

Happiness in View of Aristotle and Mulla Sadra

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Abstract. One of the important concepts in the philosophy of ethics is the concept of euphoria [alternative term are happiness, felicity, prosperity, success, and others.] It is, therefore, necessary to have a definition of the concept. It is a pleasure, a sense of wisdom, a science, a goodness, or something beyond these concepts? Human beings seek euphoria, but they have their doubts about the whatness of euphoria. Human beings don't know what it is. However, they do know that euphoria is something consistent with man's creation and his ultimate goal. In Islam, one can say, a euphoric, or a prosperous person is someone who is on their way towards God, and or the absolute perfection. In this essay, the viewpoints of Aristotle and Mulla Sadra [that is, sadrolmote- alehin] have been compared and contrasted. Also components of prosperity have been discussed. In addition, there are answers to such questions as:
Is the concept of prosperity real, or is it conventional? In other words, does it exist *per se*, or has it been invented by man? Is it a matter of this world, or is it a discussion belonging to the Hereafter? Is it natural, or is it acquired?

Keywords: Euphoria [and words related to the concept, such as prosperity, happiness, virtue, etc.], Aristotle, Mulla Sadra. one, two, three, etc.

1. Introduction

One of the important concepts in ethics and in the philosophy of ethics is euphoria, or prosperity, or happiness, or success, as some thinkers tend to use these alternative terms. Euphoria, which is a New Latin word taken from the Greek word *euphoros*, meaning originally healthy, from *eu-* [good] and *pherein*, [to bear], has long been a fundamental component in ethics and the philosophy of ethics. Different schools of thought have incorporated the concept in their ethical systems. It has received a special attention from various systems of thinking, both in the west and in the East.

In this study, we have discussed the viewpoints of Aristotle as a western philosopher, and the viewpoints of Mulla Sadra as a philosopher from the East, since both of these philosophers are considered classical thinkers in the field of philosophy. In a comparative study, we have addressed these two viewpoints on the euphoria, or as some writers call it, the prosperity.

2. Status of man in Different schools

In Zoroastrianism, mankind is considered as a creature created by Goodness. He has been, therefore, shaped into a good creature by the hands of his creator. He has been vested with freedom and power of choosing. He has the power of choosing any path he desires.

According to Judaism and Christianity, mankind is able to choose between good and evil. He has the option to be godly or ungodly, and his salvation depends on this freedom. [the Holy Bible, the old testament, the new testament]. In the Greek philosophy, Socrates was interested in the human virtues and the bliss for humans. Aristotle says that Socrates addressed the ethical matters and the ethical virtues. [1] Among the sophists, Protagoras believed that man is the criterion or the standard for everything: He is the standard for the things that exist, and the standard for the things that do not exist; in other words, Plato's family believes in the originality of spirit. For him, the soul is the most valuable possession of man. In his prayers, Plato says, O

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my beloved God, let me experience the inward beauty; [3] . According to plato, the highest good, or the bliss, of man includes the knowledge of God. However, euphoria, or prosperity, should be obtained through the pursuit of virtue, which is possible only if man tries to become similar to God.

We should become similar to God, as far as possible. It means that we should become just and honest through the assistance of wisdom. Anyone who desires to be loved by God, he should become similar to Him, as far as possible. Plato is ideal man is the person who seeks the entire wisdom., since wisdom comes from the Heaven, and therefore, it never loses its strength. According to Aristotle, mans felicity comes from his thinking, and from his ideas. Copplestone reports that Aristotle gives various arguments that the highest prosperity is the thinking, and that reason is mans greatest faculty, and that meditating is the greatest activity of the mind, and that prosperity depends on the employment of the mind. In other words, only through the application of the mind in the most noble issues can man find his euphoria. To Aristotle, the highest mode of knowledge is, therefore, God.

Therefore, man has got a high status in the Greek philosophy. Mans status, according to the Greek philosophers, and specifically according to Aristotle, is high, and his station is defined in terms of his meditation on God. Aristotle considers euphoria as something related to the inner states of thought, or the spirit, Moreover, Aristotle considers virtue as something leading to the achievement of balance, In other words, he considers virtue as a mediator for the creation of equilibrium among different aspects of human behaviour and living. [4].

3. Man According to Muslim Thinkers

Muslim philosophers define the life on the basis of the Koran. They resort to the holy book to see whether the life is meaningful, goal- oriented, or else, futile, What do you think that we created you in vain? [5]: This rhetorical question in the Holy Koran states that Gods deeds are wisely devised and that His actions are goal- oriented, and meaningful. Farabi believes that the existence of community is necessary for the perfection. He is, therefore, under the influence of plato and Aristotle. The ultimate goal towards which Farabi is walking is. indeed, the achievement of euphoria. This euphoria according to him, consists of some components. Acting as pre-conditions. In his book. The Acquisition of Euphoria, Farabi lists four components of prosperity in this world and in the Hereafter : theoretical virtues, Virtues of thought, Ethical virtues, practical Device [6].

Elsewhere, he says that the main goal of ethics is the acquisition of euphoria. For him, the ultimate perfection is the good, and that the euphoria is the highest good. The more man tries to reach the good, the more he gains euphoria.

Avecina believes in the process of perfection for creatures and in the ascending arc from inanimate to vegetables and animates and Jinn and humans in the from of an evolutionary process. He believes that man is located on the last point of life perfection in the material world, who possesses every accomplishment found among the lower creatures, in addition to a thinking faculty, or as he terms it, a thinking soul when the thinking soul comes to existence in him, and after the serene temperament is added to the soul, the Holy spirit, or as he terms it, the pure Reason, comes to existence. Then, man goes the path of evolution again in order to make the soul more transparent. At this stage, forms of knowledge separate from the Active Mind, creating a degree of perfection experienced by Elders and prophets without a message from God.

After this stage, as his perfection increases, man reaches the station of Active Mind, and he receives messages from God. If man transcends in the station of messengers, he will reach the station of pure Angels and Active Minds. In the station of pure Minds, there are, of course, different degrees. These degrees can be materialized for man, ranging from mere materiality to pure spirituality. Any person may attain one of degrees of humanity, depending on his capability and aspiration, or a Favor from God.[8]

Mulla Sadra defines the true euphoria as the union of the communicating soul with the common sense. He believes that the intellectual euphoria and the spiritual pleasure on the basis of Hereafter are the most transcendental pleasures. In terms of ontology, and in the universe of being, the status of man experiences a descending and an ascending curve in the system of creation. In order to explain this. Mulla Sadra says that the Bounty from God the Almighty is sent down first to the world of Reason, and then, to the world of Ideas,

and then, to the world of Nature, and that the evolutionary movement leads from the world of Nature to the world of Ideas, and from the world of Ideas to the world of Reason.

According to Mulla Sadra, man is the top of the world of Amr, because the countenance of man consists of the final degree of perfection in the carnal universe and the first degree of the spiritual metaphysical universe. Mulla Sadra, in a different content, says that the human soul experiences an herbal degree of existential perfection while it is in the mother womb, because the embryo is potentially herbal and actually animal. When it is born, the soul is promoted to the degree of an animal. When it reaches the stage of puberty, the soul of man is actually a human animal and potentially a sensual human. Then, the soul of man perceives the objects with its thoughts. With his practical reason, man performs actions before he reaches the spiritual puberty. At this stage, the moral behaviour is internalized. This stage is experienced, more often than not, at the age of forty. At this stage, humans are actually sensual and potentially angelic, or else, demonic. Mans value status is determined at this stage. In his book *The Asfar*, Mulla Sadra outlines the evolutionary trend of perfection for the existence from the inanimate to the humans, saying that vegetables have got a superfluous state when they are compared to inanimate. The vegetables, in turn, have different degrees, such plants as olives or palm trees being similar to animals in terms of their ways of living, for example, in their manner of production and reproduction of fruits and in their manner of survival, coming down to the lowest degree of animals such as insects or flies; Animals, in turn, are composed of different degrees: the highest degrees belong to the primates that imitate many actions of man. This is the ultimate status for the animalistic perfection, and the beginning of human movement, a horizon indicating the vestiges of reason and discrimination and the use of tools. The hierarchy ends in humanity. At this stage, the movement culminates in the acquisition of knowledge, because some faculties, some internalizations, and some Divine Favors have been given to man, enabling him to go through the human virtues.

4. Aristotles Viewpoints

Different philosophers have defined euphoria in different ways. Some philosophers have presented a hedonistic interpretation, and some others have interpreted it in terms of internal virtues. Hedonists believe that euphoria, the desirable good, is experienced through the sensual pleasures including happiness, craving, carelessness, etc, since they are the components of euphoria, Pre- Aristotlian philosophers believe that euphoria can only be found in the perfection of soul. They maintain that euphoria is the realization of such virtues as wisdom, courage, chastity, justice, and so forth within the soul. [9] Aristotle considers euphoria as the virtuous living, or as the activities in accordance with virtues, or in accordance with the highest virtue, i.e., the theoretical wisdom. [10]

In the field of ethics, Aristotle is extremely teleological. He believes that each action of man is, indeed, a step in the direction of a single purpose. This purpose is the ultimate good, and the highest good, or rather, the very good itself. In other words, euphoria is good in nature, and that it is innately good. Humans have been created in a way that they seek euphoria. Aristotle also says that euphoria, as the final goal, has two characteristics: First, it is innately perfect and impeccable. Second, it is unique and for itself. It is sought not for anything else, since it is reasonable to seek a thing for the sake of euphoria, and to seek euphoria for the sake of itself, we must have the justification for the belief that there is no good thing than euphoria; Otherwise, why shouldn't another good be the ultimate purpose, besides euphoria?

Aristotle gives a criterion by which euphoria can be understood. [11]. He explains that if something, say X, is good, and we call it euphoria, but later, we learn that there is something else, say Y, which is also good in a way that X + Y is better than X, it will be clear that X is not the euphoria. This criterion for euphoria does not specify the nature and the type of life that brings about euphoria. Aristotle believes, by focusing on mans functions and roles, we can present a more definition of euphoria. As man is necessarily a reasonable creature, he must be, functionally, guided through reason. The appropriate life for man, therefore, is a life which can be directed by the practical reason and in accordance with virtue: only reason, and virtue, can cause man to prosper, i.e., to realize the perfection of his soul. Aristotle takes euphoria as the virtuous life or as the activities in accordance with virtues or as the greatest virtue, i.e., the theoretical wisdom. [12]

In many respects, Muslim philosophers interpretations of euphoria are consistent with Aristotles interpretation, although there are differences in their analyses of euphoria, which stem from religious

influence. Due to the relationship between euphoria and the spiritual transcendence, philosophers usually try to first explicate the spirit, or soul, and its capabilities. In order to understand euphoria, it is necessary to understand the soul, and there by the mankind, so that the key to euphoria, or prosperity, as Muslims call it, can be understood, since the soul is indeed the key to euphoria, and the means by which man is able to acquire virtues, and since it is the internalized reservoir of human higher values. [13] .Aristotle maintains that there are two kinds of virtue: rational virtues and moral virtues. Retional virtues include practical wisdom or reason, and moral virtues include justice, freedom, bravery, courage, and so forth. They need to be guided by the practical reason. He concludes that euphoria is a durable or permanent action in accordance whit both moral and rational virtues. Accordingly, the virtue lies some where between these two extremes. Aristotle states that it is not enough for the virtue to just recognize good and evil, He believes that wisdom and the virtue influence each other, and that wrong doing is caused by dominant desires. Aristotle holds that pleasure is not the ultimate purpose, i.e., euphoria. He explains that pleasure functions as a prerequisite to euphoria. He reminds us that a prerequisite to something is not the same as the thing itself. The value of pleasure depends on the practical value of pleasure, and not every pleasure causes a single feeling. Each pleasure evokes a specific feeling. Aristotle believes that some pleasure are evil, which bring about evil. A life on the basis of pleasure, in which reason does not play a leading role, is not appropriate for a reasonable creature.[14].

5. Nature of Euphoria According to Aristotle

Concerning the union of ethics and politics, as a single science responsible for studying the nature of euphoria, Aristotle maintains that every mode of knowledge as a rational action or movement focuses are no exceptions. Ethics and politics are one. However, it is called ethics when it focuses on the good of individuals, and it is called politics when it focuses on the good of society. The good which is studied by this union, i.e. The highest good, is euphoria. Concerning what euphoria is, and what man must do in order to prosper, Aristotle inductively states that everyone agrees that euphoria is mans highest good, yet they disagree about the nature and about the definition of euphoria: soma people think that euphoria consists of the pursuit of pleasure, others think that it consists of wealth, and of nobility, and some others think that euphoria comes from good health.[15].

6. Virtue, and Types of virtues According to Aristotle:

Virtue is an internalization that makes man good, and makes his actions good. This can happen when mans actions and interactions are within limits. Aristotle first divides virtue into two types: rational virtue and ethical virtue.

Rational Virtue: This type of virtue comes about through learning. It needs time and experience to develop.

Ethical virtue: This type of virtue is the result of habits. It does not result from nature, because no natural creature may have acquired a habit contrary to their nature.

Naturally, we have the capability to nurture our virtues, yet it is through habits that we may be able to make them perfect. At first, we have our natural abilities potentially, but we can actualize them later through our actions. Senses confirm this fact. We acquire our virtues through practice. In other words, through acting on the basis of material and spiritual virtues, we can acquire them. Aristotle believes that virtue is an internalization of good deeds, thereby changing man into righteousness, so that his actions and interactions will be within limits [16].

Although being within limits is a virtue, and going to extremes is evil, not every action (and every interaction) is considered to be within limits. For example, actions such as treason, shamelessness, rancor, murder, etc. are always considered as evil or corruption ; we can not consider any moderation for such actions. Aristtotles theory of being within limits has been criticized, to be sure. For example, it has been said that the extreme point of learning is the knowledge of indefiniteness, and opposite extreme is the utter ignorance. Therefore, how can we find any moderation, or as critics put it, limits? Moreover, can we say that the indefinite knowledge is bad, because it is going to extremes? In addition to setting standards for virtue,

Aristotle has addressed virtues in details. He has studied such ethical concepts as courage, as courage, bravery, chastity, generosity, bounty, etc. as well as the opposites of these concepts, as follows:

Bravery lies between the extremes of boldness and fear, generosity is between wastefulness and stinginess. Between the extreme of boasting and shyness lies truthfulness. Modesty lies between baseness and arrogance. Receptiveness is between funniness and sternness. Flexibility lies between the extremes of surrender and despotism. Dignity is between ambition and lowness, and so forth. [17] .Aristotle believes that euphoria and virtue are not the same. There is, rather, a causal relationship between them. In other words, they are causes and effects: virtues cause euphoria; through practicing in accordance with virtues, one will reach euphoria.[18]

7. Characteristics of Euphoria According to Aristotle

Aristotle believes that euphoria has two main characteristics: First, euphoria is innately desirable. In other words, we seek euphoria for the sake of euphoria. Second, euphoria is independently good by itself. In other words, euphoria does not need any entity or force. This utter independence is but pure perfection. Therefore, mans euphoria is innately desired by him, and it is innately independent. Accordingly, euphoria is the one God, and not other truths. The prosperous man is moving towards the pure reason, i.e. The closer to God, the closer to euphoria. Aristotle maintains that every sensual and/ or rational virtue aims at preparing man to achieve the status of though fullness which is, indeed, the action of God. By thinking, man tries to be similar to the essence of God who is the absolute thinking. [19].

Aristotle says that thinking is the differentiating element that separates man from other animals, a fact that causes him to survive because mans material elements are mortal. It is the euphoria of mans soul that makes him immortal, and he must be good- doing, and indifferent to the worldly matters in order to achieve euphoria.[20].

8. Euphoria According to Mulla Sadra

On euphoria, Sadra- Mote- Alehin says: Until adherence of soul to senses stops, Wayfaring will not happen. Wayfaring is movement towards God after the soul is separated from the senses and from the sensible. Life will materialize in this world only if ones body is wholesome, and ones seed is permanent, and ones species deserves life.[21]. He defines the euphoria of something as the perfection of that thing. Iniquity is against euphoria because the being is altogether good and the not- being is absolutely evil. The perfection of any being is its good, and the degeneration of any being is its evil. The perception of perfection causes pleasure, and the perception of shortcoming or degeneration causes pain and iniquity.[22].

In the works of philosophers, the perfection of a faculty is the same as its pleasure. Since, on the other hand, the pleasure of every faculty has been considered to result from the perception of pleasant circumstances of that faculty, the euphoria of any faculty, consequently, means the perception of pleasant circumstances of that faculty. AVecina defines pleasure as the perception of good and getting access to the good which is considered to be perfection and good for the perceptor.[23]. And Sadra also defines the euphoria of any faculty as the perception of pleasant circumstances of that faculty. Since there are different degrees, or stations, for the perceptions of truths for the preceptor, there are also different degrees and stations for different preceptors of being. Their mastery of perception indicates the existence of the first truth as well as the existence of sensible. As the existence of a thing is pleasant for itself, the cause of a thing is the provider of its essence and perfection. Therefore, the true pleasant is the being. Specially, the true beloved and the Absolute perfection which is the most perfect being,[24].

In his book *The Divine Evidence*, Mulla Sadra says: sages all agree that pleasure, goodness, euphoria, happiness, etc. of each one of the sensual faculties result from the perception of something congenial to ones nature or tasted or moods, and that ones pains, evil, and dissatisfaction result feom the perception of something undesirable to his nature. For example, the pleasure of senses is a perception congenial to our essence. Admittedly, although all of the sensual faculties have the same perception, they are different in terms of their degrees of perceptions.

Accordingly, a sensual faculty with a stronger existence, and with a perfection congenial to its necessity, will have a more powerful perception. Therefore, we should not limit the pleasure in this world to the pleasure among the beasts, of drinking or eating or mating, lest we should say that the spiritual minds or the transcendental entities or the those stationed near to his presence, that are abstract from matter and bodily instruments, lack pleasure, hence-euphoria.[25]. In order to attain the higher universe of heavens, the siul has to cut off his attachment to the body and remove the veil of attachment to anything. The soul has to promote his thinking so that he can attain the higher universe. Therefore, the intellectual euphoria and the speiritual pleasure of Hereafter can not be compared to the sensual pleasures. The Holy prophet has been quoted as saying: There is not pleasure, but the pleasure in the Hereafter, because the pleasure, and the life in general, in this world is transient. It is also accompanied by corruption and deterioration.[26]. For the evaluation of pleasures, the Holy Koran mentions two words, the quality and the world to come is better, and more enduring,[27].(chapter 87, verse 17)

Meskevey believes that the intellectual pleasures are the highest pleasures because they are original and permanent, unlike material pleasures that are superficial, impure, transient, unidimensional, and carnal. Therefore, a person is prosperous when his pleasures are original rather than accidental, intellectual rather than sensual, active rather than passive, pure rather than impure, deep rather than superficial, and above all, Divine rather than carnal.[28]. Wisdom and Euphoria According to Mulla Sadra Wisdom is one of the components of euphoria. As the perfection of any creature depends on the traits, and effects, which are specific to it, mans perfection occurs when his own poentialities develop in to perfection. Mans specific trait is his power of thinking- hence wisdom. Therefore, the prosperous life is essentially conditioned by intellectual activities specific to man. Accordingly, mans perfection depends on his thinking and the power of his reason and perception. (In this regard, as it was mentioned above, Aristotle also believes that thinking, meditation, and reason are the components of the greatest euphoria:) [29]

According to the Koran, only one thing can bring about euphoria, and that is wisdom. And who so is given the wisdom, has been given much good... [30] (sura Baghara, chapter the cow, verse 269, or 2: 269) By wisdom, or knowledge, it does not merely mean the theoretical knowledge. Wisdom, rather, consists of two components: the practical aspect, and the theoretical aspect. A wise man is a person who has attained perfection both ways.

On euphoria and mans true pleasure, Sadrol- Motaleh in says: This will be materialized when he attains the true perfection and the ultimate goal which is the nearness to God. Mans existential prefectural occurs at two dimensions of theoretical and practical modes of wisdom; in terms of theoretical dimension of wisdom, mans existential perfection will occur when he comes to firmly believe in God, The monotheism of essence, and the Divine Epithets, when he recognized Gods magnificence, when he believes the Divine Bounty, when he moves in the direction of knowing the truths of the universe, when he removes the veils of ignorance, and when he becomes, in the final run, a universal scholar who encompasses the intellectual cosmos.[31]

9. Conclusion

According to Aristotle, euphoria is not the same as virtue,. The relationship of virtue and euphoria is that one is the first, and the other is the last. In other words, one is the cause, and the other is the effect: By acting on the basis of virtues, man attains euphoria.

Aristotle believes innately desirable in itself, or as he puts it, innately desirable. Euphoria must be innately independent, needing no other entity. Since mans euphoria is innately desirable and innately independent, the true euphoria is the one God, and not another truth. The prosperous man, therefore, is moving towards the pure reason, i.e., God the Almighty. Like Aristotle, Mulla Sadra believes that mans euphoria is the same as the attainment of his ultimate goal and true perfection, i.e. nearness to God, or as Aristotle puts it, the absolute good, because there is no other perfection or good than Divine Holy presence. Whenever man reaches that great station, his soul will experience a happiness incomparable to any happiness.

Attainment of perfection is optional rather than innate: Each person has to attain perfection through his voluntary actions wittingly. Through education, learning, and nurture, man is able to reach his ultimate purpose, i.e. his prosperity and euphoria in two dimensions of wisdom: the theoretical dimension, and the

practical dimension. If man wants to attain euphoria, he must get rid of two kinds of veils: the internal veil, and the external veils. The internal veil consists of the shortcomings of soul. It can be removed in the light of Active Reason. The external veil consists of the souls involvements with sensual faculties, Anyway, if man is able to do away with these two kinds of veils, every thing will be revealed to him, and every thing will become apparent for him.

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