

**Writers:** Matin Kakhsaz([matinkakhsaz@gmail.com](mailto:matinkakhsaz@gmail.com))

Azar Hosseinzadeh Behrouz ([Azarhosseinzadehbehrouz@gmail.com](mailto:Azarhosseinzadehbehrouz@gmail.com))

Date: 09/04/2024

### **Principality of Act Based on the Principality of Being**

The concept of the principality of being (Esalat Wujud) holds a central position in the realm of Islamic philosophy, significantly influencing subsequent theories and discussions. This paper explores the comparison between the principality of act and mental state, particularly through the lens of the gradation principle (Tashkik). The principle of gradation allows for a nuanced understanding of how different entities partake in existence, leading to a deeper analysis of their ontological status. This understanding emphasizes the living tradition of Islamic philosophy as a resource for thinking through and responding to modern concerns. Also, this conclusion underscores the importance of action within Islamic philosophy, highlighting its role not merely as a physical outcome of mental processes but as a significant ontological reality with closer proximity to the divine, who is considered the most perfect being.

Some mental states, such as knowledge, are primarily concerned with quiddity. Others, like human understanding of the self or will, are forms of knowledge by presence and thus have a share in being. However, an act, especially in its physical manifestation, enjoys a more significant share of both being and quiddity than any mental state. This is due to its physical dimension and the element of movement, which is a sign and mode of the formation of existence.

Logical Form:

1. Premise 1: Mental states vary in their participation in existence, with some primarily involving quiddity (e.g., abstract knowledge) and others possessing a share in being (e.g., will, self-awareness).
2. Premise 2: Acts, particularly physical acts, possess both being and quiddity, with a significant share of being due to their physicality and movement.

3. Conclusion: Therefore, acts have a greater share in being compared to mental states.

According to this premise, it can be argued that mental states serve as a form of preparation for the act, rather than being the effective cause of the act. There exists a horizontal gradation (Tashkik Arzi) between mental states and acts, rather than a vertical gradation (Tashkik Tulei). Horizontal gradation implies that while mental states and acts are different in their participation in existence, they do not have a causal relationship in the strict sense. Instead, they coexist at the same level of being, with the act having a greater degree of existence due to its physical and dynamic nature.

Logical Form:

1. Premise 1: The gradation principle allows for horizontal (non-causal) differences in the degree of participation in existence between entities.

2. Premise 2: Acts possess a greater share of being than mental states, as established by their physicality and involvement in movement.

3. Premise 3: Mental states serve as preparation rather than as effective causes for acts.

4. Conclusion: Therefore, the relationship between mental states and acts is one of horizontal gradation, with acts holding ontological primacy due to their greater share in being.

Consequently, when something partakes more in being, it means that it is less associated with non-existence, and thus its existence has principality. This analysis underscores the importance and originality of action within Islamic philosophy. In Sadra's philosophy, the more an entity benefits from existence, the closer it is to God, who is the most perfect being. The act, therefore, represents a higher degree of perfection compared to the mental state.

In conclusion, the exploration of the principality of act compared to mental state within the framework of the principality of being and the gradation principle reveals the superior ontological status of action. This insight not only highlights the significance of action in Islamic philosophy but also offers a valuable

contribution to broader philosophical debates on the nature of existence and the relationship between thought and action. By applying the gradation principle to evaluate the relative worth of intellectual and physical endeavors, the paper highlights the significance of action in both Islamic philosophy and broader theological discussions. This approach not only deepens our understanding of the ontological primacy of acts but also offers a framework for addressing contemporary ethical and spiritual issues through the lens of Islamic thought.

This discussion also opens avenues for engaging with Western philosophical discourse, particularly concerning the cause-and-effect relationship between mental states and actions, as seen in the works of philosophers like Wittgenstein and Davidson. The horizontal gradation model provides a distinct perspective on these relationships, suggesting that while mental states and actions are related, they exist on the same ontological plane, with actions embodying a fuller participation in existence.

**Keywords:** principality of being, Gradation, Mental state, principality of act