" is discussed, he needed to demonstrate the absurdity of infinite succession in proving the existence of God, while in Sadra's *Seddiqin* Argument in which existential poor-ness (poverty possibility) is mentioned there is no need to demonstrate the absurdity of infinite succession. Mulla Sadra himself after proposing his argument said about this advantage:[68]

> "This way that we measured is firmest and most honorable and simplest one so that the disciple of Him does not need any intermediate thing other than Him for having a knowledge about His essence and attributes and acts; and there is, also, no need to annul infinite succession and circular causality..."

Some commentators of Sadra's philosophy are of the opinion, which they ascribe to him, that this argument not only does not need to rule out infinite succession but that it is a proof for rejecting any infinite succession.[69]

Notes

[1] . See David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.*

[2] . See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated by Max Muller, pp. 398-403. I will refer to this book in notes which will come later as "*CPR*".

[3] . David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.*

[4] . *CPR*. p. 404-410, see notes 1-4 also Norman L. Geisler *Philosophy of Religion* pp.145-147 and 181-185.

[5] . You can find these criticisms in "Malkolm" in Plantinga, *The Ontological Argument*, p.136

[6] . See *Anselm's Basic Writings*, translated by S. N. Deans, or Alvin Plantinga, *The Ontological Argument*, pp.3-27.

[7] . Descartes *Meditations* in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, volume I, translated by Elizabeth S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross.

[8] . *CPR*. p. 399

[9] . *Ibid.*

[10] . *Ibid.*

[11] . *Ibid.*, p. 398.

[12] . *Ibid.*, p. 399.

[13] . *Ibid.*

[14] . *Ibid.*

[15] . *Ibid.*

[16] . Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Philosophical Writings*, translated by Mary Morris and G. H. R. Parkinson, pp. 10-17.

[17] . *CPR*, p.400

[18] . *Ibid.*

[19] . *Ibid.* p. 401.

[20] . See Mulla Sadra, *Asfar* I pp. 292-294. Mulla Sadra carefully shows the difference between these two kinds of predication in Islamic philosophy. By this distinction he has a good solution for soul important problems as mental existence and the characters of knowledge, etc.).

[21] . You can see all of these examples of the two kinds of predication in the following: Mulla Sadra, *Asfar*, pp. 238-240, Tabatabaii, *Bedayat al-Hikmat*, p. 27; and *Nehayat al-Hikmat*, p. 58.

[22] . See Norman L. Geisler, *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 147.

[23] . *CPR*, pp. 401-402.

[24] . You can find that distinction (between two parts propositions and three parts propositions) and the illuminative philosophers' objection against the fundamental reality of existence along with Mulla Sadra's and his disciples' answers in: Mulla Sadra, *Asfar I* p. 40-47, *Al-Mashaiir*, p. 135-138; Tabatabaii, *Bedayat al-Hikmat*, p. 20-21.

[25] . See part two, chapter 1, section "Types of existence"

[26] . *CPR*, p. 401

[27] . *Ibid*

[28] . See page 75.

[29] . *CPR*, p. 403.

[30] .*Ibid*.

[31] .See Sabzavari, *Sharh al-Manzoomah*, p. 29, and Javadi Amoli, *Proof of Divine Existence* p. 203.

[32] . *CPR*, p.398

[33] . See "A Debate on the Argument from Contingency", F. C. Coplestone and Bertrand Russell, in Louis P. Pojman, *Philosophy of Religion, An Anthology,* pp. 6-11. This debate was broadcast in 1948 on the Third Program of the British Broadcasting Corporation and published in *Why I Am Not a Christian*, by Bertrand Russell.

[34] . John Hospers, *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis*, pp. 293-295.

[35] . J. L. Mackie, *The Miracle of Theism*, pp. 82-86.

[36] . See the beginning of the section "Existence" from chapter 1 of the second part.

[37] . See Mulla Sadra, *Al-Asfar* pp. 23-27, 68-69; *Al-Shavahid al-Robubiyyat*, pp. 7, 8; *Al-Masha'ir*, pp 13-19; Sabzavari Mulla hadi, *Sharh al-Manzumat fi al-Hikmat* in its translation by Mohaghegh Mehdi and Izutsu Toshihiko, *The Metaphysics of Sabzavari* p.31.

[38] . Mulla Sadra, *Al-Masha'ir*, p .12.

[39] . Mulla Sadra, *Al-Shavahid al Robubiyyat*, pp. 7-8.

[40] .See Mulla Sadra, *Al-Shavahid al Robubiyyat*, pp.14-17, M.H. Tabatabaii, *Bedayat al Hikmat*, p. 13; *Osoole Falsafeh wa Raveshe Realism (The Principles of Philosophy and Method of Realism)* , p. 29 with footnotes by Motahhari.

[41] . A. Javadi Amoli, *Proofs of Divine Existence*, p. 206.

[42] . Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London, 1958), B.634

[43] .B.636.

[44] .B.635.

[45] .B.636-637.

[46] .B.632-633.

[47] . Russell is not the only writer on the cosmological argument who thinks there is something superfluous about using *a posteriori* considerations to prove the existence of a necessary being. See, for example, H. J. Paton, *The Modern Predicament* (London, 1955), pp. 199-200, and Patterson Brown, "St. Thomas' Doctrine of Necessary Being", *The Philosophical Review*, 73.1(January, 1964): 78. However, The writers, unlike Russell, do not attribute such a claim to Kant.

[48] . B.635.

[49] . B.634.

[50] . There are many passages indicating that for Kant a necessary being would be one whose existence can be determined a priori. (See, for example, B631, 640, 645, 662.) Thus he was well-positioned to make the objection Russell attributes to him. But he did not do so.

[51] . B. 634-635

[52] . B. 635

[53] . B. 636-637

[54] .Norman L. Geisler, *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 211.

[55] . David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, and Norman L. Geisler, *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 146.

[56] . See page 207.

[57] . A. Javadi Amoli, *Proofs of Divine Existence*, p.163-164.

[58] . Mulla Sadra's statements about origin of the meaning of necessity and possibility is scattered in his book *Asfar*. To explain his view I use his commentator, A. Javadi Amoli; see A. Javadi Amoli, *Proofs of Divine Existence*, p.158-159.

[59] . Ghazi Azodi Iji, *Sharhi Mavaqif*, Vol. III p.121.

[60] . Mulla Sadra *Asfar*, vol. I p.91.

[61] . A. Javadi Amoli, *Proofs of Divine Existence*, p. 163.

[62] . Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book XII ch. 8

[63]. Alfarabi, *Oyoun al-Masa'il* p. 50.

[64] . Avicenna, *Al-Negat*, p. 210.

[65] . Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, 1,2,3

[66] . Duns Scotus, *Philosophical Writings*, pp. 129ff.

[67] . Gottfried Leibniz, *Monadology*, pp. 32-39.

[68] . Mulla Sadra, *Asfar*, VI, pp. 25-26.

[69] . See A. Javadi Amoli, *Sharhe Hekmat Mota'alieh Asfar Arba'ah*, sec.1 from vol. IV, p.134, and M.T. Mesbahi Yazdi, *Amoozeshe Falsafeh*, PP. 79-80,343.

Conclusion

The *Seddiqin* Argument, as an argument for proving the existence, attributes and acts of God, is not much known by Western philosophy, what assumes there are three or four important sets of arguments for the existence of God, namely the ontological, the cosmological, the teleological and perhaps the moral. This can be because of the assumption in the view of Western thinkers that Islamic philosophy came to an end with the death of Averroes and/or it ceased to exist with what was written by Ghazzali (1058-1111) against philosophical thinking in his important and influential book, namely *Tahafut al-Falasifat*. In reality, what came to an end was only the first phase of the whole history of Islamic philosophy. With the death of Averroes, Islamic philosophy ceased to be alive for the West, but this does not mean that it ceased to be alive for the East. In fact, Islamic philosophy did not develop in all Muslim countries after Ghazzali and Averroes especially among Sunni Muslims; and in the Arabian areas there was no longer a large interest in developing philosophy. Since these Muslims were the majority and had more relations to the West, the assumption that there were no new philosophical views in Muslim countries grew in the West. This assumption was an obstacle between Islamic philosophy and Western philosophy and impeded active relation between their ideas.

In fact, the truth of the matter is that a kind of philosophy which deserves to be regarded as typically and characteristically Islamic developed not so much before the death of Averroes as after. This typically Islamic philosophy arose and matured in the periods subsequent to the Mongol invasion, until in the Safawid period in Iran it reached the apex of vigorous creativity. This peculiar type of Islamic philosophy which grew up in Iran among the Shiites has come to be known as *hikmat* or theosophy (lit. "wisdom"). We can trace the origin of the *hikmat* back to the very beginning of the above-mentioned second phase of the history of philosophy in Islam.

Hikmat is structurally a peculiar combination of rational thinking and Gnostic intuition, or, we might say, rationalist philosophy and mystical experience.

The most famous and important philosophers of this second phase of Islamic philosophy is Mulla Sadra. He had very new ideas in philosophy (especially ontology) that made him the brightest star in Islamic philosophy. His new ideas mark a turning-point in Islamic philosophy so that the other philosophers after him were affected by his view points.

The *Seddiqin* Argument that we analyzed in this research is a more developed argument for proving the existence of God in the light of his philosophical views about existence, necessity, causality etc. The fundamental reality (principality) of existence is the most important bases of his philosophy and can change our view about more other philosophical affairs.

Consequently, the above study is divided into three parts. The first introduced Mulla Sadra as an Islamic philosopher to make clear his background, life, works, views and historical relation to other schools, etc. This was a preparatory part for introducing the one who projected the *Seddiqin* Argument in the true *Seddiqin* manner of argumentation.

The second part was devoted to the explanation of the *Seddiqin* Argument. Since this argument is based on some philosophical views of Mulla Sadra that without which the argument can not be understood, I allocated three chapters for this explanation about "existence", "necessity" and "causality" in his view. Then the *Seddiqin* Argument in Mulla Sadra's view was presented in the interpretations of two contemporary commentators of his philosophy. There were not the final statements about *Seddiqin* Argument; for the argument had some background in Avicenna's thought which Mulla Sadra improved, as well as developments after Mulla Sadra by Sabzavari and Tabatabaii, which were presented also. In the end of this part I compared the *Seddiqin* Argument with what is known in the western philosophy as the ontological argument, and enumerated three differences between these two arguments by which the *Seddiqin* Argument has been vaccinated against some criticisms made against the ontological argument.

The third part examined the *Seddiqin* Argument in relation to standard criticisms that raised against the soundness of ontological and cosmological arguments. Since most important criticisms are taken from Hume and Kant, their criticisms were first presented, then the *Seddiqin* Argument was examined in relation to these criticisms specially those ones which refer to existence and necessity. This part reviewed seven more important criticisms. Since other criticisms are studied indirectly during explanation of the

foundations of *Seddiqin* Argument, they were not examined later but could be part of another larger study of this argument afterwards.

The *Seddiqin* Argument was not originally an attempt to prove that God, as that which most people conceive, exists, but is an attempt to transcend our perception to the real meaning of God that according to Mulla Sadra is nothing but the pure truth of existence. The difficulty in proving the existence of God is not in affirming the proposition "God exists" but in having a good knowledge and conception about Him.

The negation of His existence is because of weakness not in the argumentation but in the conception of His nature. Avicenna said in his Logic: "all thanks belong to God that whoever denies Him [does not deny Him but] of course denies what he has conceived." When one has a good transcendent perception from God it is equal to affirming His existence.

I think Mulla Sadra reached this view because of some hints from Islamic thought about this matter in the Quran and some prayers quoted from the prophet Mohammed and his relatives. In one of these prayers it is said:

> "... How can it be demonstrated for You [God] by what is not but need in existence to You? Does any other than You have any appearance that You do not have, so that it can make You appear? When did You disappear so that You need a reason that denote You? And when did You go out of sight so that some effects can be what cause us to reach to You? ..."

Therefore, the arguments which use some effects or special facts in the universe to reach to God do not have enough power to give us a good conception about God who must be clearer than those effects. In the light of this view, Mulla Sadra introduced his *Seddiqin* Argument which arises from most evident facts in the world, i.e., existence (or reality in Tabatabaii's view).

What he did was to give not a demonstration, but a good survey of the reality of existence that refers firstly to God then to other things. In this survey, he founded his philosophy on the fundamental reality of existence and its circumstances. In my research I introduced only a brief survey of the results of this view in his philosophy. The fundamental reality of existence has also other consequences in other philosophical matters like the reality of time and the substantial movement in the world. A thorough survey of the fundamental reality of existence and its results need more research. However, I used only those parts of his philosophy that are essential to introduce the *Seddiqin* Argument. I

explained, in this research, only the main purpose of the *Seddiqin* Argument that is proving the existence of God in the views of Mulla Sadra and his disciples.

This argument has also some other consequences more beyond proving the existence of God, and Mulla Sadra's argument is so structured that can be useful for these results. These consequences can be used for proving the unity (in some special meaning) of God, the quality of his attributes and the relation between God and other beings. Explanation of these consequences also can be done in some other researches which can clarify the differences between his view in the light of the fundamental reality of existence and other traditional conceptions about these matters.

For example, he has a detailed and interesting answer to the problem of evil by his view about attributes of God (like His power and mercy) and the relation of God to other beings. The survey in his answer to this problem can also be the subject of further research. He also has a term explaining the nature of God, namely, "the simple truth all things and not any of them". But it can be difficult to understand what he means, yet it is also very comprehensive explanation of the matter. The present research could prepare other research in these fields.

The *Seddiqin* Argument differs from both the ontological and the cosmological arguments both in the kind of argumentation and in the conception of and intention from God. These two arguments have encountered some objections. Hume and Kant criticized them systematically and the other philosophical objections usually originate from their criticisms. Some of these criticisms arise from analysis of some philosophical affairs like existence, necessity etc. Some of these standard critics created serious troubles for some kind of these arguments (especially the ontological) so that their correctness were in question.

Mulla Sadra based his *Seddiqin* Argument on such founds that they could be protected against these criticisms. He proposed his philosophical foundations in detail in order to protect the argument from those attacks. Consequently, to examine the *Seddiqin* Argument with those systematic criticisms, we must survey the foundations of the *Seddiqin* Argument in Mulla Sadra's view.

The third part examined, the *Seddiqin* argument and its foundations along with the more important standard criticisms and tried to show that these criticisms do not disturb the *Seddiqin* Argument because it provide a new idea about God which is nothing but the

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pure truth of existence and a new argumentation that strengthens this idea. These criticisms focused on existence and necessity. Some other criticisms were enumerated, but they were not so important that *Seddiqin* Argument was examined directly with them. These criticisms were answered indirectly during explanation of foundations of *Seddiqin* Argument. The position of *Seddiqin* Argument against these criticisms and also some others posed by other philosophers like Russell, Haspers, Mackie etc. can be examined in another research that may show Mulla Sadra's answer to these objections. The present research can provide the main key for solving those problems.

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