Chapter 5

Mulla Sadra

His life and works

Sadra lived from approximately 980/1571 to 1050/1640. His full name is Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim al-Qawam al-Shirazi, and he is commonly known as Mulla Sadra. “His honorific title Sadr al-Din ("Pandit of Religion"), indicates his accepted rank within traditional theological circle, while his designation as “Exemplar, or Authority of Divine Philosophers” (Sadr al- Mut a’allihin) signifies his unique position for generations of philosophers who came after him.1"

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He was born in Shiraz, a historical city in Fars province in Iran to a wealthy family. His father, Khwajah Ibrahim Qawami, was a knowledgeable and faithful politician. He was a rich man and minister in the Safavid court. Sadra was the only child of the minister of the ruler of the vast region of Fars and enjoyed the highest standards of a noble life.

“Sadra was a very intelligent, strict, energetic, studious, and curious boy and mastered all the lessons related to Persian, Arabic literature, as well as the art of calligraphy, during a very short time, following the old tradition of his time, he might have also learnt horse riding, hunting and fighting technique. Mathematics, astronomy, medicine (to some extend), jurisprudence, Islamic Law, Logic, and philosophy were also among the courses that youngsters were supposed to pass at that time. The young Sadra, who had not yet reached the age of puberty, had acquired some of all those fields of knowledge; however, he was mainly interested in philosophy and, particularly, in gnosis.”

His life mainly devoted to the study and teaching of philosophy and theology. He became familiar with lessons and lectures of two prominent masters, that is, Shaykh Baha aL-Din

1. WWW. Wikipedia.COM
Muhammad aL- Ameli (d. 1031, 1622) and Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Astarabadi well known as Mir Damad (d. 1040/1631). They were famous and unique not only in their own time, but also unparallel by any scientist appearing even four centuries thereafter. Sadra started his study under them and very soon his outstanding talent made him the best of all their students.

Shaykh Baha was an expert in jurisprudence, hadith, interpretation, theology and gnosis. In his courses he was not teaching philosophy and theology. Sadra studied under him transmitted sciences (aL-u’Lam aL-naqliyyeh) which was shi’ite view concerning jurisprudence and hadith scholarship and exposure to Quran commentary.

His other master during the same period was the geniues philosopher, Mir Damad, who was known as the “Seal of Philosophers” (Khatam aL- HuKama) and the “Third Teacher”-after Aristotle and aL-Farabi.¹

Sadra began his study of what was commonly known as intellectual Science (aL-uLum aL-aqliyyah) under him most of

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¹ Majid Fakhry, P. 636.
his knowledge in philosophy and gnosis was from him. Sadra represented another new and reconstruction of metaphysics in Islamic philosophy, which bears the name of metaphysical philosophy (*aL-hikmat aL-muta’aliyah*). Sadra says that many of his philosophical compassion was revealed to him in a visionary experience which he analyses within the discursive system.\(^2\)

Sadra trained many students that two most important of them are Muhammad ibn aL-Murdada- well known as Mulla Muhsin Fayd Kashani and Abd aL-Razzaq ibn aL Husayn aL-Lahiji. The forman emphasized on two side of his master thought: the genostic (*irfan*) and the shi’ite interpretation of the Quranic realm of unseen (*aL- ghayb*) as the source of inspiration, and the latter signified ethical view of his master.

Max Horton did the earliest study of Sadra’s works in translations with pre-modern philosophical terminology\(^3\). In more recent decades with a modern western philosophical analysis of Sadra’s works was done by Henry Corbin, Sayyed Hossein Nasr, James Morris and Toshihiko Izutsu.


\(^2\) See also: M.Mohaghegh and T.Izutsu, *The metaphysics of Sabzavari*, Delmar, 1977, p.31-2.

\(^3\) *Das Philosophiche system Vin Schirazi* (1913)
Henry Corbin\textsuperscript{1}, a theosophical terminology, emphasized on esoteric dimension of Sadra’s thought and avoids the logical side of Sadra’s system of metaphysics. This explanation of Sadra’s philosophy has not been interesting for western readers who are eager about analytical philosophy. Nasr and Morris\textsuperscript{2} expound Sadra’s predominantly reconstructed system of metaphysics. Morris emphasized a presumed “transcendental element in Sadra’s thought to construct a valid, consistent system of metaphysics where a well-defined philosophical terminology is employed to refine mostly classical ontological and epistemological arguments. This new system is called aL-hikmat aL-muta’aliyah.

Contemporary scholars who have written many books in Persian and Arabic on various aspects of Islamic philosophy of Sadra from a modern philosophical perspective are Mehdi Hair, Yazdi, JaLaL Ashtiyani, syyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai, and Mehdi Mohaghegh.

The vast profound influence created by Sadra was on the intellectual scene in Iran during the past four centuries.

\textsuperscript{1} Le Livre des Penetrations metaphysiques, Tehran, 1964
\textsuperscript{2} The wisdom of the Throne, Prinston, 1981.
Influence of Sadra began in India from the middle of the seventeen century. His writings, particularly the Sharh aL-hidayah well known as Sadra became famous in India and many scholars tried to translate some his books.

**His works**

Sadra was a prolific writer and more than fifty works are attributed to him.\(^1\) He created a varied, useful, and influential philosophical collection of writings in different forms following different purposes. They may be divided into three trends of his thought:

1. Some of his books are textbooks and useful for gaining acquaintance with philosophy and gnosis. His major works in this group include:

   1.1 al-Asfer al-arb’at al-aqliyyah
   1.2 al-Shawahid aL-rububiyyah
   1.3 glosses on Ibn Sina’s Shifa and on Suhrawardi’s Hikmat aL-ishraq

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\(^1\) www. Sadra Islamic Philosophy Research Institute IRAN.
1.4 aL-Tanquih and aL-Tasawwur wa’L-tasdiq deal with logic.

2. Some of his books are devoted to the interpretation of Quran, Islamic jurisprudence, Hadith scholarship and theology. His major works in this group are:

2.1 Sharh al-usuL al-kafi, a commentary on kalayni Rezai’s book.
2.2 Mafatih al-ghayb, an incomplete Quranic commentary (tafsir)
2.3 A short treatise called Immamat on Shi’ite theology,
2.4 A number of glosses on KaLam texts such as Qushchi’s Sharh al-tayrid.

3. Some of his books are on ethics and manners, such as Si Asl, the only book in Persian, all other books are written in Arabic. The lists of all his books are available in many different sites, which are translated in English\(^1\) and Persian.

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\(^1\) www. Mulasadra.org
“The great genius of Mulla Sadra was in harmonize philosophy based upon rational demonstration with gnosis aspect in one hand and revelation on the other hand.”

Sadra’s Metaphysics

Sadr al-Din Shirazi or Sadra is one of the greatest intellectual figures in the Iranian philosophical tradition. For long time his doctrine was thrived only among his disciples in Persia and in certain parts of India until the present day. This obscurity out side of Persia and some parts of India was due to the fact that his writings were never translated into foreign Languages like English until recently. His translators have been those who are knowledgeable in those parts of Islam that not influenced the western world.

The most important work which stands out as one of the greatest monuments of metaphysics in Iranian philosophy is his Asfar which is in four books or journeys (Safar, as far being its broken plural) deals with the origin and end of the whole manifestation of the universe and in particular of the human

soul. He was familiar with all the previous philosophies and main source of his doctrines can be mentioned as follows:¹

1. Muslim peripatetic philosophy especially that of Ibn Sina and through it the philosophy of Aristotle as well as the Neoplatonists, many of whose doctrines became part of Aristotelian philosophy in Islam.

2. The Ishraqi theosophy of Suhrawardi and all of his commentators like Qutb al-Din Shirazi and Jalal al-Din Dawani.

3. The genostic doctrines of Ibn Arabi and other expositors of the teachings of his school like sadr al-Din Qunawi and also the works of other Sufi masters like Ain al-Qudat Hamadani and Mahmud Shabistari.

4. Islamic revelation, especially certain saying of Prophet and the Shi’ah imams which serve as the revealed basis of Islamic wisdom.”²

Sadra’s great genius was in combining the rigor of peripatetic demonstration with the ecstasy of illumination and bringing evidences from the Quran and Hadith, united them in a

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¹ Ibid. P 11.
² Ibid.
harmonizing philosophy, which had never been in the same manner before.

The vast metaphysics created by Sadra is based on the three principles of unity (wahdat aL-Wujud), principality of being (Isalat al-wujud) and gradation of being (tashkik aL-Wujud), and it is only in the light of these principles that his other doctrines can be understood.

Generally, authenticity of being means that the quiddity (Mahiyat, essence) of being are only some concepts that we drew them from the limitations of being, they have no real reality, every quiddity occupies one limited of being. For instance: quiddities of a table are its quality, quantity, shape, and colour and so on, they can come to existence only when they occupy some parts of being. Unity of being means that the being is a single reality, and it is the ultimate reality of the universe; Gradation of being means there is only One being with many different grades, each being is different from each other only in strength and weakness, like light which is the same reality whether it be that of the sun or a candle, but is stronger in one case and weaker in another.
To make these aspects of Sadra’s philosophy more clear, we compare them with some aspects of Plato, Aristotle and Kant’s philosophy.

**What is the being and its principality**

**Sadra and Parmenides**

A distinguished Ancient Greek philosopher, Parmenides said that all of that which is, is being and every thing is different from being, is not. “Being alone is, and there is no other alternative for any conceivable reality, that either to be that which being itself- actually is, or else to be at all.”

He believed the path of sense is simply the path of illusion and error and the light of the intellect is apparently more skillful than the sense and since Parmenides rejected the eye of the sense to prove the intellect.

Mulla-Sadra developed a theory, which appreciates the role of each perceptive resource in the process of perception, without sacrifice of one faculty of perception for another.

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Sadra says, as Parmenides said, that reality is nothing other than being (Wujud), which is at once one, but graded, existentiating the reality of all things. The theory of gradation of being is the solution of Parmenides’s mistake in considering being as only an intellectual perception and neglecting sensible perception. Sadra said in so far as we talk about things as actually existing, being is predicated of all things that exist. In this most generic sense, being applies to things univocally, signifying their common state of existence. He goes on and argues that the predication of being takes place with varying degrees of “intensity” and gradation (tashkik)\(^1\).

To give an example, light is predicated of candle, the lamp and the sun univocally, in that they all participate in the quality of light and its brightness. Each of these objects shows different degrees of intensity in sharing the quality of light. Light is the most brightest in the sun and weakest in the ray of lamp and candle. It is light in being of God as the source of all beings, the brightest one and other existence as his illuminations. God has more “being” than other things, which have being but lighter than him, and because of Him they have their being. While a single entity, possesses such degrees of strength and weakness in its inner most that each of them

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1. *Asfar*, I.I.P. 36-7
comprises a world or may be some worlds. The vertical gradation of being represent the system of cause and effect, and the horizontal one unravels the correlative, network like interconnected and complex relations among the grades, with each grades represented all its higher grades at a single place.

**Sadra and Plato**

Plato believed that the reality of real world may be very different from its appearance. As Heraclitus, his ancestor, said that sensible things, objects and individuals are always in coming and passing a way, flux and change, in a state of becoming which are not real being, but in contrast with Parmendis they are not non-being. They are the lowest degree of reality or being, then after them, there are objects of mathematics and after that there are objects of intellect, which represents the peak of being, and knowledge, means Ideas or Forms. The higher Form is richer containing more Forms, while it is more abstract.¹

Plato’s Idea or real being is clear mental state in which the object is directly known, on the other hand, he could not

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¹. Sophist. 259, b.
ignore sensible things therefore, and dualism remains in his philosophy.

Sadra analyzed whole existence as union and single reality. “He saw the whole of existence not as objects which exist or existents but a single reality (Wujud) whose delimitations by various quiddities (mahiyyat) gives the appearance of a multiplicity which exists within various existences being independent apparently of each other.”¹ He analyzed cause and effect relation in a one-side relationship as illumination relation, in that effects have their effectual degree while we look at them, but they are in a pure annihilation and being in comparison their relation to the cause. In this case it does not leave any room for duality.

The gradation of existence corrects justifies this distinction. Instead of sacrificing unity for plurality or vice versa, Sadra brings plurality in unity and unity in plurality in an interconnected relation to each other. The problem of the gradation of being is one of the complex problems which does not easily yield itself to conception, like ‘being’ which is pure rational concept of the reality. Following this, the principality of being is necessary to discuss here in Sadra and Aristotle.

¹. Hossein Ziai, In A History of Islamic Philosophy, Majid Fakhry, p.646
Sadra and Aristotle

The most outstanding realist philosophers among ancient Greek philosophers, Aristotle explained true and independent being as substance. Everything except primary substance is either predicated of primary substance, or is present in them and if these last did not exist, it would be impossible for anything else to exist and all qualities are the qualities of substance.¹

Sadra looked at being not as investigation of the properties of things or existential propositions, grounded in abstract considerations of existence but a doctrine of being (al-Wujud), in its principality.

Although Sadra says that the principality of being is obvious and axiomatic, he sets out to prove it rationally. In his book “Mashair” he proves the truth of principality of being in six way:

First, being (Wujud) is the reality of every thing and they come to existence because of being, but being is its self-

¹. See Categories, 1 a 25.
realization and does not need of any other reality to embody it while other things including quiddities need being to be objective and come to external world. Being does exits in virtue of its own self, not by other being. So the matter does not in any way lead to an infinite regress.¹

Second, when something exists externally, it produces effects and consequences, and when it is said that something exists in the mind, it means that external effects and consequences are not attributed to it. So, if being was not principal and actualized and if quiddity was principle and actualized, and quidity is kept in mental and external world without any difference- then, there would be no distinction between the external and mental. But since this conclusion is absorbed, then being must be real and actualized, like fire in mind that cannot burns, but in external world it burns.

Third, it is obvious that in the validity of a predication there is always both a certain type of unity and diversity. For, if there was only unity, no predication could occur and if there was only diversity, predication could not be supposed. And when one thing is predicated of another, is that they are united

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¹ For more details in this subjects look at: Mulla-Sadra and Comparative Studies, Islam-West Philosophical Dialogue, Vol. 5, pp 230-245
in existence and are different from one another in their quiddites, then it would have been impossible for them to be the same thing, because in a quiddity there is no unity and diversity and it stays always in mind and out of mind same; therefore, existentiality and actuality of things lay only in their being which could be diversity and unity in a union of predication.

**Fourth,** there could be “degrees in gradual increase of intensity in existence, whereas grades can not occur in quiddities. This may be explained as follows: A body which has bright red color may move towards dark red color, like an apple which is pale and little by little in an intensive and constructing movement becomes dark red, from weak color to strong color.

All movements are continuous and every continuous movement allows for an infinite number of limits being posited in it. If quaddity is principle, necessarily there must be various infinite species and degrees bounded between to limited parts, i.e. between the beginning and the end of a movement, but as it proved quiddity can not be different and there is no grade in it.
“On the contrary if being does have reality, it would be like a thread bringing the scattered “quidities” into order and keeping them from dispersion.”

Therefore, we must say being of that thing is principal and like weak and strong color that constitute a color, being is a constant and union thing with different grades and from each grade we understand one step of being. Multiplicity is mere potential not actual, it is a being having extension and different grades which from each grade a specific being can be drown.

**Fifth**, since by being, everything wears the clothes of existence how it cannot be principal, i.e. quaddity qua quiddity is nothing but itself and it has in itself an equal relation to both existence and non-existence. If being was nothing except an abstract concept, how can quiddity leave the state of equality? For adding a non-existent to another non-existent cannot produce a “being existent.”

If one can claim that quiddity although is boundary of equality, has become capable of being, because a mode of being which it has acquired from the maker after coming into relation with Him.

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It must be noticed that if after related to maker quiddity has got different state, it can be no other than being, and if after related to maker occurs no difference in state of equality in quiddity and yet it deserves the being, that would be mutation and is a contradiction.

**Sixth,** “If “existence” (being\(^1\)) were not fundamentally real there would be no unity actualized, because all other things raise only the dust of multiplicity.”\(^2\) There is unity because of reality of being; otherwise quiddity is the source of multiplicity and differential. And if unity were not actualized, there would be four deficiencies:

First, there would be no unification (identity) which is necessary in predication; second, there would be no unification of the divine essence; third, not the justification of His Attributes; fourth, nor again the unification of His Acts and Greats to world. The last three deficiencies need to talk in religious contexts that are far from this text, and then we explain the first one.

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1. Author added “being” to show here being and existence mean the same.
If unity were not actualized there would be no unification in predication. There are two important predications: “primary predication” and “common technical predication”. In the former the subject and predicate are same in concept and existent, such as, ‘man is man’, or ‘man is a rational animal’, in the latter subject and predicate are different in concept but are union in existent, such as ‘man is a writer’, there is difference between the concept of ‘man’ and ‘writer’, but they are union in existent in the external world.

There must be two conditions for a correct predication. First, subject and predicate may be diverse in one direction; and second, subject and predicate may be in union in one direction, otherwise predication may not exemplify. In common technical predication, there is a difference between ‘man’ and ‘writer’, which have two different quaddities, but they are one and in union in direction which is existent, man exists with its predicate which is ‘writing’, i.e. subject and predicate have one existent.

Existents are not composed of two things, ‘being’ and quiddity, which antecedently put together and turn into an existent. The distinction between being and quiddity is not a real distinction, but mind has such capability to perceive them
distinctively.\textsuperscript{1} Although quiddities perceived as universal and in the external world there is a unique existent that participates in all inclusive being. In other words, that has real existent in reality is being and from its limitation the quiddity will be drown.\textsuperscript{2}

The predication of being takes place with various gradations (\textit{Tashkik}).\textsuperscript{3} Each of objects, however, displays different degrees of intensity in the being. Things partake of being with different degree of intensity, strong and weak, prior, and posterior, perfect and imperfect.

\textbf{Sadra and Kant}

Kant claimed that there is a difference between a real predicate and a non-real predicate. In the former, predicate adds something to its subject and enlarges it, such as “the body is white” whereas in the latter, a predicate does not add anything new to the subject, such as “the man is man”. The first proposition is synthetic and the second is analytic. Kant says that being (or existence) is not a real predicate, for it can not

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\textsuperscript{1} Asfar, I, I, P. 46  \\
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid, P. 54.  \\
\textsuperscript{3} Ibid, P.36.
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add something to its subject and in logical terminology, being is only a copula of the proposition and neither of its sides.

He added that “Being” is obviously not a real predicate; that is, “it is not a concept of something, which could be added to the concept of a thing. It is merely the positing of a thing, or of certain determinations, as existing in them. Logically, it is merely the copula of a judgment.”¹

He gives an example that there is no discrepancy between the one hundred dollars, which exist, and the one hundred dollars, which does not exist;² otherwise it would not be the same. Kant did not regard being as a real predicate for the proposition, because he regards the being as mere empirical thing. To apply being to the object is justified if it is only based on empirical evidences, and concepts are different according to their empirical differences. When Kant rejected the being as a real predicate for it adds nothing to the concept of subject, he means there is no empirical discrepancy between predicate and subject in this type of existential proposition.

² Ibid, P 505, B 672.
Mulla Sadra, like Kant, believes that the concept of being is not analytic and there can be discrepancy between the concept of being and quiddities (predicates). He gives some proofs for that which are as follows:

1. Being is not same as quiddity nor can a part of it, for being be negated of quiddity, while quiddity cannot be negated of itself.

2. Being and quiddity are different concepts in our mind while they are unified in the external world. Quiddity needs being to bring it to the external world; otherwise if quidity has existence before the being in the world outside, it means that quiddity has got a being before the being of that object, then we can ask how it is possible to have a being a priori to the being of that object. It must be some thing different from the being of that thing, then it needs the real being to bring it to existence, then if again that quiddity has another being different from the real being, question remains that how and from where this quiddity has got that being. This is an infinite regressive chain that can not come to the end.
3. To predicate a being to a quiddity there must be a middle term. When we say ‘tree exists’, the statement needs proof, but when we say ‘tree is from roots, trunks, leaves,’ the statement does not need any proof; because to predicate the being to the quiddity we need proof while to attribute properties of a thing to its essence (quiddity) we don’t need any proof, it is self-evident. Hence, being is neither the same as quiddity nor a part of it.

4. All different quiddities of a thing would necessarily be one concept if the being was same as quiddity, because being is one single concept, but quiddities are different concepts. For instance a tree has one single being, while its quiddities are its material, its shape, its colour, its weight and so on. If being was same as quiddities, there must be all quiddities same.¹

Sadra agreed with Kant that existential propositions are not analytical and thus it is synthetically, but from different

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stand point. For Kant distinction between quiddity and being is based on the sense experience. Then, he does not come to this conclusion that being is a real predicate, because he regarded the concept of being as an independent and predicated. While this distinction for Sadra is possible as intellectual and philosophical, therefore, he may prove “being” as real predicate.

Sadra says, “What is affirmed in the existential proposition is not the affirmation of a thing for the subject but the affirmation and realization of the subject.”\(^1\) For instance when it is said, “a body is white” the bodyness and the whiteness have two different external individuation, their actualization is onething.”\(^2\)

In other words the being and the object are externally realized through same existence, what is original outside of mind is the being according to primacy of being- and by thought we abstract from the limitation of being the object or quiddities, i.e. the object is the modes of being which is mentally exist. There is one unite being externally with

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1. aL Shawahid aL - Rubabiyyeh, aL-Mashhad Al-Awal, P. 10
2. aL-Asfar aL—arba’a, Vol. 1, PP 43-44
different grade, that from each grade we distinguish one existence.

For Sadra the predicate of being is neither part of subject (analytical) nor an adherence predicate (bil- Zamimeh), but it is a predicate by way of intimacy (bil-Samimeh). In the predicate by way of adherence, the predicate has a reality different from subject, such as “a body is white” but, in the predicate by way of intimacy the predicate has no reality other than its subject, such as “man is possible.” The possibility (analytical) is neither among the man’s essential attributes, nor has a reality other than man, hence possibility is abstracted from the man and predicated to it in the mind and possibility exists with the being of man externally and it is a predicate mentally which is abstracted from the innermost of being.

In other words, the quiddity of man has an equal relationship with coming to existence and not coming to existence and whenever quiditty of the man receives any cause for its being, it will come to existence, otherwise it stays in a potential situation, therefore relationship of quiddity to the being is neither an adherent predicate nor analytical, but is combined with man’s being externally; it has no other reality other than man’s being.
The same is true for the being, but we do not abstract the predicate of the being from the subject, because according to the primary of being what exists outside is being and subject is posited from the limitation of the specific being, in other words it is true to say “this being is man”, “this being is horse.”

Thus, what Kant meant by existence as a concept is that it must add something to the subject, and Sadra proved it externally. He said that the being is origin and what we call quiddities is something that we understand from the limitations of a specific being. In the real world there is one expanding being with different grades.
Summary

The vast metaphysics created by Sadra is based on the three principles of unity (*Wahadat al-Wujud*), principality of being (*IsaLat al-Wujud*) and gradation of being (*tashkik al-Wujud*). To make these aspects of his philosophy more clear, we compare them in the subject of the being in Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle and Kant.

Parmenides believed all of that which is, is being and everything different from being, and is not. Being is a real thing in this world. Plato accepted this definition from Parmenides but render it to the world of Idea. He created a gradation of existence corresponding to cognition from sense as lowest level of being compatible with sense perception, then the objects of mathematics corresponding to the understanding, then the object of ideas corresponding to pure reason.

Aristotle explained the being as true and independent being in substance, which can be seen and touched and is a combination of matter and form but understandable through thought.
Kant claimed that being is not a real predicate, because it does not anything to its subject, therefore, being is a copula.

Sadra said as Parmenides who declared that reality is nothing other than being (Wujud) which is at once one, but he added a gradation to the being, the reality of all things. This gradation is the solution of Parmenides’s mistake in considering being as only material thing which is intellectual perception, he neglected sensible perception and Plato’s mistake was considering real being as only immaterial thing and put low estimate on sensible conception and its objects.

Sadra said that in so far as we talk about actual things as actually existing, being is predicated of all things that exist. In this most generic sense, being applies to things univocally, signifying their common state of existence. He said the predication of being takes place with varying degrees of ‘intensity’ and ‘gradation’ (tashkik). The vertical gradation of being represent the system of cause and effect, and the horizontal on unravels the interconnected and complex relations among the grades that each grade represented its entire higher grade at single scope.
Plato’s idea is a mental state and he could not ignore the sensible objects, which render to dualism in his philosophy.

Sadra analyzed whole existent a single reality (*wahadate-wujud*) whose delimitations by various quiddites (*mahiyyat*), which exist within various existences being, independent apparently from each other. He said quiddies are not real being except the limitations and bounds of every being and posed many reasons to defense the idea.

Aristotle believed in substance as true and real being investigated the properties of things in his categories showed in an analytical but abstract process.

Sadra said, the principality of being is obvious and axiom in sixth way. Quiddities as properties of being have no independent existence but it does not meant they are two things in out side world, they are unique and quiddities have their existence in spite of being.

Kant said that being is not a real predicate, because it adds nothing to its subject. It could be just copula of a judgment. He gave an example that there is no discrepancy between the one hundred dollars, which exist, and the one
hundred dollars, which does not exist; otherwise it would be something else.

Sadra like Kant believes the concept of being is not analytical and there can be discrepancy between the concept of being and quiddities. He agreed with Kant that existential propositions are synthetically but from different stand point. For Kant distinction between quiddity and being is based on the sense experiment, therefore, he can not come to this conclusion that being is a real predicate, because he regarded the concept of being as an independent and predicated.

Sadra said this distinction between predicate and subject is an intellectual and philosophical, because what is affirmed in the existential proposition is not the affirmation of a thing for the subject, but the affirmation and realization of subject. Being and the object are externally same and according to primacy of being, quiddity or object has its originality through being. The predicate of being is neither a part of subject (analytically) nor an adherence predicate (synthetically), but it is a predicate by way of intimacy.
Conclusion

In this research, problem of being was discussed from the point of view of Plato, Aristotle, Kant and Sadra to show their differences in terms of their prospectives. What was focused was the changes in the concept of being. It was observed that this concept as a distinct topic of inquiry has not been discussed in the Greek philosophy, but it does not mean that the Greeks did not pay attention to that.

The meaning of being has shifted from ‘to be’ as general, universal, transcendental in Plato to noun ‘being’ as a concrete, substance, essence in Aristotle, and becomes a non-real predicate in judgments in Kant. Sadra analyzed the being as a authentic, univocal and real with different grades.

Among all pre-Socrates philosophers Plato was more influenced by Parmendis who said, “all of that which is, is being and every thing which is different from being, is not; there is no intermediate condition between them and being is self-subsistent, extended all over of this world, which is conceivable through thought.
Plato accepts Parmenides’s view that what is real is being, it is self-subsistent but exists in the world of Ideas. He said that there are many degrees of being corresponding to degrees of knowledge. From Pythagoras he accepted relativism in the sense perception and regarded them as the first step of knowledge, which is not real being and not non-being. He believed, in the second step that there is more reality, which is in the world of mathematics, because their objects and knowledge are unchangeable and universal.

Basic reality is always abiding, unchangeable, transcendental, and understandable through an intelligible effort, which exists in the world of Ideas. He said it does not mean that it is separate from things in this world, it is in the things and things are imitation of it, partakes in it.

Plato tried to explain the relationship between things in this world and the Ideas through metaphor. Clearly, he could not overcome to the gap between these two worlds and because of that, Aristotle rejected the authenticity of Ideas. More important than this deficiency in Plato is transcendental aspect of his real being. He made an effort to bring the Ideas in an ascending meaning to every day life to show man is able to
transcend his life and soul to higher level, if he can understand his situation in the world (cave) and try to change it.

The vast metaphysics created by Sadra is based on the three principles of unity (Wahadat aL-Wujud), principality of being (IsaLat aL-Wujud) and gradation of being (tashkik aL-Wujud). To make these aspects of his philosophy more clear, we compare them in the subject of the being in Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle and Kant.

Sadra said in so far as we talk about actual things as actually existing, being is predicated of all things that exist. In this most generic sense, being applies to things univocally, signifying their common state of existence. He said the predication of being takes place with varying degrees of ‘intensity’ and ‘gradation’ (tashkik). Such as light, which predicates to candle, lamp and sun univocally, they all participate in the quality of light and its brightness. Each of them shows different degrees of intensity in sharing the quality of light, which is the brightest in the sun and the weakest in the ray of lamp and candle. It is right in being of God as source of all beings, the brightest One and other existence as his illuminations.
The vertical gradation of being represents the system of cause and effect, and the horizontal unravels the interconnected and complex relations among the grades that each grade represented all its higher grade at a single place.

Sadra analysed whole existence as a single reality (wahadate-wujud) that can be limited by various quiddities (mahiyyat), which exist within various existent beings, independent apparently from each other. He said quiddities are not real beings, except that they are the limitations of being, he gave many proofs for his idea.

Aristotle did not accept from Plato that ultimate reality is the Idea, for he said Plato was not able to explain the change and movement of things in this world and also the relationship of Ideas to things are not clear.

To him reality is what he can see or touch of ‘this man’, ‘this rose’. Reality always bears an individual and actual existence, means primary substance that is combined of matter and form. He made a list of nine types of predicates, which can be truly or falsely attributes of substance and universal can exist only in individual.
Aristotle discussed a hierarchy of universal and individual, with each universal being contains the lower level universal and individual. The most generic item is genes of substance, then plant with form of nutrition, then animal with forms of sensation, then men with form of reason or thought. He founded this theory of evolution for he could explain through it there is an end and everything moves toward that end, or its form. Each matter has potentially its form and may be actualized through movement. Then he has established four causes during this motion.

Aristotle did not accept the ultimate reality of the world, the idea, because he believed the absolute reality of all things couldn’t be separate from them; therefore, he declared universality in the form and individuality in the matter. They do not lie apart in different world they are combined in substance.

Stace says if Aristotle wanted to show there is matter and form in substance he had to establish that matter necessarily comes out from form and it is produced by it, otherwise they are two entities equally ultimate, underivative and prima existing side by side from all eternity.
He remained in dualism, the gap between matter and Form, the sense and thought, as Plato did. Aristotle did not show matter cause must deduce from all other cause, it remains eternal and is not clear from where it has come, and ultimate reality, from which, entire universe flows from it, in his philosophy also is universal and indefinite.

The last and the most important point is in his method which he tried to explain everything in this world according to his categories in the way of his logic. As O’Connor said he thought for explain what is being, is enough to show it “that things in this world are hallmarked by the possession of sets of essential properties and are neatly pigeonholed by nature into distinguish species”.

What Aristotle has done is that he pulls down the transcendental and sublime meaning of being to the concepts and sentences. Truth and untruth in the world changed them to true and false sentences and also ethics became an autonomous field for him, in the way that students of ethics do not need to engage in a special study of philosophy to enhance them from the inferior life. To understand what is good does not require any expertise in any other field.
Aristotle believed in substance as true and real being investigated the properties of things in his categories showed in an analytical but abstract process.

Sadra said the principality of being is obvious and axiom in sixth way. For instance: being (wujud) is the reality of every things and effects, then consequences of things are derived through it; so being for its realization does not need of any other reality while other things including quiddities need being to be objective and come to external world through being.

Quiddities as properties of being have no independent existence but it does not meant they are two things in out side world, they are unique and quiddities have their existence in spite of being, different limitations of being create different beings, they are union out of mind.

Kant changed the previous method of knowledge and said that it is not true that we may have more success in the task of metaphysics if we suppose that our knowledge must conform to objects. Metaphysical problems may well be discussed scientifically if its impression arises from experience, then applied to our sensitive forms and particular concepts originally begotten in the understanding which produce the objective
validity of judgment of experience, through imagination and use of schematization. Therefore, some parts of true knowledge start from experience and some parts of that are which we receive from our own mind. Some problems such as “being”, “soul” and “God” which cannot come to our experience may not be disputed in this sphere, but they may well be discussed in the practical philosophy.

He elaborates three class of judgment which just through one of them true knowledge is possible. He says that analytic judgments express nothing in the predicate but what has been already thought in the concept of the subject, though no so distinctly or with the same (full) consciousness. They are independent from experience logically and wholly depend on the law of contradiction. A posteriori judgment has empirical origin and amplifies the knowledge. They are not absolutely and necessary true, because they depend on experience.

The true judgment is third class, means, and “synthetic a priori judgments which its predicate is not contained in its subject and yet is logically independent of all judgments, describing sense experience, and extend our knowledge.
Kant said the use of words or predicated alone does not necessarily imply the existence of their referents. Being is not a real predicate that is a conception of something, which is attended to the conception of some other thing. When we posit a thing real, we posited the thing with all its predicated in the conception of the subject and assumed its actual existence and this means repeated the predicate; logically being is merely the copula of judgment. By "is" we cannot add any predicate to the subject, otherwise it would not be exactly the same thing that exist.

Then, finally his theory of being according to Sadr’s thought is analyzed to show how he may be far away from understanding what the real being is. He believed that the predicate “"is” or existence must be different from the subject. Firstly, the meaning of existence is not containing in its subject, otherwise we may not ask whether that thing exist or not. Existence and the characteristics are two different concepts in our thought but they combine one existence in the real world, because their combinations are composition by way of unification. There is some independent meaning for existence even though in the thought, hence it could not be mere a copula. Secondly, if existence does not add any more meaning to the predicate it may add our knowledge of the things in the
universe, even though if we declare they are not exist. Thirdly, Kant made a false start when he assumed that whatever is universal and necessary in our knowledge must come from the mind, because he did not consider what actually take place in the mind accordance to the things in the real world.

Kant said being is not a real predicate, because it adds nothing to its subject. It could be just copula of a judgment. He gave an example that there is no discrepancy between the one hundred dollars, which exist, and the one hundred dollars, which does not exist; otherwise it would be something else.

Sadra like Kant believes the concept of being is not analytical and there can be discrepancy between the concept of being and quiddities. He gives many prove for that and here we point up six proves, such as: being is not same as quiddity or a part of it, for being can be negated of quiddity, while quiddity cannot be negated of itself.

Sadra agreed with Kant that existential propositions are synthetically but from different standpoint. For Kant distinction between quiddity and being is based on the sense experiment, therefore, he can not come to this conclusion that being is a real
predicate, because he regarded the concept of being as an independent and predicated.

Sadra said this distinction between predicate and subject is an intellectual and philosophical, because what is affirmed in the existential proposition is not the affirmation of a thing for the subject, but the affirmation and realization of subject. Being and the object are externally same and according to primacy of being, quiddity or object has its originality through being.

Sadra like Kant believes that the concept of being is not analytical and quiddities are neither a part of subject (analytically) nor an adherence predicate (synthetically), but Sadra added that it is a predicate by way of intimacy.