

Progress as an Issue in Imam Musa Sadr's Thought¹

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Research Article



Abstract

Lebanon is a country with a variety of tribes and a multi-cultural society. Thus, the social activity therein has many sensitivities. Imam Musa Sadr as the leader of the Shiites in Lebanon sought to free the Shiite community of Lebanon from various social depravities. Therefore, social harmony and cooperation were important in that society. The question in the present article is as follows: “considering diverse and multi-cultural milieus in Lebanese society, how did Sayyid Musa Sadr delineate the path of progress in that society?” To provide answer for this question, we may say although Sadr faced a diverse society from religious, cultural and economic perspectives, he attempted, through his measure – especially the way he viewed human and religion, expectations from the government, establishing organizations and performing collective tasks – to consider a considerable role for human in moving the society towards progress. Naturally, considering the features of that society and existence of various cultural types, those differences do not hinder progress. Such a view made it possible for him to consider the common points of tribes and religions, political and

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cultural trends, while paying heed to their differences, and prepare the ground for progress based on human's will to create a coherent society by highlighting common points. The present article deals with this issue by considering the internal logic of Sayyid Musa Sadr's thought as well as the description and analysis of his opinions.

Keywords

human, progress, government, organization, social solidarity, Imam Musa Sadr.

Introduction

While of a limited area compared to other countries of the region, Lebanon is of great importance from various aspects. One of the important features of Lebanon is its ethnic and religious diversity, which make it a country properly described as multi-cultural; and from this perspective, coexistence of this ethnic diversity can be a challenging issue. This feature has made this country face many obstacles in its historical course. The first issue in this regard is the duality of backwardness/ progress, which is of great interest. As we find in various sources, including Imam Musa Sadr's speeches (2017, vol. 2, pp. 440-498), the Shiites of Lebanon struggle with a double state of depravity and backwardness. Therefore, after his presence in Lebanon as the leader of Lebanese Shiites, Imam Musa Sadr attempted to overcome the historical, epistemic, cultural, political and economic obstacles, and move towards progress by eliminating depravity and backwardness in that society. Therefore, his way towards progress is under dispute. In explaining Sadr's mentality of progress, we will discuss a variety of points presented by Imam Musa Sadr, but – shortly stated – we must refer to the fact that Sadr's position on progress is removal of historical, epistemic, cultural, political and economic backwardness. Indeed, by proposing the discussion of progress, Sadr considers promotion and transcendence of Lebanese society in all social spheres. For instance, elimination of poverty and economic depravity is one of the instances of it, and he sought to achieve that goal by creating solidarity among different tribes. In other words, we can say that Sadr's purpose in proposing the discussion on progress was removing the Lebanese needs, especially the deprived Shiites. In the next discussions, different dimensions of progress in his thought will be clarified, but the considerable point is in the idea the present article is seeking to discuss. The idea of this article is that progress in various dimensions of human life has requisites that, if fulfilled, prepare the ground for progress.

Thus, the human as the agent and ultimate goal of progress is the focus of discussions presented by Sadr. Indeed, Sadr seeks to make evolutions inside the society through human's internal evolutions and his freewill. The measures Sadr took were applied during two decades of his presence in Lebanon and leadership of the Lebanese Shiites, and this can be investigated separately. On the one hand, Sadr – with his good command of religious foundations up to the level of *ijtihad*, philosophizing and politics – attempted to propose different dimensions of this view and prepare the ground for promotion of the Lebanese society towards progress. Considering such an atmosphere, questions arise about the nature and the method of progress for Sadr. We will continue this discussion in the next sections.

1. Human, identity and progress

One may say that Sadr's main view in his discussion of progress has been proposed in regard with human, and the human – as the main agent – can serve as the origin for evolution and progress in himself and in society with his own will. Therefore, the human is a history-making agent, and Sadr pays much attention to educating human and making humans. This progress starts from human's internal evolution, which is based on faith, and continues with his external evolution, which is based on human's action in the society and helps him in his progress. Consequently, human attempts to improve himself and make his environment and society at the same time. The first paragraph in the statute of Amal Organization stresses on human and making human more than anything else. Besides, Sadr discusses the Prophet Mohammad's revolution in two sessions (Sadr, 2017, vol. 12, pp. 37-46), analyzes it as the greatest human revolution to discuss human comprehensively, stresses on honoring humans by emphasizing that human is so great and must not destroy his greatness in the path of trivial affairs. In that investigation, Sadr refers to the measures taken by the Prophet as a

historical experience, wherein the main basis of the Prophet's revolution was honoring the human and making him free from all belongings and trivial dependencies (Sadr, 2017, vol. 12, p. 38). Therefore, one may say that the first principle in any kind of evolution and progress starts from human's reformation.

However, the question is how the man must face the new human achievements. Sadr believes that no one has wanted us to resist against evolution and progress and refrain from enjoying human achievements. Rather, we must not lose our identity and originality and place the human's new achievements in our genuine framework, assess them with our own criteria, accept some and reject others to build a genuine nation anew, with all its intellectual, historical and practical dimensions of the concept of originality (Sadr, 2012a, p. 18). This view is based on the fact that the first step, which is self-improvement, has happened. Thus, Sadr, while confirming the value of human experiences and knowledge, makes enjoying them conditional upon provisions that can be in line with Islamic teachings; otherwise, they cannot run in the Islamic society. Indeed, all human experiences and knowledge can have another tint in the light of self-improvement so that they can be effective as the engine of progress.

This, of course, shows an important principle: "progress does not occur in vacuum." If progress is based on self-improvement, it cannot be silent before the human experiences and knowledge. Therefore, Sadr maintains that in the past, when the Islamic civilization was taking form and meeting other societies in the world, "it translated the achievements of other civilizations, and the Muslim scholars entered the general Islamic structure and reformed and nurtured them, reoffering them to the world" (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 342). In fact, some kind of internal identification happens and, in addition to making use of the experiences of other civilizations such as the Greek, the Alexandrian, Chaldean, Persian, Indian and other civilization, it re-presented them to the world

by attracting and taking them into the Islamic culture. Thus, the Islamic society was not merely a consumer society and, while making use of the knowledge and experience of other societies and civilizations, it has reproduced them in line with the Islamic culture and presented them to the world once more. In the series of lessons presented to the members of Amal Movement, Imam Musa Sadr tries to reinforce the Islamic identity in the members of the movement by presenting discussions on faith in God, paying attention to the Islamic heritage, and human's dignity. Accordingly, he asserts that "after formation and evolution of the Islamic identity, there is no problem in associating with People of the Book¹" (Sadr, 2017, vol. 12, p. 4). Therefore, self-improvement must lead to a strong identity that helps us in building the Islamic society.

From the past discussions, one can infer Imam Musa Sadr's emphasis on human's freedom and his dignity. Thus, the evolution and progress Imam Musa Sadr speaks of is not achieved except through human's free will. Indeed, he emphasizes the role of human's freewill and freedom, and especially the role of human agent, in evolution and progress and says, "The evolution imposed from outside and founded on the situation and the state made by others is an unacceptable surrender, is not considered perfection, and is nothing except annihilation" (Sadr, 2012a, p. 18). If human's will has no role and the man is merely a consumer, one can no longer speak of human's will. Thus, human creates identity for himself by dealing with self-improvement through his own will. The important point is that, for Sadr, the main and basic factor of evolution and progress is the human himself. Therefore, he adduces the Quranic verses and asserts that the human's misery or felicity is in his own hands. One's ancestors, tribes and clans, and hometown do not determine his felicity and misery. You humans determine your own felicity and misery. The felicity and misery of

1. Followers of the divine religions with celestial books, including Christians and Jewish people.

everyone is in our own hands: “That nothing belongs to man except what he strives for” (The Quran, Najm: 39). Your successes are the result of your own efforts: “Every soul is hostage to what it has earned” (The Quran, Mudaththir: 38). Felicity and misery are not imposed on me from outside. I determine my own felicity and misery. This is the Quran’s logic. This does not pertain to just individual felicity and misery; rather, it includes social felicity and misery as well. The Holy Quran asserts: “Corruption has appeared in land and sea because of the doings of the people’s hands” (The Quran, Rūm: 41). We determine our social felicity and misery. The verse 11 of surah Ra’d (“Indeed Allah does not change a people’s lot, unless they change what is in their souls.”) is about the social felicity. In the Quranic logic, there is no felicity and misery outside human’s understanding and control. How does human become felicitous? When he delineates his future and dominates over his own soul, takes the control of his destiny, does not yield to passions and lusts, and does not bow down before pressures and deceptions” (Sadr, 2012a, pp. 268-269).

With this view, the role of human’s will and volition in his felicity and misery has been emphasized and asserted and, in other words, the evolution and progress in any society is not realized except through human’s will. Thus, Sadr does not accept the well-known meaning of Qadr Night¹ and regards it inconsistent with the decisive effect of human in his destiny and progress: “the well-known meaning of Qadr Night is that it is a night when conditions change and humans’ deeds are specified and their portions are divided. And this night is considered similar to the day when the state submits budget to the assembly. I really do not understand this meaning, since human’s destiny and his portion and deeds as well as his felicity and misery or his disease is not linked

1. The night when God determines everybody’s destiny, provision, subsistence, etc. according to His will and discernment. It may be the 19th, 21st, or 23rd night of Ramadan.

to this” (Sadr, 2012a, p. 272). By negating the conventional meaning of Qadr Night, as well as the role and effect of human’s will in his felicity and misery and that Ramadan is the month of determination of human’s destiny, he emphasizes that human’s destiny is gradually determined through his works and actions. Human’s destiny is linked to his will and his actions from his life: “The one who purifies his soul achieves felicity, and the one who does not attempt to this end and does evildoings will be afflicted with misery. The Quran says, ‘human’s destiny is linked with his will when this will is directed to purification of the soul” (Sadr, 2012a, p. 312). Therefore, human-making and self-improvement is based on human’s will, and progress is achieved accordingly and the social systems are established accordingly. Based on what we stated, there are three factors for human’s success: first, the free will far from personal expediencies and needs; second, understanding the nation’s sufferings; and third, open awareness, understanding and mentality in facing truths. With these three factors, the human can delineate his future and, in this way, determine his destiny in Qadr Night to lead himself and the nation to felicity or to misery (Sadr, 2012a, p. 314).

2. Religion and progress

In Sadr’s view, progress and evolution are among the educational goals of religion, and human’s evolution and life are strongly interrelated. Therefore, he stresses on the role and function of progress in human’s life. In his view, “progress is just produced by the continuous interaction between the human and the universe. We must not think that progress is creating a new element or elimination of an element” (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 91). He deals with Islamic doctrines from this perspective, and since he regards Islam a religion of innate nature, which rejects stagnation, he believes that Islam has invited people to evolution and perfection. Thus, for him, evolution and progress, is done in two ways.

First, it returns to the eternity of the Quran and right perceptions of it: “eternity and progress in Islam is owed to the divine nature of the Quranic words, which stand beside human, giving him instructions to new interactions with the existence. The continuation of interaction between human and the Quran is possible with updated understanding in line with interaction between the human and the existence in the process of evolution” (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 91). The second way is that “in the Islamic doctrines, there are certain laws for evolution in contracts and regulations such as in-contract provisions that change the form of contracts” (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 91).

Continuous interaction between the human and the existence is, for Sadr, important in understanding the concept of progress. Thus, Sadr puts emphasis on the element of movement and ties human's life and death to movement: “When human makes progress, he remains alive; and when he stops, he dies” (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 71). In analyzing this view of Sadr, we can say that he means human's movement must be based on thinking; and in this case, the movement will be meaningful. Indeed, movement in itself does not have such a qualification, and it is ‘thought’ that directs movement. In this case, stagnation and rigidity are factors for the fall of regimes. Movement may be accompanied by continuous conflict and struggle. For Sadr, such a conflict has always existed. Indeed, “progress is a fight between the time and the human that has always existed. When the man came to the scene of existence, he began to struggle with the time. His fight was indeed with his own soul and the nature, and we are waiting for a day when the human overcomes all forces in the universe” (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 71). But what directs progress and facilitates it – as we stated in the previous section – is the existence of self-improved qualified human with right thought: “When the sword is in the hands of a righteous man, it will be at the service of humanity, truth and nobility” (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 71).

Thus, the progress that occur with interaction between human and

existence is – in principle – the scene of conflict and struggle between the two. What can realize the field of progress here is the way the human and nature encounter, thereby the conflict must lead to interaction. Thus, the role of the ‘righteous human’ will be more expressive. Sadr restricts the scene of the conflict to the struggle between human and his soul and between human and the nature, while it seems that the scene must be seen much broader. Especially, the scene of human’s struggle in the society and – in particular – his struggle with oppression in various forms including many rulers and governments that can be considered among human’s perpetual struggles for achieving a basic goal, i.e. desirable life.

In Sadr’s view, this interaction must not go in the direction that one thinks there must be no difference in beliefs; rather, Sadr maintains that: “differences of opinions and views prepare the ground for progress and evolution and facilitates the move towards *ijtihad* or legal reasoning” (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 342).

Indeed, difference in opinions is a part of the conflict that appears, in the intellectual and social spheres, among various views; and any view attempts to gain superiority. He also stresses on solidarity and unity of religious rites in spite of difference in jurisprudential opinions and, more importantly, he regards this unification possible (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 341). Therefore, while Sadr is seeking solidarity in Islamic society, he admires the existence of various views and maintains that plurality of views must be admired and used to enrich one’s thought. In addition, Sadr asserts that the cores of evolution and progress exist in Islam, and [Islamic] laws have been legislated in a way that is consistent with human’s needs in any time and place (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 242). Thus, using the method of legal reasoning (or *ijtihad*), there will be no deadlock for human’s movement; and, in Sadr’s view, Islamic laws can be consistent with human’s versatile needs and can fulfill those needs.

Therefore, considering the fact that Sadr deals with the discussion of

progress from the position of a religious leader, paying attention to the role of religion in his discussions is of great importance. While paying heed to the type of anthropological view of human and – in particular – the human's relationship to existence, Sadr says: "The human is a creature surrounded by other beings in the universe. There are links and relations between the human and other beings. When the human wants to discern the right way in his life and in his relation to existence and his fellowmen, he sees that religion and God's Book show him the [right] way. Thus, he interacts with the existence and evolves. Then, he sees himself before newer relations. Again, he refers to God's Book and is directed by divine doctrines and so forth. These three factors (i.e. the Quran, the human, and the existence) go forth alongside one another in a harmony. The Quran organizes the evolved relations between the human and the existence in an advanced form and in direction of eternity" (Sadr, 2012a, p. 17). Here, Sadr stresses on the educational goals of religion, especially, the social function of religion. He, somehow, speaks of the model of progress in Islam as well as the relationship between religion and development and the ontological dimensions of development.

The important point here is the relationship between work and faith that can serve as the engine for progress. Accordingly, working is much emphasized and – in Sadr's words – in the society favored by Islam, working has a prominent position, because "In that society, working is a mission that human has the obligation to do his best for its realization, and it is a worship that cannot be restricted or priced" (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 94). Such a view of 'work' has, on the one hand, promoted its position and amalgamates it with religious teachings and, on the other hand, regards it as the introduction for progress. Perhaps, this view of 'work' from a Muslim scholar is a new one that wants to organize, through religious justifications, the path of the progress of society based on human's work. Of course, here, Sadr has a jurisprudential view as well, because

he considers 'work' as an obligation that individual must do his best to realize it.

Sadr has a divine and religious view of 'work' and emphasizes the effective role of work in any progress. In his view, 'work' is the foundation of society (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 146). Accordingly, he poses the question of 'What is work?' and speaks of two types of work in answering it: one is work "for payment" and the other is work 'out of motivation and eagerness'. What Sadr emphasizes and asserts is that work must be out of motivation and eagerness. Therefore, he refers to the merits of working out of motivation and eagerness and says, "If work originates from doctrinal roots, i.e. with one single motivation, it will be done in harmony." This is while if work 'is for payment, it will be done without harmony' (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 146). Indeed, we must see work from the following perspective: "work is a part of human and human evolves with work, because work grows human's attitude, feeling and character" (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 146). With this in mind, religion and faith are along with progress, evolution and working and directs them; and humans are encouraged to attempt, work and progress.

What Sadr confirms in the relationship between religion and progress is the type of people's look and worldview in regard with working in the society, which leads to progress in the society. As the result of this view, an individual considers working as a mission and another individual looks at it in relation to wage. A believer resorts, with his work, to absolute and unlimited values that link human to God and, consequently, such a human "founds his social relations on the basis of values" (Sadr, 2017, vol. 12, p. 45). Thus, religion takes over an important role in directing progress, just as government has a considerable effect in this regard.

3. Government and progress

The collection of Sadr's discussions on progress reveals the point that one must simultaneously pay attention to the effective role of government on the one hand and cultural, social and economic systems on the other hand to be able to have a serious scrutiny of progress. In particular, the structure of the government can be important from the viewpoint of progress, because the government, on the one hand, plays an effective and decisive role in distributing facilities and decision-making in the society and, on the other hand, it can be effective in progress by creating social solidarity based on the common values. Regarding the government, Sadr has some important discussions that we will refer to here. Naturally, Sadr's approach regarding the government is directly and indirectly related to progress. Thus, it seems that Sadr's view in this regard is a comprehensive view, because he offers solutions that can better organize the condition of progress in Lebanese society, while – at the same time – criticizing the status quo in the structure of the government.

In Sadr's opinions, what impairs progress in a society is, on the one hand, the sectarian system and, on the other hand, the secular system. Sadr thinks of a third solution between sectarianism and secularism, a solution that is able to overcome the problems of the Lebanese society and make use of the elements of faith and spirituality by forming a believer non-sectarian government. Indeed, putting aside the faith and existence of the sectarian system in administering the society on the one hand and 'secularism of the government' on the other hand "waste the faithful forces as the most invaluable manpower" (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 230). And thus, the progress is harmed. Therefore, Sadr asserts that the government must not separate itself from having faith in values, and faith in values is not realized without having faith in God and constructing a society based on faith. Faith is different from sectarianism in society, just as it is different from having prejudice in personal affairs. Thus, we do not accept being secular or its being a

substitute for sectarianism. Of course, we also oppose sectarianism. We want to form a believer and non-sectarian government (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 230).

Forming a believer and non-sectarian government in Lebanon is just an important part of Sadr's concern for progress. Elsewhere, he has tried to use other expressions to express his view regarding the government. In all of them, one can find out that they are in line with his concern for progress. Among them, in a dialogue, he speaks of the government as a father: "The government always attempts to politicize the social issues, while the government – like a father – must be patient in facing with political movements and measures" (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 237). Another expression he offers for the government in Lebanon is 'non-despotic pious'. In my view, this is also another expression for 'the believer non-sectarian government' or 'government as father'. All these expressions refer to a government whose realization can approach the society to a better situation. A very important point for Sadr is progress amid removal of depravity and backwardness from Lebanese society. In this regard, the Lebanese government has an important task and must act accordingly. Thus, he believes that the government is a tool for the welfare and dignity of the society: "If all Lebanese groups find out that with the modification and reformation of the existing system they can preserve the dignity, the rights and the freedom of all, it will be possible to enforce it. The human wants government as a means to provide him with welfare and dignity, not considering it as fixed and unalterable. We want the regime and government for goodness and felicity, and when goodness and felicity are achieved through reformation of the regime, it must be done" (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 262). Thus, he issued a decree for reforming and changing the political regime and defended it: "In my view, establishing the meritocratic regime and forming the second assembly that I noted will create a regime better than the existing regime" (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 263).

Since the government is a means for welfare and dignity of citizens in a society, we can say – in this case – that progress has realized to some extent. Thus, Sadr maintains that there is no certain form of government in Islam (Sadr, 2017, vol. 3, p. 354) and according to the demands of each society and any time, we may reach a certain form of government that can realize such a goal. Sadr considers the government as a series of institutions (Sadr, 2017, vol. 12, p. 163) and even the biggest institution, in any society, that administer the society through those institutions. Here, the human agent and human's decisions are of great importance. In addition to the government, which is a series of institutions, non-governmental institutions and – in general – the existence of organizations can be important for progress.

4. Organizations and progress

Apart from the fact that the government in its general sense is a series of very important institutions in any country, Sadr has discussed the question of what institutions we can speak of as effective institutions in the progress of the society, regardless of governmental institutions. Indeed, Sadr does not entrust all task to the government, and believes in a sphere wherein humans – free from the presence and interference of government – can take practical measures for progress in the public sphere. Certainly, measure taken outside the governmental institutions cannot be effective without an organization.

A memory recounted from Imam Musa Sadr tells us that he, in answering a question on why he did not remain in seminary center and did not think of becoming a religious authority, said: “Let me pursue Sayyid Jamal's task which no one appears to undertake” (Khosroshahi, 2014, p. 109; Lakza'i, 2020, p. 54). My analysis is that since Sayyid Jamal is famous for going to cultural and political elites or the rulers to reform the society, and he did not manage to change and reform the society, Sayyid Musa Sadr sought to have a more successful activity for progress with

his presence among people and – simultaneously – making use of the capacities of the elites. Today, of course, with more information on Sayyid Jamal’s intellectual and philosophical dimensions and his failure in reforming the Muslims societies, we can better understand that memory.

The important point is that Sayyid Jamal pursued his task personally and although he nurtured some pupils, they did not pursue his task as he wished despite his important effects in awakening of the Islamic world. Besides, he investigated the impairments of his activities in the last days of his life and, as a result, asserted that he wished he would have acted in another way. He said: “And I wish I had planted the seeds of my thought in the prepared farm of the nation instead of spoiling it in the fertile farm of the monarchy of this land” (Khosroshahi, 2014, p. 117). Nevertheless, Sayyid Jamaluddin Asadabadi is known as the pioneer of awakening in Iran and the Islamic world, the one who has left deep effects on movements after him in the Islamic world. I do not claim that Asadabadi had failed completely in his action, or that Sadr was completely successful; however, I can say that in discussion on progress, Sadr did not believe, on the one hand, in personal work, and on the other hand, he did not maintain that just elites carry the capacity for changes and evolutions. Rather, he sought to establish organizational and collective work, pursued his activities through institutions and organizations, taking measures for building institutions and creating some organizations as well. Such a path can create an atmosphere for progress.

Therefore, Sadr was completely aware of the necessity and importance of organizational work of progress. He learned the necessity for organizational work when he was in Qom. That is, in the period when he was active in the magazine entitled *Maktab Islām*, he had a serious leaning towards collective and organizational work and institutional presence in the society, especially from religious

viewpoint. This was his strong point regarding Sayyid Jamal's activities. The same view sees religion from the social perspective. Thus, we can say that Sadr was consciously stressing on pursuing Sayyid Jamal's unfinished task. The prominent aspect of Sadr's activities for all-out progress of Lebanon was organizational work and making institutions. Evidently, Sayyid Jamal could ring the bell of awakening to mobilize the Muslim nations and, to that extent, it seems that he was successful and effective in his task. Sadr, however, could take important steps to reduce the backwardness of Lebanese society and bring progress for it by establishing public institutions such as charities and educational, religious and military centers.

The field and public levels of Sayyid Musa Sadr's organizational and managerial works and his institutionalizations were very broad and, at the same time, they included the public and elite levels of political, cultural, social, press, media, economic, and civil as well as domestic and foreign affairs. This was especially evident in the establishment of The Supreme Assembly of Lebanese Shiites and the movement of the underprivileged in Lebanon, and its military branch called Amal Military Movement in particular. Indeed, to overcome the social backwardness, Sadr expected all those institutions to help the society in its progress. Therefore, he put much emphasis on organizational work and considered it obligatory like the daily prayer. He maintained if we want to be powerful (and advanced), we must perform task in an organizational form (Sadr, 2017, vol. 12, p. 54). In fact, in Sadr's view, power and strength bring about progress, and this does not happen except through collective and organizational work. Indeed, God's hand is with groups, i.e. organizations (Sadr, 2017, vol. 12, p. 54). Thus, we must take measures to achieve the intended progress by creating proper organizations. The lack of power means weakness, be trampled and backwardness. This power emerges from people's effective presence, their real participation and interaction with elites, and demanding the

government as well as the government's accompaniment with them. With Sadr's guidance, people take over the affairs of the organization and further them, and the imam plays just the supervisory, directive and ideological roles as the leader, with no interference in the executive section. To receive the charters of the organization, the members of the organization of Amal Movement must pay the price and all members are obliged to purchase and use the charters of the movement. He asserts that presence in the meetings, paying the membership fee, reading the enactments and laws, and taking part in the assemblies are obligatory like saying the daily prayers (Sadr, 2017, vol. 12, pp. 23-24). In my view, creating an organization with these features, regardless of its effect on progress of a society, is of great importance and shows the progress of the society. The discussion on organization and the presence of individuals as the main agents in it is a kind of self-improvement, which we emphasized in the first part of this article. Thus, faith in God is not separate from serving people, and rising for God's sake means rising up to serve people. Sadr's answer about how this self-improvement takes place is much important and emphasizes the individual's turning into community (Sadr, 2017, vol. 12, p. 53). Indeed, organization turns the individual into community. He says: "The main condition of our movement is that we melt in the community, and must be free from self-centrism, selfishness, family-centrism, tribalism, group-centrism, profiteering and from this earthly dynasty to be able to melt in a movement in line with faith in the all-knowing, just, live, infinite and perceiving God" (Sadr, 2017, vol. 12, p. 46).

Therefore, the organization is busy creating an atmosphere and condition wherein the individual grows, is nurtured and achieves progress. Education and making humans is Sadr's main goal taken from organization. Anyway, two things happen simultaneously in creating an organization: one is internal self-improvement whose main condition is 'intention' (*niyya*) and the other is construction and progress outside

whose main condition is work and action. Therefore, we expect two things from organizational work: one is that all individuals be like one single great body spread everywhere. The other is that responsibilities be divided among elements just as they are divided among the members of a body.

Summary and conclusion

Following the question posed about how to delineate the map of progress in Imam Musa Sadr's view, we have focused in the present article on some of the requisites of progress to deal with the subject of 'human' and the role of 'his will' in progress. Thus, by stressing on Sadr's key approach in his social look at religion and its role in a Muslim's life, we emphasized the obligation of religion to move forward. Indeed, in Sadr's view, human is the agent and ultimate goal of progress in various spheres. Thus, one of the results of the discussion is that without human's role-play, we cannot speak of progress. Besides, the government as the most important institution in any society is, alongside organizations (including both official and non-official ones) the other prerequisite and condition for progress, wherein we find human's track and the role of his will again. As another result and consequence of the discussion, I must note that progress occurs when internal evolution occurs in human. This internal and inner evolution prepares the ground for social evolution. In the discussion of progress, Sadr seeks to cause various tribes in Lebanon to move in harmony and create changes in social condition. With the discussion presented, the present article delineates this view from the perspective of Imam Musa Sadr's political thought. In some of his writings, he has seen the Lebanese society as the one in the path of progress. Thus, we can note these statements of Imam Musa Sadr who said: "Move forward to progress, toleration and deep-thinking" (Sadr, 2012b, p. 174) and "Move forward towards self-sacrifice, peace, national solidarity and

resurrection of Lebanon” (Sadr, 2012b, p. 161).

In his view, if the aforementioned requisites are considered and we stand firmly on our values, attempting to make identity for human with social interpretation of religion and the important role of the government, we have covered the rough route of progress. Consequently, human’s presence in social evolutions gains double importance and, basically, all progresses are related to human’s presence and participation.

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