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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Analyzing the Concept of Common Good in the Political Thought of Muslim Thinkers: Emphasis on the Views of Farabi and Ibn Miskawayh

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**Abstract:** In the general discourse of political science, ‘common good’ refers to those material, cultural, or institutional facilities in which members of a given community share public interest. ‘Common good’ is an important concept in political philosophy and political thought; because it plays an important role in philosophical thinking about the public and private dimensions of social life. In this article, while recognizing and analyzing the concept of common good and related concepts, we have examined the views of Muslim thinkers in relation to common good thought. The analysis of the political thought of Muslim thinkers has shown that they consider man to be, by nature, a social being, and in their opinion, the attainment of perfection and common good also depends on the formation of society. There is no doubt that it is not possible for man to attain the perfections for which he was created, except for a large integrated community where everyone helps each other with what they need, and that thanks to them all that is necessary for human perfection is obtained. Therefore, Muslim thinkers such as Mullah Sadra and Farabi consider correct thinking and beneficial science as a necessary condition along with good morals, self-purification and exaltation of the soul. They believe that the first head of Medina should have the rank of divine caliphate and deserve to rule over the people and accomplish the mission of Allah the Almighty, so that common good may be spread. Such a person has reached the position and level of comprehensiveness in the threefold origin of intellect, soul and senses, has the merit of the Khalifatullah (Vicegerent of Allah) and the comprehensive manifestation of the divine names, and can spread common good in human society. This article tries to analyze the concept of common good in the political thought of Muslim thinkers in a descriptive-analytical way, using reliable library resources.

**Keywords:** Common Good; Political Thought; Public Interest; Muslim Thinkers.

## Introduction

‘Common good’ is an important concept in political philosophy; because it plays an important role in philosophical thinking about the public and private dimensions of social life. Basically, why should we think about mutual benefit? Who is harmed in a society whose members are excluded from public life and focus exclusively on their private lives? These are some of the questions that arise from philosophical discussions about the common good. In philosophy and ethics, ‘common good’ or ‘general good’ is a kind of ‘good’ that is beneficial to most members of a society. What is good or bad for most people in a society may change over time or in different societies (Yuengert, 2009: 7). Of course, some basic necessities of life, such as food, water, and shelter, are always good for everyone. Public or common good in philosophy, economics, and political science refers to what all or most members of a particular community have in common or benefit from, or what results from citizenship, collective action, and active participation in politics and public service. The concept of common good differs significantly between different philosophical teachings.

Ancient Greek philosophers, including Aristotle and Plato, devised the basic concepts of common good. An understanding of the common good rooted in Aristotle's philosophy is widely used today and refers to what a contemporary scholar has called ‘the good of society and only attainable by it, but shared by its members’ (Zaman, 2004: 11).

The attitude of any society towards the concept of common good, in addition to influencing the destiny and policy-making in that society and its structural development, can be derived from certain principles and foundations. Examining and recognizing the basis of the institutional formation of this concept in political thought can help us to understand the way of life of the collective world and be effective and useful in understanding the language of societies (Salvatore, 2012: 28). From this point of view, it can be said that the main issue here is the perception and fundamental concepts of political thought from the concept of common good in the political sphere of the thoughts of Muslim thinkers. Political thought can reproduce and construct political reality, so

from a political perspective, the crystallization of common good can be observed in the context of society and the political, social and cultural action of the people of any society, and their objective crystallization can be traced and analyzed.

The importance and necessity of this issue is that the concept of common good is one of the most important concepts in the public and fundamental law of the countries of the world. This concept has been used and applied even in the history of ancient Greece and Rome. Therefore, in modern and contemporary public law, public interest means free and equal participation of the people of a country in the creation and democratic administration of an organized political society (government), for the realization of public interest, and public good (Nobahar, 2012: 6). Common good in this regard is one of the concepts that has always been the main challenge and discussion between thinkers of political thought and political economy (Reisch, 2018: 23). With this description, political ideas, practical policy-making and diplomacy of national interest are influenced by ideas related to the common good. From this point of view, political

currents and parties, depending on their approach to the common good in the field of policy-making and diplomacy, define practical principles and objective strategies and are influenced by them (Riordan, 1996: 44).

From this point of view, the concept of common good and its construction in the political thought of Muslim thinkers in this article has been recognized and analyzed in a descriptive-analytical and qualitative manner so that this concept can be rethought and redefined in the hope of opening doors to today's policies.

## 2- Conceptual and Theoretical Definitions of Common Good and Related Concepts

Common good is a concept that has been defined and considered in different ways and from the perspective of philosophical, political, sociological, economic and religious approaches. The sum of good deeds that are formed through collective actions over a period of time and are generally considered preferred, desirable, and good by the majority of the members of that community can be called common good (Reisch, 2018). In other words, the kind of good deeds that are

inherently general, good, and common to human beings who interact with each other through this kind of good property or legacy and collectively consider them good can be defined as common good, such as values, civic virtues, sense of justice and other material good deeds that cannot be reduced to individual resources and things (Yuengert, 2009).

Therefore, common good is the things that are general and common, and its generality and commonality are inherent and end in the best interest of society (not necessarily the individual) and subsequent relationships are formed based on it.

For this reason, common good is different from concepts such public goods, collective goods, public benefits, general goods and the like. Wherever there is talk of common good in the minds of thinkers, in fact, it is a concept of common good that at the macro level of society shows the overall good and benefit of society, the big process of prosperity and development of society. However, in order to clarify the issue and understand the differences, in some cases, examples of different concepts have been included in the discussion. This issue can be

justified and interpreted in two ways: First, the concept of common good defined above and also based on the articles cited, includes all the different kinds of basic goodness. In other words, each good and desirable thing, if the right path is taken, can lead the society to general happiness and perfection. In fact, the common good from this perspective shows and determines a degree of perfection and happiness in a society. Second, in order to show the common good in the form of a measure of happiness and perfection, it is necessary to perform small collective righteous deeds that can show such a supreme level in a tangible way and that in general, can provide the desired perfection.

With this description, as stated, there are several definitions of common good. Dupre (1994: 173) has recently summarized the classic concept of common good and defined it as desirable, appropriate, and achievable only by the community, which is shared separately among its members. According to Jacques Martin, the great twentieth-century pro-Aquinas philosopher (Thomas Aquinas), the common good is made up of things that are inherently common to human beings and that

they communicate with each other through assets, such as values, civic virtues, and a sense of justice (Maritain, 1946). Cahill (2004: 9) defines the common good as ‘an organization for the solidarity of individuals that goes beyond personal interests of individuals throughout the whole society.’ Here with the aim of showing how it is used with a little analytical precision and retelling the meaning it implicitly expresses, we will explain this concept further. We advance this analysis by making a conceptual distinction between collective action/good and common action/good.

People produce numberless goods by cooperation and collaboration, because it is necessary or, even if not necessary, convenient and efficient when it comes to tools. Examples include buildings, roads, restaurant meals, and garbage disposal systems. Each of us can build a house on our own, but we cannot do it very easily. So we use collective action. But as soon as such goods are produced, we can (at least in principle) benefit from them individually - living at home, traveling on the road. So there is nothing individual about goods that are produced through collective action because it

is a necessary, convenient, or efficient tool. This means that their interests do not belong only to individuals. Of course, people usually benefit from such co-produced goods: they live in the same house or alone, they eat at the workplace canteen. But sharing such goods makes them desirable. Although sharing is beneficial to any recipient, there is nothing inherent in the product itself that needs to be shared. The supply of such commodities requires collective action - for fundamental reasons, but not because of the inherent goodness of that commodity - and may or may not be shared. Therefore, in order to understand the issues of all these good deeds, we call them ‘public good’”. Most of the concepts used in the economics literature fall into this category.

There is another kind of shared good that is relatively different and that includes good deeds that are inherently public goods. The term ‘Shared Good’ is synonymous with what Charles Taylor (1995) calls ‘irreducibly social goods’. We prefer to use the term common good instead so that we can better understand the connections between micro and macro

levels of the common good (Deneulin and Townsend, 2006: 10-13).

Common good cannot be defined by individuals alone. They cannot be built by individuals, nor are they a collectively generated 'resource bank' available to individuals to choose or not to choose from. However, they do not exist just because of some kind of forced cooperation. There is a common good because of an old common practice that makes it possible, and in which people participate freely, therefore preserving and developing it. Of course, certain people are free to start or stop. But these good deeds are generated only in joint action, rather than simply by individual selection from an existing source.

Collective goods, public goods and common goods are similar in that all three require joint action. But this is accidental and compulsory for collective good and public good, while it is inherent for the common good.

Going beyond 'micro' common good, one can speak of 'general common good' when what is meant is not just a disposable common good (such as a concert, a team game, a joint

walk) but the one that lasts over time and is especially useful for a group of people whose lives interact in different ways, usually because they have the same material living conditions. It could be a monastery, a village or a town, an ancient or a modern city. The common interests of a city are similar to a concert, but the city concert lasts indefinitely. We speak of the common good because it is not just a discrete transferable public good, but pertaining to the people who make up society exactly as they are (Deneulin and Townsend, 2006: 10-13).

Finally, the emphasis may be on two points. First, there is, of course, both common good and common evil. Many people consider the busy hours of the city bad, but this does not mean that the city as a whole is bad. Racism always destroys the common good. The laws of apartheid have created a bad common structure (Deneulin and Townsend, 2006: 10-13).

Second, the discussion of public goods, collective goods, public interest and general goods arises when society or policymakers conclude that the supply of certain goods, services, benefits or charities is neither possible



individually nor offered through the market. (Deneulin and Townsend, 2006: 2-9). Therefore, in cases where they cannot be procured individually or through the market, the government is asked to compensate for market failure. On the other hand, some market activities or individuals also have external effects, which may be positive or negative. Negative effects are not considered part of the calculations of economic and market actors, and traditionally it is the duty of governments to organize such matters. (Héritier, 2001, 23). Therefore, what generally defines public goods depends on the specific conditions of supply and use of these goods, as well as their technical characteristics (Kaul and Mendoza, 2003: 79-80). With this description in economics, common good refers to those facilities -whether material, cultural, or institutional- that the members of a given community/society provide to all members in order to fulfill a relational obligation they all have to care for certain interests that they share and have in common. Some examples of this sharing of interest include road transport system; public parks, public protection and security, courts and judicial system, public

schools, museums and cultural institutions, public transportation, civil liberties, such as freedom of expression and freedom of association, property system, clean climate, and national defense (Bodansky, 2012: 14; Chen, 2014, 5). This definition clearly shows that citizens are united in a political or civil relationship, and this relationship requires the creation and maintenance of special facilities because these facilities serve certain common interest (Etzioni, 2004: 25). A review of theoretical studies shows that "common good is in fact an umbrella for all good deeds, which are pursued shared by, and beneficial to the majority of society through collective action or active participation. It is by nature common, shared, and desirable. 'It works for the good of society and the individual. In this definition, we can also consider the components of common good. The common good is always good for the individual and society, but other good deeds may be good sometimes and bad at other times.'

### 3- Literature Review

Considering that issues related to the common good, especially by looking at important

thinkers of contemporary political thought, is a new subject and mainly under political thought, serious and important research, especially in this field, can be rarely found in Persian. Perhaps the most important research in Persian is the thesis by Ameneh Nobahar (2012) titled '*Common Good in the Political Thought of Christianity and Islam*'. It answers what elements and components constitute common good in the tradition of Christian and Islamic thought. Aquinas examines politics and government from the perspective of the notion of the common good and distinguishes between the state and the church. The special function of the government is to provide the citizens with the common good, while the main function of the church is to guide the people towards salvation and ultimate goal of human beings. Thus Aquinas accepts the independence of the state from the church. It seems that in Islamic thought, philosophy is more responsible for abstract and purely theoretical thinking, and jurisprudence is responsible for providing solutions in the practical affairs of society. Islamic and Christian teachings have shown their compatibility with the theory of common good

by identifying public matters. In some institutions, common good elements and preconditions such as people's need for security and justice are officially recognized (Nobahar, 2012: 85).

Other researches done in Iran have been mainly in the form of concepts such as 'public interest, public sphere, public benefits, national interest, Islamic Ummah (nation), etc'. These issues have been dealt with from the perspective of sciences such as politics, sociology, economics, philosophy, religion and theology. In the Western world literature, the concept of common good and related concepts has been deeply explored by scholars and researchers, some of whom are mentioned here:

Melanie Johnson et al. (2015) consider different dimensions of the issue in a work titled '*Common goods Economy, Ecology and Political Theology*'. Thinking about the common good may be pleasant for some of us. But how can common ground be created between different human beings and serve the public interest? How can shared social, physical and virtual, open, centralized spaces be cross-sectionally shared? Are traditional



arguments well-known among leading Christians and liberal political thinkers wrong or right? Not too incompatible? As we see in this study, the remaining commonalities of the planet bear its costs, its waters, its acquisition, destruction and destruction for the future, extraction and conversion into common and global goods. Where do the transnational economy and the future lead the state of common good to? (Johnson et al., 2015: 26). These are some of the topics that have been explored in this study.

Martin Schlag and Juan Andrés Mercado (2012) consider the common good from the perspective of the free market and the way in which individual and collective interests intersect, analyzing the works of experts accordingly. The important point of their work is to emphasize the cultural dimension of common good which is considered and changed under the influence of free market. Their book, *Free Markets and the Culture of Common Good*, reviews and analyzes the public good from the viewpoint of political economy and public culture (Schlag and Mercado, 2012: 53).

David Hollenbach (2004) analyzes the common good and Christian ethics. In his works, has also studied this concept from the perspective of political theology and political economy. The work 'Hollenbach's Common Good and Christian Ethics' examines the long tradition of common interests in a way that addresses contemporary social distinctions, both nationally and globally. David Hollenbach deals with social analysis, moral philosophy, and the ethics of theology. To open new paths in urban life and the world community, he argues that the division between the middle class and the poor in big cities and the challenges of globalization requires a new commitment to the public interest and the public good. Both social groups, believers and secularists, must move in this direction. New forms of solidarity must be formed in order to live together. Hollenbach offers a positive view of how an understanding of the reconstruction of the concept of common good can lead to a better life for all, both in cities and around the world. This interdisciplinary study transforms practical and theoretical collaborations into an

expanding form of social, cultural, and religious life today (Holenbach, 2004: 45).

#### **4- The Concept of Common Good in the Political Thought of Muslim Thinkers**

In the Eastern world and especially in the Islamic world, political thought related to common good has been considered since the distant past and from the time of the first Muslim thinkers. This concern has been significant and categorized in several ways. First, how can common good be achieved? Of course, some thinkers have used the specific concepts and theoretical apparatus of their time in response to concerns. For example, some have used the concept of happiness and some the concept of good and evil against it. Some have also spoken of the hereafter and worldly happiness. Second, these thinkers have, as noted, discussed and explored ways to achieve the common good and ensure the survival of civilization and society. Thirdly, the thinkers of the Islamic world have discussed the starting point of common good and happiness, and many have stated its starting point in the nature of creation and humanity, and have pointed out the subsequent

deviations as a result of the domination of evil, cruelty and violence in society. Fourth, in the political literature and political thought of Islam, government and sovereignty have found a fundamental role in providing and guiding common good. Fifth and finally, the good and happiness of man and society depends on guaranteeing the good and spiritual and otherworldly happiness of man. Therefore, all the efforts of human beings and society to meet the material and basic needs in order to reach nearness to God and happiness and goodness in the hereafter.

#### **1-4- Abu Nasr Mohammad Farabi and Conceptual Foundations of Common Good in Political Thought**

Abu Nasr Muhammad Farabi (339-259 AH) is a second teacher and, according to some experts, the founder of Islamic political philosophy. The term political philosophy was first used in the Islamic world by Hakim Farabi. Farabi writes in the definition of political philosophy: Political philosophy is the knowledge of things through which beauties are obtained for the people of Medina and the power to study those beauties as well as to

preserve those beauties is possible for them. Farabi considers the common good in the attainment of human happiness and human happiness as dependent on a utopia whose human beings have reached a virtue and awareness by applying all sciences that can achieve virtues in a prosperous society. In fact, these virtues are the good that all human beings should achieve, and such a path is led by a nation that has special characteristics. In his book (Politics) in defining political science and stating general guidelines and public benefit political laws, he says that the most useful method that can be used in seeking political science is to study the outward and inward actions and behavior of human beings (Al-Farabi, 2001: 50). From Barzegar and Firoozjah, 2006: 54) Farabi is the first political philosopher in the history of Muslims who revived and reconstructed the tradition of Greek political philosophy. This is agreed upon by all historians (Galston, 1991). It is noteworthy that the issue of cultural exchange first appeared in Farabi's political thought (Tibi, 2002: 139). In his view, as the center of analysis in explaining the structure of the universe, the origin Creatures and the first

cause, the center of analysis of human existence is the 'heart' and the center of analysis of Medina is the top of the pyramid of political life, ie the 'first head' of Medina. (Farihi, 1999: 333) Considering the position of the 'first chief' in Farabi's 'utopia', from the relationship that he establishes between the first cause (God) and the leader of the utopia, he concludes, As all beings it happened from the first existence and through it, the system is established. The existence of Medina also depends on the existence of the first ruler and owes its order to him (Farabi, 1997: 222). Therefore, the ruler of Medina is the supreme and absolute servant He is not a servant of anyone and while the other members are the servants of the leaders, even though the servants of some other guilds are from Medina (Madkour, 1981: 58).

Therefore, the concept of common good in the completion of the utopia can have meaning. Common good therefore has a special connection with happiness and the way to reach the utopia and the way of civil administration. Al-Farabi has written two books, 'Education of Happiness and Punishment for the Sake of Happiness' in the

science of ethics and two books, Civil Policy and the Opinions of the City of the Virtue" in the science of politics. At the same time, he believes that these two sciences are two parts of a single science. Farabi calls that single science human science or civil science; because each of the two sciences of politics and ethics pursues a major goal, which is the attainment of human happiness. According to Farabi, the attainment of human happiness is very important. According to him, man does not achieve happiness unless, firstly, he has mastered all the mathematical, natural, divine and civil sciences, and secondly, he has created himself into a virtuous morality. Man is created if he himself knows the various forces of himself and the end for which he was created, and moves towards that end with his will and reaches it. According to the characteristics of happiness, what is the definition of happiness in Farabi (Hassanifar, 2015: 56) Farabi does not consider individual happiness apart from civil life and believes that no individual will achieve happiness without society and the formation of Medina is the first stage of perfection. He divides each of the cities according to happiness, and the city in which the real

purpose of the society is to cooperate on matters that lead to prosperity is called the utopia and the people call it the utopia. Friendship and unity in society should be based on Virtue is centered around the head of the utopia, and whoever puts his experience and power in the service of the politics of the utopia and the head of the utopia has done the best thing, but if the same force is in the service of the non-utopia, it becomes the worst; Therefore, migration to the utopia is obligatory (Abdulmutallab, 2015: 60).

**Characteristics of Happiness:** Happiness is good. Man seeks happiness because he considers it his perfection and any perfection that is desired by human beings is called good (Farabi, 1992: 227). In other words, it is not possible for anyone to consider happiness as something that is in fact He does not consider perfection for himself, because the pursuit of happiness is nothing but the pursuit of perfection. Therefore, 'happiness is absolutely good' (Farabi, 1987: 72) Happiness is the most deserving, superior and most perfect good (Farabi, 1992: 228) there are two types of good: good that are inherently desirable and are desired by man for their own sake. And good

deeds that are not inherently desirable; but because they are the means of achieving other desires, they are desired by human beings and have other desires (Aristotle, 1378, 27, quoted by Hassanifar, 2015: 57).

Happiness is superior to other good things, because happiness is the last answer to the question of why there are countless human quests and requests, and it is the ultimate goal. Happiness, in addition to not being the mediator of asking for anything else, is then not something that can be achieved through happiness, it is basically something that, by being it, does not need anything else beside it. When we find happiness, we do not need anything else with it, and whoever it is, more than anything else, it deserves to be enough on its own. (Farabi, 1992: 229) Happiness is virtue. Perfection and goodness of man is nothing but virtue and happiness is actually achieved through virtue and is nothing but the same virtues (Farabi, 1992: 234 quoted by Hassanifar, 2015: 57). According to Farabi, it is not possible to reach the human end without society, and society cannot exist without a leader. In Farabi's view, society is an organic system whose prosperity or cruelty affects the

happiness and cruelty of members of society, 'the good of society provides the good of the individual' and the happiness and cruelty of members also affects the whole society. Thus, issues related to the well-being of the individual and society are discussed under the heading of civic science or humanities. Achieving perfection is not possible without the cooperation of human beings and the formation of society; because man instinctively needs many things to reach his highest perfection, which he alone cannot solve. He needs groups that each provides a part of his life needs (Farabi, 1982: 112). The ultimate goodness and perfection come first to Medina, not to a society that is more imperfect than Medina. Since the dignity of good and evil is that human beings reach it voluntarily, Medina may reach the ends that are evil by cooperating. Therefore, achieving happiness for Medina / community is possible and not necessary.

According to Farabi, Buddhas are the real source of objective manifestations of civil phenomena. Also the system of relations and behaviors as well as voluntary institutions and traditions are civic manifestations or manifestations of the existence and identity of

civil phenomena, civil society and medina. According to him, these civic manifestations are derived from and based on those beings, just as civic ends as civic goals are the direction and the so-called ultimate cause of existence and creation of civil beings and civil manifestations; Farabi interprets them as happiness or perfection as well as purpose. According to Farabi, if the culture, tradition and civic character of a civil society and the city are optimal, then it is politics, presidency, structures and institutions, and the relevant city is also good, and vice versa, if their character is negative and regressive, then It is also negative in terms of politics and presidency, government, governance and government.

At the center of the ideal government (in the supreme model of government) is the gift of superiority and the use of intellect, which is associated with the 'Holy Spirit' and the 'active intellect', and made it possible to achieve happiness and goodness by establishing and promoting utopia. The second teacher has designed civil society and government from the perspective of the elements of population, territory, government and governance at three

levels: national (Medina), regional (ummah) and global (land). From the perspective of utopia and political rulers, he has designed five models of government, alternatively proposing to run the community. The first type of effluent government is the 'first presidency' led by the first president, which means the government of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The second type of utopian government is the similar subordinate presidency led by the similar head which means the infallible Imams government. The third type of utopia is the presidency of the Sunnah, which is led by the jurist of the University of Conditions. The fourth type of effluent government is the heads of the Sunnah led by two experts, one of whom is a jurist. The last type of effluent government is the noble chiefs led by a maximum of six experts, one of whom must necessarily be a jurist. Each of these governments can be formed at one level of government. The presentation of different types of government reflects the realistic approach of the second teacher to the situation of different societies. He believes that in the absence of the latest model of government, the utopia state will face decline and collapse and the good and prosperity of society will not be



ensured. Hence, the discussion of non-utopian governments and governments is based on the opinions and actions of non-utopia and four types of non-utopian governments. The utopia is conceivable: a- Ignorant government b- Disguised government c- Wicked government d- Misguided Government Each of them is divided into six models of government according to their goals, goals and characteristics, and because each model is in one of the different levels of government. It is achievable, the totality of utopian governments is divided into 72 types of non-utopian models of government (Mohajernia, 2000: 5).

Farabi believes that in the utopia, two issues must be taken into account, in other words, there are two issues in shaping society, and that is the definition of happiness and the ways to achieve it, because the pattern of happiness is different in different societies; so their utopia is also different. Today, Farabi's theory is fully and clearly applied in sociology and in determining the models of growth and development. For example, it is said that the development model in any society is specific to that society and one society model cannot be used for another society. In describing the

ignorant city, Farabi says: The people of the ignorant city did not know happiness and goodness, they were not guided to it; they do not believe in it. They have turned to outward charity such as self-cultivation, wealth, material pleasure, and power-seeking dignity, and consider it the ultimate charity and the ultimate goal. Therefore, when such qualities are widespread among the people of the society, one cannot speak of the happiness of Medina. With this description, it is inferred from the content of Farabi's political thought that he did not distinguish between reason, revelation, politics and law, but made the greatest efforts to harmonize them. Basically, Farabi's main assumption was to link politics with wisdom; For Farabi has considered the end of human beings as happiness, and the research of happiness in the light of wise politics, in which case it becomes necessary in relation to wisdom. According to Farabi, the way to reach true happiness is justice and justice is the axis of human movement on the path of perfection and achieving happiness and universal good.

## 2-4- Interpretation of Goodness and Happiness According to Ibn Miskawayh

Abu Ali Ahmad ibn Muhammad Miskawayh Razi was born in the city of Rey between 320 and 325 AH; He died in the ninth month of Safar 421 AH in Isfahan and was buried in Khajoo neighborhood. He is known for titles such as Muskawi (Mo'rab al-Mushkawayyah), Third Teacher (after Farabi) and Khazen. Miskawayh's political life began when he joined the Buwayhid dynasty and immigrated from Ray (Muscat al-Ras) to Baghdad (the center of the caliphate). He spent at least 32 years of his life in politics. He started entering politics with the ministry of Abu Mohammad Mahlabi in 340 AH, and after him in the court of Abu al-Fadl ibn amid (353-360 AH) and Abu al-Fatah ibn amid (360-66 AH) and finally, with Az-Dawla (360- 372 AH) has cooperated. Historical evidence suggests that al-Miskawayh bids farewell to the world of politics at the age of fifty after Az-Dawla, because he does not find his end in it; hence, he prefers to spend the rest of his life in education and self-purification. His important achievement in this period is the exquisite book Tahzib al-Akhlaq, which is in fact his

philosophical masterpiece and is the one that made him famous and gave him the title of third teacher (Mohajernia 2009: 25).

There is no doubt about the important place of politics in Muscovite thoughts and works. No medieval thinker of Islam could be indifferent to political life, and this is especially true of Muskawiyah because of the special acceptance he gained from his youth at the court of al-Buwayh; But in a step further, it can be said that al-Miskawayh does not neglect for a moment his attention to political affairs throughout his work, and even the issues he raises in his treatises in the form of moral ideas, education, philosophy, and history must be addressed to politics. Counted; Therefore, in order to understand the position of politics in his eyes, one is inevitably confronted with the question of whether, in the opinion of the third teacher, politics and organizing society and government and the administration of Medina are nothing but preparation, moral education, piety and political virtue. He is the administrator of Medina, what is his purpose in laying the intellectual foundation for civil ethics, what is his goal in compiling and presenting the experiences of the ummah, the

immortal of wisdom and Anas al-Farid? The answer to these questions can well illustrate the position of politics in Moscow. In addition to the term politics, he uses words such as "civil industry", "city strategy", "civil strategy", "country strategy" and "strategy in the interests of slaves" in the same sense. Used, and in addition to the absolute use of the word politics, in nine cases it has been used in combination, which are: 1 politics of the soul; 2 Parental policy; 3 home policy; 4 Medina politics; 5 country politics; 6 Property Policy (Fadel or Jar); 7 Divine Policy; 8 Sharia policy; 9 Natural politics (Mohajernia, 2000).

Based on the civic nature of human beings, Miskawayh divides human beings into two groups: socialist and anti-social, which indicates that giving in to society is compatible with rationality, necessity, and social contract; That is, while human nature dictates socialism, human rationality chooses society, and human beings determine how they live by social contract. What needs to be clarified in Muscovite political philosophy is what is the role of the individual in society and his political destiny after society, and what is the relationship between the individual and the

government? The relationship between the individual and the government can usually be divided into two categories: political participation and social acceptability. In the political philosophy of Muslim philosophers, participation has been considered mainly in the form of the term cooperation. The broader meaning of cooperation is much broader than participation, because participation in society is used to determine political destiny, to participate in decision-making, and to elect the governing body, while cooperation also contributes to the cohesion of society. The principle of society is based on cooperation and civilizations are organized accordingly. A scrutiny of the nature of cooperation leads to the fact that in a desirable and benevolent society, all people have a role to play in the eyes of the third teacher, and isolation and isolation are strongly condemned, and people consider community their right and society and the system. They know the ruling politicians of the society and expect justice from it. They have a direct relationship with the governing body on the basis of love and help it to achieve the ends of the government. At the same time, whenever they feel that the rulers are deviating, they have

the opportunity to criticize and advise to improve matters. Rulers, on the other hand, acknowledge this fundamental role of the people and know that if they are not accountable to them, they will lose their credibility. Because in the political philosophy of the third teacher, there is a close relationship between the acceptance and the social base of the government with the political participation of the citizens, so that the more the political system maintains and increases this acceptance and penetrates among the people, the more people are present in the political arena. Will be.

From Miskawayh's point of view, public participation and efforts to achieve a common good have conditions and characteristics that include:

1- Cooperation is based on two bases: right and duty; 2. Cooperation is based on a philosophical system appropriate to itself and relies on a specific type of epistemology, anthropology and ontology; 3. Cooperation is a function of the philosophy of teleology, therefore, participation is not only for participation and the exercise of rights, but the purpose of participation, in addition to

providing material life, is to achieve perfection, happiness and universal good; 4. In order to achieve participation, appropriate contexts and governance apparatus and power structure and leadership in line with political philosophy are needed; 5. The ideal society of Muscovite is based on virtue in addition to teleology; 6- Cooperation in the political philosophy of Muscovite is based on the premise that aware citizens are aware of social rights and the conditions and conditions governing society and know that political rulers adhere to religious conditions. And social acceptance have come to the fore; therefore, cooperating with them to achieve happiness is both a right and a duty, and in case of oppression, opposition and hatred of them is both a right and a duty.

Another approach that exists in the social philosophy of the third teacher is the category of the completeness or imperfection of society. Before him, Abu Nasr al-Farabi divided the communities into two complete and incomplete types and expressed the complete type in three levels of the community of Medina, the community of the ummah and the community of the land, and the imperfect

community in four types: community of home, community of community, community of community and community of community Presented. Miskawayh does not explicitly divide this, but he has raised all the issues, and in fact, in his view, imperfect communities are divided into four types: home community, neighborhood community, dormitory community, and village community, and the complete community is based on the community of Medina and the community of the country. Is divided. In this sense, the well-being of the community of Medina and the country depends on participation for the common good.

Happiness in terms of lexical roots implies the concept of help and assistance. The Arabs used the word Saeed to refer to someone whose causes and causes came to his aid and assistance. Abi al-Baqa 'writes in the book Al-Kaliyat: Al-Saadah, the deputy of the divine affairs for man for the sake of goodness. In many dictionary books, happiness, goodness, joy and cruelty are meant by misfortune and suffering.

Muscovite has expressed the types of happiness according to the Aristotle school.

Happiness is of three kinds: mental hours, physical happiness and external happiness. Each of them also includes three things: mental happiness is: justice, courage, learning sciences and knowledge, and finally attaining wisdom. Body clocks are: health and fitness, fitness and beauty and strength. And finally, external happiness is: social respect, wealth and prosperity, having a good race and friends. (Ibid: 87)

Since all these matters are not called happiness in Miskawayh's words, it can be concluded that in his view, happiness is a composite thing and the author of the above matters. It is clear that not all of these things have the same value and there is a difference between them in providing happiness. The starting point of the Muscovite debate on the meaning of happiness in the philosophy of ethics is reflection on the meaning of 'no' or 'goodness' in the absolute sense of the word.

Al-Miskawayh defines happiness as follows: Fama al-Saadah fahi al-khair in addition to the owners and hey perfection for him means: Happiness is good in comparison with its owner and is considered as perfection for its owner. As can be seen, according to this

definition, happiness is good and the happiness of any being is different from the happiness of another being. For example, human happiness is different from horse happiness, and according to this definition, happiness in general can be defined as follows: The happiness of any creature is that all the talents and characteristics that are specific to it come to fruition from the stage of power and that creature reach the stage of perfection. In other words, all his perfections reach the stage of emergence and manifestation. Based on the above definition, we find that there is a kind of equality between happiness and perfection from Muskawiyya's point of view. In the exquisite treatise *Al-Fawz al-Asghar*, he also explains this claim in an unauthorized way. In the second part of this book, entitled *The Second Issue: In the Soul and Its Conditions*, he has discussed it in ten chapters. In the seventh chapter, the second part, which deals with the nature of the soul, he claims that the soul has two movements: one movement leads the soul to reason, and the other movement leads the soul to a monster. He believes that if the soul moves towards the intellect, it will benefit from it and be enlightened, and the

ground for its transcendence and evolution will be provided. But if the soul moves in the opposite direction to the monster, the negative talents of the soul will appear and the ground will be set on fire and the soul will be destroyed. Ibn al-Miskawayh chose the title for the eighth chapter as follows: In the soul, now perfection is called happiness and the end of imperfection is called happiness. This title is another confirmation that from Miskawayh's point of view, there is a balance between the two words perfection and happiness on the one hand, and deficiency and cruelty on the other hand. Another proof of the equality of happiness and perfection is that Miskawayh says in the discussion of ethics: The ethics industry is the most valuable industry, because its goal is the excellence and evolution of human actions because it is human. He believes that it is issued from the essence of the present special human being, which cannot be exported from other beings, because the noble human being is the creature of the universe. He also claims that human beings have different and contradictory powers and talents. Therefore, if some of these talents are realized from power, man will go through the path of degeneration and loss and

will move towards the rank of Akhs. Because of this decline and descent, he will be caught in the terrible abyss of enmity between God and the torment of Alim. On the contrary, if he takes another path and develops his other talents, he will become the Ashraf of creatures. He also believes that different beings, such as inanimate objects, plants, and animals, are honorably different from one another, and that this honorable distinction exists not only among different jewels, but even in a particular essence. There are distinctions in terms of honor. He uses allegory to explain his claim, pointing out that: between two types of swords, one known as Samsam which is sharp, sharp, and passing, and the other known as Kaham which is slow, and also between Horse There is a difference between Karim, from whom the horse's verbs are issued in full, and Darazgosh, which is only suitable for planning and loading.

#### 1-2-4-Definitions of the “Concept of No”

According to al-Miskawayh, in the exquisite book Tahdhib al-Akhlaq and Tahrir al-Iraq, two definitions of goodness are mentioned: 1. [16, p. 34; 2] »He means the whole and it is the

ultimate end and it is called the beneficial thing in this end is good. [16, p.83. 5]. Analyzing the first definition of Miskawayh, in order to present this definition, he first mentions an introduction and says: Each of the beings in the universe is distinguished from other beings because of one or more features, and this feature or features are in fact one of its features. This is a general rule and applies to all creatures, including humans. He introduces the most important factor in distinguishing human beings from other beings as the human will and says: The voluntary affairs that are attributed to human beings are divided into two categories: charity and evil. For this reason, whenever one of the human beings pays attention to the goal of human creation and tries to reach this goal, such a person is called a good man or a happy person. On the contrary, if a human being is hindered from achieving the goal of creation and he does not achieve the goal for which he was created, he is called such a vicious human being. [35-34, 16].

#### 2-2-4- Good Affairs

After stating these preliminaries, Miskawayh defines good deeds and says: 1- Man was not



created in vain, but man's creation is purposeful. 2- The purpose of man's creation is not achieved randomly and based on luck. 3- The realization of the goal of human creation depends on his effort and will. 4- All the things that man does during his life based on his will and effort to cover the purpose of his creation are called charity.

Analysis of the second definition the precise and in-depth understanding of the second definition of Muscovite depends on the following:

1- Every being that is moving towards an end, if it reaches the end, has reached its perfection (the end of the verb). 2- The wise and sound nature avoids doing vain and vain deeds (active end). 3- Such a creature considers the end and purpose for it before doing any work. 4- Sometimes several ends are considered in doing voluntary affairs. Sometimes there is a kind of longitudinal order between multiple ends. This means that each end provides the ground for reaching another end, and so-called each end is a prelude to reaching another end. 6. Among the many ends, there is an end to which all ends flow, and in fact that end is the end and the end of all ends (the end of the

ends) and the ultimate desire of all. 7- It refers to the ultimate good of all and the end of good ends. Such good is called absolute good. 8- Sometimes there is tolerance in the definition of good and the meaning of good is not absolute good. For this reason, anything that is useful and effective in achieving the ultimate and absolute good (end of ends) is called good.

If we compare the first and second definitions, we find that there are similarities and differences between the two definitions. The similarities between these two definitions are:

1. in both definitions, teleology is considered as a matter of course. 2. In both definitions, in a way, the attainment of the ultimate good is considered. The differences between this definitions are: In the first definition, only relative good is considered, but the second definition, in addition to considering relative good to absolute good, also refers to. The first definition refers only to man, but the second definition, in addition to man, includes all rational beings, and even if the end of the action is considered, it can somehow include all beings in the universe.

### 3-3-4-Types of Good

In his works for goodness sake, Muskouyeh has enumerated the types which are:

1- The good of ends and the good of non-ends Al-Miskawayh in the first step divides charity into two types: good of ends and good of non-ends; And in the next step, good divides ends into two types: complete and incomplete. Total goodness: It means goodness that if a person grasps it, he does not need to add anything else to it. Miskawayh mentions happiness as an example of complete goodness. Incomplete goodness: It means the goodness that if a person achieves, he needs to increase other things. He introduces healing, learning, and austerity as examples and examples of the most inexhaustible good [16, p. 84].

2- Goodness in jewelry and goodness in Miskawayh deviations. On the other hand, in the first step, it divides charity into two types of charity in jewels and charity in deviations; And then he divides charity in deviations into different types of goodness in quantity, goodness in quality, and goodness in other transverse categories; And he believes that good in categories is some as powers and properties, and some as circumstances, and

some as actions, and some as ends, and some as materials and parts as tools.

To explain what he means, Miskawayh says: Good in essence means God (essence), which is the first good, because all things move with enthusiasm towards Hazrat Haqq, and finally, divine blessings such as survival, eternity, and completeness belong to Hazrat Haqq. He cites various examples to explain charity in deviations [16, p. 85. 3-] Absolute and Absolute Goodness: Miskawayh, on the other hand, divides goodness into two types, absolute and non-absolute. He means absolute goodness that is good at all times and for all people and in all respects, and he means non-absolute (relative) goodness that is good in times of need and what happens to some people and good to all people. And they are not good in all respects and at all times [16, pp. 84-85.]

4- General and non-general goodness Al-Miskawayh, on the other hand, divides goodness into general and non-general goodness, and it means general goodness, which all people desire with enthusiasm, and all seek to attain it, and general goodness has a nature that means it is all people and has an

independent nature and existence. In other words, the common good is the good that is common to people because they are people and that all people have in common. Based on the definition of general good, the definition of non-general (special) is determined, and it is the good that is desirable and intended for some people and not everyone wants to achieve it [16, p. 83; 3, pp. 22-33. [16, p. 84].

#### 4-4-4- Analysis of Goodness and Happiness and Common Good Resulting from the View of Ibn Miskawayh

As he thinks, there are different types of good. One of these types is the division of good into ends and non-ends. In the first step, al-Miskawayh divides the good into two types of end good and non-end good, and also introduces the end good into two types, complete and non-complete good, and complete end good, which man does not need to add anything else after grasping it. He introduces happiness as an example of the atom and the perfection of the ultimate good [16, p. 84.] In addition, he is therefore a kind of good and all their goodness and ends, and is all that man after achieving and with Existence of

receiving it never feels the need for anything else, and that is why it is said: Happiness is the most virtuous and transcendent charity. God's gift to man is happiness, because happiness is a gift from God to man, which is one of the most honorable houses of charity and the highest level of charity, and it is specific to the whole man. Therefore, people like children or similar children who have not reached the stage of completion and completion will not be awarded. According to this definition, happiness is good and the happiness of any being is different from the happiness of another being.

#### 5. Conclusion

As noted, this article examines the concept of common good in the new world and its distinction from other concepts. The sum of good deeds that are formed through collective actions over a period of time and are generally considered desirable, desirable, and good by the majority of the members of that community can be called common good. In other words, the kind of good deeds that are inherently general, good, and common to human beings, and they interact with each

other through this kind of good property or inheritance and collectively consider them good; Such as values, civic virtues, sense of justice and other charitable affairs that cannot be reduced to individual resources and affairs can be defined as common good. Most of the concepts used in the economics literature fall into this category. There is another relatively different type of shared good that includes good deeds that are inherently shared goodness. The term common good is synonymous with what Charles Taylor calls socially irreducible commodities. Most political thinkers prefer to use the term common good in order to better understand and analyze the relationship between common good at the micro and macro levels. A common good is that it cannot be defined by individuals alone. They cannot be built by individuals, nor is there a collective product resource bank available to individuals to choose from, or not to choose from. However, they do not exist just because of some kind of forced cooperation. There is a common good because of a common practice that makes them possible, and in which people participate freely, thus preserving and developing it. Of course,

certain people are free to start or stop. But these good deeds are produced only in joint action, rather than simply by individual selection from an existing source.

Collective philanthropy, joint philanthropy and public philanthropy are similar in that all three require joint action. But this is accidental and co-operative for the common good and the common good, while it is inherent in the common good. Collective action, which expands the range of things through which individuals can choose to benefit, does not make common goods available to anyone. They need something in terms of quality and coordination with others because there is a benefit to each of them in this. To the extent that human well-being is shaped by the benefit of the common good, public policy may be undermined rather than aided by human well-being if it fails to recognize the common good and is thus formed and implemented without such knowledge. Its effects can destabilize or even destroy some very valuable common good.

In the Eastern world and especially in the Islamic world, political thought related to common good has been considered since the

distant past and from the time of the first Muslim thinkers. In Islamic thought, the good and happiness of man and society depend on guaranteeing the good and spiritual and otherworldly happiness of man. Therefore, all the efforts of human beings and society to meet the material and basic needs in order to reach nearness to God and happiness and goodness in the hereafter.

Farabi considers the common good in the attainment of human happiness and human happiness as dependent on a utopia whose human beings have reached a virtue and awareness by applying all sciences that can achieve virtues in a prosperous society. In fact, these virtues are the good that all human beings should achieve, and such a path is led by a nation that has special characteristics.

No medieval thinker of Islam could be indifferent to political life, and this ruling was more true of Miskawayh than anyone else because of the special acceptance he had gained from his youth at the court of al-Buwayh; But a step further, it can be said that throughout his works, al-Miskawayh did not neglect for a moment his attention to political affairs, and even raised issues in his treatises in the form of

moral ideas, education, philosophy, and history.

Based on the civic nature of human beings, Miskawayh divides human beings into two groups: socialist and anti-social, which indicates that giving in to society is compatible with rationality, necessity, and social contract; That is, while human nature dictates socialism, human rationality chooses society and human beings determine how they live by social contract.

According to al-Miskawayh, in the exquisite book *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* and *Tahrir al-Iraq*, two definitions of goodness are mentioned: 1. [16, p. 34]; 2. He means the whole and it is the ultimate end and it is called the beneficial thing in this end is good. [16, p.83. [5 .1. Analyzing the first definition of Miskawayh, in order to present this definition, he first mentions an introduction and says: Each of the beings in the universe is different from other beings because of one or more features, and this feature or features is in fact one of its features.

If we compare the definitions of good with each other, we find that there are similarities and differences between these definitions. In terms of similarity, they consider teleology as a

matter of course. In a way, the attainment of the ultimate good is considered. The differences are as follows: only relative good is considered, but in addition to considering relative good to absolute good, it is also observed. Some definitions refer to man, but

others, in addition to man, include all rational beings, and even if the end of the action is taken into account, it can somehow include all beings in the universe.

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## تحلیل مفهوم خیر عمومی در اندیشه سیاسی متفکران مسلمان با تأکید بر آراء فارابی و ابن مسکویه

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**چکیده:** در گفتمان متداول علوم سیاسی، «خیر عمومی» به آن امکانات مادی، فرهنگی یا نهادی گفته می‌شود که اعضای یک جامعه در آن اشتراک منافع دارند. خیر عمومی مفهوم مهمی در فلسفه سیاسی و اندیشه سیاسی است؛ زیرا نقش مهمی در تفکر فلسفی درباره ابعاد عمومی و خصوصی زندگی اجتماعی دارد. در این مقاله ضمن بازشناسی و تحلیل مفهوم خیر عمومی و مفاهیم مرتبط با آن؛ دیدگاه‌های متفکران مسلمان را در ارتباط با اندیشه خیر عمومی مورد بررسی قرار داده‌ایم. تحلیل اندیشه سیاسی متفکران مسلمان نشان داده است که آنها، انسان را مدنی الطبع می‌دانند و به نظرشان رسیدن به کمال و خیر عمومی نیز در گرو تشکیل اجتماع است. شکی در این نیست که برای انسان ممکن نیست که به کمالاتی که برای آن مخلوق شده است برسد، مگر به اجتماع جمعی کثیر که هر یک یکدیگر را در امری که به آن محتاج است، معاونت نماید و از مجموع آنها همه آنچه در بلوغ انسان به کمال ضروری است، مجتمع گردد. از این رو متفکران مسلمان از جمله ملاصدرا و فارابی تفکر صحیح و علم نافع را در کنار اخلاق حسنه و تهذیب نفس و تعالی روح، شرط ضروری می‌دانند و معتقد است که رئیس اول مدینه باید صاحب رتبه خلافت الهی باشد و مستحق ریاست بر خلق و رسالت‌دار خدای تعالی است، تا خیر عمومی گسترانیده شود. چنین کسی به مقام و مرتبه جامعیت در نشأت سه‌گانه عقلی و نفسی و حسی رسیده است و شایستگی خلیفه‌اللهی و مظهریت جامع اسمای الهی را دارد و می‌تواند خیر عمومی را در اجتماع بشری ساری و جاری کند. این مقاله به شیوه توصیفی - تحلیلی و با استفاده از منابع معتبر کتابخانه‌ای کوشش کرده مفهوم خیر عمومی را در اندیشه سیاسی متفکران مسلمان تحلیل کند.

**واژه‌های کلیدی:** خیر عمومی، اندیشه سیاسی، مصلحت عمومی، متفکران مسلمان.