# Clarifying the basis of the concept 'vicious' through the analysis of the intertextual relationships between *Supreme Wisdom* by Mulla Sadra and the words of Imam Ali (pbuh)

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| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
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| **Article type:**<br>Research Article<br><br>**Article History:**<br>Received 09 August 2022<br>Revised 13 September 2023<br>Accepted 23 September 2023<br>Published Online 10 January 2024<br><br>**Keywords:**<br>*Imam Ali (PBUH),*<br>*Supreme wisdom,*<br>*Vicious,*<br>*Intertextual relationships,*<br>*Affectability.* | The major goal of this research is to find out how the 'viciousness' issue in Mulla Sadra's *Supreme Wisdom* is fundamentally affected by the words of Imam Ali (PBUH). The study of this issue can provide insight into a significant source of speculation from which Sadra has derived his wisdom. It also helps to reveal the hidden intertextual relationships between Imam Ali's words, as the covert text, and Sadra's intellectual remarks, as the overt text. In this study, a descriptive-analytical method is used to scrutinize the *Supreme Wisdom* and its relationship with the Imam's words is identified through Kristeva's intertextuality as a new approach. The results show that Sadra has drawn upon Imam Ali variously to deal with the fundaments of 'viciousness'. For instance, regarding the principles of abstract truth, originality of being, causality, and absolute dependence, Sadra adopts parallel negation, total negation, parallel negation, and partial negation, respectively. |

## 1. Introduction

The vices issue and the task of answering the questions about it have been a challenge for the speculators of various divine and nondivine schools of thought. As one of those schools, the Supreme Wisdom has been committed, since the very beginning, to providing its followers with an acceptable account of that issue. In this regard, Sadr al-Mota'lehin Shirazi, known as Sadra and the founder of the speculative-mystical school of Supreme Wisdom, frequently pondered upon the nature of vices and the motive for their creation. He also analyzed the subject on a rational basis and with references to hadiths. This procedure was imitated by the followers of his Supreme Wisdom. The examples of this imitation are visible even in some contemporary works of philosophy. The authors of those works have sought to cope with the ambiguities of the matter by coming up with scientific responses. What is of significance is the study of the rules and principles used by this group of philosophers and the detection of the philosophical resources that they have drawn upon, thus helping to understand the whys and wherefores of Sadra's points of view. This can best be done by analyzing the intertextual relationships between *The Nahj al-Balāghah* and the speculations of Sadra's followers as well as comparing the corresponding texts. The present study meets the purpose of Kristeva's intertextual analyses, as a novel method devised to evaluate and compare two or more texts and detect the interactions among them (Qhaeminia, 2010: 436). So far, it has been considered as an efficient method by researchers in the field of Qur'anic sciences. (Pakatchi, 2019: 101)

In this study, three aspects are involved in the use of Kristeva's method. They include a) the present text (i.e., the one in front of the reader), b) the absent text (i.e., the one affecting the present text), and c) intertextual analysis (i.e., the process of detecting the relationships between the present and absent texts). Indeed, the method serves to determine the transfer of elements or ideas from the absent text to the present text. There are three types of such transfers as follows:

a. Partial reduction: A word or a part of a word is borrowed from the absent text and inserted in the present text. This textual relationship involves the least innovation.

b. Parallel reduction: The absent text affects the present one covertly but does not change its nature. As compared to the previous case, this kind of textual relationship involves a better degree of innovation, but the innovation is not ideal.

c. Total reduction: In this intertextual relationship, the author disintegrates the absent text completely and recreates the generated concepts in the present text. This occurs with complete innovation. The degree of relation is the highest, but the detection of its type is difficult. (Kristeva, 2002: 44)

It is to be noted that, due to the limited scope of the present research, all the possible cases of intertextual relationships cannot be mentioned here in this paper.

## 2. Vices from the viewpoint of the Supreme Wisdom

From the viewpoint of Sadra-following scholars, 'vice' is a non-existing concept, but it is figuratively considered as an existing entity[1]. In his works, Sadra quite commonly equates the concept of 'virtue' with existence and that of 'vice' with nonexistence. He emphasizes that what exists is a virtue while what is of no known existence is a vice (Sadra, 1989, vol. 2: 353). The noteworthy point in this regard is that, from the Supreme Wisdom perspective, reality only belongs to what exists. This is why the Supreme Wisdom is referred to as 'the philosophy of existence' and Sadra as 'the philosopher of existence' (Sajjadi, 2000: 29; Yazdanpanah, 2020: 167). This is what Sadra believes too (Sadra, 2008, vol. 1: 28). He considers virtue as the very existence and vice as something nonexistent that may occur. His definitions of these two concepts are also repeated in the scholastic writings of his followers. For example, Tabatabaie (2011, vol. 20: 390) states that the most sublime virtue of anything is its existence, while the most salient vice is its nonexistence. He also considers vice as the lack of perfection and the opposite of a virtue (ibid: 281). According to him, if a vice existed, there would be either of the two cases; it would be vicious to itself or some other thing. The first case is impossible because whatever denies itself cannot have existed at all. The second case is also impossible. It may wipe something out, degrade its perfection, or have nothing to do with its existence or perfection, all

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1. It is to be noted that vices, defects, sufferings as well as lacks and losses show up only in the natural world. They are philosophically considered to stem from the material side of beings (Javadi Amoli, 2009, vol. 1: 327).

of which are impossible to occur (Haghani, 1999, vol. 2: 597). This has also been referred to by Imam Khomeini. (2002, vol. 2: 97)

As another Sadra-following scholar, Sobhani (1991, vol. 1: 279) believes that the concept of vice is understood only in comparisons and has no real being. He has classified the concept into a) real vice which is of no origin and b) incidental vice which is of a kind of existence. To support it, Motahari (1998, vol. 9: 98) states that vice is either non-existent or leads to nonexistence. According to him, ignorance is vicious because it is the nonexistence of knowledge, which is virtuous. Thus, ignorance has no reality; it is simply the negation of a reality. Another example is poverty, as the negation of wealth. Moreover, Javadi Amoli (2010, vol. 4: 323) interprets the verse وَفِي ذَٰلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ (2:49)

and believes that vices are of no existence. As he puts it, whatever occurs in the world is a test given by God. Every test of such a type entails a certain duty, whether the test brings adversity or prosperity. In both cases, man is advised to be patient or to be grateful to God. Javadi Amoli (2010, vol. 13: 568) concludes that all vices and problems are tests, some of which are intended by God. He deems this view in line with monotheism. By analyzing his speculations, one comes to the following conclusions:

a. The origin of vices and problems in human life is the physical world.
b. Vices and problems are intended by God to test human beings.
c. What man should do in the face of vices and problems is to show patience.
 d. Vices and virtues originate from the same source, namely God.
e. By nature, a vice denotes nonexistence, and, in figurative terms, it is attributed to God.

In numerous cases, Javadi Amoli (2010, vol. 13: 568, vol. 19: 573) points to the figurative attribution of vices to God.

## 3. The effect of Imam Ali's views on the Supreme Wisdom
 Islamic teachings through the Shia window of thinking as reflected in the Supreme Wisdom are clear and easy to understand. Some contemporary scholars have referred to this ease and clarity as a feature of the Supreme Wisdom (Yazdanpanah, 2020: 302). Based on the research conducted on the book *Asfar Arba'eh* (Four Trips) alone, Sadra has used more than a thousand Qur'anic verses as well as more than two hundred quotations from the Shia Imams to organize his philosophy (Sajjadi, 2000: 26; Sadra, 2008, vol. 1: 33). This referential formidability can also be found in the writings of his followers. Most of the contemporary scholars in this category have benefited from the Qur'anic verses and Imams' remarks, especially Imam Ali's quotes, to deal with the issue of vices and virtues in different contexts. This use of sacred sources was initiated by early Muslim scholars and rhetoricians and continued more frequently and smartly by Sadra. (Yazdanpanah, 2020: 303-308)

Tabatabaie and his outstanding pupils have also made scholarly use of Imam Ali's views in their speculations. For example, in *Al-Mizan*, his prominent interpretation of *the Qur'an*, Tabatabaie (2011, vol. 19: 149) refers to some phrases of Sermon 96 in *the Nahj al-Balāghah* to interpret the early verses of the al-Hadid chapter about the simultaneous overtness and covertness of God as well as His simultaneous distance and closeness. In the context of monotheism and the attributes of God, Javadi Amoli resorts to Imam Ali's remarks too. Regarding the innate attributes of God, he follows the attitudes of the other Shia scholars and states that those attributes are the very essence of God and differences among them are just conceptual. As he puts it, by Imami Shiism, any feature attributed to God is a part of his being, and nobody can realize the depth of His being or attributes. In this regard, Imam Ali (PBUH) states that God does not inform anybody of what His attributes are, nor does He deter anyone from trying to recognize Him as far as possible. (Shahidi, 1999: 43; Javadi Amoli, 2018: 290)

## 4. The principles used by Sadra philosophers to deal with the 'vices' issue
Sadra's philosophy is generally based on such principles as unbounded reality, genuineness of existence, cause and effect relationship, and destitute existence. To explain the issue of the vice, Sadra has benefited from all these principles.

### 4.1. The principle of unbounded reality
This principle means God is an unbounded reality that covers everything but nothing constitutes or affects Him. It is the heritage of the scholars before Sadra, but it was he who elaborated it into various

branches and made different inferences from it. Some contemporaries have, thus, referred to this principle as an enterprise of the Supreme Wisdom (Javadi Amoli, 2007, vol. 3: 230; Ebrahimi Dinani, 2020, vol. 1: 100). This has been admitted even by Sadra himself (Sadra, 1989, vol. 6: 110). He believes that no scholar has excelled him delineating this principle except for Aristotle, who expressed it in general terms (ibid). As for the significance of this principle, it is one of the most commonly used tenets in Sadra's philosophy. More importantly, it underlies many philosophical predicates in the Supreme Wisdom (Ebrahimi Dinani, 2020, vol. 1: 103). Gaining the appropriate knowledge of this principle helps to detect certain figurative and factual precepts about it, leading to a better understanding of monotheism as intended by Imam Ali (PBUH). Also, providing proof that Imam Ali's views of monotheism and its levels, especially practical monotheism, have influenced the principle of unbounded reality can serve as a key to the understanding of the complicated concept of vices as well as its apparent contrast to practical monotheism and the universal system of the best. This view is also held by Tabatabaie. (Shams, 2002: 483-484)

### 4.1.1. Philosophical analysis of the word 'unbounded'

In philosophy, the word 'unbounded' means monolithic, non-combined and limitless (Sadra, 1984, vol. 1: 33; 1996, vol.1: 130; 2004, vol. 1: 264; Javadi Amoli, 2018: 202; 2019, vol. 1: 91). Sadra takes the word in the sense of non-combined (Sadra, 2004, vol. 3: 429; Sohraverdi, 2013, vol. 4: 169). In this regard, Khoie (1979, vol. 1: 325-326), one of the interpreters of *the Nahj al-Balāghah*, refers to some sentences in the first sermon and concludes that God is unbounded because He is not composed of parts. This speculation imparts two rational concepts and one logical conclusion. They include a) confirming concept: God is boundless, b) contrasting concept: absolute boundlessness is in contrast to parts or partners, and c) conclusion: God is not composed of parts, nor does He have a partner. This proof pertains to all the levels and domains of monotheism and is generalizable to the monotheistic views of the nature, attributes, and acts of God as well as the vices issue in the world. On this basis, the hypotheses of duality, trinity, composedness, and separability are completely nullified. Indeed, the idea of unity and uniqueness of God is confirmed.

### 4.1.2. The second tenet of the 'unbounded reality' principle

The second part of the unbounded reality principle implies that, while God is with all things, He is not any one of them. In other words, whatever being owes its existence to God, but it is not a part of His being. Thus, no parity can be imagined between God and other than Him. This lack of parity also relates to the attributes of beings. That is, those attributes are not the same as the ones belonging to God. A created being is imperfect, and so are its attributes. Whatever imperfect cannot be a part of the divine nature? Besides, God, as the absolute reality, cannot be compared to the beings created by Him (ليس كمثله شىء). The same is true of His attributes; they are His very essence and, therefore, incomparable to those of His creatures. A given praiseworthy feature of a creature is, indeed, the reflection of His feature in that creature based on its capacity or eligibility. (Sadra, 1987, vol. 2: 371; Javadi Amoli, 2010, vol. 4: 162)

### 4.1.3. Studying the principle of unbounded reality with an intertextual method
### A) The present text

بسيطُ الحقيقة كلُّ الاشياء و ليس بشئٍ مِنها (His reality involves all things, but He is not any one of them).

### B) The absent text

Considering the foregoing discussion, the following tenets can be derived from the present text:
- God is with everything, but He does not coexist with it, nor is He on par with it. Also, there is nothing without Him (Shahidi, 1999: 3). This is an idea that some scholars such as Tabatabaie (2008, vol. 1: 33) and Javadi Amoli (2009, vol. 1: 241) ascribe to Imam Ali (pbuh).
- Thinking of an attribute of God as something added or stuck to Him would mean thinking of something coexisting with Him, which implies He is two or He can be separated into parts. This is nothing but ignorance (Shahidi, 1999: 2). Sadra (1989, vol. 6: 140-141) elicits this idea from Imam Ali's remarks.

    − God is neither inside nor outside anything (Shahidi, 1999: 201). According to Javadi Amoli (2011, vol. 1: 337), this is the basic tenet of the unbounded reality principle.

**C) Intertextual analysis**
Considering the three forms of intertextual transfer of information, it seems that Sadra has integrated the tenets of the absent text to creatively devise a novel philosophical principle. This shows his perfect knowledge of the unbounded reality. What he has devised is a combination of the second and the third forms of intertextual transfer. It depicts the first and the second segments of the unbounded reality principle as the total and parallel reductions of the absent text, respectively. The roots of the words in the second segment are significantly similar to those in the absent text, but the first segment bears no apparent similarity. Therefore, Sadra's remark is quite new and original.

**4.2. The principle of existence genuineness**
The Supreme Wisdom is based on the genuineness of existence. Undoubtedly, Sadra was the first one who discussed his philosophy with speculations on the existence issue. Then, he made use of proper tools to bring up his views on philosophical subjects (Yazdanpanah, 2020: 175). Before him, no one had referred to existence genuineness as a basic and independent principle; there were only references to the meaning and the major tenets of that principle (Ebrahimi Dinani, 2020, vol. 2: 551). Even a few centuries after the introduction of the theory of existence genuineness, its significant role has remained ignored, and no study has dealt with it comprehensively (ibid). Yazdanpanah (2020: 177) states that Sadra could cast a fundamental look at such issues as God's knowledge, resurrection, revelation, prophethood, perceiver and perceived unity, postulation and emanation unity, and the unity of essentiality and possibility. He also presented the best definitions for these concepts. Even in some cases, he could solve certain riddles in philosophy that other scholars had tackled weakly.

    It seems that one of the issues subcategorized under the existence genuineness principle is vices. As mentioned earlier, Sadra-following scholars consider vices as context-based concepts that are of no intrinsic genuineness; rather, they are of a figure nature. Whatever is created is a manifestation of divine perfection and beauty in its right (Javadi Amoli, 2008: 456; 2018: 387). So, how is it possible for something of no perfection to belong to God?! In other words, vices can never be attributed to the Lord who is the light of heaven and earth. In this section of the study, Kristeva's method is used to provide a true picture of existence genuineness by bringing up some quoted propositions that affected Sadra's mentality.

**4.2.1. Application of the intertextual technique to the existence genuineness principle**
**A) The present text**
The principle of existence genuineness assumes existence as a common spiritual concept and a single truth that has run through all beings. Although existence is single, it is manifested at different levels just like light shining in different intensities. (Sadra, 2008, vol. 1: 28)

**B) The absent text**
Considering the foregoing discussions, the following items may be taken as propositions affecting the present text.
    a) He is the one whom everything is a sign of and the heart of a disbeliever testifies (Shahidi, 1999: 43). Imam refers to the acts of God as something predestined and flashed out, which is just specific to Him. (Javadi Amoli, 2018: 387)
    b) Praise be to the Lord who proved to exist by creating His servants (Shahidi, 1999: 149). In this regard, Ibn-e Meytham (1983, vol. 3: 229) rhetorically addresses Imam Ali's words in that some people recognize the Creator through His creatures, which is an effect-to-cause reasoning.
    c) God refers to the birth of new things to rule out His birth; the creation of beings is suggestive of His presence. (Shahidi, 1999: 197)
d) God is outside the confines of time; He was there before anything came into being. (ibid)

**C) Intertextual analysis**
Considering the three types of intertextual analysis, Sadra seems to have paid attention to the tenets of the absent text and organized his text through the third intertextual form, namely total reduction. With creativity and novelty, he has remolded the tenets of the absent text into a new principle that underlies his philosophical speculations. In this process, the absent text is decomposed into a new discourse. Conceptually, Sadra believes that the absolute existence belongs to God and, based on absent texts, the whole universe is the reflection of His act. In other words, the universe is of a certain degree of existence (light), and each creature signifies the glorious power of God. This is exactly what Sadra's principle of existence genuineness means. An implication of this matter as a reverse premise is that vices are of no existence or light; they are just relative concepts. As earlier mentioned, the scholars who advocate Sadra's philosophy deem vices as something non-existent, which is an exciting point.

**4.3. Principle of causality**
Cause and effect relationships are of great importance in philosophy. As a principle, causality is an innate concept and, thus, cannot be verified with proofs for or against it (Javadi Amoli, 2010, vol. 13: 566; Qhadrdan Qhoramaleki, 2014: 66). According to the definition presented by Tabatabaie (2009: 59), causality suggests that any given effect stems from a cause, and no effect would be there without a cause. He believes that *the Qur'an* confirms the reign of causality all over the world (Tabatabaie, 1995, vol. 7: 407). It is to be noted that this principle acts only within the confines of existence and has nothing to do with entities that do not exist. The belief in cause-and-effect relationships is a rudiment of monotheism regarding the acts of God (Javadi Amoli, 2009, vol. 13: 575). This monotheistic view of causality, which is also mentioned in *The Nahj al-Balāghah*, ultimately addresses the specific authority of God on every being or process (ibid). What is of significance in this case is the nonconformity of vices or vicious entities with the causality principle. (Tabatabaie, 2008: 201-203)

To sum it up, cause and effect relationships pervade the whole creation and point to God as the sole practitioner in acts of creation. They can also be discussed in the case of things that exist rather than whatever is non-existing. Accordingly, causality does not apply to vices, which are non-existing concepts. This point is supported by some religious premises and textual data as well as the speculations of the scholars in Sadra's philosophy. To grasp the true sense of the causality principle, Kristeva's method is used here to analyze certain predicates affecting Sadra's philosophy.

**4.3.1. Performing intertextual analyses on the causality principle**

**A) The present text**
The principle of cause and effect

**B) The absent text**
a) Everything is up and alive due to Him (Shahidi, 1999: 102). This predicate is suggestive of a causal relationship between Him and the universe; God is the ultimate cause of the creation and continuation of whatever in the world Moghnieh. (1979, vol. 2: 142)

b) What cannot stand on its own has to be held up by something else (Shahidi, 1999: 200). This predicate implies that everything needs a cause for its creation and survival, except for God. He stands on his own because He is not the effect of any cause. (Moghnieh, 1979, vol. 3: 67; Khouyie, 1980, vol. 11: 65; Ibn-e Meytham, 1983, vol. 4: 153)

**C) Intertextual analysis**
Sadra and his followers have dealt with the principle of causality (i.e., the present text) by drawing upon absent texts through the parallel reduction of those texts. In other words, they have covertly elicited certain predicates from the absent texts and inserted them in the present text (i.e., causality principle). However, they have made no change in the essence of the elicited predicates because there are evident similarities between the present and absent texts in terms of some words and substantiations. For instance, one may refer to the word 'effect' in the second predicate of the previous subsection.

## 4.4. The principle of destitute existence

Generally, an entity may exist either in concept or in reality. In the first case, the entity is equally likely to be or not to be. In the second case, however, it can be considered existent because it has already come into being[1]. Regarding the principle of destitute existence, what matters is the second case, namely existence in reality. Whatever exists is absolutely in need of a cause for its very existence, and things that do not exist need no cause for their non-existence (Hassanzadeh, 2008, vol. 3: 135). In line with this idea, Tabatabaie (2008: 252) believes an effect is dependent on a cause and this dependency is due to the innate destitution of the effect versus the needlessness of the cause.

According to Tabatabaie (2009, vol. 1: 285), the expression of destitute existence was first introduced by Sadra, but his pupil holds that this expression, originally recorded as 'light', was a lexical innovation of Mohyadin Arabi. It found its way from the book *Fosous al-Hekam* into other philosophy books as well as Sadra's philosophy, i.e., Supreme Wisdom (Hassanzadeh, 1986: 181). Regardless of these two views, there is no doubt the concept of destitute existence is rooted in *the Holy Qur'an*. Indeed, long before Mohyadin Arabi and Sadra, it was verse 15 of Fatir's chapter that first pointed to the absolute destitution of all beings. This and similar Qur'anic verses inspired such pithy expressions as destitute existence (Javadi Amoli, 2007, vol. 1: 181). Not only does *the Qur'an* deem man in need of God, but it also views him and other beings in the full subjugation of God. (ibid)

The absolute needlessness of God is beautifully reflected through Imam Ali's words. On various occasions, the Imam (pbuh) makes references to this issue. For instance, in Sermon 193 of *the Nahj al-Balāghah*, known as the Homam sermon, he states, «The Exalted One created the beings while He was needless of their obedience and safe from their disobedience. He makes no gain or loss due to those who obey or disobey Him». These sentences explicitly address the needlessness of the Lord at the time of creation and His immunity from any damage caused by the sins of servants. This point is also expressed as a sheer fact in *the Qur'an.* (35:15)

From Imam Ali's point of view, God is absolutely rich and can enrich whoever is poor. No being in the world is needless of Him. The neediness of creatures and the richness of the creator are well expressed in the concise sentence كُلُّ شَيْءٍ قَائِمٌ بِهِ غِنَى كُلِّ فَقِيرٍ, which means everything stands due to Him, and He is the one who enriches the poor (*Nahj al-Balāghah*: Sermon 158). Everything owes its existence and survival to Him, and He grants what the needy ask for (Shahidi, 1999: 102). The word فقير as used by Imam Ali is a familiar Qur'anic concept attributed to whatever is created. According to *the Qur'an* (35:15), يا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَ اللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ (Oh people, you are all in need of God, but He is the only needless one). The destitution in this verse is intrinsic, and it is attributed to all human beings. It is a response to the delusion of richness which sometimes seizes man. God seeks to eliminate this delusion by projecting man's sheer poverty and His sheer richness. (Tabatabaie, 2011, vol. 17: 33)

At the end of his sermon, Imam Ali (pbuh) praises Hadj as a ritual and recognizes Kaaba as the icon of Islam. As he puts it, the Kaaba pilgrimage is an obligation that God has assigned to well-to-do Muslims. This house of God is a haven which His servants are ordered to visit. The Imam's remark is based on verse 97 in the Al-e Emran chapter, which reads «Whoever affords it must go on a pilgrimage to the House. Those who avoid it should know that the affluent Lord does not need their act».

As understood from the foregoing discussion, the mystic-philosophical expression of 'destitute existence' is consistent with Qur'anic verses. In this regard, it is importance as how to set up correspondence between Imam Ali's words and those verses. For instance, Javadi Amoli initially clarifies verse 15 of the Fatir chapter through a scholarly analysis to prove that the 'destitute existence' notion originates from *the Qur'an*. Then, he brings up certain *Nahj al-Balāghah* predicates that are in line with that verse. In this very case, Shahidi (1999: 7) and Javadi Amoli (2007, vol. 3: 181) refer to Sermon 185 in *the Nahj al-Balāghah* where the Imam states «The continuous creation of beings is the evidence for His permanency, and the defects as well as the mortality He has intended for those beings highlight His immortality».

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1. For further information, see *the Dictionary of Sadra's philosophical expressions.* (Sajjadi, 2000: 101)

In this stage of the study, Kristeva's method is used to analyze some predicates that have impacted Sadra's philosophy in the case of destitute existence.

### 4.4.1. Application of the intertextual method regarding the principle of destitute existence
**A) The present text**
This is the principle of destitute existence in the sense that whatever is created is intrinsically needy and dependent on the Lord. (Tabatabaie, 2008: 252)

**B) The absent text**
a) The Supreme Lord created the universe, but He does not need the obedience of the beings, nor is He harmed by their disobedience. He is aloof from the gain and loss due to the obedience or disobedience of His creatures. (Shahidi, 1999: 225)

b) Everything depends on Him, while He depends on nothing. (ibid: 102)

c) God postulated the Kaaba as an icon of Islam, made it a haven, and ordered Muslims to visit it and recognize its veracity. He called His servants on a pilgrimage there by stating, «Whoever affords it has to go to Mecca on a pilgrimage. Whoever avoids this ritual should know that God is needless of everything». (ibid: 7)

d) The continuous creation of new beings denotes His permanency, the weaknesses that He has set in those beings suggest His strength, and the death that He has intended for them indicates His immortality. (ibid: 197)

**C) Intertextual analysis**
As it appears, the definitions given for the present and absent texts refer to the full denotative consistency of these texts, especially in the case of the present text and the second phrase in كُلُّ شَیْءٍ قَائِمٌ بِهِ غِنَى كُلِّ فَقِيرٍ (everything stands due to Him, and He is the one who enriches the poor) (*Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 109). The intertextual relationship in this regard is of the partial reduction type because a part of one text is reflected in the other with the same words.

In summary, the expression of destitute existence, which has been frequently used by Sadra followers, semantically corresponds to Imam Ali's words. This indicates the impact of the Imam's thoughts on the Sadra philosophers.

## 5. Conclusion
The scholars that follow Sadra's philosophy admit the existence of vices but consider them as relative and figurative entities. In this regard, they base their idea completely on *the Qur'an* and the remarks of Imam Ali (PBUH) in *The Nahj al-Balāghah*. According to them, the existence of vices in the physical world is to be viewed as a means of man's evolution and salvation. Moreover, this existence is not in contrast with the monotheistic idea that the whole universe has been created based on absolute goodness and the best ways and means; indeed, vices are quite well-placed and in line with the purpose of creation.

A scrutiny of the four concepts or principles examined in this study, namely unbounded reality, genuineness of existence, cause and effect relationship, and destitute existence as well as the use of Kristeva's novel approach for intertextual analysis showed that the postulation of those principles in Sadra's philosophy has been under the impact of Imam Ali's remarks and thoughts in various ways.

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*The Holy Qur'ān*

*The Nahj al-Balāghah*

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